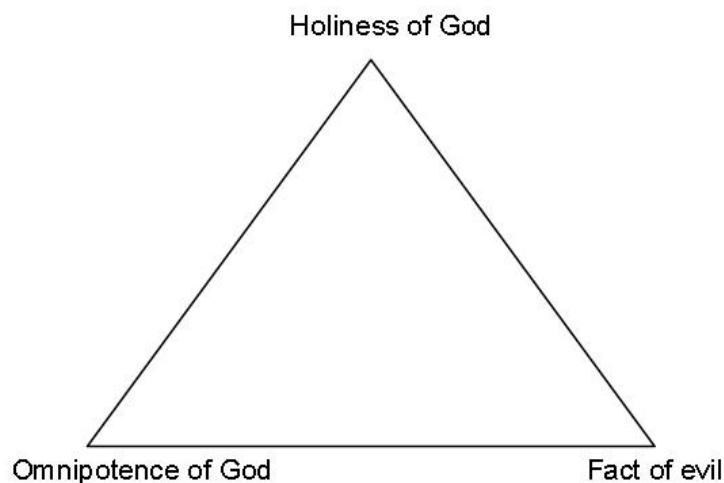


EVIL IN THE WORLD: IS GOD HOLY?

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Introduction: The Antilogism



- I. The origin of evil in the free will (intellect) of secondary agencies maintains the holiness of God.

A. Persons involved

1. Satan: John **8:44**
2. Adam and Eve
 - a. Origin of sin among men: Romans **15:12**
 - b. Universality among men

B. Why allow evil in the first place?

Evil is a necessary potentiality of free will. God is not limited by the option, but expresses himself in the option.

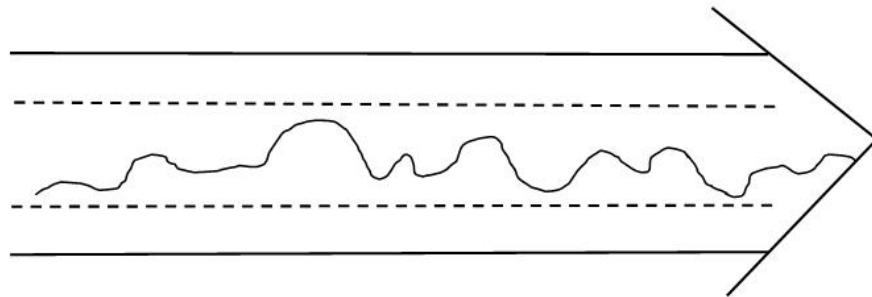
1. Free will allows a higher level of existence for the creature: Psalm **19**; 1 Corinthians **9:9**.
2. Free will provides a greater glory potential for the Creator: Ephesians **1:6**, 12, 14
We avoid the spectacle of a self-centered God by observing that his glory comes from the creature's freewill, loving response to his love first shown.

By allowing evil, God set up a situation for the greater expression of love as well as for a higher kind of holiness—one in which the holiness is in the face of evil, forgives the evil, and otherwise overcomes the evil.

- a. Free will chooses God over against an alternative (Genesis 3) IF CHOSEN FOR: no one would like to be married to a spouse who could not have chosen someone else.
- b. Free will only creates an opposition to be triumphed over IF CHOSEN AGAINST.
 - (1) Evil possibility provides opportunity for retrieving someone from an alternative.
 - (2) Evil provides occasion for triumph over opposition that will not respond to love (the failure to respond to love justifies condemnation and destruction).
- c. Evil provides a basis through contrast for a greater appreciation of good.

GOD IS NOT GUILTY (UNHOLY); YET HE IS RESPONSIBLE.

The concept of restricted freedom sets the boundaries ahead of time.



II. Limitation of the extent to which secondary agencies may oppose God

A. In degree

1. Ability limited in secondary causation
2. Nature of evil: the built-in tendency for sin to self-destruct
3. Imminence of God provides for his intervention at any time.
4. Revelation

B. In time

1. Pain cannot be “remembered”; only the fact of it is remembered.

Time is a great healer of both physical and psychological pain.

2. Death of the individual curbs the cumulative effect of evil in the world.
3. Consummation of the moral order (judgment) permanently separates the irretrievable evil in the world.

The inequities of the time of proclamation are gathered up in the time of judgment. The eternal eschaton provides the enlarged context in which to qualify the purposeless pain and suffering of the innocent and the righteous during time.

III. Establishment of the redemptive possibility

God dealt with the possibility of evil not by avoiding the possibility of evil, not by immediate destruction of the evil doer, but by overcoming evil with good: Romans **12:21**.

The Christ was slain in God's mind before the foundation of the world (Revelation **13:8**; 1 Peter **1:20**).

The Christian is conceived of as being in Christ before the world (Ephesians **1:3-6**).
The works were finished before the foundation of the world (Hebrews **4:3**).

Love is part of the problem of evil, but in another direction love gets rid of the problem of suffering (pain).