

EVIDENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF HOW ANYTHING IS REALLY GOOD IF THERE IS NO GOD

Religion says the problem of how God lets suffering and evil happen is not the point. What is the point is how nothing is really good unless there is a God. This is called the problem of good.

The discussion on the religion side seems to hide a need for God when it poses as making a case for God.

The conscientious atheist cannot meet the believer on any plane that involves God or prayer. If evil is seen as being pro-atheist then the atheist does not want to risk watering evil down or redefining it and will see belief in God as taking the risk of doing that.

Religion says evil is not a true power but only good that is not the right kind of good. So evil is the lack of a good that should be there but is not.

Some may reason, "Evil if it is a thing is not truly evil for it cannot corrupt good. Oil may look like it corrupts water but it does not. The two may be in the one lake but they never merge." But if it does all the harm it can it is still evil. Good or evil cannot be expected to do the impossible. It does not affect what they are.

Another deduction from their reasoning is, "Is evil evil because it twists and degrades good? Evil is more evil so to speak when it does that. It is evil simply because it is fake good." This is nonsense for as we seen evil does not need to corrupt good to be evil. Pure evil and one that is parasitic on good is just evil and how it goes about it does not make it any worse or better.

IS GOD GOOD?

The Church says that God is perfectly rational and creative which is the same as saying he is totally good. So failure to be rational or creative then is evil. God cannot be evil for he is not stupid and you cannot be evil without being somehow stupid.

And who says God is good? Whoever says that God is good is saying they are in a position to judge that God is good and that they know God as well as God does!

If God wants people to do that and religion says he does, is he really good?

EVIDENTIALISM SOLVED BY THE PROBLEM OF GOOD?

There are two types of arguments against an all-good God being able to let evil happen.

The logical arguments argue that evil and God contradict each other.

The evidentialist arguments say that even if God does exist, we cannot be expected to say he does for evil makes his existence unlikely. For an evidentialist, God might exist in theory but its hardly likely he does for certain kinds of evil tell against a loving creator. The evidentialist says that though God might allow evil for the sake of a worthwhile good we have the right to take a chance and say some evils look so terrible that they show there is no God. It is about plausibility not certainty.

Believers in God have only one answer for the evidentialist. It is that he or she overlooks that evil itself is really good in the wrong place and time. But that amounts to saying that if you come into existence and start an eternal life of endless pain that it is worthwhile. Looking for the good in everything to partly excuse or fully excuse the bad is evil in itself.

It is callous to say that there is a problem of good if we have a hypothetical universe in which very little evil happens and there is an equal problem in a hypothetical universe with countless zillions of people who suffer to the extreme from the first moment of their existence and for all eternity. That is just disregarding the suffering to look at the good.

The problem of good is a popular religious argument. It says that if you reject God over evil you end up with the problem of good. You end up with no explanation for where good came from. This assumes you need God as the answer. They say if there is no God of love and goodness there is no such thing as evil or good. You have no reason to call anything good.

This reasoning rejects all evidentialist arguments against God as irrelevant.

Human nature is surely made to see evil as evidence of the possibility that nothing or no one is going to help you with aspects of it. The argument then attacks you. The evidentialist argument is part of our nature. If you see evil as terrible you will see it as evidence for no God. You have to see it as evidence in itself. It says something and you have to listen.

Evidence is a message.

If you still believe in God then that should be because there is also evidence that God exists and that is stronger and offers hope of triumph over evil. If you are looking for such evidence you will be disappointed. Christian defenders of the faith typically give you arguments based on ifs and maybes and they exaggerate their force. They really give you just opinions masquerading as evidence.

The problem of good argument sees the good in evil and refuses to see the bad correctly. It is watered down. It wants you to worry about good not evil.

The problem of good does not and cannot account for there being evil that does no good but only bad. It is not even relevant. Trying to use it to excuse what is possibly terrible neglect by God is itself evil.

WE DON'T NEED CONCEPT OF UNLIMITED GOODNESS

To be God, God has to be the origin and essence of all good. So believers make out that if there is no God there is no good. Good exists therefore there must be a God. Not just any version of God will do - he must be an all-good and sovereign and infinite God. A finite God is limited in goodness. So if goodness proves God, it proves his infinite and perfect and unlimited goodness.

But we have an imperfect and limited understanding of good. Good is limited. There is only so much you can do for others and yourself. It is enough. We don't need God's brand of endless goodness. Needing tea doesn't mean you want or need an infinite ocean of tea to exist.

The doctrine of God then is about God and not about what we need. God's concern for our needs is not paramount. God is.

Religion says that is only fair. But even if it is fair then what about us? God mattering not us would be a necessary evil. We can't be asked to be happy about that.

GOOD EXPERIENCE IS GOD EXPERIENCE?

If God is goodness and goodness is this person who is God then surely any form of goodness is a religious experience or perhaps more accurately a spiritual experience? That idea denies that there is any such thing as an atheist for there is good in everything we do. If evil is the abuse of good it follows that evil in a sense is good. If there is no goodness without God because goodness has to be a person to be real then it follows that the argument, "God may exist because we experience his presence" is not an argument for belief. It is an argument for experience meaning that the unbeliever just does not realise she is in union with God and serving God.

EUTHYRPO DILEMMA

Christianity says that many things are good and all things have good in them. Moral good is a different kind of good.

Some say good will exist whether there is a God or not. Some also say that moral good will exist whether there is a God or not. Christians say there is no moral good if there is no God and that the morally good atheist does not realise they are acting as if they know that.

Which one is the most important - good or moral good?

If it is good then God is evil because we suffer and should have only good things. This shows that there is something terribly wrong with the problem of good argument. It would be more than just wrong intellectually but as far as the heart is concerned it would be a sign of religious hardness towards those who suffer.

Moral good can only matter if good matters more. Good has to happen before moral good can be possible. So good matters more than free will to do evil. If love is important, good is more important for what use is love if it is not good?

If, this is only an if, the two matter equally then what?

We have a God who could have put us in a universe with no risk of evil or harm. He is not much of a God for when he had a choice he should have chosen the choice that is painless for us.

As good matters more than moral good and if there is a choice it has to be good in preference to moral good then that is the kind of universe we should be in.

The believers say we could have had a universe where evil is not the problem at all but good is. So if there is no evil or temptation or pain or suffering in a world there is still a problem of good. If there is evil, evil is not a problem - the problem of good is the problem. So either way evil is not a problem. But does such an argument make sense? No - a universe with a painful non-problem is not as good as a universe with a painless non-problem of the same kind.

The good person does good automatically and does not need to reason that there is a God in order to be good. If you need to believe in God to be good then you are not a good person and are manipulating yourself to act good.

Belief in God does not solve the problem of good. It makes the problem worse and corrupts our intentions.

Suppose good and evil would exist whether God exists or not. Suppose we exist. If we have free will then it is not about loving God or otherwise but about good and evil. God has no right to use our free will as an excuse for his letting evil happen for good and evil are not about him but independent of him. The believers themselves do not understand good and evil properly when they make excuses for him. That makes them dangerous and often has in the past as exemplified by religious wars.

Think this. Is God's nature good by some standard or good because he says so? If it is by some standard then good matters and God doesn't. And to say he makes things good just by decree is to say that you would be willing to torture a baby to death for fun if he demanded it and just because he asked.

Believers may say that God would never ask you to torture the baby for he is the kind of God that would not do that. Even if you boast that he would never ask the point is you would if he did. What about the hypothetical issue? Surely if hypothetically he could, you have to be hypothetically willing to do it? It may be hypothetical but it still says something about you. It still speaks of the person you would be if it were commanded by God.

The delusion that God and goodness are the same and that good is a person and that person is God is far worse than thinking you are going to sprout wings and fly over the moon or have done so. It is even more detached from reality than thinking you are made of cheese and not flesh. In psychiatry, delusions that endanger you and/or make you dangerous are illnesses.

If God is not necessary for there to be good, then good is to be served above God. If God commands evil then ignore him. Even his command that you see him as necessary for good to exist at all and grounding it is evil. Jack the Ripper tried to make a good of his own.

THE RISK

Even if there were no God and no universe and nothing at all there would still be some good. For example, there would be no suffering. God can't invent good. He has to subject himself to it. Hurting a baby would be evil whether there is a God or not and shame on religion for trying to say different. They imply it would be fine to hurt the baby if there were no God. It is terrible how they can suggest that and then say that God is right to let babies suffer terribly for he has a reason unknown to us.

Believers in God risk worshipping a God who is evil but whose evil is condoned. God seeing himself as good is one thing but we are too limited and imperfect to see it the way he sees it. Thus you could adore a perfect God but because your love for good is blurred your perception of God becomes blurred too. Thus you adore the source of moral perfection through the lens of your bad and faulty moral perception meaning you adore what you think good is or want it be rather than what it is. You would have excessive esteem for your moral compass and perception when you would turn it into God or worship a God who represents it.

Most of us - if not all - understand evil inadequately. We say we know it when we see it but we don't really really know it. Given that human nature is so limited in discernment and our understanding is largely clouded, it should be taken as certain that believers are in fact condoning evil even if God really is good. They tend to condone especially when the worst things seem to happen to other people.

If you are suffering and see your loved ones suffering, you could get so desperate that you are willing to condone God's role in this as long as good things may come at the end. People have condoned what earthly tyrants did to them for the same reason. It is all about hope.

Is belief in God worth it if it causes vulnerable desperate people to go to that extreme? They discard principle for the sake

of hope.

It is not worth it. You can have hope without God. We know by experience that things usually improve given time. You can have hope if you think God is not all-powerful

Human nature likes inventing its own good. It may be close to the real thing but it is not the real thing. Even if it is a perfect match for real good, it is not mean we are really attuned to what good is. It could be that we don't care about good as good but only care about good for it happens to match what we want good to be. Even if there is merit in the theology of the problem of good, even if it is correct, it does not follow that any human person cares. We could be seeing good in nature not God and imagining that it is God. That way we find God's presence in what suits us. In other words, we create an idol. It does not matter if God exists or not, it is still idolatry.