



s buried under a simple slab in a chapel

to what extent human beings are capable of avoiding sin. *On the Fall of the Devil* deals with one of the most excruciating versions of the problem of evil: how could initially good angels, supremely intelligent and with no carnal temptations, turn away from God, the only true source of happiness?

While at Bec, Anselm did write one purely philosophical work. *On the Grammarian* reflects on the interface between grammar and logic, and on the relation between signifiers and signified. Against the background of Aristotle's categories Anselm analysed the contrasts between nouns and adjectives, concrete and abstract terms, substances and qualities; and he related these contrasts to each other.

In 1093 Anselm succeeded Lanfranc as archbishop of Canterbury, an office which he held until his death. His last years were much occupied with disputes over jurisdiction between the king (William II) and the Pope (Urban II). But he found time to write an original justification for the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation under the title *Why did God Become Man?* Justice demands, he says, that where there is an offence, there must be satisfaction: the offender must offer a recompense that is equal and opposite to the offence. In feudal style, he argues that the magnitude of an offence is judged by the importance of the person offended, while the magnitude of a recompense is judged by the importance of the person making it. Human sin is infinite offence, since it is offence against God; human recompense is only finite, since it is made by a creature. Unaided, therefore, the human race is incapable of making satisfaction for the sins of Adam and his heirs. Satisfaction can only be adequate if it is made by one who is human (and therefore an heir of Adam) and also divine (and therefore capable of making infinite recompense). Hence the necessity of the Incarnation. In the history of philosophy this treatise of Anselm's is important because of its concept of satisfaction, which, along with deterrence and retribution, long figured in philosophical justifications of punishment in the political as well as the theological context.

Just before becoming archbishop, Anselm had become embroiled in a dispute with a pugnacious theologian, Roscelin of Compiègne (c.1050–1120). Roscelin is famous for his place in a quarrel that had a long history ahead of it: the debate over the nature of universals. In a sentence such as 'Peter is human' what does the universal term 'human' stand for? Philosophers down the ages came to be divided into realists, who thought that such a predicate stood for some extra-mental reality, and nominalists, who

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