

# **THOMAS AQUINAS ON FREE WILL**

by

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

I have used the following abbreviations for Aquinas's major texts.

- SCG *Summa Contra Gentiles*  
ST *Summa Theologica*  
QDM *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*  
QDP *Quaestiones disputatae de potentia Dei*  
QDV *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper argues that, with respect to creaturely freedom, Thomas Aquinas is a theological compatibilist. The compatibilist position is entailed by his claim that God is the cause of everything including all creaturely choices, though humans and angels have free will. Aquinas's views on a wide variety of issues, including divine sovereignty, the problem of evil, grace, foreknowledge, and predestination, either entail compatibilism or at least provide strong evidence for this interpretation; his views on other issues, such as sin, are at least consistent with compatibilism. However, Aquinas believes that God is free in a very broad sense: nothing necessitates His actions, so He could have created a different world (even one which is better than this world) or chosen not to create at all.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The issue of free will has been frequently debated throughout almost the entire history of Christianity: if God is the omnipotent, sovereign creator of all things, in what sense can humans be free? To answer this question, I will examine the writings of one of the greatest Christian philosophers, St. Thomas Aquinas; since he is arguably one of the two most influential Christian philosophers (along with St. Augustine) and his work is highly regarded among Christians and non-Christians alike, his view is certainly worth looking into. Giving a full defense of Aquinas's view is beyond the scope of this paper; my intention here is simply to determine exactly what his view is, since this has been much debated especially within recent decades. I will argue that Aquinas is what I will call a theological compatibilist.

First we must define exactly what we mean by 'free will'. I will follow Seth Shabo's definition: to have free will means "that we sometimes have a choice about which of two or more accessible futures becomes the actual future."<sup>1</sup> According to Shabo, this definition is generally accepted by both sides of the free will debate; what is debated is exactly what it means for a future state of the world to count as accessible.<sup>2</sup> By a 'free choice' I mean a choice about which accessible future becomes

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<sup>1</sup> Seth Shabo, "Why Free Will Remains a Mystery," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 92, no. 1 (2011): 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the actual future; one can make a free choice only if one has free will. We should also note that, although we are focusing on free will rather than moral responsibility, the two are closely connected. One cannot be morally responsible for a choice unless one is free,<sup>3</sup> and making a free choice between good and evil<sup>4</sup> is sufficient for being morally responsible for that choice.

The different views on free will can be divided into two types: incompatibilist views, on which a determined choice cannot be free, and compatibilist views, on which a determined choice can be free. By a ‘determined’ choice I mean a choice which is causally necessitated by factors outside the agent.<sup>5</sup> This is not the standard understanding of determinism, but it is the one most relevant to the issue of free will. We should note three things about this definition. First, it does not assume universal causal determinism: a choice is determined as long as there is something outside of the agent which causally determines that choice, no matter how much indeterminacy there is in the rest of the universe. Second, it does not require the relevant causes to be temporally prior to the choice: something simultaneous with the choice or something outside of time (depending on your view of time, God’s choices would fit in one of these two categories) can count as the cause of the choice in the relevant sense. Finally, the necessitating cause of a choice may itself be indeterminate: if a choice is

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<sup>3</sup> This is, at least, the traditional view, and Aquinas certainly accepts it; however, some modern philosophers would disagree.

<sup>4</sup> On some views, such as Aquinas’s, no one literally makes a choice between good and evil, since no one can pursue evil for its own sake. By choosing between good and evil I mean choosing between a permissible good and an impermissible good.

<sup>5</sup> Katherin Rogers, *Anselm on Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 2.



causally necessitated by the indeterminate motion of a particular particle in the brain, then the choice counts as determined, unless we can identify the agent with that particle (otherwise the particle is ‘outside’ of the agent in the relevant sense).<sup>6</sup>

We can further subdivide the different views on free will based on whether they believe there are any beings with free will. An incompatibilist who claims that some beings have free will is a libertarian,<sup>7</sup> and an incompatibilist who claims that no beings have free will is a hard determinist. We could make the same division among compatibilist views, since I see no inconsistency with saying that free will and determinism are compatible and yet no being has free will, but since I know of no one who makes such a claim, I will take compatibilism to include the claim that some beings have free will.

By adding a few additional assumptions, we can more clearly see the issue with regard to Aquinas. Aquinas believes there are beings with free will, namely humans,<sup>8</sup> angels,<sup>9</sup> and God,<sup>10</sup> so he is clearly not a hard determinist. He is also committed to Christianity, so we can safely assume basic Christian principles when analyzing his view. Among Christian libertarians, there are three main views:

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 2-4.

<sup>7</sup> Some philosophers have a more narrow definition of libertarianism on which a free choice must not only not be determined but also must be such that the agent could have done otherwise. I am not including this requirement of alternative possibilities, mainly for the sake of simplicity: by my definitions, compatibilism, libertarianism, and hard determinism are mutually exclusive and exhaustive.

<sup>8</sup> ST I, q.83, a.1

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., q.59, a.3

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., q.19, a.10

Molinism, Anselmianism, and Open Theism; each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

Molinism says that there are contingent truths, known as counterfactuals of creaturely freedom, about what every possible creature would do in every possible situation, even situations which involve a libertarian free choice. These truths are true independently of anything God does, and they are causally prior to God's choices. God knows these truths by His 'middle knowledge' (roughly, His knowledge of any contingent truths which are causally prior to His choices), although He does not cause them to be true, and He takes them into account when deciding what to create or whether to create at all.<sup>11</sup> This has the advantage of allowing the strongest view of divine sovereignty available to a libertarian: since God knows everything which will happen 'before' (logically, not temporally) He chooses to create, He can choose to actualize any feasible world (where the set of feasible worlds is the subset of possible worlds in which the same counterfactuals of creaturely freedom are true as in the actual world) and He does not need to take any risks in doing so.<sup>12</sup> But the Molinist

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<sup>11</sup> For a defense of Molinism, see Thomas P. Flint, *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Some would say that Anselmianism and Open Theism provide a stronger account of divine sovereignty because, on the Molinist view, God is constrained by the counterfactuals of creaturely freedom which exist independently of anything He does, while on Anselmianism and Open Theism, there are no constraints on God except those He imposed on Himself by choosing to create free creatures. But, as I argue in chapter 3, there is at least some sense in which Molinism's account of divine sovereignty is stronger: on the Molinist view, God knows which worlds are feasible and therefore can choose to actualize any feasible world, while on Anselmianism and Open Theism, God does not have that knowledge and therefore must take risks if He chooses to create any free creatures.

view is problematic: some of these counterfactuals of creaturely freedom are about people and situations which never existed and never will exist, so what makes them true? And, if God is omnipotent, how can there be contingent truths which are not caused to be true by God and which are true independent of anything God does? Because of these difficulties, Anselmians and Open Theists both deny the existence of middle knowledge and counterfactuals of creaturely freedom.

On the Anselmian view, God's choice to create free creatures is causally prior to the creatures' free choices, which are in turn causally prior to His knowledge of what those creatures freely choose, and God is eternal, existing outside of time. God did not know what His creatures would do with their freedom until He chose to create them, but 'now' that He has created them, He can see all their free actions from His eternal vantage point.<sup>13</sup> This view allows for God to foreknow events and to perform some action at one time, such as uttering a prophecy, in response to an event, such as a free choice, which happens at a later time. It also attempts to defend the traditional conception of divine simplicity. However, it is not clear that it is even a coherent view. It claims that God simultaneously sees all events (including free choices) in all times and responds to those events. Suppose that there is some free choice X (for example, Peter's threefold denial of Jesus) which occurs at time  $t_2$ , and in response to X, God performs some action Y (for example, prophesying Peter's threefold denial) at earlier time  $t_1$ . X is causally prior to God's knowledge that X, which is causally prior to Y. And, at least in our example, it seems clear that X would not have happened in exactly the same way if Y had not occurred, which means Y is causally prior to X. In other

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<sup>13</sup> For a defense of Anselmianism, see Rogers, *Anselm on Freedom*.

words, we have a causal loop in which God's choices and creatures' choices cause each other; many people would find this problematic.

Open Theism claims that God is in time and doesn't know what His creatures will freely choose until (temporally, not just logically) they actually choose. God knows as much as it is possible to know about the future, since he knows anything which follows from the present state of the world without involving any free choices, as well as the likelihood of each person making any given choice in any given situation (if such a thing can be known),<sup>14</sup> and perhaps also what He would do in response to each possible choice. But God does not know what creatures will freely choose in the future; those choices do not exist yet and so cannot be known.<sup>15</sup> This view clearly avoids the major problems of both Molinism and Anselmianism. However, it comes at a substantial price: it denies God's complete and infallible foreknowledge. This is problematic not only because it is a departure from the traditional view of God,<sup>16</sup> but also because it makes some Biblical prophecies difficult

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<sup>14</sup> I see three possible things the Open Theist could say here: either (1) God knows the exact probabilities of any given option being chosen, or (2) He knows which option is most likely to be chosen (and perhaps also the ranking of likelihood for the remaining options if there are more than two options) but not the exact probability, or (3) He merely knows what the options are but not which is more likely to be chosen. I will here assume that the Open Theist accepts (1); the problems dealing with prophecy are even more serious on (2) and (3).

<sup>15</sup> For a defense of Open Theism, see Clark Pinnock et al., *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 59.

<sup>16</sup> This departure from tradition should be enough, at least for Catholics, to render Open Theism an unacceptable view, since "the claim that God lacks knowledge of future free actions was explicitly rejected by the First Vatican Council" (Flint, 102).

to deal with: how could Jesus know that Peter would deny Him exactly three times, when so many free choices were involved in that occurrence? It is hard to see how God could predict much of anything beyond the immediate future on an Open Theist view, since the further something is in the future, the more free choices occur between the present and the future event, and so the more uncertainty is involved in predicting it. But in Genesis 15:13-14, God tells Abram to “know for certain”<sup>17</sup> that his descendants would be enslaved in a foreign land for four hundred years and then would depart with great wealth. William Hasker tries to explain prophecy on an Open Theist view by saying that

We have available to us three different ways of understanding biblical prophecies, consistent with God’s openness to the future. Some prophecies are conditional on the actions of human beings, others are predictions based on existing trends and tendencies, while still others are announcements of what God himself intends to bring about.<sup>18</sup>

But none of these is a good explanation for either of these prophecies. There are some prophecies which have an implied condition (if you do not repent, ...), but it would be very strange to say that such was the case here. It is hard to see how Jesus could reliably predict from existing trends that Peter would deny Him exactly three times, and existing trends certainly wouldn’t be enough to accurately predict that Abram’s descendants would remain enslaved for four hundred years. And surely the Open Theist does not want to say that God intended to bring about Peter’s denial or the Israelites’ 400-year enslavement. And these problems with predicting the future can also be applied to more practical cases: for example, God can’t always offer very

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<sup>17</sup> All Bible quotations are taken from the New American Bible.

<sup>18</sup> Pinnock et al., 153.

helpful advice about what major to choose in college (because He doesn't know what the economy will be like in four years) or who to marry (because someone who is a good person now may turn out to be a terrible person later). So Open Theism is certainly problematic. Since Aquinas clearly and repeatedly states that God knows all future contingent things, including free choices,<sup>19</sup> we can safely rule out the possibility of him being an Open Theist.

As we have seen, given the basic assumptions of Christianity, there are three main forms of libertarianism; now, given those same assumptions, we can also subdivide compatibilism. There are two kinds of compatibilism: theological compatibilism, which says that a choice which is causally determined by God can still be free, and naturalist compatibilism, which says that a choice which is causally determined by something other than God can still be free. Naturalist compatibilism is a fairly broad classification, as it includes any view which believes that there is at least one thing (actual or merely possible), other than God and the agent, which can causally determine a choice without preventing it from being free. Note that this is an unusual understanding of 'natural,' as I am including *everything* other than God, even angels and demons. The two forms of compatibilism are not exclusive: one can consistently hold either one individually or both together. There is a related distinction among causes used by Aquinas and other medieval philosophers: primary and secondary causation. Every effect has two different kinds of causes: it is caused by God (primary causation), and it has natural causes as well (secondary causation). So, for example, if I hold a lit match up to a piece of cotton, the match is one of the

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<sup>19</sup> ST I, q.14, a.13; QDM, q.16, a.7

secondary causes of the cotton burning, and God, by keeping the match, the cotton, the flame, and the relevant natural laws in existence, is the primary cause. These are two different orders of causation; an effect is not partially caused by its primary cause and partially by its secondary cause, but rather it is wholly caused by each of them. So theological compatibilism is the claim that a choice determined by its primary cause can be free, and naturalist compatibilism is the claim that a choice determined by its secondary causes (other than the agent) can be free. In this paper, ‘compatibilism’ means ‘theological compatibilism’ unless otherwise specified.

We should also note that Aquinas differs from most modern writers in his use of the term ‘cause’. Aristotle distinguished four kinds of causes:

“A cause” means (1) that from which, as a constituent, something is generated; for example, the bronze is a cause of the statue, and the silver of the cup, and the genera of these [are also causes].

(2) Also, the form or the pattern, this being the formula of the essence, and also the genera of this; for example, in the case of the octave, the ratio 2:1, and in general, a number and the parts in the formula.

(3) Also, that from which a change or a coming to rest first begins; for example, the adviser is a cause, and the father is a cause of the baby, and in general, that which acts is a cause of that which is acted upon, and that which brings about the change is a cause of that which is being changed.

(4) Also, the end, and this is the final cause [that for the sake of which]; for example, walking is for the sake of health. Why does he walk? We answer, “In order to be healthy”; and having spoken thus, we think that we have given the cause. And those which, after that which started the motion, lie between the beginning and the end, such as reducing weight or purging or drugs or instruments in the case of health, all of them are for the sake of the end; and they differ in this, that some of them are instruments while others are operations.

Causes, then, are spoken of in about so many senses; and since they are spoken of in many senses, there may be many non-accidental causes of

the same thing (for example, in the case of a statue, both the art of sculpture and the bronze are causes of it, not in virtue of something else, but qua a statue, though not in the same manner, but the bronze as matter and the art as the source of motion); and there may be causes of each other (for example, exercise is a cause of good physical condition, and good physical condition is a cause of exercise, although not in the same manner, but good physical condition as an end, and exercise as a moving principle); and again, the same thing may be a cause of contraries, for that which when present causes something, when absent is sometimes said to be the cause of the contrary (for example, we say that the absence of the pilot was the cause of the capsizing, while his presence was the cause of safety, and both presence and privation are moving causes [sic]).<sup>20</sup>

Aquinas accepted Aristotle's division of causation into material, formal, efficient, and final causes.<sup>21</sup> What Aquinas calls the 'efficient cause' is what most resembles our modern understanding of 'cause', so in this paper 'cause' means 'efficient cause' unless otherwise specified. In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Aquinas goes into more detail on what he means by an efficient cause:

In a third sense cause means that from which the first beginning of change or of rest comes, i.e., a moving or efficient cause. He says "of change or of rest," because motion and rest which are natural are traced back to the same cause, and the same is true of motion and of rest which are a result of force. For that cause by which something is moved to a place is the same as that by which it is made to rest there. "An adviser" is an example of this kind of cause, for it is as a result of an adviser that motion begins in the one who acts upon his advice for the sake of safeguarding something. And in a similar way "a father is the cause of a child." In these two examples Aristotle touches upon the two principles of motion from which all things come to be, namely, purpose in the case of an adviser, and nature in the case of a father. And in general every maker is a cause of the thing made and every changer a cause of the thing changed.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Δ 1013a24-1013b16

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, C763-772

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, C765



According to Aquinas, something can be the cause of something else in two ways: either by purpose or by nature. To cause something by purpose involves choosing that thing as a means to a certain end, just as an adviser causes something by advising that it is the best means to the advisee's desired end. To cause something by nature involves passing on one's nature to that thing, just as a father is the cause of a child by passing on his nature to that child. We can draw an important distinction between causing and permitting: for any being X and any event/state of affairs Y, where X is not the cause of Y by nature, X is the cause of Y only if X intended to bring about Y *for its own sake*;<sup>23</sup> if X could have brought about not-Y but instead allowed Y, not for its own sake but entirely *for the sake of something else*, then X permitted but did not cause Y.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps this differs from our modern understanding of causation, but for Aquinas, who considered one's intention in acting to be very important,<sup>25</sup> it seemed reasonable to distinguish causing and permitting in this way.

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<sup>23</sup> When I speak of bringing about Y 'for its own sake,' I do not mean to imply that Y is an end in itself rather than a means to an end, since every choice is about the means rather than the end. Call this end Z. Bringing about Y for its own sake means bringing about Y *because Y is a means to Z*, while allowing Y only for the sake of something else means allowing Y only *because Y follows from some W where W is a means to Z*.

<sup>24</sup> Given this distinction between causing and permitting, Aquinas must, and in fact does, say that God causes (perhaps both by purpose and by nature; it is unclear exactly what Aquinas would say about this), rather than merely permits, the existence of everything which is a being, which, as we will see in chapters three and five, includes all human choices, even acts of sin. But he is free to say that God permits, rather than causes, things which do not have being, namely evils, for the sake of some good; as we will see in chapter four, this is in fact what he claims.

<sup>25</sup> ST I-II, q.19, a.7

We should note that, according to Aquinas, words do not mean exactly the same thing when referring to God as they do when referring to creatures: “things are said of God and creatures analogically, and not in a purely equivocal nor in a purely univocal sense.”<sup>26</sup> The meaning of a term, such as ‘good’, when applied to God is very similar to the meaning of that term when applied to creatures; roughly speaking, the difference is that the term applied to God does not include any of the creaturely limitations that the term implies when applied to creatures.<sup>27</sup> And, as Brian Davies notes, the purpose of Aquinas’s doctrine of analogy is not to give us the ability to talk about God but rather to explain how we have already been able to talk about Him; this is clear from the fact that Aquinas does not mention analogy in the *Summa Theologica* until after explaining why we must speak of God in certain ways.<sup>28</sup> So we usually do not need to explicitly reference the doctrine of analogy when discussing God (Aquinas himself rarely mentions it), but we should always keep it in mind.

We should note one final thing about analyzing Aquinas: unlike many philosophers, his thought is fairly consistent over time. According to Brian Davies,

though there are significant developments in [Aquinas’s] thinking, there is also enormous continuity. His major conclusions can all be found in his first important work, the *Commentary on the Sentences*. He shifted in his emphases, but he did not change his mind radically. One cannot seriously speak of an ‘Early Aquinas’ and a ‘Later Aquinas’. He was a man of many thoughts, but he always had a single vision, albeit

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<sup>26</sup> ST I, q.13, a.5

<sup>27</sup> Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 73.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

one presented with varied nuances and with different degrees of attention to detail.<sup>29</sup>

Most scholars agree on this point. In many subjects, Aquinas goes into more detail in one work than in another, or points out different things in different works, but he very rarely contradicts his earlier views. And, when he discusses the same topic in multiple works, there is usually substantial overlap between the different works. So it is safe to take anything he says in any of his works as his considered view, except in the very rare cases when he contradicts himself.

In chapter two of this paper I will give a general outline of Aquinas's view of free will. Then in the next six chapters I will examine how this view fits with his views on the subjects of divine sovereignty, the problem of evil, sin, grace, foreknowledge, and predestination. Finally, in chapter nine I will examine his view of God's freedom. I will argue that, with respect to creaturely freedom, Aquinas is a theological compatibilist but not a naturalist compatibilist; with respect to God's freedom, he claims that God had truly open options about whether and what to create.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

## Chapter 2

### OUTLINE OF AQUINAS'S VIEW

On Aquinas's view, free will is essentially the ability to make choices: "The proper act of free-will is choice: for we say that we have a free-will because we can take one thing while refusing another; and this is to choose."<sup>30</sup> And again he says: "Free choice is said in relation to the things that one wills, not of necessity, but of his own accord."<sup>31</sup> However, he insists that we cannot choose our last end, but that all necessarily desire happiness.<sup>32</sup> So we are not free in our desire of happiness, but our freedom consists in choosing the means to this end.<sup>33</sup> On Aquinas's view, there are two essential characteristics which make a choice free: a free choice cannot be necessitated by any natural causes, and its source must be within the agent.

Aquinas insists that our actions cannot be free if they are necessitated: "Since choice is the taking of one thing in preference to another it must of necessity be in respect of several things that can be chosen. Consequently in those things which are altogether determinate to one there is no place for choice."<sup>34</sup> And, as a result of this

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<sup>30</sup> ST I, q.83, a.3

<sup>31</sup> SCG I, ch. 88.2

<sup>32</sup> ST I, q.82, a.1

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., ad 3; Ibid., q.83, a.3; ST I-II, q.13, a.3

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., a.2

claim, he claims that non-human animals are not able to choose.<sup>35</sup> His explanation of the relevant differences between humans and other animals can show exactly what kind of determination or necessity he is referring to. As Scott MacDonald points out, he must be referring to an action being necessitated in particular circumstances rather than in general.<sup>36</sup> It is clear that an action that is necessitated in general (for example, if a sheep necessarily becomes fearful upon seeing a wolf regardless of any other circumstances<sup>37</sup>) cannot be free. But Aquinas argues that the judgment of non-human animals is, in each particular case, determined to a single action, even if that action is not necessitated in general, and that as a result non-human animals are not free.<sup>38</sup> So, on Aquinas's view, an action can only be free if, given the particular circumstances, more than one choice is possible.

But this does not imply that God causing a choice prevents the choice from being free. Aquinas offers several arguments in support of the claim that God's causation does not make everything He causes necessary. First, he argues that "the efficacy of the divine will requires not only that something be that God wills to be, but also that it be as He wills it to be,"<sup>39</sup> and "It falls under the order of divine providence not only that this effect is to be, but also that this effect is to be contingently, while

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.; QDV, q.24, a.2

<sup>36</sup> Scott MacDonald, "Aquinas's Libertarian Account of Free Choice," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 52, no. 204 (June 1998): 324-326.

<sup>37</sup> QDV, q.24, a.2

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., ad 3

<sup>39</sup> SCG I, ch. 85.2

another is to be necessarily."<sup>40</sup> In other words, he is appealing to the transcendence of God: God, as the Creator, transcends any differences within His creatures, even between contingent and necessary beings,<sup>41</sup> and therefore He can cause “not only the effects that he wills, but the modality of those effects.”<sup>42</sup>

Aquinas also argues that “it does not follow, if God wills something, that it will of necessity take place. But this conditional is true and necessary: *If God wills something, it will be*. But the consequent does not have to be necessary.”<sup>43</sup> And as W. Matthews Grant explains,

God’s effects can flow necessarily from God’s willing them without themselves being necessary... $\Box(y)$  does not follow from  $\Box(x \supset y)$  unless we assume  $\Box(x)$ . Hence, although our acts follow necessarily on the supposition that God wills them, those acts are not themselves necessary so long as the divine will does not will them of necessity.<sup>44</sup>

As long as God does not will some act of necessity, the fact that his willing the act causes the act to occur does not necessitate the act. And as I will show in chapter nine, Aquinas believes that there is nothing outside of God which God wills of necessity, so God’s willing does not necessitate any actions in the created world. But Aquinas also makes it clear that secondary causes can necessitate an action: “even though the

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<sup>40</sup> SCG III, ch. 94.11

<sup>41</sup> On Aquinas’s understanding, a necessary being is simply a being which does not have potentiality to non-being; a creature can only be a necessary being if God causes it to be a necessary being. See SCG II, ch. 30

<sup>42</sup> W. Matthews Grant, “Aquinas and the Free Will Defense” (PhD Diss., Fordham University, 2002), 233.

<sup>43</sup> SCG I, ch. 85.6

<sup>44</sup> Grant, “Aquinas and the Free Will Defense,” 234.

remote cause [God] is necessary, *provided the proximate cause is contingent*, the effect is contingent” (emphasis added).<sup>45</sup> So an action is free only if there are no natural causes which necessitate it (so Aquinas is not a naturalist compatibilist); God’s causation does not prevent it from being free.

Another essential condition of a free act, on Aquinas’s view, is that its source is in the agent: he says “it is essential to the voluntary act that its principle be within the agent,”<sup>46</sup> and again, “we call voluntary something whose source rests in the very one acting.”<sup>47</sup> According to Aquinas, free acts meet this condition because their source is the agent’s own intellect and will.<sup>48</sup> On his view, freedom is not something which is dependent on the will alone; rather, it depends on the intellect and will together. In fact, he claims that a being has free will if and only if it has an intellect.<sup>49</sup> The object of the will is good in general; the will, in its desire for this object, moves the intellect to the exercise of its act,<sup>50</sup> and the intellect moves the will by presenting a particular good to it;<sup>51</sup> the will also moves itself, since by desiring the end it moves itself to will the means.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> SCG I, ch.85.4

<sup>46</sup> ST I-II, q.6, a.2; ‘voluntary’ here means ‘free’

<sup>47</sup> QDM, q.3, a.11, ad 3

<sup>48</sup> Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 286.

<sup>49</sup> ST I, q.59, a.3

<sup>50</sup> ST I-II, q.9, a.1, ad 3

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, a.1

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, a.3

There has been much debate about exactly how Aquinas understands the relationship between intellect and will, in particular whether he believes that the judgment of reason determines the will's action;<sup>53</sup> attempting to resolve this debate is beyond the scope of this paper. There are three possible understandings of this relationship which are consistent with Aquinas's claim that a free choice cannot be necessitated by natural causes: either the intellect operates indeterministically in its judgment, or the will operates indeterministically in choosing whether to act on the intellect's judgment, or both operate indeterministically.<sup>54</sup> It seems clear that, on Aquinas's view, the act of the intellect is not determined by any finite good:

in all particular goods, the reason can consider an aspect of some good, and the lack of some good, which has the aspect of evil: and in this respect, it can apprehend any single one of such goods as to be chosen or to be avoided. The perfect good alone, which is Happiness, cannot be apprehended by the reason as an evil, or as lacking in any way.<sup>55</sup>

Since the intellect's action is not determinate (except when the object is happiness itself, which we have already seen is not something which can be freely chosen), it does not matter much whether the will's action is determined by the intellect or not, since either way the operation of the intellect and will together is not determined, and,

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<sup>53</sup> See, for example, P. S. Eardley, "Thomas Aquinas and Giles of Rome on the Will," *The Review of Metaphysics* 56, no. 4 (June 2003): 835-862; Daniel Westberg, "Did Aquinas Change His Mind about the Will?" *The Thomist* 58, no. 1 (January 1994): 41-60; Thomas Williams, "Human Freedom and Agency," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 199-208; David M. Gallagher, "Free Choice and Free Judgment in Thomas Aquinas," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 76, no. 3 (1994): 247-277.

<sup>54</sup> Williams, 204.

<sup>55</sup> ST I-II, q.13, a.6



as we stated earlier, freedom depends not on the will alone but on the intellect and will together. But again, this does not exclude God's causation, for the reasons mentioned above. And this means that the intellect and will together are the source of the agent's action (in terms of secondary causes), which means any agent which possesses both intellect and will has free will.

We must note one more feature of Aquinas's account: it does not entail that the ability to choose between good and evil is a necessary condition of freedom. He explicitly states that God,<sup>56</sup> Christ,<sup>57</sup> and the beatified angels<sup>58</sup> are free although they cannot sin; he does not explicitly say so about humans in heaven, but it is clearly implied.<sup>59</sup> We will discuss why God (and therefore Christ) cannot sin later; now we will focus on why humans (and angels)<sup>60</sup> are able to sin before they experience beatitude but not while they are experiencing it, and how they can be free in their beatitude. Aquinas's explanation is worth quoting at length:

[T]he intellect is not compelled to assent to conclusions if they be not necessarily linked to naturally known first principles, as is the case with contingent and probable things. Likewise, neither does the intellect necessarily assent to necessary things necessarily linked to first principles before it knows there is such a necessary connection. Therefore, regarding the will, the will will not be necessarily moved to

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<sup>56</sup> ST I, q.19, a.10, ad 2

<sup>57</sup> ST III, q.18, a.4, ad 3

<sup>58</sup> ST I, q.62, a.8, ad 3

<sup>59</sup> QDM, q.3, a.3

<sup>60</sup> Aquinas's view of angelic freedom does not differ significantly from his view of human freedom, except that angels are unable to repent after having sinned, so I will focus on his view of human freedom.

anything that does not even seem to have a necessary connection with happiness, which is naturally willed... And the perfect good, that is, God, indeed has a necessary connection with the happiness of human beings...but the necessity of this connection is not fully evident to human beings in this life, since they do not in this life behold the essence of God. And so the human will in this life also does not necessarily adhere to God, but the will of those who, beholding the essence of God, evidently know that he himself is the essence of goodness and the happiness of human beings cannot not adhere to God, just as our will in this life cannot not will happiness.<sup>61</sup>

In other words, humans cannot be truly happy without God, so anyone who clearly sees the connection between God and happiness will necessarily adhere to God just as they will necessarily will happiness. In this life we cannot see this connection clearly, so it is possible for us to sin and turn away from God, but those who see the essence of God (or, equivalently, those who experience beatitude) in heaven can see the connection clearly and therefore cannot sin. But although those in heaven cannot choose between good and evil, they must be able to choose between different goods; otherwise they would not be free.<sup>62</sup> And their inability to choose evil is, on Aquinas's view, not a restriction of freedom but a perfection of it:

it belongs to the perfection of its liberty for the free-will to be able to choose between opposite things, keeping the order of the end in view; but it comes of the defect of liberty for it to choose anything by turning away from the order of the end; and this is to sin. Hence there is greater liberty of will in the [beatified] angels, who cannot sin, than there is in ourselves, who can sin.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> QDM, q.3, a.3

<sup>62</sup> ST III, q.18, a.4, ad 3

<sup>63</sup> ST I, q.62, a.8, ad 3

Since free will is meant to choose the means to the end of happiness, one who is confirmed in good, and therefore guaranteed to achieve this end by whichever means they choose, is more free than one who is able to choose a means which will not lead to this end (although they believe that it will).

Free will, for Aquinas, is nothing more than the ability to make choices. And choice requires open options, such that no natural causes necessitate a particular outcome; God's causation does not eliminate the relevant kind of open options. Choice also requires that its source be in the agent's own intellect and will, and again God's causation does not prevent this. The inability to choose evil does not preclude freedom, but rather is a perfection of it, so long as the agent is able to choose between different goods.

### Chapter 3

#### FREE WILL AND DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

Aquinas's account of divine sovereignty is one of the clearest indications of his view on free will. He believes in the absolute sovereignty of God: on his view, God is the universal cause, and therefore nothing can happen outside of the order of His providence<sup>64</sup> and nothing can resist His government.<sup>65</sup> Aquinas repeatedly insists that God is the first cause of everything, including the movement of the will.<sup>66</sup> But he also insists that this does not prevent our actions from being free.<sup>67</sup> His explanation of how these statements are compatible shows that he is clearly committed to a compatibilist account of freedom (one which claims that God's causing our choices is compatible with their being free): he argues that God causes our actions, but this does not prevent them from being free because God's causation is of a different order than the causation of creatures and thus neither order of cause can interfere with the other.

An important aspect of Aquinas's explanation is that God is the only exterior principle that can move the will.<sup>68</sup> He again appeals to the distinction between primary

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<sup>64</sup> ST I, q.103, a.7

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., a.8

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., q.83, a.1, ad 3; Ibid., q.105, a.4; ST I-II, q.6, a.1, ad 3

<sup>67</sup> ST I, q.83, a.1, ad 3; ST I-II, q.6, a.1, ad 3

<sup>68</sup> ST I, q.111, a.2; QDV, q.22, a.9; ST I-II, q.9, a.6

and secondary causes, arguing that God's causation does not interfere with ours: "the same effect is not attributed to a natural cause and to divine power in such a way that it is partly done by God, and partly by the natural agent; rather, it is wholly done by both, according to a different way."<sup>69</sup> As Harm Goris explains, "Because God's will is the cause of being as such, His causation does not compete with the causation of creatures, but rather supports and grounds it."<sup>70</sup> Aquinas clearly believes that an action which is caused by anyone or anything other than God and the agent cannot be voluntary, and therefore cannot be free, but God can cause our actions in a way which no other exterior principle can: God moves us by causing our nature and our will, while others can only move us by acting against our nature or will.<sup>71</sup> We should note that others can also, in some sense, move us by persuading us toward a certain course of action; for example, the devil, in the form of a serpent, persuaded Adam and Eve to eat the fruit which they would not otherwise have eaten.<sup>72</sup> But this type of movement is not efficacious, since we can still freely choose not to follow that course of action; for example, even after the devil's attempted persuasion, Adam and Eve could have freely chosen not to eat the fruit. God's movement of the will, on the other hand, is efficacious: it would be contradictory to claim that God moved Adam's will to eat the fruit but that Adam nevertheless did not eat the fruit.

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<sup>69</sup> SCG III, ch. 70.8

<sup>70</sup> Harm J.M.J. Goris, *Free Creatures of an Eternal God: Thomas Aquinas on God's infallible foreknowledge and irresistible will* (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 1996), 299.

<sup>71</sup> ST I-II, q.9, a.6

<sup>72</sup> QDM, q.3, a.4

Aquinas's explanation of how God causes the movement of the will is worth quoting at length:

God can change the will with necessity but nevertheless cannot force it. For however much the will is moved toward something, it is not said to be forced to it. The reason for this is that to will something is to be inclined to it. But force or violence is contrary to the inclination of the thing forced. When God moves the will, then, He causes an inclination to succeed a previous inclination so that the first disappears and the second remains. Accordingly, that to which He induces the will is not contrary to an inclination still extant but merely to one that was previously there. This is not, then, violence or force.

The case is parallel to that of a stone, in which by reason of its heaviness there is an inclination downward. While this inclination remains, if the stone is thrown upward, violence is done it. But if God were to subtract from the stone the inclination of its heaviness and give it an inclination of lightness, then it would not be violent for the stone to be borne upward. Thus a change of motion can be had without violence.

It is in this way that God's changing of the will without forcing it is to be understood. God can change the will because He works within it just as He works in nature. Now, just as every natural action is from God, so too every action of the will, in so far as it is an action, not only is from the will as its immediate agent but also is from God as its first agent, who influences it more forcefully. Then, just as the will can change its act to something else...so too and much more can God.<sup>73</sup>

In other words, God can change a stone from being naturally inclined to move downward to being naturally inclined to move upward, and as a result the stone moves upward, but this movement is natural and not a result of violence or coercion.<sup>74</sup> In like manner, if I now have an inclination toward some action A, God can remove that

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<sup>73</sup> QDV, q.22, a.8

<sup>74</sup> Stump, 392.

inclination and replace it with an inclination toward some other action B, so that I will to do B. But my choice to do B is still free, since I am acting in accordance with my will and not against it. And no other agent can change my inclinations. If the devil, for example, wants me to do B while I still have the inclination toward A, he cannot remove my inclination toward A. He might be able to force me to do B (for example, by demonic possession), but doing so would mean my doing B was not voluntary as it was in opposition to my inclination toward A; on the other hand, he could attempt to use some method to persuade me to freely choose B, but that would not move me efficaciously, since there is no contradiction in him using this method and me nevertheless choosing A. Aquinas never says anything that might indicate that we are the cause of God's choice to give us one inclination rather than another, so this account of God's changing our will seems clearly compatibilist.

Let us compare Aquinas's account to the strongest account of divine providence available to the libertarian, namely that of Molinism. Unlike the other forms of libertarianism, Molinism claims that God knows not only the free choices creatures actually make but also the choices they would freely make in every possible situation; thus, God knows all the "feasible" worlds (the worlds which are possible given the free choices of creatures)<sup>75</sup> and can choose to create any one of these feasible worlds. It seems clear that Aquinas's account of providence is stronger even than that of the Molinist: the Molinist is committed to saying that not all possible worlds are feasible, and thus some possible worlds cannot be created by God, but there

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<sup>75</sup> Flint, 51.

seems to be no such restriction on Aquinas's view.<sup>76</sup> The reason for this is simple: the Molinist insists that God is only the explanation of my choice of B over A insofar as He chose to put me in a situation in which He knew I would choose B; the fact that I would choose B when placed in that situation is causally prior to God's choice to put me there. Aquinas, on the other hand, says that my choice of B can be explained by God's choice to remove my inclination toward A and give me an inclination toward B; he does not appeal to my choice in order to explain God's choice. And since God's choice is not restricted by my choice (or by any counterfactual of creaturely freedom related to my choice), God possesses absolute sovereignty on Aquinas's view, but not on the Molinist view or any other libertarian view.

We should note one objection the Molinist (or any other libertarian) might make. It seems that Aquinas is actually offering a weaker account of divine providence, since on any of the libertarian views God is able (at least in terms of His power, even if His goodness restricts Him) to actualize any world He can actualize on Aquinas's view, namely those which lack creatures with libertarian freedom, plus some but not all of the other possible worlds which contain creatures having libertarian freedom. But Aquinas would deny a central assumption of this argument, namely that there are any possible worlds containing creatures with libertarian

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<sup>76</sup> As we will see in chapter nine, Aquinas does mention some restrictions on God's creation due to His goodness; for example, God cannot create a man without an intellect (QDV, q.6, a.2). But it is not clear that this is actually saying that there are possible worlds God can't create—it seems that having an intellect is a necessary condition of being human, so a man without an intellect is an impossible being and thus not present in any possible world. But if it turns out that there are some possible worlds which God can't create due to His goodness, these worlds are no more feasible for the Molinist than they are for Aquinas (since both agree on God's goodness), and so they are not relevant to this discussion.



freedom. On his understanding of omnipotence, God can create any being whose existence does not imply a contradiction in terms; anything which does imply a contradiction in terms is not a possible being.<sup>77</sup> It would be very strange for Aquinas to present a compatibilist view if he believed libertarianism was logically possible, so it is safe to say that on his view ‘a creature with libertarian freedom’ is a contradiction in terms.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, on Aquinas’s view, no possible creature has libertarian freedom, no possible world contains such a creature, and God has absolute sovereignty to actualize any possible world.

Several things Aquinas says about divine sovereignty may seem, at first glance, to conflict with this compatibilist interpretation.<sup>79</sup> He says that the will contributes something when it is moved by God,<sup>80</sup> voluntary agents have the power to withdraw from what God has ordained,<sup>81</sup> and God does not move the will of necessity.<sup>82</sup> He also says:

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<sup>77</sup> ST I, q.25, a.3

<sup>78</sup> I think Aquinas would allow that Christ has the kind of freedom libertarians require, but since He has that freedom in virtue of His divine nature and not His human nature, this is not what we are here concerned with; what matters is that no creature who is not also divine can have libertarian freedom.

<sup>79</sup> The apparent contradictions here are not with compatibilism itself but rather with our reason for ascribing a compatibilist view to Aquinas, namely his claim that creaturely free actions are determined. Since Aquinas never speaks of compatibilism directly, our only evidence for a compatibilist interpretation is his claim that creaturely actions are both determined and free; therefore, if anything he says contradicts determinism, it also eliminates any reason we have for calling him a compatibilist.

<sup>80</sup> QDM, q.6, a.1, ad 4

<sup>81</sup> ST I, q.17, a.1

<sup>82</sup> ST I-II, q.10, a.4

God moves man's will, as the Universal Mover, to the universal object of the will, which is good. And without this universal motion, man cannot will anything. But man determines himself by his reason to will this or that, which is true or apparent good.<sup>83</sup>

This may seem to be saying that God moves the will to the universal good but not to any particular good. However, none of these statements actually conflict with his compatibilist view. The will does contribute something by moving itself, as a secondary cause of its movement, but this does not in any way conflict with God's primary causation. When Aquinas says we can withdraw from what God has ordained, he merely means that we can depart from the order of goodness God has created for men by choosing an apparent good rather than a true good; we will discuss this more in chapter five. God moving the will does not make the will's movement necessary, as shown in chapter two. And when Aquinas says God moves man's will to the universal object, that doesn't imply that God never moves a particular man's will to a particular object;<sup>84</sup> man certainly determines his own will as a secondary cause, but again, this does not interfere with God's primary causation.

W. Matthews Grant would agree with most of what I have said so far this chapter, but argues that Aquinas should nevertheless be considered a libertarian, since his view lacks what Grant takes to be an essential condition of determinism. Grant argues that

determinism presupposes an explanatory scheme whereby for every action, we can explain why that action took place instead of another in terms of prior conditions. Where there is a difference in effect, there

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., q.9, a.6, ad 3

<sup>84</sup> Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, trans. Patrick Cummins (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1950), 108-109.

must be a difference in cause...[T]he doctrine of divine simplicity does not accommodate such logic, for God is the same regardless of his effects.<sup>85</sup>

Aquinas certainly agrees that God is the same regardless of His effects, since he says that “relations which refer to God’s effects cannot possibly exist in Him really”<sup>86</sup> and that “[these relations] are attributed to Him solely in accordance with our manner of understanding, from the fact that other things are referred to Him.”<sup>87</sup> But from this it follows only that God Himself is not the explanation for why one action took place rather than another; it does not follow that there is no causally prior condition which can explain it. Aquinas says that “[God’s] knowledge must be the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it.”<sup>88</sup> Although he does say that God’s intellect<sup>89</sup> and will<sup>90</sup> are identical with His essence, this quote shouldn’t be taken to mean that God Himself is the cause of things, but rather that the fact that God knows something and the fact that He wills it are the cause of that thing. In other words, if I choose to do action A instead of action B, the causally prior conditions which explain why I choose A instead of B are God’s knowledge that I choose A and His free choice

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<sup>85</sup> Grant, “Aquinas and the Free Will Defense,” 245. I take it that by ‘prior conditions’ he means causally prior; if he means temporally prior then his argument is irrelevant as it does not even attempt to prove that Aquinas is a libertarian by the definition I have given.

<sup>86</sup> SCG II, ch. 12.1

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., ch. 13.4

<sup>88</sup> ST I, q.14, a.8

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., a.4

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., q.19, a.1, ad 3

to cause me to choose A. And since there are these prior conditions to explain why one action took place rather than another, we still have determinism; there is no contradiction between Aquinas's account of divine simplicity and a compatibilist understanding of freedom.

Aquinas's understanding of divine sovereignty entails a compatibilist view of freedom, and despite a few passages which at first glance seem to indicate otherwise, he consistently holds this view. He believes in absolute divine sovereignty, such that God is the cause of everything including creaturely choices; no libertarian can accept such a strong view of sovereignty. Since Aquinas believes our choices are caused by God's choices, he is committed to determinism. But this does not prevent us from being free; God causes our choices as a primary cause, but we cause our choices as a secondary cause. Our choices are free because there is no secondary cause outside of us which determines them; the fact that there is a primary cause that determines them does not prevent them from being free, since it is in a different order of causation. So Aquinas is a theological compatibilist, but he is not a naturalist compatibilist.

## Chapter 4

### THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

The problem of evil, simply put, is the question “If God exists, whence comes evil?”<sup>91</sup> The argument is that a perfectly good God would want to eliminate all evil, and an omnipotent God would be able to do so, so the fact that there is evil in the world either entails or makes more likely the nonexistence of God. It can be understood as two separate problems, since there are two separate kinds of evil: moral evil (which Aquinas calls fault),<sup>92</sup> which is the evil of improper choices of free creatures, and natural evil (which Aquinas calls pain),<sup>93</sup> which is any evil other than an improper free choice.<sup>94</sup> Since we are focusing on Aquinas’s view of free will, it is only the problem of moral evil which concerns us.<sup>95</sup> Several solutions have been offered to

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<sup>91</sup> SCG III, ch. 71.10

<sup>92</sup> ST I, q.48, a.5

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Some define moral evil to include not only the evil of a free act but also any evil which results from it. But Aquinas’s description of fault suggests that he is referring to only the evil of the free act itself, while any evil which results from it would count as pain; I will follow Aquinas’s distinctions. So, for example, if I pick up a rock and throw it at you, the evil of my sinful choice is moral evil, while the evil of you getting hit by a rock is natural evil even though it results from my free choice.

<sup>95</sup> As far as I know, Aquinas has nothing to say about natural evil except for what he says about evil in general. He is focused primarily on moral evil: in his book *On Evil*, moral evil is the subject of all but the first question. But, as we shall see, his solution to the problem of natural evil is identical to his solution to the problem of moral evil.

this problem; perhaps the best known is the Free Will Defense, which argues that moral evil results from creatures with libertarian freedom acting contrary to how God wants them to act. Indeed, if Aquinas were a libertarian, we would expect him to use some form of this argument. But the Free Will Defense is notably absent from Aquinas's writings; instead he offers two solutions to the problem of evil which suggest a compatibilist view of freedom.

Before we look at Aquinas's view, let us look more closely at the free will defense. W. Matthews Grant identifies two forms of it: the Molinist Free Will Defense, and what he calls the Divine Risk Free Will Defense (which he identifies with Open Theism, but essentially the same argument is available to the Anselmian). According to the Molinist Free Will Defense, God knew, through His middle knowledge, that there was no feasible world in which free creatures always choose good, but since free will is such a great good He decided to make a world with free creatures despite the moral evil which would result.<sup>96</sup> According to the Divine Risk Free Will Defense, God does not have middle knowledge, so He chooses to create free creatures without knowing whether they will choose evil or not.<sup>97</sup> Both versions assume libertarianism: God is not responsible for moral evil precisely because He could not have created a world of free creatures who always choose good; on a compatibilist view, God could determine all free choices such that moral evil is never chosen, which contradicts one of the central premises of the Free Will Defense. And since the problem of evil is often one of the main motivations for a libertarian account

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<sup>96</sup> Grant, "Aquinas and the Free Will Defense," 18-29.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 73-77.

of freedom, we would expect Aquinas to use some form of the Free Will Defense if he were a libertarian. But as Brian Davies notes,

[T]he free-will defense plays no role in what Aquinas has to say about God and evil...Aquinas makes it clear that he rejects what it proposes...Aquinas's approach to God as Creator absolutely prohibits him from supposing that any real thing in the universe (whether a substance or an accident or an activity) is not caused to be by God. Yet a human free choice is an activity of a substance in the universe. So Aquinas concludes that it is caused to be (and not merely permitted) by God [cf. SCG III, ch. 67.4].<sup>98</sup>

As far as I know, no scholar attributes any kind of Free Will Defense to Aquinas. And as we noted in chapter three, Aquinas's view of divine sovereignty requires that God be the first cause of everything including creaturely free choices, so neither form of the Free Will Defense is available to him.

Aquinas offers two main arguments as to why God permits evil,<sup>99</sup> both arguments apply to both natural and moral evil. First, he argues that certain goods cannot come about without certain evils. So he says that

many goods are present in things which would not occur unless there were evils. For instance, there would not be the patience of the just if there were not the malice of their persecutors; there would not be a place for the justice of vindication if there were no offenses; and in the order of nature, there would not be the generation of one thing unless there were the corruption of another.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas on God and Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 72-73.

<sup>99</sup> On Aquinas's view, God does not and cannot cause evil. As we saw in chapter one, something can cause something else either by purpose or by nature. God cannot cause evil by purpose, since He is perfectly good, and He cannot cause evil by nature since His nature is being and evil has the nature of nonbeing.

<sup>100</sup> SCG III, ch. 71.6

And again: “There are certain goods which can be drawn only from certain evils; for example, the good of patience can be drawn only from the evil of persecution, and the good of penitence only from the evil of sin.”<sup>101</sup> He argues that God would not permit any evil unless He were able to bring good from it,<sup>102</sup> so although he does not explicitly say so, his view seems to be that, for any particular evil, there is some particular good which could not have existed without that evil. But Aquinas is not merely arguing that the fact that some good can be brought from some evil is sufficient reason for God to put a free creature in a position in which it might choose that evil; rather, he seems to be saying that the universe is better with these goods and the evils that necessarily accompany them than without them:

It is otherwise with one who has care of a particular thing, and one whose providence is universal, because a particular provider excludes all defects from what is subject to his care as far as he can; whereas, one who provides universally allows some little defect to remain, lest the good of the whole should be hindered. Hence, corruption and defects in natural things are said to be contrary to some particular nature; yet they are in keeping with the plan of universal nature; inasmuch as the defect in one thing yields to the good of another, or even to the universal good: for the corruption of one is the generation of another, and through this it is that a species is kept in existence. Since God, then, provides universally for all being, it belongs to His providence to permit certain defects in particular effects, that the perfect good of the universe may not be hindered, for if all evil were prevented, much good would be absent from the universe. A lion would cease to live, if there were no slaying of animals; and there would be no patience of martyrs if there were no tyrannical persecution.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> QDV, q.5, a.4, ad 5

<sup>102</sup> ST I, q.22, a.2, ad 2

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.



Aquinas seems to be saying that God permits certain evils (both natural and moral) because the universe is more perfect with them than without them, and not merely because free will is such a great good; a libertarian is highly unlikely to make such an argument, since, as noted above, the problem of evil is one of the main motivations for accepting a libertarian account.

Aquinas's second argument is that

the whole itself, which is the universe of creatures, is all the better and more perfect if some things in it can fail in goodness, and do sometimes fail, God not preventing this. This happens...because *it belongs to Providence not to destroy, but to save nature*, as Dionysius says...but it belongs to nature that what may fail should sometimes fail.<sup>104</sup>

In other words, given that a free creature not currently experiencing the beatific vision is capable of sinning, it is fitting for God sometimes to permit such a creature to sin. Perhaps an illustration will make this clearer. Can God create a fair coin which, as a matter of fact, never actually lands on tails, without it ceasing to be a fair coin? I believe Aquinas would say yes-after all, if you have enough coins and flip them few enough times each, some are bound to land heads every time. But can God make it the case that every fair coin always lands on heads? I think Aquinas might still say that He can, but he would certainly argue that it would not be fitting<sup>105</sup> for God to do so. It

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<sup>104</sup> ST I, q.48, a.2, ad 3

<sup>105</sup> In the *Summa Theologica*, especially the Third Part, Aquinas often asks whether something is 'fitting' for God to do. By 'fitting,' he seems to mean what is most conducive to God's goals (given certain other aspects of the world). It is clear that Aquinas believes God doesn't have to do what is fitting; for example, he says the Father or the Holy Spirit could have become incarnate rather than the Son even though it was not fitting for Him to do so (ST III, q.3, aa. 5 and 8). But we can at least say that the thing which is fitting for God to do is the thing we would expect Him to do and the one He is most likely to do.

belongs to the nature of a fair coin than it may land on tails when flipped, so God should permit them to sometimes land on tails. Now apply this to the issue of moral evil: can God create a free creature which never sins? Aquinas would say yes, and that He has in fact done so in the cases of the good angels<sup>106</sup> and the Blessed Virgin<sup>107</sup> (I am not including Christ here because He was never able to sin).<sup>108</sup> But can God make it the case that no free creature ever sins? Aquinas would say that it would not be fitting for Him to do so, since it belongs to the nature of a free creature not currently experiencing the beatific vision that it may sin, so God should permit them to sometimes sin.<sup>109</sup>

Perhaps one could argue that God should merely create free creatures in beatitude, since no one experiencing beatitude can sin. But according to Aquinas, this is impossible. He argues that no creature can reach beatitude by its own natural powers,<sup>110</sup> and as such this beatitude is the end of their nature rather than part of it and therefore “they ought not to have it immediately from the beginning.”<sup>111</sup> So God

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<sup>106</sup> ST I, q.62, aa. 5 and 8

<sup>107</sup> ST III, q.27, a.4

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., q.18, a.4, ad 3

<sup>109</sup> Aquinas would certainly admit that sinning goes against human nature (ST I-II, q.94, a.3, ad 2), while landing on tails is not in any way opposed to the nature of a fair coin. But this disanalogy is not enough to undermine Aquinas’s argument. Aquinas can simply admit that, in some sense, it is natural for us to go against our nature: although it is natural for us, as humans, not to sin, it is natural for us, as fallible creatures, to sometimes sin.

<sup>110</sup> ST I, q.14, a.4

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., q.62, a.1

would never create a creature in beatitude (excepting Christ, due to His human nature's union with the divine nature). Aquinas does admit that there are some people, such as infants, who have never had the use of their free will,<sup>112</sup> and that if such people die after Baptism they will end up in heaven,<sup>113</sup> where they will never be able to sin. So it is possible for there to be free creatures who are never capable of sin. But clearly, these are people who have fallen outside of the normal order: humans are not meant to die as infants. And I think Aquinas would agree that it would not be fitting for God to make this the norm. So, although it might be possible for God to create a world of free creatures who never sin, it is not fitting for Him to do so.

Some might object that, even if God generally should allow things to operate according to their nature, sin would be an exception, since it seems that God would have an obligation to prevent sin. And Aquinas does say something which may sound like God is obligated to prevent sin:

Man is, in two ways, a cause either of his own or of another's sin. First, directly, namely by inclining his or another's will to sin; secondly, indirectly, namely by not preventing someone from sinning...[I]t happens that God does not give some the assistance, whereby they may avoid sin, which assistance were He to give, they would not sin.<sup>114</sup>

This might seem to be saying that, if God fails to prevent someone from sinning, He is indirectly causing their sin and therefore, at least to some extent, He is blameworthy for their sin. But this is not actually the case. In the above quotation, Aquinas was not trying to give a complete definition of what it means to indirectly cause sin; on that

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<sup>112</sup> ST I-II, q.113, a.3, ad 1

<sup>113</sup> ST III, q.69, a.6

<sup>114</sup> ST I-II, q.79, a.1

definition I would currently be causing Hitler's sins because I am not preventing him from sinning, and Aquinas certainly would not make such a claim. He makes it clear that the above definition is incomplete in the sentence immediately following the above quotation:

But He does all this according to the order of His wisdom and justice, since He Himself is Wisdom and Justice: so that if someone sin it is not imputable to Him as though He were the cause of that sin; even as a pilot is not said to cause the wrecking of the ship, though not steering the ship, unless he cease to steer while able and bound to steer.<sup>115</sup>

So to the partial definition given above we must add the two conditions mentioned in Aquinas's example: one causes another's sin indirectly if and only if one fails to prevent the sin while able and bound to prevent it. God certainly fails to prevent certain sins, and He is certainly able to prevent them, but Aquinas would deny that He is bound to prevent them. And the reason for this is simple: on Aquinas's view, God is not a moral agent.

What does it mean to say that God is not a moral agent? Essentially, it means that God does not have obligations to follow a moral law.<sup>116</sup> Aquinas emphasizes God's transcendence: He is not just a bigger version of us, He is something radically different. God is the source of all being. And, as such, there cannot be a moral law independent of Him, since all that exists is God and what He creates. So if God has any obligations (where 'obligation' simply means something He ought to do), they

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Brian Davies, *The Reality of God and the Problem of Evil* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 85.

ultimately stem from His nature.<sup>117</sup> And it would be strange to call God morally good simply for following His nature. So in what sense can we call God good? According to Aquinas, “Goodness and being are really the same, and differ only in idea,”<sup>118</sup> and “a thing is good according to its desirableness.”<sup>119</sup> So, on his view, God is good because He is desirable and because He is perfectly actual.<sup>120</sup> Someone might also ask how God can be loving if He is not a moral agent. According to Aquinas, “to love anything is nothing else than to will good to that thing.”<sup>121</sup> So God is loving because He wills good to us, and His love, unlike our love, is not a response to goodness, but rather “the love of God infuses and creates goodness.”<sup>122</sup>

Although Aquinas does not argue extensively that God is not a moral agent, it is an important assumption in his writings. He states that “God is bound to nobody but Himself”<sup>123</sup> and “there can be nothing in the divine power which cannot also be in His

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<sup>117</sup> Perhaps one could argue that God is obligated to follow moral laws He has created—for example, the obligation to never again destroy the world with a flood. Clearly this is not an obligation which comes directly from His nature. But it still ultimately stems from His nature: it can’t be the case that He is obligated to keep this particular promise unless something about His nature makes Him obligated to keep His promises, since there can’t be any law independent of Him which obligates Him to keep His promises.

<sup>118</sup> ST I, q.5, a.1

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., q.6, a.1

<sup>120</sup> Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 87.

<sup>121</sup> ST I, q.20, a.2

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., q.25, a.5, ad 2

just will or in His wise intellect,”<sup>124</sup> but otherwise he has little to say about the subject. But what he doesn’t say is also important in this case. As Brian Davies points out, if Aquinas thought of God as a moral agent, “you would expect his various treatments of [pain and suffering] to home in at once on questions of the form ‘Is God morally justified in...?’ But he never raises any such question.”<sup>125</sup> Even when he asks whether divine providence should have excluded all evil from things, the issue of whether God is morally justified does not come up.<sup>126</sup> Aquinas views God as transcending morality, so if He has any obligations, they must stem from His nature. And His nature is Goodness,<sup>127</sup> so whatever He wills, He wills by reason of His goodness,<sup>128</sup> and so He cannot will any evil, although He can will to permit evil in order to draw some good from it.<sup>129</sup> And as we shall see in chapter nine, there is no particular good God must will except for His own goodness. So, on Aquinas’s view, God’s only obligations are to will His own goodness and not to will any evil for its own sake. Since no amount of evil in the world can diminish God’s goodness, and God only permits evils, including

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., ad 1

<sup>125</sup> Davies, *Problem of Evil*, 97.

<sup>126</sup> SCG III, ch. 71

<sup>127</sup> ST I, q.6, a.3

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., q.19, a.2, ad 3

<sup>129</sup> QDV, q.5, a.4, ad 10

sins, in order to bring good from them,<sup>130</sup> it cannot be the case that He is bound to prevent sin.<sup>131</sup>

As we noted above, Aquinas does not use any form of the Free Will Defense in responding to the problem of evil, which we would expect him to if he were a libertarian. Instead, he argues that sin is necessary for the perfection of the universe and that it would not be fitting for God to prevent all sin although He is able to do so. And in both of these arguments, he makes it clear that free will is not the good which makes permitting evil worthwhile. Rather, permitting evil is worthwhile because there are some goods which require certain evils, and the universe is better off overall with some of these goods and accompanying evils than without them; also, since God has created creatures who are capable of sin, it is fitting that He should allow them to sin, since to do otherwise would oppose their nature. So Aquinas's solution to the problem of evil is a strong indication that he is a compatibilist.

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<sup>130</sup> ST I, q.22, a.2, ad 2

<sup>131</sup> For a more thorough defense of the view that God is not a moral agent, see Davies, *Problem of Evil*, 84-111.

## Chapter 5

### FREE WILL AND SIN

In chapter four we focused on why God permits moral evil; in this chapter we will focus on the nature of sin. Aquinas admits that God causes the act of sin, but he repeatedly denies that God is in any way the cause of sin. This seeming contradiction can be resolved by examining his understanding of how sin can have a cause: in the way in which the defect of sin can have a cause, only the creature and not God can be understood to be the cause. Although Aquinas says very little about sin that would clearly indicate a compatibilist view of freedom, everything he says on the subject is consistent with compatibilism.

We should note that other medieval philosophers make their view on free will clear by looking at one particular sin, namely the first sin, the fall of the devil. Augustine clearly shows his compatibilist position when he says that some angels fell while others did not because they were given different amounts of grace: the ones that were given more grace stood firm, while the ones that were given less grace fell.<sup>132</sup> Anselm, on the other hand, shows his libertarian view when he says that there could be no cause of the devil's choice to do evil except his choice itself.<sup>133</sup> But Aquinas's brief discussion of the issue does not make his view of free will clear. He does not accept

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<sup>132</sup> Rogers, 50-51.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-97.



Augustine's view, since he says that "gifts of grace...were bestowed on the angels according to the degree of their natural gifts"<sup>134</sup> and that the devil was the highest of the angels<sup>135</sup> and therefore received the most grace. He admits that the lower angels were more prone to sin because they were given less grace, and that the higher angels had more motive for sin because their sin was pride and excellence is the motive for pride, but he concludes that "the angels' sin did not come of any proneness, but of free choice alone."<sup>136</sup> But this is not the same as Anselm's answer; he is saying that the devil's free choice was the cause of the sin, but not that the choice was itself uncaused. So the fall of the angels doesn't tell us anything conclusive about Aquinas's view of free will.<sup>137</sup>

It is a central thesis of Aquinas's theory of evil that evil is not a being. Instead, it is a privation, or the lack of some good which ought to be there.<sup>138</sup> And since evil is not a being, it cannot be caused in the same way as good, which has being, is caused. But in some sense evil does have a cause, and according to Aquinas it is an accidental cause:

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<sup>134</sup> ST I, q.62, a.6

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., q.63, a.7

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> The second best example of a sin would be the original sin of Adam and Eve. But Aquinas's writings on this topic are similarly unhelpful. He says that their first sin, like that of the angels, was pride (ST II-II, q.163, a.1), and that they were tempted by the devil but were able, by their free will, to resist that temptation (Ibid., q.165, a.1, ad 2), but this tells us nothing conclusive about his view on free will.

<sup>138</sup> QDM, q.1, a.1

It is caused by reason of the power or perfection of the agent when there necessarily follows on the form intended by the agent the privation of another form; as, for instance, when on the form of fire there follows the privation of the form of air or of water. Therefore, as the more perfect the fire is in strength, so much the more perfectly does it impress its own form, so also the more perfectly does it corrupt the contrary. Hence that evil and corruption befall air and water comes from the perfection of the fire: but this is accidental; because fire does not aim at the privation of the form of water, but at the bringing in of its own form, though by doing this it also accidentally causes the other.<sup>139</sup>

Evil results when some agent aims at a good which is necessarily connected to some privation; evil cannot be sought in itself. All evils have a creature as an accidental cause; in the case of moral evil, the creature is the only cause, while in the case of natural evil, God is also an accidental cause.<sup>140</sup> According to Aquinas, this is because moral evil results from a defect of action, which can only be caused by a defect in the agent, and God has no defects; natural evil, on the other hand, consists in the corruption of some things due to the actions of created things, and since God causes these actions He is the accidental cause of the evil which results.<sup>141</sup>

Aquinas insists that the act of sin, as it is a being and an act, must be caused by God, but he nevertheless insists that God is not the cause of sin because “He does not cause the act to have a defect.”<sup>142</sup> This may seem like Aquinas is contradicting himself; the claim that God causes everything, including creaturely free choices such as acts of sin, would appear to entail that God is the cause of sin (if sin has a cause at

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<sup>139</sup> ST I, q.49, a.1

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., a.2

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> ST I-II, q.79, a.2

all). But, although Aquinas himself does not present a detailed account of how his claims are compatible, his system does offer a solution which leaves the sinner, and not God, responsible for sin without requiring an appeal to libertarian freedom. As we noted above, God is the cause of natural evil because He causes the creaturely activities which cause the privation, so if the sinner did something to make the act defective, God would also be responsible for the sin.<sup>143</sup> So, if Aquinas is consistent, he must say that the sinner makes the act defective by failing to do something. And, in fact, he says that the defect is caused by the creature's failure to consider the relevant moral rule in making his choice:<sup>144</sup>

For in all things of which one ought to be the rule and measure of another, good results in what is regulated and measured from the fact that it is regulated and conformed to the rule and measure, while evil results from the fact that it is not being ruled or measured. Therefore, suppose there is a carpenter who ought to cut a piece of wood straight by using a ruler; if he does not cut straight, which is to make a bad cut, the bad cutting will be due to his failure to use the ruler or measuring bar. Likewise, pleasure and everything else in human affairs should be measured and regulated by the rule of reason and God's law. And so the nonuse of the rule of reason and God's law is presupposed in the will before the will made its disordered choice.

And there is no need to seek a cause of this nonuse of the aforementioned rule, since the very freedom of the will, by which it can act or not act, is enough to explain the non-use. And absolutely considered, not actually attending to such a rule is itself not evil, neither moral wrong nor punishment, since the soul is not held, nor is it able, always actually to attend to such a rule. But not attending to the rule first takes on the aspect of evil because the soul proceeds to make a moral choice without considering the rule. Just so, the carpenter errs

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<sup>143</sup> W. Matthews Grant, "Aquinas on How God Causes the Act of Sin Without Causing Sin Itself," *The Thomist* 73, no. 3 (July 2009): 455.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 462-469

because he proceeds to cut the piece of wood without using the measuring bar, not because he does not always use the bar. And likewise, the moral fault of the will consists in the fact that the will proceeds to choose without using the rule of reason or God's law, not simply in the fact that the will does not actually attend to the rule.<sup>145</sup>

According to Aquinas, sin results when a free creature makes a moral choice without taking the relevant moral rule into consideration. But, as the carpenter analogy should make clear, this failure to consider the moral rule does not mean that the agent is ignorant and therefore blameless; the agent knows the relevant rule but simply fails to use it. Since someone can only be said to cause a sin if they cause both the act and the defect in the act,<sup>146</sup> although God causes the act of sin, He does not cause the sin if He does not cause the defect. And since the defect is not in anything a creature does, but rather in what a creature fails to do, we do not have to say it is caused by God.

This solution might seem at first to imply that neither God nor the sinner can cause the defect in the sin. Aquinas does not discuss this issue, but as Grant points out, there is a solution which is consistent with Aquinas's system. In order for Aquinas to consistently say that the sinner causes the defect and God does not, there must be a sense in which it is possible to cause by not-doing, and in that sense it must be true that the creature causes the defect but God does not.<sup>147</sup> Clearly, there is some not-doing involved on both sides: the creature does not consider the relevant moral rule when making the choice, and God does not cause the creature to consider the rule. And, on a compatibilist view of freedom on which God determines all free choices,

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<sup>145</sup> QDM, q.1, a.3

<sup>146</sup> ST I-II, q.75, a.1; Grant, "How God Causes the Act of Sin," 456.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 477

“God’s causing guarantees the sinner’s considering, and...God’s not-causing guarantees the sinner’s not-considering.”<sup>148</sup> So Aquinas can’t merely say that God did what He could but it was not enough to prevent the sin. For Aquinas to be consistent, there must be some difference between the creature’s not-doing and God’s not-doing, such that the former is the kind of thing which can cause a defect in the creature’s action while the latter is not.

Grant offers an explanation of just such a difference. Let us look at his illustration of the principle:

Suppose I have an aquarium into which I drop fish food every morning before leaving for work. Every day, the fish food is gone upon my return. Today, however, I arrive home to find the food still floating about the water’s surface. The fish food’s still-floating calls for an explanation. What explanation should we give?

Consider the following possibilities:

- (1) The food is still floating because my goldfish didn’t eat it.
- (2) The food is still floating because the plants in my aquarium didn’t eat it.
- (3) The food is still floating because the water in my aquarium didn’t dissolve it.

All three of these explanations purport to explain the fish food’s still-floating in terms of the non-activity or non-operation of some substance. Furthermore, had any of these substances performed the activity in question, the fish food would no longer be floating. It would not be floating had my fish eaten it; but neither would it be floating had my plants eaten it, or had the water dissolved it. Yet, while the first of these explanations is perfectly reasonable—indeed, it is the most obvious explanation of the fish food’s still-floating—explanations (2) and (3) are absurd. The first explanation is reasonable because, given

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

what fish are, we expect them to eat fish food in normal circumstances. Thus, the fish food's still-floating can be explained by the fish's not having done what we would expect it to do. Explanations (2) and (3), by contrast, clearly do not explain the fish food's still-floating. Given what plants and water are, we have no reason to expect that in eight to ten hours they will eat or dissolve the fish food. These examples show that in some instances the non-operation of a substance is explanatory, but not in others.<sup>149</sup>

Note that this is not meant to be a perfect analogy; its aim is merely to "show that in some instances the non-operation of a substance is explanatory, but not in others."<sup>150</sup>

Aquinas gives a different example to illustrate the same principle:

Now one thing proceeds from another in two ways. First, directly; in which sense something proceeds from another inasmuch as this other acts; for instance, heating from heat. Secondly, indirectly; in which sense something proceeds from another through this other not acting; thus the sinking of a ship is set down to the helmsman, from his having ceased to steer. But we must take note that the cause of what follows from want of action is not always the agent as not acting; but only then when the agent can and ought to act. For if the helmsman were unable to steer the ship or if the ship's helm be not entrusted to him, the sinking of the ship would not be set down to him, although it might be due to his absence from the helm.<sup>151</sup>

And in this passage, unlike the above passage from Grant, Aquinas specifies exactly what conditions must occur for one's not-acting to be causal: one can only cause something by failing to act when they both can and ought to act.<sup>152</sup> And Aquinas

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 481-482.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> ST I-II, q.6, a.3

<sup>152</sup> Katherin Rogers offers two arguments against this view. According to her first argument, it seems that someone can consistently make the following two statements:

(1) I caused him to remain in ignorance because I didn't tell him the secret.

argues that the creature can and ought to consider the relevant moral rule when acting,<sup>153</sup> but it is not the case that God ought to make him consider it<sup>154</sup> (because God

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(2) I ought not to have told him the secret.

If these two statements can consistently be made, then that would disprove Aquinas's view, since it would present a case in which someone causes something by failing to act even though it is not the case that they ought to have acted. But Aquinas can simply deny the first statement: it is not the case that failing to tell someone a secret causes them to remain in ignorance (at least not in the sense of efficient causation, which is what we are here concerned with). According to Aristotle, the efficient cause is "that from which a change or a coming to rest first begins" (*Metaphysics* Δ 1013a24-1013b16); Aquinas certainly accepts this definition (*Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, C765). Remaining in ignorance is not an instance of either change or coming to rest, and so it does not have an efficient cause. And surely no one would say that failure to tell someone the secret could be the initial cause of their ignorance. So, in this case, the failure to act is not causal, and thus it does not present a problem for Aquinas's view.

Rogers' second argument is based on Aquinas's example of the helmsman: suppose that it was a good thing that this ship sank, and that the helmsman stayed away from the helm because he knew that he ought not to have steered the ship. According to Rogers, in this case the helmsman causes the sinking of the ship by failing to steer even though it is not the case that he ought to have steered.

But this argument can also be countered by examining the definition of efficient causation: the efficient cause is "that from which a change or coming to rest first begins" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Δ 1013a24-1013b16). Ordinarily, the helmsman has an obligation to steer his ship; if in this case he does not, but rather ought not to steer, something must have happened to override his obligation or to release him from it. Let's look at a more concrete example: suppose the helmsman is steering an important government ship, which is carrying the prototype of a secret weapon, when suddenly a fleet of enemy ships appears and surrounds the ship. The captain, knowing it would be disastrous if the weapon fell into enemy hands, orders the helmsman to let the ship sink, and then the helmsman ceases to steer, and the ship soon sinks. In this case, it seems plausible to claim that the change first begins with the captain's order, rather than with the helmsman's failure to steer. This means the helmsman's failure to steer is not the cause (in the sense of efficient causation) of the ship's sinking, so this is not a counterexample to Aquinas's view.

<sup>153</sup> QDM, q.1, a.3

is not a moral agent, as we saw in chapter four), so the creature, and not God, is the cause of the defect in the sin.

Some might think that Aquinas still can't say the creature is responsible, since although the creature certainly ought to consider the rule, it seems he is not able to do so because God's causing him to do so is a necessary condition of his so doing. But as Grant says:

since an agent is not free with respect to an act unless he has the power to perform that act...it follows that the sinner who fails to consider the rule had the requisite power to consider it, even though his considering it has as a necessary condition God's causing the act of consideration.<sup>155</sup>

If compatibilism is coherent at all, then any creature making a free choice is able to choose either option, in the relevant sense of 'able', and so the free creature certainly can consider the moral rule when making its choice; if it could not, the act would not be sinful.

So far we have shown only that Aquinas's view of sin is consistent with a compatibilist view of freedom. And in fact, other than his claim that God causes the act of sin, nothing he says on the issue provides any evidence of a compatibilist view. He does, on the other hand, say several things which appear to indicate a libertarian view; however, these also can be interpreted in a way consistent with compatibilism. He says that "something external can be a cause moving to sin, but not so as to be a sufficient cause thereof: and the will alone is the sufficient complete cause of sin

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<sup>154</sup> ST I-II, q.79, a.1

<sup>155</sup> Grant, "How God Causes the Act of Sin," 492.



being accomplished.”<sup>156</sup> But, as he makes it clear earlier in that same article, God can and does move the will inwardly, and the reason He can’t be the sufficient cause of sin is that He can’t be a cause of sin at all; it is only other creatures who are unable to be the sufficient cause of sin due to a limit on their causative power.<sup>157</sup> Aquinas also says:

it belongs to God to direct everything to his very self and so not to divert anything from his very self. But he himself is the supreme good. And so he cannot cause the will to turn away from the supreme good, and the nature of moral wrong, as we are now speaking about it, consists of turning away from that good.<sup>158</sup>

But again, this does not imply any limitation (of the kind libertarian freedom would provide) on God’s causal influence on the will; rather, it just reinforces the point we showed above that God cannot be thought of as the cause of any defect in a creature’s free choice. At one point Aquinas says sin occurs when “something is not properly disposed or fit to receive the causal movement of the first mover,”<sup>159</sup> but this does not entail that the creature is the ultimate source of this lack of proper disposition and that it cannot be traced back to God in some way. None of these passages contradicts a compatibilist interpretation of Aquinas.

There is one more objection to the compatibilist interpretation which we must consider. Aquinas says “the deformity of sin in no way falls within the compass of the divine will; rather, the deformity results because free choice withdraws from the

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<sup>156</sup> ST I-II, q.75, a.3

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> QDM, q.3, a.1

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., a.2

ordination of the divine will.”<sup>160</sup> This may sound like free will involves the ability to do something other than what God wills one to do in some particular situations, which would imply libertarian freedom (assuming no natural, determining causes). But we must note that Aquinas also says that the divine will is always fulfilled,<sup>161</sup> and therefore free choice can’t withdraw from the ordination of the divine will. He resolves the apparent contradiction between these two claims by pointing out the equivocation of ‘will’: the divine will is distinguished into antecedent will and consequent will. Let us first look at Aquinas’s description of this distinction:

This distinction [between God’s antecedent and consequent will] must not be taken as applying to the divine will itself, in which there is nothing antecedent nor consequent, but to the things willed. To understand this we must consider that everything, in so far as it is good, is willed by God. A thing taken in its primary sense, and absolutely considered, may be good or evil, and yet when some additional circumstances are taken into account, by a consequent consideration may be changed into the contrary. Thus that a man should live is good; and that a man should be killed is evil, absolutely considered. But if in a particular case we add that a man is a murderer or dangerous to society, to kill him is a good; that he live is an evil. Hence it may be said of a just judge, that antecedently he wills all men to live; but consequently wills the murderer to be hanged.<sup>162</sup>

In other words, God antecedently wills whatever is good in itself, in an abstract sense, regardless of the circumstances, while He consequently wills whatever is good taking all circumstances into account.<sup>163</sup> And this means, as Aquinas says, that God’s

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., ad 1

<sup>161</sup> ST I, q.19, a.6

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., ad 1

<sup>163</sup> Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Predestination*, trans. Dom Bede Rose (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1939), 74; Mi Young Nam, “Divine Voluntarism: Moral

consequent will is always fulfilled, while His antecedent will is not always fulfilled.<sup>164</sup> So in the above quote, when he says “the deformity results because free choice withdraws from the ordination of the divine will,”<sup>165</sup> he must be referring to God’s antecedent will. And so he is merely stating that the deformity of sin results when free will departs from the order which God has ordained to be good for humans, and not that the free will can or does depart from what God has willed taking all the circumstances into account.<sup>166</sup> this is completely consistent with a compatibilist view of freedom. The other places where Aquinas mentions the free will departing from divine ordination<sup>167</sup> should be understood in the same way.

According to Aquinas, evil is not a being but a privation, and as such can only have an accidental cause. In the case of natural evil, God as well as the creature is the accidental cause, since the evil is caused by the creature’s action, and that action is caused by God. But in the case of moral evil, only the creature is the accidental cause, since the evil is caused by the creature’s failure to act, more specifically their not considering the relevant moral rule in making their choice. Only the creature, and not

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Obligation Supervenes on God’s Antecedent Will” (Master’s thesis, Texas A&M University, 2004), 17-18.

<sup>164</sup> ST I, q.19, a.6, ad 1

<sup>165</sup> QDM, q.3, a.2, ad 1

<sup>166</sup> We should note that sin itself is never willed (antecedently or consequent) by God. God wills (consequently) everything that is good (or equivalently, everything which has being) in the situation, including the act of sin, but He does not will the sin, He merely wills *to permit* the sin, as it is a necessary consequence of having that particular combination of goods.

<sup>167</sup> QDM, q.3, a.2; ST I-II, q.79, a.1, ad 3

God, can be considered the cause of this not-considering because the creature can and ought to consider the rule, but it is not the case that God ought to cause him to do so (although He certainly can cause him to do so).

## Chapter 6

### FREE WILL AND GRACE

We will now examine Aquinas's view on grace<sup>168</sup> and how it relates to free will. By 'grace' we mean what Aquinas calls 'sanctifying grace', which is given to a man to draw him to God, as opposed to what he calls 'gratuitous grace', which is given to a man to help him draw others to God.<sup>169</sup> Aquinas's understanding of grace requires a compatibilist understanding of freedom.

We should first note that Aquinas distinguishes two different kinds of grace: sufficient grace and efficacious grace. These are not his terms, but the distinction is clearly found in his writings.<sup>170</sup> Aquinas says that

in order to live righteously a man needs a twofold help of God--first, a habitual gift whereby corrupted human nature is healed, and after being healed is lifted up so as to work deeds meritorious of everlasting life,

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<sup>168</sup> As far as I can tell, Aquinas never attempts to define 'grace', since he expects his audience to have some grasp of the meaning of the term. Here is a more recent definition which seems to fit what Aquinas had in mind: according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, "Grace (*gratia*, Χάρις), in general, is a supernatural gift of God to intellectual creatures (men, angels) for their eternal salvation, whether the latter be furthered and attained through salutary acts or a state of holiness." (Charles G. Herbermann et al., eds., *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1909), 6:689.)

<sup>169</sup> ST I-II, q.111, a.1; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace: Commentary on the Summa theologiae of St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109-14*, trans. Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1952), 150-153.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 215-217.

which exceed the capability of nature. Secondly, man needs the help of grace in order to be moved by God to act.<sup>171</sup>

And again:

*in the original state man received a gift whereby he could persevere, but to persevere was not given him. But now, by the grace of Christ, many receive both the gift of grace whereby they may persevere, and the further gift of persevering.*<sup>172</sup>

So, on his view, there are two kinds of grace: one which gives us the ability to do good, known as sufficient grace, and one which actually makes us do good, known as efficacious grace.<sup>173</sup> And we should note that sufficient grace is really sufficient for doing good, even though it does not actually cause us to do good. As Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange says:

[A] thing is really sufficient in its own order, even though another cause may be required in another order... We should say nowadays that heat is sufficient to cause burning, although it must first be applied to combustible matter; and bread, similarly, is sufficient for nourishment, although it must further be masticated, swallowed, and assimilated... The passion of Christ is sufficient to save us, but, in addition, its merits must be applied to us, for example, in the sacrament of baptism. Hence St. Thomas says ([ST III], q. 61, a. 1 ad 3): “The passion of Christ is a sufficient cause of man’s salvation, but it does not therefore follow that the sacraments are not necessary for salvation, since they operate by virtue of the passion of Christ.” Again, he declares (*De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 15): “Not every cause necessarily produces its effect, even if it is a sufficient cause, on account of the fact that a cause may be impeded.”... Therefore sufficient grace is really sufficient in its own order, since it confers the proximate power of doing good. Indeed it cannot be more sufficient.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> ST I-II, q.109, a.9

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., a.10, ad 3

<sup>173</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 215-217.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 218-219.

Sufficient grace is really sufficient for doing good because, by giving the power to do good, it is sufficient in its own order, although efficacious grace is required in addition in order to make someone actually do good.

According to Aquinas, grace is necessary in order for us to do anything good.<sup>175</sup> He admits that man before the Fall, in the state of perfect nature, could do the good that is natural for him, such as “the good of acquired virtue”, and even after the Fall we can do some of the good natural to us “as to build dwellings, plant vineyards, and the like” but not all of it; but in both states grace is necessary in order to do anything supernaturally good or anything meritorious, such as works of “infused virtue”.<sup>176</sup> Therefore, we can only follow God through His grace, or as Aquinas puts it, “free-will can only be turned to God, when God turns it.”<sup>177</sup> But, on Aquinas’s view, God’s grace does not prevent us from being free. He argues that “God does not justify us without ourselves, because whilst we are being justified we consent to God’s justification...by a movement of our free-will.”<sup>178</sup> And immediately after this he says “Nevertheless this movement [of our free-will] is not the cause of grace, but the effect; hence the whole operation pertains to grace.”<sup>179</sup> So, on his view, God’s grace can cause us to freely choose the good; this clearly indicates a compatibilist understanding of freedom. We should note that this only applies to those who have the use of reason;

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<sup>175</sup> ST I-II, q.109, a.2

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., a.6, ad 1

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., q.111, a.2, ad 2

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

in the case of infants and any other men (in Aquinas's terms, "madmen and idiots") who have never had the use of reason or free will, God can justify them by grace without any motion of their free will.<sup>180</sup>

Aquinas insists that God gives grace to all those who are willing to accept it.<sup>181</sup> So if anyone does not receive grace, it can only be attributed to their unwillingness to accept it:

God as he is in himself communicates himself to all things in proportion to their receptivity. And so if something should deficiently share in his goodness, this is because the thing has an obstacle to participating in God. Therefore, God does not cause grace not to be supplied to someone; rather, those not supplied with grace offer an obstacle to grace insofar as they turn themselves away from the light that does not turn itself away.<sup>182</sup>

And because this obstacle comes from free will, the agent is blameworthy for placing this obstacle.<sup>183</sup> Interestingly, Aquinas allows that there are cases in which someone puts an obstacle in the way of grace and God nevertheless gives grace anyway:

Now, although the man who sins puts an impediment in the way of grace, and as far as the order of things requires he ought not to receive grace, yet, since God can act apart from the order implanted in things, as He does when He gives sight to the blind or life to the dead—at times, out of the abundance of His goodness, He offers His help in advance, even to those who put an impediment in the way of grace, turning them away from evil and toward the good...He does not assist with His help all who impede grace, so that they may be turned away from evil and toward the good, but only some, in whom He desires His

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., q.113, a.3, ad 1

<sup>181</sup> QDV, q.6, a.2, ad 11

<sup>182</sup> QDM, q.3, a.1, ad 8

<sup>183</sup> SCG III, ch. 159.2



mercy to appear, so that the order of justice may be manifested in the other cases.<sup>184</sup>

So sometimes God gives grace to those who put an obstacle in His way, but it seems that these cases are relatively rare, since Aquinas compares them to giving sight to the blind and raising the dead. It is also unclear whether Aquinas would say that the man in that case freely accepts the grace God gives or whether that action is not free (he would certainly admit that not all human actions are free-if I push you out a window, you have no choice about whether or not to fall), but if that is a free choice, then clearly it is free in a compatibilist sense. But even if these rare cases are not cases of free choice, it is clear that the ordinary cases involve freedom in a compatibilist sense: Aquinas claims that our willingness to accept grace comes from God's predestination,<sup>185</sup> which means God is the cause of our freely choosing to accept grace.

To see how this all fits together, let us look at how it applies in two typical kinds of cases: one in which a person does something meritorious, and one in which a person does something sinful. For example, suppose we have two Christians imprisoned in a pagan land who are both ordered to deny Christ or die; the first makes the meritorious choice not to deny his faith, thus accepting martyrdom, while the second makes the sinful choice to deny Christ. Now we must ask: how was grace involved in their decisions? Both were given sufficient grace, and thus both had the ability to make the meritorious choice. The first made the meritorious choice because he cooperated with this grace, while the second made the sinful choice because he

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., ch. 161.1

<sup>185</sup> QDV, q.6, a.2, ad 11

failed to cooperate with this grace. So the choice made is determined by one's cooperation with (sufficient) grace, but this cooperation is in turn determined by efficacious grace. The first cooperated with grace because God, by giving him efficacious grace, caused him to do so; the second failed to cooperate with grace because God did not give him efficacious grace and thus did not cause him to cooperate. And who God chose to give efficacious grace to depends on their willingness to accept it: He gave it to the first because he was willing to accept it, while He withheld it from the second because he wouldn't have accepted it anyway. And the fact that the first was willing to accept the efficacious grace while the second was not is itself caused by God. So the two causal chains look something like this: God gives him sufficient grace and causes him to be willing (unwilling) to accept efficacious grace → he is willing (unwilling) to accept efficacious grace → God gives (does not give) him efficacious grace → he cooperates (fails to cooperate) with the sufficient grace → he makes the meritorious (sinful) choice.

Eleonore Stump argues that, contrary to my interpretation, Aquinas's view of grace is consistent with a libertarian view of freedom.<sup>186</sup> She begins by arguing that, on Aquinas's view, nothing, not even God, can operate on the will with efficient causation.<sup>187</sup> To support this view, she quotes Aquinas's statement that

if the will is moved by some external principle, the motion will be violent. Now, I am talking about being moved by some external principle which moves *in the way of an agent*, and not *in the way of an*

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<sup>186</sup> Stump believes that libertarianism is the only reasonable interpretation of Aquinas; however, when focusing on his account of grace, she merely claims that his account is consistent with libertarianism and not that it entails it.

<sup>187</sup> Stump, 390.

*end.* But the violent is incompatible with the voluntary. So, it is impossible for the will to be moved by an extrinsic principle as by an agent; rather, every movement of the will must proceed from within.<sup>188</sup>

Aquinas does say that external principles cannot move the will without coercing it, but when taken in context, it is clear that he is not referring to God. As he mentions in the beginning of the chapter, his intention in this chapter is to prove that angels cannot cause our free choice,<sup>189</sup> and later in the same chapter (but before the passage quoted above) he says that “God alone can move the will in the fashion of an agent.”<sup>190</sup> So it is clear that Aquinas believes God moves the will as an efficient cause.<sup>191</sup>

Stump further argues that Aquinas’ view of grace is consistent with a libertarian view of freedom because of his view of what she calls the quiescent will. On Aquinas’s view, the will can do three things with respect to an object: it can assent to it, reject it, or do nothing at all; this state of doing nothing Stump calls quiescence.<sup>192</sup> And it is always within the will’s power to be quiescent with respect to an object.<sup>193</sup> So with respect to grace, the will may accept grace, refuse grace, or be quiescent. And, Stump claims, God only gives grace when the will is quiescent.<sup>194</sup> She argues that this may be understood in the following way:

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<sup>188</sup> SCG III, ch. 88.5

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 88.1

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 88.3

<sup>191</sup> In Aquinas’s terminology, ‘agent cause’ is synonymous with ‘efficient cause.’

<sup>192</sup> Stump, 394; ST I-II, q.9, a.1

<sup>193</sup> Stump, 394; ST I-II, q.10, a.2

<sup>194</sup> Stump, 394.

Consider a person suffering a bad allergic reaction to a bee sting who nonetheless vigorously refuses his doctor's injection of the desperately needed antidote to the allergen because he has a phobic fear of needles. Such a person might not be able to bring himself to will that the doctor give him the injection. That is, if the doctor asks him whether he will accept the injection, he might not be able to bring himself to say 'yes'. But he might nonetheless be able to stop actively refusing the injection, knowing that if he ceases to refuse it, the doctor will press it on him. If he does this, then his will is quiescent with regard to the injection, neither accepting it nor refusing it, but simply turned off in relation to the injection. . . . Aquinas's post-Fall person whose will is quiescent with respect to grace is in an analogous case. Consequently, on Aquinas's view, when God gives the grace of justifying faith to such a person, he is infusing that grace into a human will which has ceased to reject it but which has not accepted it either. The will is in a state of privation in this respect; it is inactive.<sup>195</sup>

And she notes that there are many ways for the will to be quiescent; the type of quiescence relevant here is "one in which the will's quiescence is a privation of a previously inhering form."<sup>196</sup> It seems to me that this is a reasonable interpretation of Aquinas, although perhaps not the only one. But whether Stump is correct about this or not, she is certainly wrong to conclude that "Because Aquinas thinks that it is always in the will's own power to be quiescent or not, it is open to us to suppose that for Aquinas the will is moved from the rejection of grace to quiescence by the human willer herself"<sup>197</sup> and not by God. Aquinas does believe that man can prepare himself to receive grace (which means moving his will to a state of quiescence, if Stump's interpretation is correct), and that if he does so then God will give him grace,<sup>198</sup> but

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 395.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 396-397.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 401.

<sup>198</sup> QDV, q.24, a.1, ad 2

this does not conflict with compatibilism, since he also claims that “free choice cannot prepare itself for grace unless it is divinely directed to this end.”<sup>199</sup> So even if God will provide grace to anyone who moves his will from rejecting grace to quiescence, no one can move their will thus unless God causes them to do so.

Grace, on Aquinas’s view, is absolutely necessary in order for us to do meritorious acts. God offers it to all those who do not put an obstacle in its way, and they freely choose to accept it. But since God causes the willingness to accept grace, He is ultimately the cause of the free choice to accept grace; we cannot even do anything to prepare ourselves to receive grace unless God causes us to do so. Clearly, this means Aquinas must have a compatibilist view of freedom.

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., a.15

## Chapter 7

### FREE WILL AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

One major problem in philosophy of religion is how to reconcile divine foreknowledge with human freedom. The problem can be stated thus:

if God knows what I shall do tomorrow, given that God's knowledge is infallible, I cannot do otherwise than as God foreknows, and so it is a matter of necessity that I do what God foreknows I shall do. But something done by necessity is not done freely. And so my choices cannot be free if they are all foreknown by God.<sup>200</sup>

Several solutions have been offered to this problem. Aquinas's solution is simply to say, as we saw in chapter two, that God's causation does not make everything He causes necessary (in the sense of necessity which precludes freedom); his solution does not require a libertarian conception of freedom, and in fact much of what he says on God's knowledge indicates a compatibilist view of freedom.

To understand Aquinas's view of divine foreknowledge, we should first examine his view of time, since these two subjects are (at least in many cases) very closely related. There are two major views of the nature of time which we must consider: presentism and isotemporalism.<sup>201</sup> Presentism claims that there is an absolute present: the past (and all that existed and happened in it) no longer exists, and the

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<sup>200</sup> Rogers, 146.

<sup>201</sup> Although these are not the only possible views, I think it is safe to say that, if Aquinas is committed to any particular view of time, it is either one of these two or Leftow's view which I will introduce in the next paragraph.

future (and all that will exist and happen in it) does not yet exist.<sup>202</sup> Isotemporalism claims that “all of time, what is past, present, and future, relative to our limited, temporal perspective, is in fact equally existent.”<sup>203</sup> And Aquinas, at various points in his works, makes claims which appear to support each of these positions. He claims that “all things that are in time are present to God from eternity,”<sup>204</sup> which suggests an isotemporalist view: all of time really exists and is present to God. But he also claims that “No one but God can indeed know future things in themselves [because] future things as such do not yet exist in themselves,”<sup>205</sup> which suggests a presentist view on which the future is really nonexistent.

Brian Leftow has suggested that Aquinas does not accept either of these standard views of time; rather, he thinks Aquinas accepts an unusual view which prefigures modern quantum physics.<sup>206</sup> According to quantum physics, whether two events are simultaneous or not depends on your perspective; there is no absolute present. Leftow claims that Aquinas’s view follows this principle: from God’s perspective, all events are simultaneous, and therefore all of time is present to God, while from our perspective some events are present and others are past or future, and both perspectives are equally valid (there is no absolute present).<sup>207</sup> And, as in

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<sup>202</sup> Rogers, 159.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>204</sup> ST I, q.14, a.13

<sup>205</sup> QDM, q.16, a.7

<sup>206</sup> Brian Leftow, “Aquinas on Time and Eternity,” *The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (1990): 389.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 389-391.

presentism, only the present exists,<sup>208</sup> so from God's perspective all of time really exists, while from our perspective the past and future are really nonexistent.

So which of these three views does Aquinas take? It is not clear, but it turns out that, for our purposes, the answer to this question is not very important: what is relevant here is not his view of what time *actually* is but rather his view of what time *behaves as if* it were. Aquinas clearly claims that God sees everything as if it were present<sup>209</sup> and that, from our perspective, it is as if the future is nonexistent<sup>210</sup> (where saying 'as if X' does not imply not-X). As we shall see, on a compatibilist conception of freedom, it does not matter whether everything is *actually* present to God or whether the future is *actually* nonexistent for us (or both).<sup>211</sup> What matters is this: since, on Aquinas's view, God sees everything as if it were present, there is no real difference between divine foreknowledge and God's knowledge in general.

Aquinas's account of God's knowledge makes it clear that, for several reasons, creaturely freedom is only possible in a compatibilist sense. First, he claims that God is pure act, with no passivity<sup>212</sup> and no potentiality<sup>213</sup> in Him. This would at least seem

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid., 388.

<sup>209</sup> ST I, q.14, a.9

<sup>210</sup> QDM, q.16, a.7

<sup>211</sup> The nature of time does make a difference on a libertarian view of freedom. Open Theism seems to assume presentism, and the Anselmian view can explain foreknowledge only on an isotemporalist view. Molinism, like compatibilism, can work on any view of time.

<sup>212</sup> ST I, q.25, a.1

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., q.3, a.1



to imply that nothing outside of God can cause His knowledge and therefore that He can only know creaturely free choices if He causes them. Stump claims that this is incorrect:

On Aquinas's view of the way in which the intellect even of a human being functions, the intellect is always active when it knows. The intellect acts on the phantasms [mental images] to abstract the intelligible species; the phantasms do not act on the intellect. So a human being can will or know something because of what something or someone else does without being acted upon. But then, in Aquinas's understanding of passivity as being acted upon, neither a human will nor a human intellect is passive in virtue of acting responsively. *A fortiori*, neither God's will nor God's intellect is acted upon when God wills or knows something because of what creatures do.<sup>214</sup>

But, according to Aquinas, humans have a passive intellect, which is in potentiality and is acted on to form 'phantasms,'<sup>215</sup> as well as an active intellect, which acts on these phantasms through abstraction.<sup>216</sup> Since there is clearly passivity involved in the human intellect, a better example for Stump would be angels, which have no passive intellect, and Aquinas does say that the intellect of angels is wholly in act.<sup>217</sup> But Aquinas also says:

the intellect becomes understanding in act through an intelligible species... The intelligible species is to the intellect, therefore, as act to potency. If, then, the divine intellect understood through some intelligible species other than itself, it would be in potency with respect to something. This is impossible.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Stump, 121.

<sup>215</sup> ST I, q.79, a.2

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., a.3

<sup>217</sup> SCG II, ch. 99.2

<sup>218</sup> SCG I, ch. 46.3

On Aquinas's view, we understand things through their intelligible species, or in other words their form; for example, I understand that there is a keyboard in front of me through the form of the keyboard. And, according to Aquinas, this means I am in potentiality with respect to the keyboard. But, since God is purely active, God can't understand the keyboard in this same way because then He would also be in potentiality toward it, which is impossible. Therefore, on Aquinas's view, God's knowledge cannot be caused by anything outside of Him.

Since Aquinas would certainly admit that angelic knowledge is caused by something outside of the angel, how do we explain his claim that the angelic intellect is wholly in act? The most reasonable explanation is that, by "wholly in act", he meant what he proved a few chapters earlier in his *Summa Contra Gentiles*, that the angelic intellect is "always in act of understanding."<sup>219</sup> In other words, since the intellect of an angel is above time,<sup>220</sup> it is always in act of understanding rather than sometimes in act and sometimes not;<sup>221</sup> this does not imply that nothing outside of it can causally influence its act of understanding. Aquinas also admits that an angel "is in potentiality...to the intelligible likenesses whereby all being is known"<sup>222</sup> and that "they have in them potentiality and act as regards intelligible being."<sup>223</sup> So, on

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<sup>219</sup> SCG II, ch. 97

<sup>220</sup> ST I, q.61, a.2, ad 2; SCG II, ch. 96.10

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., ch. 97.2

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., ch. 98.10

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., ch. 98.13

Aquinas's view, things outside of an angel can cause that angel's knowledge, but nothing outside of God can cause God's knowledge.

Aquinas also explicitly says that God's knowledge of the world comes from Himself and is not caused by anything external. He says that "what is outside Himself He does not see except in Himself"<sup>224</sup> and that "God...knows only Himself in Himself; but He does not know other things in themselves except by knowing His own essence."<sup>225</sup> And Aquinas is clear that God knows everything, not merely Himself: he says that "in knowing His own essence He beholds all other things"<sup>226</sup> and that "From the fact that God understands Himself primarily and essentially we must posit that He knows in Himself things other than Himself."<sup>227</sup> So, on Aquinas's view, God knows everything, not because anything outside of Him causally affects Him, but simply by knowing Himself.

Finally, Aquinas argues that God's knowledge is the cause of everything and that God knows things outside of Himself because He causes them. To show that God's knowledge is the cause of everything, he says:

either the knowledge is the cause of the thing known, or the thing known is the cause of the knowledge, or both are caused by one cause. It cannot be said, however, that what is known by God is the cause of His knowledge; for things are temporal and His knowledge is eternal, and what is temporal cannot be the cause of anything eternal. Similarly, it cannot be said that both are caused by one cause, because there can

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<sup>224</sup> ST I, q.14, a.5, ad 1

<sup>225</sup> QDV, q.2, a.3, ad 5

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., a.2, ad 2

<sup>227</sup> SCG I, ch. 49.1

be nothing caused in God, seeing that He is whatever He has. Hence, there is left only one possibility: His knowledge is the cause of things.<sup>228</sup>

And he gives a second argument for the same conclusion:

God's knowledge of created things may be compared to that which an artist has of his artistic products and which is their cause. Hence, the relation of God's knowledge to things known is the opposite of the relation of our knowledge to them. Our knowledge is received from things, and, by its nature, comes after them. But the Creator's knowledge of creatures, and the artist's of his products, by its very nature, precedes the things known.<sup>229</sup>

So Aquinas clearly believes that God's knowledge is the cause of things, rather than the other way around. This means that creaturely free choices are caused by God; if they were not, then God could not know them, since it is impossible for them to cause God's knowledge. And Aquinas explicitly says that God knows things outside of Himself because He causes them: "To know is to understand the cause of a thing. Now, God knows the causes of all contingents; for He knows Himself, the cause of all things. Hence, He knows contingents."<sup>230</sup> This (together with the claim that humans and angels have free will) clearly entails compatibilism.

Eleonore Stump has several objections to this interpretation. First, she claims that "[if] God's knowledge is always the cause of what God knows, it follows that God does not know human evil if he does not cause it...there are passages in which Aquinas explicitly rejects the position this interpretation has to ascribe to him."<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> QDV, q.2, a.14

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., a.8

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., a.12

<sup>231</sup> Stump, 161.

However, according to Aquinas, “evil is not of itself knowable,”<sup>232</sup> and “a thing is knowable in the degree in which it is; hence, since this is the essence of evil that it is the privation of good, by the very fact that God knows good things, He knows evil things also; as by light is known darkness.”<sup>233</sup> In other words, since evil is a privation of good, God knows evils by knowing that there is a good which should be present but isn’t. For example, God knows the evil of a man’s blindness by knowing that the man exists, knowing all the goods that a man should have (which includes sight), and knowing all the goods that this particular man actually has (which does not include sight). And God knows the evil of a couple’s adultery by knowing that their act of intercourse exists, knowing all the goods that such an act ought to have (which includes it occurring within marriage), and knowing all the goods that this particular act actually has (which does not include it occurring within marriage).<sup>234</sup> So for both natural and moral evil, God knows the evil only by knowing the good; he neither knows nor causes the evil in itself.

Stump also argues that, if Aquinas believed God’s knowledge was the cause of everything including future free actions, then he would not need any explanation of God’s knowledge of future contingents beyond the causal efficacy of God’s knowledge, and so the fact that he appeals to divine eternity to explain God’s knowledge of future contingents [see QDV, q.2, a.12] suggests that he does not view

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<sup>232</sup> ST I, q.14, a.10, ad 4

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, a.10

<sup>234</sup> This might be simplifying Aquinas’s account of moral evil somewhat, but it should be close enough for our purposes here.

God's knowledge as the cause of everything.<sup>235</sup> But even on a compatibilist interpretation, it is perfectly reasonable for Aquinas to appeal to divine eternity here. When he explains why only God can know future things in themselves (as opposed to knowing them through another),<sup>236</sup> he says:

No one but God can indeed know future things in themselves. The reason for this is that future things as such do not yet exist in themselves, and being and truth are convertible. And so since something true is the object of every act of knowledge, no knowledge regarding future things as future can be knowledge of them in their very selves...[E]verything that belongs to time in any way is related to future things as future. And so no knowledge subject to the temporal order can be knowledge of future things in themselves...And such knowledge [of future things in themselves] is proper to God alone, whose knowledge is so completely beyond the whole temporal order that no part of time is related to his knowledge as past or future. And the whole procession of time and the things transpiring through the whole of time are present to him and conformed to his sight.<sup>237</sup>

So, on his view, God can know future contingents in themselves only because they are present to Him; if any contingent thing was future to God, He could not know it in itself because it would not yet exist. So if God knew any contingent as future, He would have to know it through another. And this other would have to be God Himself, since nothing else in the present could determine a future contingent (otherwise it

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<sup>235</sup> Stump, 161-162.

<sup>236</sup> I know that the sun will rise tomorrow, but this is not knowledge of this future event in itself, since my knowledge is not caused by (and is not the cause of) tomorrow's sunrise. Rather, it is knowledge through another: I know the sun will rise tomorrow because I know certain natural laws and characteristics of the present state of the world from which it follows (at least with a very high probability) that the sun will rise tomorrow.

<sup>237</sup> QDM, q.16, a.7

wouldn't be contingent). But some might think that, if God were temporal, He would not know what He would cause in the future and therefore He would not know the future. So an appeal to divine eternity here prevents this possible confusion and therefore is perfectly reasonable; there was no need for Aquinas to repeat his claim that God's knowledge is causal because it was already discussed elsewhere and nothing about it was specific to future contingents.

Stump also argues that, since there are many places where Aquinas talks about God's intellectual observation, view, vision, and gaze, "it looks very much as if Aquinas takes God to be in epistemic contact with creatures in virtue of metaphorically or analogously 'seeing' them"<sup>238</sup> and therefore that creatures' free actions cause God's knowledge rather than vice versa. For example, Aquinas says that "[God's] glance is carried from eternity over all things as they are in their presentiality. Hence it is manifest that contingent things are infallibly known by God, inasmuch as they are subject to the divine sight in their presentiality."<sup>239</sup> It seems reasonable to suppose that all of these metaphors to sight mean the same thing as what Aquinas calls "the knowledge of vision."<sup>240</sup> Aquinas says:

Knowledge of simple intelligence and that of vision imply no difference on the part of the knower but only on the part of the things known. Knowledge of vision is said to be in God because of its resemblance to bodily sight which looks upon things outside of itself. Hence, God is said to know by His knowledge of vision only those things that are outside of Him, whether they are present, past, or future. But... God knows by His knowledge of simple intelligence things that

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<sup>238</sup> Stump, 185.

<sup>239</sup> ST I, q.14, a.13

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., a.12

neither are, will be, nor ever have been. There is no other way by which God knows these and those things.<sup>241</sup>

Aquinas distinguishes two kinds of divine knowledge: knowledge of simple intelligence and knowledge of vision. He says the two differ only in what is known (God knows actual, existent things by His knowledge of vision and nonexistent, merely possible things by His knowledge of simple intelligence), and that they “imply no difference on the part of the knower,”<sup>242</sup> which suggests that it is not the case that one has an external cause and the other doesn’t. He says the term ‘knowledge of vision’ is used because of its resemblance to sight, but only insofar as sight “looks upon things outside of itself.”<sup>243</sup> So any references to God’s vision merely imply that the thing known is outside of God, and not that the thing known is in any way the cause of God’s knowledge.

Finally, Stump argues that, although Aquinas does claim that God’s knowledge is the cause of everything, he is speaking of formal rather than efficient causation. Immediately after Aquinas says that God’s knowledge is the cause of things, he says that

the knowledge of God is to all creatures what the knowledge of the artificer is to things made by his art. Now the knowledge of the artificer is the cause of the things made by his art from the fact that the artificer works by his intellect. Hence the form of the intellect must be the principle of action.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> QDV, q.2, a.9, ad 2

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> ST I, q.14, a.8



So, according to Stump, the divine ideas are formal causes, just like the artisan's knowledge is a formal cause of artifacts, and the pattern a builder has in mind is the formal cause of a house.<sup>245</sup> And just as an artisan can have knowledge of forms which have not yet been produced, God can have knowledge of things which do not actually exist; this would be impossible if the causation in question were efficient causation, since "What an efficient cause causes comes into existence; but a formal cause is simply the form of a thing, which may or may not come into existence, depending on whether or not it is brought into existence by the operation of an efficient cause."<sup>246</sup> And, since formal causes are only the causes of things which have forms (things which either are forms or are composites of matter and form), God's knowledge, as a formal cause, cannot be the cause of acts, events, or states of affairs.<sup>247</sup>

It seems clear to me that Stump is correct that God's knowledge is a formal cause rather than an efficient cause; however, this does not make a significant difference to the question of freedom. When Aquinas speaks of God's knowledge as causal, he says that "[God's] knowledge must be the cause of things, in so far as His will is joined to it."<sup>248</sup> So it seems reasonable to interpret this as saying God's will is the efficient cause which brings into being what God's knowledge has formally caused. And if God's will efficiently causes everything to be in the form His knowledge has formally caused it to be, there is still no room for libertarian freedom.

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<sup>245</sup> Stump, 180.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>248</sup> ST I, q.14, a.8

The fact that, strictly speaking, God's knowledge is not the formal cause of acts, events, or states of affairs is irrelevant; it is still the formal cause of everything in the state of affairs which has a form, and God's will is, according to Aquinas, the efficient cause of every act,<sup>249</sup> and presumably also of every event and state of affairs.

Now that we've seen Aquinas's view of foreknowledge, we can look at his solution to the problem of freedom and foreknowledge. Some people deny that God has infallible foreknowledge, and others deny that humans have freedom, but clearly neither of these options is open to Aquinas. Others claim that God's foreknowledge imposes merely logical necessity on our actions, saying that the propositions 'God knows that X' and 'not-X' are logically incompatible but that God's knowledge that X does not cause X; as we have seen, this option is not open to Aquinas because he views God's knowledge (together with His will) to be causal. Aquinas admits that God's foreknowledge causes our choices, but he avoids the dilemma by saying that God's causation does not necessitate what it causes (in the relevant sense of necessity). And since God's foreknowledge does not necessitate our choices, it does not prevent them from being free.

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<sup>249</sup> ST I-II, q.79, a.2

## Chapter 8

### FREE WILL AND PREDESTINATION

Predestination is another issue very closely connected to free will. By ‘predestination’ I mean, roughly, God’s directing a person to a certain eternal destination (heaven or hell). Exactly how this occurs is much debated within the Christian tradition. Some would say that (1) predestination does not occur at all. Some would say that (2) everyone is predestined to heaven, or in other words God directs everyone toward heaven to the best of His ability, but predestination is not certain (being predestined to heaven does not necessarily mean you will end up in heaven).<sup>250</sup> Others would say that (3) God predestines some people to heaven,<sup>251</sup> and predestination is certain, but predestination is nothing more than foreknowledge (saying ‘God predestined X to heaven’ is equivalent to saying ‘God foreknew that X would be in heaven’) and it is not the cause of salvation. Still others would say that (4) predestination is the cause of salvation, but predestination is itself caused by God’s

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<sup>250</sup> I am here ignoring the possible view that everyone will end up in heaven regardless of their choices; I am assuming, as Aquinas clearly does, that there are some choices (known as mortal sins) such that a person who makes such a choice, without later repenting of it, will not go to heaven. In other words, no one is saved against their will.

<sup>251</sup> Strictly speaking, I see no reason why a libertarian couldn’t say that God predestines some people to hell; however, I also see no reason why any libertarian would say such a thing. So I will assume that, on any libertarian view, everyone is either predestined to heaven or not predestined at all.

foreknowledge of the merits of the predestined. The first two of these views are available to the Open Theist, and all but the first one are available to the Anselmian and the Molinist; these are the only views open to libertarians, and, as we will see, Aquinas explicitly rejects them all. The remaining alternative is to say that (5) predestination is certain (meaning one goes to heaven if and only if one is predestined to heaven), it is the cause of salvation (or damnation, in the case of predestination to hell), and it is not caused by God's foreknowledge of merits. This alternative is open to compatibilists, but not to any kind of libertarian: if predestination is not in any way caused by the one who is predestined, and predestination is the sufficient cause of the predestined one going to heaven (or hell), then either no one makes free choices which are not caused by God or one's free choices have no effect on whether one goes to heaven; almost all Christians would reject the latter option. And since Aquinas believes predestination is certain, the cause of salvation, and not caused by God's foreknowledge of merits, he therefore must be a compatibilist.

We should note that compatibilist accounts of predestination can be divided into two types: single predestination and double predestination.<sup>252</sup> According to single predestination views, some people are predestined to heaven and the rest are not predestined at all. According to double predestination views, some people are predestined to heaven and the rest are predestined to hell. As we shall see, Aquinas accepts a single predestination view.

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<sup>252</sup> In theory, this division could also apply to libertarian views, but I do not know of any libertarian who accepts a double predestination view, and I see no reason why any libertarian would.

It should be clear that an Open Theist or Anselmian cannot claim that predestination is certain, the cause of salvation, and not caused by God's foreknowledge of merits. It might seem that a Molinist could accept this view, claiming that God chooses certain people, regardless of their merits, and arranges their lives so that they will end up in heaven, thus making God's predestination the cause of their salvation. However, on this view predestination is in a way caused by God's foreknowledge of merits: God can only choose to predestine someone who will merit heaven when placed in some particular set of circumstances. There may be some possible free creature X such that there is no feasible world in which X merits heaven, and if so then God cannot choose to predestine X, due to X's lack of merits. Even if there is no such creature, there certainly could have been if the counterfactuals of creaturely freedom were different. This principle also applies to sets of creatures. There may be some set of possible free creatures X, Y, and Z such that, even if there is a feasible world in which X merits heaven, one in which Y does, and one in which Z does, there is no feasible world in which X, Y, and Z all merit heaven. And this becomes more likely as the sets become larger; when the sets are very large, like the set of the predestined in the actual world, it is very likely that there are some sets of possible free creatures such that there is no feasible world in which all the creatures in the set merit heaven. So clearly, on a Molinist view, if predestination is certain and the cause of salvation, God must take His foreknowledge (or, more accurately, His middle knowledge) of merits into account when deciding who to predestine.

Aquinas clearly believes both that God does predestine some people and that predestination is certain. In response to the question of whether men are predestined by God, he says:

It is fitting that God should predestine men. For all things are subject to His providence, as was shown above (Q. 22, A. 2). Now it belongs to providence to direct things towards their end, as was also said (Q. 22, AA. 1, 2). The end towards which created things are directed by God is twofold; one which exceeds all proportion and faculty of created nature; and this end is life eternal, that consists in seeing God which is above the nature of every creature, as shown above (Q. 12, [A.] 4). The other end, however, is proportionate to created nature, to which end created being can attain according to the power of its nature. Now if a thing cannot attain to something by the power of its nature, it must be directed thereto by another; thus, an arrow is directed by the archer towards a mark. Hence, properly speaking, a rational creature, capable of eternal life, is led towards it, directed, as it were, by God. The reason of that direction pre-exists in God; as in Him is the type of the order of all things towards an end, which we proved above to be providence. Now the type in the mind of the doer of something to be done, is a kind of pre-existence in him of the thing to be done. Hence the type of the aforesaid direction of a rational creature towards the end of life eternal is called predestination. For to destine, is to direct or send. Thus it is clear that predestination, as regards its objects, is a part of providence.<sup>253</sup>

So, on Aquinas's view, predestination is God's directing a rational creature toward an end, namely eternal life in heaven, which it cannot achieve by its natural abilities; on his view, predestination is only to heaven. And he believes that some men (and angels)<sup>254</sup> are predestined by God. He also argues that "Predestination most certainly and infallibly takes effect,"<sup>255</sup> or in other words, someone who is predestined will certainly end up in heaven. This is because predestination is part of God's consequent will,<sup>256</sup> and, as we saw in chapter five, God's consequent will is always fulfilled. If

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<sup>253</sup> ST I, q.23, a.1

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., ad 3

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., a.6

<sup>256</sup> QDV, q.6, a.2, ad 2

you consider a person in himself, the fact that he is predestined does not imply that there are no counterfactual circumstances in which he fails to end up in heaven; however, on the supposition that he is predestined, then he will certainly end up in heaven even in counterfactual circumstances-in other words, there are no counterfactual circumstances in which he both is predestined and fails to end up in heaven.<sup>257</sup> And the fact that predestination is certain does not destroy free will, since, as we saw in chapter two, God's causation does not make everything He causes necessary.<sup>258</sup>

Aquinas also believes that predestination is not equivalent to foreknowledge, but that it is itself the cause of salvation. He says that:

[S]ince God's foreknowledge does not imply, in all cases, a relation of a cause to all the things which are its objects, it is considered to have only the certitude of knowledge. But His predestination adds another element, because it includes not only His foreknowledge but also the relation of a cause to its objects, since predestination is a kind of direction or preparation. Thus, not only the certitude of knowledge, but also the certitude of ordination is contained in predestination...

[W]e cannot say that predestination adds nothing to the certitude of providence except the certitude of foreknowledge, because this would be to say that God orders one who is predestined to his salvation as He orders any other person, with this difference, that, in the case of the predestined, God knows he will not fail to be saved. According to this position, one predestined would not differ in ordination from one not predestined; he would differ only with respect to [God's] foreknowledge of the outcome. Consequently, foreknowledge would be the cause of predestination, and predestination would not take place by the choice of Him who predestines. This, however, is contrary to the authority of the Scriptures and the sayings of the saints. Thus, the

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<sup>257</sup> ST I, q.23, a.6, ad 2

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., a.6

ordering of predestination has an infallible certitude of its own-over and above the certitude of foreknowledge.<sup>259</sup>

In other words, predestination involves God not merely knowing the outcome but also directing things toward that outcome. As we saw in chapter seven, there is a sense in which God's knowledge (together with His will) is the cause of everything. Aquinas is here speaking of something more than that universal causation, although it is not entirely clear exactly what he means. It seems to me that the best interpretation is that, in the case of predestination, God is not merely creating the end result of the man in heaven and creating the events which lead up to it, but He is creating these events *for the sake of* that end. This is not always true in cases of foreknowledge-if God creates an apple which then rots, He foreknew that the apple would rot, and in a sense He caused the apple to rot because He created the apple healthy at an earlier time and then rotten at a later time, but He did not create the healthy apple *for the sake of* later having the rotten apple. And so predestination is more than just foreknowledge. Aquinas also argues that God chooses whom to predestine<sup>260</sup> and that predestination is the cause of salvation.<sup>261</sup>

Aquinas then argues that predestination is not caused by God's foreknowledge of merits. He argues that merit can only come from grace, and that grace is the effect of predestination and therefore cannot be its cause;<sup>262</sup> although God gives grace to

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<sup>259</sup> QDV, q.6, a.3

<sup>260</sup> ST I, q.23, a.4

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., a.3, ad 2

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., a.5



everyone who is willing to accept it, “the very fact that we are willing to accept grace comes to us through God’s predestination.”<sup>263</sup> So, as he says,

it is impossible that the whole of the effect of predestination in general should have any cause as coming from us; because whatsoever is in man disposing him towards salvation, is all included under the effect of predestination; even the preparation for grace.<sup>264</sup>

This means that nothing in us can be the cause of predestination; why some are predestined and not others “has no reason, except the divine will.”<sup>265</sup> And Aquinas says “Absolutely speaking, it is possible for God to predestine or not to predestine each and every person,”<sup>266</sup> which presumably implies that God can choose any combination of people to predestine to heaven.

As I mentioned above, there is a view a Molinist could hold on which predestination is certain, is the cause of salvation, and is caused by God’s foreknowledge of merits only insofar as God cannot choose to predestine a person (or group of people) unless there is a feasible world in which that person (or group of people) merits heaven. It is clear that Aquinas does not accept this view. First of all, he claims that God can predestine whomever He wishes; on a Molinist view, that could be true, but it would be a contingent truth based on which worlds were feasible, and Aquinas’s argument suggests that he views it as a necessary truth. Also, Aquinas clearly states that willingness to accept grace is caused by predestination, but on a

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<sup>263</sup> QDV, q.6, a.2, ad 11

<sup>264</sup> ST I, q.23, a.5

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., ad 3

<sup>266</sup> QDV, q.6, a.3, ad 10

Molinist view, free will is the cause of willingness to accept grace, and predestination simply causes a person to be placed in situations in which they will willingly accept grace. So, on Aquinas's view, predestination is certain, the cause of salvation, and not caused by God's foreknowledge of merits; therefore, he cannot be a libertarian.

Aquinas is clearly a compatibilist, but now we must distinguish his view from another notable compatibilist view of predestination, that of Calvinism. John Calvin is one of the best-known advocates of a double predestination view. He says that

By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or the other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.<sup>267</sup>

Calvin seems to be claiming that God directs some people to hell, and that it is His goal for certain people to ultimately end up in hell.<sup>268</sup> Perhaps part of his reason for making this claim is his claim that God does not merely permit evil but actively wills it.<sup>269</sup> Both of these are claims which most Christians would find problematic, and both were condemned by the Catholic Church at the Council of Trent within Calvin's

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<sup>267</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, bk. III, ch. 21.5

<sup>268</sup> Some claim this is not actually Calvin's view, but it seems to me to be the best interpretation. It is not my goal here to examine Calvin's view, so for the purposes of this paper let us assume my interpretation is correct.

<sup>269</sup> Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, bk. I, ch. 18.1

lifetime.<sup>270</sup> The doctrine of double predestination had already been condemned at several earlier Church councils, centuries before either Aquinas or Calvin.<sup>271</sup>

Aquinas does not accept Calvinism or any other form of double predestination.

Aquinas makes a distinction between predestination and reprobation. He says:

To providence, however, it belongs to permit certain defects in those things which are subject to providence, as was said above (Q. 22, A. 2). Thus, as men are ordained to eternal life through the providence of God, it likewise is part of that providence to permit some to fall away from that end; this is called reprobation. Thus, as predestination is a part of providence, in regard to those ordained to eternal salvation, so reprobation is a part of providence in regard to those who turn aside from that end. Hence reprobation implies not only foreknowledge, but also something more, as does providence, as was said above (Q. 22, A. 1). Therefore, as predestination includes the will to confer grace and glory; so also reprobation includes the will to permit a person to fall into sin, and to impose the punishment of damnation on account of that sin.<sup>272</sup>

Reprobation is similar to predestination in that, just as predestination causes one to go to heaven, reprobation causes one to go to hell. However, there are some significant differences. According to Aquinas,

Reprobation differs in its causality from predestination. This latter is the cause both of what is expected in the future life by the predestined--namely, glory--and of what is received in this life--namely, grace. Reprobation, however, is not the cause of what is in the present--namely, sin; but it is the cause of abandonment by God. It is the cause,

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<sup>270</sup> H. J. Schroeder, trans., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1978), 43-44.

<sup>271</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Predestination*, 17-23.

<sup>272</sup> ST I, q.23, a.3

however, of what is assigned in the future--namely, eternal punishment.<sup>273</sup>

Although reprobation is the cause of damnation, it is not the cause of the sins which lead to damnation, unlike predestination, which causes both salvation and the grace that leads to salvation. And there is another significant difference: Aquinas frequently speaks of God “directing” or “ordaining” the predestined to salvation, but he never uses this terminology when discussing reprobation. On Aquinas’s view, God does not in any sense direct the actions of anyone *in order to* send them to hell; He merely permits them to commit sins deserving of hell, chooses not to give the grace which would lead to Him forgiving those sins, and then sends them to hell in punishment. So, as Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange says, “[Reprobation] is merely the non-election and the will to permit certain ones to fall into and remain in sin.”<sup>274</sup> One of the essential aspects of predestination is God’s directing the person toward the end, and this is not present in reprobation. Calvin believes God directs the actions of certain people *in order to* send them to hell; Aquinas does not. Calvin believes God antecedently wills some to go to heaven and others to go to hell, and that His consequent will in this matches His antecedent will;<sup>275</sup> Aquinas believes that God antecedently wills all to go

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid., ad 2

<sup>274</sup> *Predestination*, 86.

<sup>275</sup> Aquinas argues that predestination is part of God’s consequent will, not His antecedent will, since he concludes from 1 Timothy 2:4 (“[God] wills everyone to be saved”) that God antecedently wills salvation for every individual man (QDV, q.6, a.2, obj.2; Ibid., ad 2). But Calvin would not accept this argument, since he claims that, in 1 Timothy 2:4, “[Paul] assuredly means nothing more than that the way of salvation was not shut against any order of men” (Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, bk. III, ch.24.16). Calvin seems to be claiming that there are some individual men (those predestined to damnation) whom God does not even antecedently will to be

to heaven but nevertheless consequently wills some to go to hell. So Aquinas's disagreement with Calvinism is not merely a matter of terminology; Aquinas insists on a single predestination view.

There are many different views on predestination. A libertarian would have to say that predestination does not occur, is not certain, is not the cause of salvation, or is itself caused by a creature's free choices. But Aquinas rejects all four of these positions. Aquinas also rejects the position of double predestination; predestination is God's directing someone to an end, and on Aquinas's view God does not direct anyone to hell, so predestination is only to heaven. Aquinas accepts a type of single predestination view which is only consistent with a compatibilist view of freedom.

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saved, and that predestination is part of God's antecedent will as well as His consequent will.

## Chapter 9

### GOD'S FREEDOM

Up to now we have been focusing on creaturely freedom; now let us examine in what sense Aquinas believes God is free.<sup>276</sup> We should first note that, in the case of God, the compatibilist/libertarian distinction is unhelpful. The reason for this is simple: if, as Aquinas believes, (1) nothing exists except God and what He creates, (2) God causally necessitates the actions of all His creatures, and (3) God is perfectly simple<sup>277</sup> such that any aspect of Him can be identified with His will, then it follows that there is nothing outside of God that can causally necessitate any of His choices and therefore none of His choices can be determined. And if a determined divine choice is not even logically possible, it makes no sense to ask whether such a choice would count as free. The relevant question here deals with the Principle of Alternative Possibilities: does Aquinas believe that God has really open options, such that all else

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<sup>276</sup> According to Aquinas's doctrine of analogy (ST I, q.13, a.5), things such as 'free' which are attributed to both God and creatures do not mean exactly the same thing when applied to God as they do when applied to creatures; when applied to a creature, they refer to something distinct from the creature's essence, but when applied to God, they do not. But their meaning when applied to God is not completely unrelated to their meaning when applied to creatures; there is some connection between the two. It seems clear that divine freedom and creaturely freedom are similar enough on Aquinas's view that, at least for the purposes of this paper, we can speak as if 'freedom' means the same thing for God and creatures, and so we can focus on differences in what is required for God and for creatures to be free.

<sup>277</sup> ST I, q.3, a.7

being equal, He really could have chosen otherwise than He did? I think it is reasonable to suppose that, since God is perfectly simple, any choice He makes would deal with creation, so as Norman Kretzmann points out, the question of divine freedom can be divided into two separate questions: Is God free to choose whether or not to create? And is God free to choose what to create?<sup>278</sup> I will argue that, on Aquinas's view, the answer to both of these questions is yes: God is free to choose both whether and what to create.

According to Aquinas, free will, for God as well as for creatures, is essentially the ability to make choices, and there are some things which God cannot freely choose. Just as creatures necessarily will happiness as the end of all their actions, God necessarily wills His own goodness as the end of all He does,<sup>279</sup> and therefore He does not freely will His own goodness because He had no choice with respect to it.<sup>280</sup> And, for a very different reason, God cannot choose to sin or to cause another to sin:

every sin is a departure from the order which is to God as the end: whereas God inclines and turns all things to Himself as to their last end...so that it is impossible that He should be either to Himself or to another the cause of departing from the order which is to Himself.<sup>281</sup>

Since God is, by nature, Goodness, He cannot will Himself or anyone else to depart from the order of goodness; however, He can will to permit someone (other than Himself) to depart from that order for the sake of some greater good, since “to direct

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<sup>278</sup> Norman Kretzmann, “Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy in the Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 80, no. 10 (October 1983): 632.

<sup>279</sup> ST I, q.19, a.3; SCG I, ch. 81.2

<sup>280</sup> ST I, q.19, a.10

<sup>281</sup> ST I-II, q.79, a.1

evil to a good is not opposed to one's goodness."<sup>282</sup> There is only one other kind of thing which Aquinas says God cannot freely choose:

His will is inclined first to make something freely, not something due, inasmuch as it is His goodness that is manifested in His works. But, supposing that God wishes to make something, it follows as something due from the supposition of His liberality that He make those things also without which those that He has first willed cannot be had. For example, if He wills to make a man, He must give him an intellect. But if there is anything which is not necessary for that which God wills, then that thing comes from God, not as something due, but simply as a result of His generosity.<sup>283</sup>

God cannot choose to make a thing without giving it those characteristics which are essential to it: He can't create a square without giving it four sides, He can't create a hamburger without creating the matter that composes it, He can't create a man without giving him an intellect,<sup>284</sup> and so on. But this condition does not put any real restrictions on what God can create: a three-sided square, an immaterial hamburger, and a man without an intellect aren't even possible objects that could be created. So Aquinas denies that God can freely choose His own goodness (which He wills necessarily), to sin or cause another to sin, or to create a being which lacks any of its essential characteristics; as we shall see, he affirms that God can freely choose virtually anything else.

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<sup>282</sup> QDV, q.5, a.4, ad 10

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., q.6, a.2

<sup>284</sup> Aquinas's example could use some clarification. According to Aquinas, there is a difference between having a faculty such as intellect and being able to use it. So, for example, he says that infants possess the faculty of free will but are unable to use it (ST I-II, q.113, a.3, ad 1). Perhaps there are some men who are unable to use their intellect, but nevertheless every man has an intellect, and having an intellect is an essential property of man.



Aquinas claims that God freely chose to create and could have chosen not to do so. He says that God wills things other than Himself for the sake of His goodness, since “it befits the divine goodness that other things should be partakers therein.”<sup>285</sup>

But He does not will any of these things necessarily:

God wills things apart from Himself in so far as they are ordered to His own goodness as their end. Now in willing an end we do not necessarily will things that conduce to it, unless they are such that the end cannot be attained without them; as, we will to take food to preserve life, or to take ship [sic] in order to cross the sea. But we do not necessarily will things without which the end is attainable, such as a horse for a journey which we can take on foot, for we can make the journey without one. The same applies to other means. Hence, since the goodness of God is perfect, and can exist without other things inasmuch as no perfection can accrue to Him from them, it follows that His willing things apart from Himself is not absolutely necessary.<sup>286</sup>

Since God wills things other than Himself only for the end of His goodness, it would be necessary for Him to will anything other than Himself only if doing so was necessary for attaining that end. But, since God’s goodness is perfect regardless of what exists other than God, God was free to choose not to create.

No one denies that Aquinas defended God’s freedom to create or not to create, but some, most notably Norman Kretzmann, argue that he was inconsistent in doing so.<sup>287</sup> Kretzmann says:

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<sup>285</sup> ST I, q.19, a.2

<sup>286</sup> Ibid., a.3

<sup>287</sup> John F. Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas II*, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy 47 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 218.

Is God free to choose whether or not to create? Aquinas's official answer to that question is an emphatic, unqualified yes... But I believe that his conceptions of God, goodness, creation, and choice entail a negative reply... I see no way of avoiding the inconsistency (or, at least, ambivalence) in Aquinas's account as it stands.<sup>288</sup>

Kretzmann's argument is based primarily on what he calls the Dionysian principle, which says that "goodness is by its very nature diffusive of itself and of being."<sup>289</sup>

This is a principle which Aquinas appeals to repeatedly,<sup>290</sup> and, according to Kretzmann, this seems to imply that creating is essential to God.<sup>291</sup>

Aquinas makes it clear in several places that he does not take the Dionysian principle to imply that God necessarily creates. In his *Quaestiones disputatae de potentia Dei*, when discussing Pseudo-Dionysius's statement that "As our sun neither by reason nor by pre-election, but by its very being enlightens all things that can participate its light [sic], so the divine good by its very essence pours the rays of its goodness upon all things according to their capacity,"<sup>292</sup> he says that

The comparison of Dionysius must be understood to refer to the universality of diffusion: as the sun sheds its rays on all bodies without

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<sup>288</sup> Norman Kretzmann, "A General Problem of Creation: Why Would God Create Anything at All?," in *Being and Goodness: The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology*, ed. Scott MacDonald, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 215.

<sup>289</sup> Kretzmann, "Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy," 633.

<sup>290</sup> Julien Peghaire, "L'axiome 'Bonum est diffusivum sui' dans le néo-platonisme et le thomisme," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa*, Section Spéciale, Volume Premier (1932): 19.

<sup>291</sup> Kretzmann, "Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy," 633-634.

<sup>292</sup> QDP, q.3, a.15, obj.1

differentiating one from another, so likewise is it with God's goodness: but it does not apply to the absence of will.<sup>293</sup>

And when discussing the same passage in his commentary on Pseudo-Dionysius's *De divinis nominibus*, he says:

Then when he says <For also as our sun etc.>, he shows through an example what he had said concerning the diffusion of goodness. And he says that just as our sensible sun illuminates all things which are able to participate in its light according to their own proportion through their natural esse [being], not by reasoning or preferring one to another, thus also the Good which is God, which is the archetype, i.e., the principal exemplar or figure, through excellency separated above the sun, as above some obscure and deficient image, through God's essence God proportionally sends forth to all existents rays of God's goodness as far as to all that pertains to goodness. But it must be considered that he did not refer to God, 'not reasoning' or 'not preferring' which he had said concerning the sun; but, as he said thus concerning God he adds that God hands down goodness to all things through God's own essence. For the esse of the sun is not its 'to understand' or 'to will', even if it should have intellect and will, and for this reason what it does through its esse it does not do through intellect and will. But the divine esse is its 'to understand' and 'to will', and for this reason what God does through God's esse God does through intellect and will. And for this reason he says significantly that God is segregated from the sun, as the archetype above an obscure image.<sup>294</sup>

Aquinas claims that Pseudo-Dionysius's comparison between God's goodness and the sun (one of the passages which most clearly endorse the Dionysian principle) is, like all analogies, imperfect: it shows that God communicates His goodness to all creatures, but not that this communication is necessary and automatic.<sup>295</sup> Rather, God

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid., ad 1

<sup>294</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In librum beati Dionysii de divinis nominibus expositio* IV, ch. 1.45-1.57

<sup>295</sup> Wippel, 222.

communicates goodness through His intellect and will, and therefore freely. So Aquinas certainly believes that the Dionysian principle does not entail that God must create, but he still must show how that is possible.

Aquinas can accept the Dionysian principle without implying that creating is essential to God by saying that the diffusion necessary for goodness takes place within God's nature, and he in fact makes this argument in his *Commentary on the Sentences*:

As Dionysius says, . . . the good is communicative of itself. But God is good in the highest degree; therefore God will communicate himself in the highest degree. But he does not communicate himself in the highest degree in creatures, because they do not receive all his goodness; therefore there must be a perfect communication, so that he communicates all his goodness [with] another. But that cannot be in a diversity of essence; therefore there must be more than one distinct [person] in the unity of the divine essence.<sup>296</sup>

Aquinas says that the essential diffusiveness of goodness cannot be satisfied by God's diffusing goodness to creatures alone, and therefore there must be a perfect diffusion of goodness within God's nature, between multiple distinct persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). This would allow him to say that, due to this intrinsic diffusion, no additional extrinsic diffusion is necessary. Kretzmann argues that this argument fails:

[E]ven if the Son's being begotten and the Holy Spirit's proceeding can be considered an essential intrinsic diffusion of goodness and being, in Aquinas's system it is the *triune* God whose essence is goodness itself. Unless there is some further intrinsic diffusion, beyond the pluralizing of persons, the essential self-diffusiveness of goodness remains intact and calls for *extrinsic* diffusion.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* I, d.2, q.1, a.4, quoted in Kretzmann, "Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy," 634.

<sup>297</sup> Kretzmann, "Goodness, Knowledge, and Indeterminacy," 634.

According to Kretzmann, having a plurality of persons in God might count as an essential intrinsic diffusion of goodness and being, but since it is not a case of the triune God (the three persons together) diffusing goodness, and it is the triune God whose essence is goodness, there nevertheless must be an extrinsic diffusion of goodness. But Kretzmann seems to be misunderstanding the argument. Aquinas does not say that God diffuses His goodness *by creating the plurality of persons*, but rather that He diffuses His goodness *by a perfect communication between the persons*. Each of the persons within God perfectly diffuses its goodness to each of the others, and so it is the triune God diffusing goodness rather than just the Father diffusing it to the Son and the Holy Spirit. And since this is a perfect diffusion, there is no extrinsic diffusion required. Kretzmann notes that, regardless of how effective this argument may be, Aquinas uses it only once, in his earliest major work.<sup>298</sup> But this does not necessarily mean that Aquinas changed his mind; he often goes into more detail about a particular subject in one work than another without having changed his mind substantially in between. Nevertheless, even if Aquinas later rejected this argument, he still has another argument to counter Kretzmann's.

Aquinas can also counter Kretzmann's argument by saying that the diffusion relevant to the Dionysian principle is not efficient causation but rather final causation.

He says:

Though, according to the proper use of the word, *to pour out* seems to imply the operation of an efficient cause, yet taken broadly it can imply the status of any cause, as do *to influence*, *to make*, etc. When good is said to be of its very notion diffusive, however, diffusion is not to be understood as implying the operation of an efficient cause but rather the

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<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

status of a final cause. Nor is such diffusion brought about through the mediation of any added power. Good expresses the diffusion of a final cause and not that of an agent, both because the latter, as efficient, is not the measure and perfection of the thing caused but rather its beginning, and also because the effect participates in the efficient cause only in an assimilation of its form, whereas a thing is dependent upon its end in its whole existence. It is in this that the character of good was held to consist.<sup>299</sup>

And as John Wippel points out, if the diffusion of goodness required by the Dionysian principle is only final causation, then the Dionysian principle merely states that God's goodness is His end in creating other things; since God's goodness is perfect and no creaturely goodness can compare to it, Aquinas can maintain that creating is not required for and adds nothing to the divine goodness, and so God is free to create or not to create.<sup>300</sup> Kretzmann claims that Aquinas's final-causation interpretation of the Dionysian principle is "novel" and "counterintuitive" and "has nothing to recommend it as an interpretation."<sup>301</sup> Although he is probably correct about this, it is completely irrelevant. According to John Wippel:

[I]ndeed, it may not be the most historically accurate rendering of [Pseudo-Dionysius's] true thought and, therefore, novel. And it may be counter-intuitive. However that may be, Thomas was accustomed to give the best interpretation possible, a benign interpretation, if you will, when dealing with great authorities from the past, whether these be philosophical or theological or, as he thought to be true in this case, Apostolic. He does this continually when dealing with Aristotle. He clearly felt that the great thinkers of the past, while not immune from making mistakes, had much to contribute to the human mind in its search for truth. Hence he did not read them merely for their historical

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<sup>299</sup> QDV, q.21, a.1, ad 4

<sup>300</sup> Wippel, 238-239.

<sup>301</sup> Kretzmann, "A General Problem of Creation," 220-221.

interest, but insofar as they could assist him in his own pursuit of truth.<sup>302</sup>

Aquinas believed Pseudo-Dionysius was the real Dionysius mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 17:34), and so he tried to give him the best possible interpretation, one which preserved God's freedom to create or not, since Aquinas viewed this as both required by orthodox Catholic belief and something established on philosophical grounds.<sup>303</sup> Whether Aquinas was accurately interpreting Pseudo-Dionysius is unimportant; the final-causation interpretation is the one Aquinas accepted, so it is the one with which we should be concerned, and on that interpretation Aquinas can consistently say that God could freely choose whether to create or not. Kretzmann's final objection to this interpretation is that it means God has no reason to create anything.<sup>304</sup> But Aquinas argues that God does have a reason for creating: He creates things for the sake of His goodness.<sup>305</sup> So God does have a reason to create,<sup>306</sup> but it is

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<sup>302</sup> Wippel, 239.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 218. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (par. 295-296) seems to agree that it is required by orthodox Catholic belief: "We believe that God created the world according to his wisdom. It is not the product of any necessity whatever, nor of blind fate or chance...nor is creation any sort of necessary emanation from the divine substance."

<sup>304</sup> Kretzmann, "A General Problem of Creation," 221.

<sup>305</sup> SCG I, ch. 86.2

<sup>306</sup> God's goodness is a reason for Him to create in the same way our happiness is a reason for us to do anything: God creates this world because it shows His goodness, and I study philosophy because it makes me happy. And we both had alternatives: God's goodness would be the same if he had created a different world or nothing at all, and perhaps I would have been equally happy studying a different subject (say, math). The fact that my happiness provides as much reason to study math as it does to study philosophy does not mean that it provides no reason to study philosophy, and

not a reason which compels Him to create rather than not or explains why He created rather than not, and so, on Aquinas's view, He is free to choose whether or not to create.

Now let us look at the second question: is God free to choose what to create, given that He has chosen to create something rather than nothing? Aquinas undeniably believes that He is: "the divine wisdom is not so restricted to any particular order [of creation] that no other course of events could happen. Wherefore we must simply say that God can do other things than those He has done."<sup>307</sup> In fact, he seems to take the view that God can create any possible world:

[Some people] said that the divine power is restricted to this present course of events through the order of the divine wisdom and justice without which God does nothing. But since the power of God, which is His essence, is nothing else but His wisdom, it can indeed be fittingly said that there is nothing in the divine power which is not in the order of the divine wisdom; for the divine wisdom includes the whole potency of the divine power.<sup>308</sup>

[I]n God, power and essence, will and intellect, wisdom and justice, are one and the same. Whence, there can be nothing in the divine power which cannot also be in His just will or in His wise intellect. Nevertheless, because His will cannot be determined from necessity to this or that order of things... neither are the wisdom and justice of God restricted to this present order... so nothing prevents there being something in the divine power which He does not will, and which is not included in the order which He has placed in things.<sup>309</sup>

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likewise the fact that God's goodness is the same regardless of what He creates does not mean that it provides no reason for Him to create this world.

<sup>307</sup> ST I, q.25, a.5

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., ad 1



Aquinas claims that anything which is in God's power could be wise and just for Him to do, which implies that He is free to create any world He has the power to create. And, given Aquinas's compatibilist understanding of creaturely freedom,<sup>310</sup> God has the power to create any possible world. We should note that there are some things which are impossible given God's nature: He cannot sin, He cannot cause anyone to sin, He cannot make an untrue statement (since He is omniscient and cannot lie),<sup>311</sup> and so on, so there are no possible worlds in which He does any of these things. Perhaps we must add to this list that God cannot make a world which is not well-ordered internally, since there is one passage in which Aquinas seems to say this:

The universe, the present creation being supposed, cannot be better, on account of the most beautiful order given to things by God; in which the good of the universe consists. For if any one thing were bettered, the proportion of order would be destroyed; as if one string were stretched more than it ought to be, the melody of the harp would be destroyed. Yet God could make other things, or add something to the present creation; and then there would be another and a better universe.<sup>312</sup>

But this is the only passage I know of where Aquinas discusses the subject, and it is not clear what he means here by well-ordered: he could simply be saying, as he says elsewhere, that God can't create, for example, a man without an intellect. It is also not clear that he is saying God had to create a well-ordered world; he could simply be saying that it was more fitting for Him to do so, or even just that He actually did so.

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<sup>310</sup> On a libertarian view of creaturely freedom, the free choices of creatures restrict which possible worlds God can create; there is no such restriction on Aquinas's compatibilist view, since God causally determines the free choices of creatures.

<sup>311</sup> ST II-II, q.89, a.1

<sup>312</sup> ST I, q.25, a.6, ad 3

On any of these interpretations, Aquinas is not here adding anything substantial. And if he were adding a condition on God's creation, it would at least seem to conflict with what he says elsewhere, so it seems the best interpretation is one on which this claim does not add anything substantial. So, on Aquinas's view, God is free to create any world which, given His nature, He is able to create.

Since there are differences in goodness between possible worlds, this implies that God can do less than the best. And Aquinas admits that God not only can but actually does less than the best: God could have made a better world than He actually made by making the things He made better,<sup>313</sup> making other things than what He made, or adding something to the present creation.<sup>314</sup> Some people think it is problematic for God to do less than the best; Aquinas clearly disagrees. On his view, since God isn't a moral agent, He has no obligation to create the best possible world, and since His infinite goodness is the same regardless of what finite amount of goodness is in the created world, creating the best world is not necessary for Him to attain His end.<sup>315</sup>

On Aquinas's view, God necessarily wills His own goodness as His end, and His freedom consists in choosing the means to this end. Unlike creatures, whose choices are necessarily caused by their Creator, there is no one outside of God who

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid., a.6

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., ad 3

<sup>315</sup> It seems to me that Aquinas believes there is no best possible world: for any possible world, God can change something to make it better. But I believe he would say that, even if there were a best possible world or set of best possible worlds, God would still be free to create a world less than the best.

can cause His choices, so His choices are ultimately caused by Him and no one else. Since the end of His goodness can be attained equally well regardless of what exists other than Him, He has substantial freedom in choosing whether or what to create. His nature does, in a sense, restrict Him somewhat: He cannot sin, cause anyone to sin, make an untrue statement, or create something which lacks one of its essential properties. But He is free to create any world which, given His nature, He is able to create, or to create nothing at all.

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