

Explanation and Investigation of the Theodicy of The Free-Will Defense in Justifying Evil

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Abstract:

This article examines and critiques the Free Will Defense theodicy, a theory that assigns responsibility for moral evil to human beings and, by emphasizing free will, seeks to reconcile the existence of moral evils with belief in an omnipotent and perfectly benevolent God. Augustine and Alvin Plantinga are among the principal proponents of this view, arguing that although human freedom is accompanied by suffering and evil, it nevertheless makes possible the emergence and existence of moral and spiritual virtues. In this study, through an analysis of the Genesis narrative in the Bible and the traditional perspective, alongside contemporary critiques that combine philosophical, theological, and ethical approaches, the limitations of this theodicy are demonstrated. These include the problem of justifying and explaining the intensity and magnitude of evils throughout human history, the tension and apparent incompatibility between God's omniscience, omnipotence, and perfect benevolence on the one hand and human freedom on the other, and the dependence of this account on the narrative of the Fall of Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, responses are provided to the critiques raised.

Key words: Free Will Theodicy; Free Will; Problem of Evil; Moral God; Religion and Ethics; Plantinga; Augustine.

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