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GOD AND EXISTENCE OF EVIL: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

BY

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university or any other award.
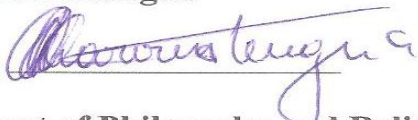
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To my late dad Charles Mugo Muthambure.

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on traditional understanding of God; a God who is purported to have created the universe and all it holds on one hand and our daily life experiences of the world on the other hand. Theists assert God to be most powerful, wholly good and all knowing. Our daily experience shows that there is evil everywhere: pain and suffering are undeniably real, cancer, natural disasters, war, poverty, racism, murder, animal cruelty and the list is almost endless. Traditionally, the problem of evil has been seen to arise from the apparent self-contradiction involved in asserting that God, who is omnipotent, wholly good creator exists, and that evil exists. There is a contradiction between these three propositions, so that if the first two propositions were true the third would be false. But all three statements are fundamental elements of traditional theists' belief.

The primary objective of this study is to investigate whether the existence of evil precludes the existence of God and vice versa. The research methodology involved a philosophical analysis, argumentation and evaluation of documents related to this topic. This method has focused on three paradigms of the study: The existence of the omnipotent God and the existence of evil, and whether the two are logically consistent or inconsistent. This study has been guided by the divine command theory as its theoretical framework. This theory states that an action is morally right or wrong because of the prescriptions given by God. The moral quality of an action is determined by approval or disapproval by God.

All arguments for the existence of God namely the teleological, cosmological and ontological has been evaluated and a conclusion drawn that none of them proves the existence of God. This study observes that the current arguments for the existence of God are not logically tenable.

Evil has been discussed in different aspects namely; its origin, psychology and its various types, and a conclusion drawn from this evaluation is that evil is real and affects human beings and animals. Having discussed the existence of God and the reality of evil, the relationship between God and evil has been assessed and the study observes that there can never be an omnipotent and omni benevolent God in the face of all moral and natural evils we experience in this world. The ostensible strong justification for God permitting evil to exist in the world is free-will defense. This defense has been evaluated and the study concludes that the importance of free-will is surpassed by its' negative outcomes. And therefore God failed by administering freedom to humanity; he should not have given human beings freedom in equal measures, but in proportion to each individual's ability to use it.

The study concludes by suggesting that theists should accept God's weaknesses and revise the attributes given to God to accommodate for a lesser powerful, good

and knowing God, or drop the whole idea of an omnipotent, omni benevolent and

omniscient God

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The quest to offer a solution to the problem of existence of a supernatural deity who is omnipotent and omni-benevolent who allows evil to exist has been there for ages (McCloskey, 1974, 1). There are three intellectual needs which the belief in a supernatural deity may be thought to serve. It offers an explanation of the world's existence and of its nature, an assurance that life is worth living an answer to the question how one ought to live and ultimate destiny of human being. But Mcloskey stresses that considering it logically it does not give an answer to the puzzle of a deity who is so powerful and totally good who allows greater quantity of evil to exist at the same time. Why would a greater quantity of evil make the existence of God less likely than a lesser quantity? Presumably any quantity of evil is a problem for the existence of an omnipotent and omni-benevolent deity. But contemporary objectors usually admit that an omnipotent and omni-benevolent being would have a morally sufficient reason to permit some evil or at least some apparent evil. That is to say, they might not be gratuitous. However, the greater the quantity of evil, the more likely it is that at least some of those evils are gratuitous, and hence, the less likely it is that the God of traditional theism exists (Rowe, 200, 120).

Thus, the evidential problem of evil which is the problem of determining whether and, if so, to what extent the existence of evil constitutes evidence against the existence of God. This is to say, a being perfect in power, knowledge and goodness does allow evil to exist at the same time. The evidential arguments from evil which attempt to show that, once we put aside any evidence there might be in support of the existence of God, it becomes highly unlikely, that the world was created and is governed by an omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly good being. As stressed by Rowe, that there are certain facts about evil that cannot be adequately explained on a theistic account of the world, theism is thus treated as a large-scale hypothesis, or explanatory theory which aims to make sense of some pertinent facts, and to the extent that it fails to do so it is disconfirmed (Rowe 2001, 125). It is therefore clear that the problem of God and the existence of evil is a philosophical problem.

Orthodox theism has attributed to God attributes that seem to contradict the reality we experience. In orthodox theism, God is believed to exist as ONE and they held an anthropomorphic picture of God who is PERFECT, a being who is greatest of all. St. Anselm argued that God is a being than which no greater can be conceived (Anselm, 117, 1979). This being enjoys a number of qualities which included; all powerful (Job. 42:2), which refers to God who is able to prompt any state of affair that must abide with rules of logic; that it must be logically possible in itself and at the same time be logically consistent with other essential characters of God.

Omnipresent God (Jer. 23: 23-24), who is wholly present in all space and time, is everywhere at the same time hence everything happens in His presence. Omni-benevolent (perfectly good) (1Jn 1:9, Jr. 12:1), is understood to be the author of moral principle; hence he is the center of all moral norms and acts in harmony with those norms. He always wishes the same good to be reflected in His creation. Omniscient God (all knowing) (Is. 40:28), has knowledge of the past, present, and the future, and everything that comes to be is pre-meditated by Him. Incorporeal (Jn 4:23-24), means that God is a disembodied agent, which means He is a spiritual being though he is able to affect the physical beings.

Aseity (Ps 90:1-4, Jn 5: 26), implies that from eternity to eternity God is unchangeable. This means that God possesses His own essence or existence. That his existence does not depend on any external reality, His existence is ontologically independent.

Creator and sustainer (Gn. 1-2), He is believed to be the creator and the sustainer of all that is seen and unseen. He gives everything that exists its power to exist, it follows that nothing can come into being without him willing it. And since power to be, comes from Him, it follows even the operational power is from Him (Pojman, 2008, 248). Thus the term God whose attributes are explained above is used to describe the Supreme Being held by theistic community of believers.

Evil on the other hand can be described in different ways; it has been associated with all that is destructive and negative. It has been iconed with wordings like unjust, bad, immoral, painful, and suffering. Some of its descriptions are as follows: evil is that which is harmful to the well being of a sentient being. It is unjust treatment, loss of opportunity, absence of a good doer.

As indicated in the above paragraph evil is described as pain and suffering. For the sake of clarity let me make a distinction between pain and suffering. Pain is a physical state, which is realized when the sensation is felt when a sentient being is subjected to physical torture. For example, if you put your hand on a naked flame you will be burnt and experience pain. Suffering on the other hand is a mental state that is realized when a sentient wishes that his or her situation would be better or otherwise. Pain and suffering can also be categorized as psychological or emotional. As stressed by Rowe that intense human and animal suffering occurs on a daily basis; it is in great plenitude in our world, and is a clear case of evil. He argued that there exist instances of intense suffering which an omnipotent, omniscient being could have averted without thereby losing some greater good, or permitting some evil equally bad or worse (Rowe,1979, 335).

It becomes a problem because in our daily lives, evil seems to triumph over good. The easiest solution to the puzzle is to deny one proposition; that is, either God of theologians does not exist or evil does not exist. The latter denial is self defeating

since no one can doubt its existence, but paradoxically theologians are not ready to drop their belief and they hold the two propositions true. It is on this backdrop that we pose the question; is the existence of God and the existence of evil compatible?

1.2. Statement of the problem

Two statements can be said to be logically inconsistent when it is logically impossible for both of them to be true. God is said to be Omnipotent (all powerful) and is omni-benevolent (wholly good). And yet evil exists. A classical theist holds that all the three statements are true; and yet there seems to be some contradiction between them. If the first two are true then the third one must be false and it is logically true that the three of them cannot be true at the same time. J .L. Mackie argues that the contradiction is vindicated when we assume an additional premise connecting the terms, 'good', 'evil', and 'all powerful'. 'These additional principles are that good is opposed to evil, in a such a way that a good thing always eliminates evil as far as it can, and that there are no limits to what an omnipotent thing can do' (Mackie, 1955, 202). Taking together the statements that, there exist an Omnipotent, Omni-benevolent God who created the world and there exists evil in the same world seems contradictory and yet theists take all of them to be true. We are left with a puzzle of investigating whether the two parallel statements can be compatible. Thus evil becomes a problem for most believers in that a contradiction is involved in the fact of evil on one hand, and the belief in the omnipotence and perfection of God on the other. The research problem therefore is

to examine the extent to which the theistic belief in God is consistent or inconsistent with Him permitting evil in the world.

1.3. Objectives of the study

1. To find out whether the available arguments for the existence of God and the existence of evil are logically tenable.

2. To investigate whether the existence of God negates the existence of evil and vice versa.

3. To provide some philosophical ground for the discussion of the problem of evil and existence of omnipotent being.

1.4. Research Questions

1. Are theistic arguments for the existence of God logically tenable?

2. Are the qualities given to God as a supreme deity contradicts what we experience in the world?

3. If God is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good, why does He allow evil to exist?

1.5. Research Hypotheses

This study is guided by the following Hypotheses;

1. The available arguments for the existence of God and the existence of evil are not tenable.

2. The existence of God should negate the existence of evil and vice versa.

3. While God is justified in punishing the wicked for their wrongdoing, much of the suffering in the world is undeserved.

1.6. Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is limited to the analysis and explication of the issues related to the existence of God and existence of evil. The study tried to investigate whether or not existence of God and existence of evil are compatible.

The study is limited to the restricted theism whereby God is understood as a being who is all powerful, all knowing and perfectly good. It avoids going into specific religions. This study presents a thorough exposition of how this problem of evil has been developed from the modern era to the contemporary time. It also engages itself with an endeavor to answer the question, what is evil? Here we explain evil in different categories. we also discuss the solution offered in reference to relevant proponents. And as we have mentioned above each theodicy has been criticized, the study presents works of the critics who argue against the compatibility of the two principles. Finally this study is brought to a conclusion with a synthesis of the two camps and a presentation of a suggestion that the orthodox attributes of God must be faulty calling for a revolution of theistic idea.

1.7. Literature review

The problem of the existence of God and the existence of evil is a problem propagated by the atheists in their endeavor to refute the theistic claim of the existence of a Monotheistic God. It stands to be the most powerful arsenal in the weapon against theism.

Plato in the *Republic* argues that all men have an inclination towards what is good and that no one desires to do the contrary. For Plato good is likened to the sun that 'provides light, so that our physical eyes may see the world around us, so the good provides a sort of conceptual light so that our minds can make out the forms underlying all reality. If this source of "light" did not exist', our minds would not be capable of making the sorts of distinctions that constitute the content of philosophical learning' (Plato1956, 509). He defines that which humanity desire as a virtue. Virtue according to Plato is wholly dependent on knowledge of what is good. Each particular virtue aims at what is good in a specific circumstance; it follows that since virtue depends on knowledge of what is good all virtues are virtually one. Plato adopted Socratic moral theory and improved it. For Plato moral evil emerges from ignorance of what is good (Plato 1956, 510).

Aristotle in his work *Nicomachean ethics* argues that human beings have reason, a faculty that sets him higher than other irrational animals. For him 'goodness is realized when a human being exercises his rational faculties diligently'

(AristotleIII, 1116a, 12). Unlike Plato who felt emotions are dangerous, Aristotle felt that they can be harnessed to cultivate humanity toward a virtuous behavior and this can only be achieved through the faculty of reason which moderates our feelings. Aristotle in *Nicomachean ethics* emphasized that human beings, by the virtue of reason, should live a balanced life; that is they should not be swayed from one extreme end to the other. This is what he termed as a golden mean, a balance between the two extremes and to him upon achieving this, human beings live reasonably. Good is realized when the sentient being is able to hit the balance between the two extremes in choice making while evil emerges when the sentient being choose either of the extreme ends.

Plotinus, one of the Neo-Platonists explained the existence of evil by the use of the very order of the world. He sees God as one absolute that cannot be comprehended by the abstract reasoning but by mystical contemplation. In God, he argues that, there is fullness of everything yet He shares His goodness without diminishing His original goodness. Plotinus argues that there is hierarchy in the order of creation, in which after God there exists the second level of intelligence who is said to be good but not in the same degree as God. Thirdly, in the hierarchy comes world soul which is eternal but inferior in the degree of goodness compared to the former, it is inferior since it is a hybrid of spirit and matter. The lowest level is matter and is said to be purely multiplicity lacking any permanency, intelligence and beauty. It is the principle of all errors and ugliness. Matter consists the essence

of untruth. Plotinus therefore argues that 'since goodness does not remain alone, it is necessary that evil should exist through progressive separation from good' (Petit, 1957, 82). This implies that evil comes into the world due to the nature of God lowering his power as we have seen in the hierarchy of creation, that from the highest rank where God is, to the lowest rank where matter is. There is reduction of degree of goodness until no good remains in matter, hence evil emanates from that tendency of God. At every level down this hierarchy goodness is enfeebled. It follows that goodness and evil co-exist in our world, a principle of light and darkness. Unlike Aristotle who viewed evil as privation of good and prime matter as good in potency, Plotinus sees matter as having a being but a very inferior being which cannot withstand any good. He believed that all goodness resides in the realm of essences and the moment matter receives essence evil is propagated.

St Augustine argues that, righteousness is a process towards integration while evil is a movement towards disintegration. Evil arises from corruption of nature which is essentially good. He rejected the Plotinus doctrine of emanation which was spelled out of causal necessity and in turn he embraced emanation that comes from free act done out of loving will of God. He continues to argue that evil entered into the world as misuse of human free will. If man is good, and cannot act rightly unless he wills to do so, then he must have free -will, without which he can not act rightly. We must not believe that God gave us free will so that we might sin, just because sin is committed through free-will (Augustine II, 36, 1964). He argues that

God created the world out of his own volition. He also understood that God created man as a creature and endowed him with free-will. It follows that man as a moral agent is free to love God or to rebel against Him. It is out of the misuse of this free-will that brought sin in the world. He contended that evil has no substance but it is a mere privation of what is supposed to be there and that is good

St Ireneaus as demonstrated by John Hick in his book *Evil and the God of love* 1966, propagated a theory that viewed the fall of man as not willed affair. He argued that Adam did not rebel against God as a moral agent, he sees him as being coerced by lack of strong will to a bad state of affair. He says that Adam fell as a child and that this fall was very essential towards the realization of full freedom. He reasoned that God is at work with humanity in pursuit of perfectionism of humanity. He called the state of humanity as 'undeveloped nature *Bios* which is a state of childhood-like which needs to be perfected to a higher level called *Zeo* which is a state of self-realization' (Hick, 1966, 291). This is a process cherished by St Augustine and later by John Hick, referred to as soul making process. It means that perfection is a process that can be attained through falling and rising.

Leibniz (1646-1716) in his book *Theodicy* responded to his predecessors who had argued that evil is an assurance that God doesn't exist. Leibniz was trying to respond to the two camps; the former argued that evil and God are totally incompatible and therefore God does not exist and the latter argued that the

existence of the two are not incompatible but the existence of evil provides at least a strong evidence against the existence of God. Leibniz responded to the problem of evil which was set to deny the existence of God who was portrayed by the traditional monotheism and seemed not to be the way. As described according to the attributes accorded to Him, there is a contradiction in the empirical reality and therefore God seems not to exist. Leibniz also argues against what was referred to as underachievement of God. This was in thinking that God, being All-powerful and All-knowing and Wholly good did not create the best world. The proponents of underachievement of God argue that whoever does not choose the best is lacking in power or know how or goodness. It follows that from the experience of the world we are in, it is evident that God did not choose the best and from this premise, the conclusion is that God is lacking in power, or knowledge of good.

According to Leibniz, God has the intelligence to know what the best is, and He, after deliberating on the matter, choose it. Throughout his *Theodicy* Leibniz maintained that the world God chose is the best world possible and could not be better. If there were a better world, God most assuredly would have chosen it, but since he did not, that proves that ours is the best possible world (Leibniz 1966, 80). Leibniz held that whatever is morally as well as logically possible is ascertainable by pure reason alone apart from divine revelation of God's will. God exists by logical necessity, for his nature is such that it is impossible for him not to exist.

The primary activity of this God is to pick the best world out of an infinite number of contingent possible worlds.

Leibniz argues that a world with some evils would be better than a world without any evil since in such a world, humanity will be devoid of the free-will but a world with some evil people act out of their own volition in the exercising of the free-will. Free-will distinguishes rational animals from irrational animals and therefore defines what a human being is. It is through free-will that man is able to make choices in life which includes good and bad choices. Evil then is part of choices made by man. Irrational animals do not commit any evil since they do not have free-will and therefore do not make choices. Due to this opinion, he contested the claim that there could not be a better world than the one we have, therefore, the world we experience is the best possible world. He argues that we are not justified in arguing that the world we experience is a lesser one since the occurrence of evil instances cannot be wholly explained in terms of its purpose. Even the apparent most pointless instance can be connected to some other good that we might not be in a position to know. Leibniz emphasized that the standard by which goodness of the world is to be judged should not be earthly human happiness, neither is it supposed to be judged from a particular goodness or event in isolation, the world is one body.

Leibniz's theology is that his God is utterly repugnant. He portrays God as coldly calculating the metaphysically richest world and then actualizing it without any thought or concern about what that world might mean to the creatures in it. A God who personally cares about his creatures seems foreign to Leibniz's portrait. If Leibniz's God really cared about his creatures, it seems that He would have looked at the world He calculated, see how much sin and suffering it contains, and either refuse to actualize any world at all or actualize a world with less evil, even if doing so meant less variety of beings. Of course, Leibniz's God could not do that, since Leibniz's system obligates God to create the metaphysically richest world, and that world must contain evil (Feinberg, 2004, 65).

Leibniz borrowed from the earlier works on aesthetic analogy which had described evil as a gloomy part of a well decorated painting. It is that darker part that makes the brighter part more conspicuous. Leibniz made a distinction between the Antecedent and Consequent will of God, and he continued to argue that God willed antecedently that everything should work perfectly but it turned out that not everything he created co-existed perfectly with each other and therefore God wills consequently that the arrangement he had willed to be perfect would become as perfect as possible. He concluded that this kind of incompatibility of the created things in the world is the basis of all evil (Leibniz II, 1966, 42).

Hume, in the *Dialogue concerning natural Religion (1948)* opens his discussion of the problem of evil in a dialogue between Philo and Demea. Demea a prominent skeptic, describes a series of sufferings and miseries in this world. Hume starts his discussion with the suffering of animals, such as the strong that prey on the weak and so forth, and continues to move on to the subject of human suffering where he refers to 'man as the greatest enemy of man'(Hume 1948, 70). He describes human suffering such as illness, disease, emotional strife and grief, even describing religion (superstition) as a source of immense fear and anxiety, but despite this enormous catalogue of human suffering, despair and grief, we as humans still find we have a fear of death, that would obviously put an end to such a miserable experience. For Hume proving the compatibility was not an achievement but he sought the believers to supply unconfused attributes of God which would give out a clear understanding of the matter at stake. The task ahead of theologians is to show the necessity and unavoidable existence of God and evil. But up to that far no convincing solution has been propagated (Hume, 1948, 71).

Robert Adam in his work *Must God Create the Best?* (1972) challenges Leibniz's contention that this is the best of all possible worlds. He argues that supposing God could have created a world wherein the creatures would be happier than the ones in this present world. The supposed world would be free from all corruption, misery and suffering. If such world would be possible it means that God created our present world with lesser degree of perfection. Adam argues that if God had

that opportunity and he never used it to create a perfect world then He did something wrong under the principle that 'it is wrong to bring to existence; knowingly, a being less excellent than the one that could have brought into existence' (Adams, 1972, 320).

Pike Nelson in his work *Hume on Evil* (1963) picked on Hume's argument that there is logical inconsistency between existence of God who is all-powerful, all-knowing and all-good with the existence of evil. Pike argues that for Hume's argument to hold we must first establish that God did not have morally sufficient reason to permit evil in this world. He argues that if God had a morally sufficient reason for permitting evil in this world then there is no logical inconsistency as purported by Hume (Pike, 1963, 67). This become epistemic problem of understanding the mind of God with our human mind, are we really in a position to do what Pike is proposing?

J. K. Mackie in his book *Evil and Omnipotence* (1955), presented the logical problem of evil, he argues that problem of evil is only for those who believe that there exists a God who is both Omnipotent and wholly good. Mackie sees this as a logical problem in trying to reconcile the belief in such a God and the existence of evil. He objected to the previous efforts made by theologians and philosophers in solving the problem arguing that this problem of evil is neither a scientific problem nor a practical problem that needs to be solved by waiting for observation

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to be made (falsification or confirmation), or to be confronted and be solved through dialogue respectively (Mackie,1955, 200). He argues that the existence of evil precludes the existence of Omni-benevolent and omnipotent God. He detects a contradiction in co-existence of God and evil. This contradiction is not explicit but prompted via consideration of other factors. Mackie formulates a third proposition by quasi-logical rules and he connects three concepts namely good, evil and omnipotence. He begins with arguing that evil and good are opposed in the manner that good will always eliminates evil and that there is no set limit since we are dealing with an Omni-potent being. Mackie asserts that since good will always eliminates evil; a being that is wholly good and wholly powerful will have no limit in eradication of all evils. It follows therefore that existence of such God and existence of evil is logically inconsistent. According to Mackie this inconsistency in logic can only be solved if and only if a believer is ready to drop the radical notion he holds on the powers of God and adjust to a mild notion. That is to hold that God is not wholly powerful or all-good as opposed to what He is believed to be, but rather limited in his powers (Mackie 1955, 201). Alternatively if a believer must hold the unlimited power notion of God then he must deny the existence of evil. If he does either of the above the problem of evil loses its power. Mackie's suggestion is viable and upon scrutiny of the existed literature he sees every contributor trying to embrace either of the remedy he suggested above, but unfortunately those proponents only rejected explicitly one of the propositions but at the same time implicitly asserted the same proposition. For example, St

Augustine's solution to the problem was to reject the existence of evil by arguing that evil is not an entity but a privation of good. Mackie argues that by so doing, St. Augustine explicitly rejected existence of evil while defining it as privation but, he forgot to tell us that privation itself is evil. Mackie objected to arguments by those theodicists who held the two constituent propositions true, and therefore accepting the conclusion by describing them as being fallacious.

Prior to the discussion of problem of evil, Mackie vehemently expressed how religious beliefs are irrational and at this point he still expresses how those religious beliefs are contradictory. The purported fallacy is traced from violating the initial working options that Mackie had given that if the problem were to be solved one of the constituent propositions must be false.

Theodicy that Mackie rejected as being fallacious is that; Good cannot exist without evil, that evil is a necessary counterpart of good. That the universe is better with some evil in it than a world without evil, and that evil is due to human free-will (Mackie,1955, 210).

Plantinga in *The Nature Necessity* (1971) tries to criticize Mackie, by stressing that he sees a problem in Mackie's assumption that there is no limit to what an Omnipotent being can do. He argues that it was possible for God to be omnipotent and at the same time unable to create a world that would only contain moral good.

Plantinga adds that God could not have strongly actualized some state of affairs since by so doing it would mean he would be the cause of that state. He argues that if God does that, he would be affecting the choices made by human beings and therefore interferes with their freedom. It follows that strong actualizing as explained above is incompatible with free-will. Plantinga says that doing so, God would have created a free and not free individual, a thing he likened with a statement that God could not have created a square circle (Plantinga, 1974, 170). This argument defeats the goodness of God and his powers too. This is because if God was wholly good He would not have allowed evil which originates from endowing human beings with the free-will. By his power and goodness He would have been able to devise a way that human being would be free but not do evil.

1.8. Theoretical framework

This research has been guided by divine command theory under which an action is morally right or wrong because of the prescriptions given by God. The moral quality of an act is determined by approval or disapproval by God. The problem of the existence of God and existence of evil is raised by atheists in an endeavor to negate the existence of God. This study tries to evaluate arguments propagated in this discussion trying to see their main errors and looking into evil scenarios which are said to negate the existence of God. The traditional theism uses divine command theory, and since I will analyze their understanding of God and

theodicies realized from this theory, I have decided to use the same theory for the sake of clarity and consistency.

1.9. Research Methodology

This is solely a library-based study focusing on primary and secondary sources of data. Primary source entails going into original works and secondary sources entailing, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet materials related to the topic. The information so gathered has been subjected to critical speculative analysis and interpretation with philosophical bias.

Thus, the method which has been used is philosophical analysis and argumentation, and evaluation of documents. This method has focused on three paradigms of the study: The existence of the omnipotent God and the existence of evil, and whether the two can be said to be logically inconsistent when it is logically impossible for both of them to be true.

The study has also involved discourse analysis as a method of research. Discourse analysis is a qualitative method that has been adopted and developed by social constructionists. It is a method that enables us to assess the ontological and epistemological assumptions behind a project, a statement, a problem or a method of research. Discourse analysis enables us to understand the conditions behind a specific problem and make us realize that the essence of that problem and its

resolution, lie in its assumptions; the very assumptions that enable the existence of that problem by enabling us to make these assumptions explicit. Discourse analysis aims at allowing us to view the problem from a higher stance and to gain a comprehensive view of the problem and ourselves in relation to that problem. It is meant to provide a higher awareness of the hidden motivations in others and ourselves and, therefore, enable us to solve concrete problems not by providing unequivocal answers, but by making us ask ontological and epistemological questions.

A detailed study of religious beliefs and moral related issues is done in this work. Different scenarios of horrendous evil are scrutinized with special attention paid to the existence of God.

1.10. Data Collection Procedure

The information has been collected through review of primary text documents and journal articles. The method has been purely analytic which is recommended as a philosophical method of data collection. The materials which were collected and used have been proven to be relevant to the research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0. GOD AND HIS EXISTENCE

2.1. Introduction

The question of whether or not it is rational to believe in the existence of God is one of the most important of all human concerns. The answer to this question, whether positive or negative, will have a profound importance for how we understand our world, and for how we live and act. It would not be an overstatement to say that it is our duty as rational human beings to confront the God question given the enormous implications the answer carries for human existence. Most people, of course, at one time or another make some attempt to consider seriously the issue of the rationality of belief in God. If one comes to hold that it is rational to believe in the existence of God, then one must attempt to discover the meaning and purpose of human life as planned by God. If one comes to hold that God does not exist, then one must attempt to come to terms with the consequences of this view, that there is no larger personal scheme of things in which human life makes sense. The universe, and even human life itself, would appear to be merely the products of chance. The implications of this chance occurrence of humanity for religion, morality, justice, law, and other important human pursuits must then be seriously addressed, however, difficult or unpalatable they may turn out to be.

The concept of God needs to be understood properly in order to articulate the problem of evil. There are many and varied definitions given to this concept and We are convinced that these different explanations of this concept have given rise to the different religions and denominations we have today. Despite the diverged understanding of this concept the problem of evil affects all believers of different walks of life.

2.2. The expressions of the term God

The term God has been discussed by those who find the concept God meaningful in two different ways: first is an apophatic (via negative); this is an attempt to define God by what he is not. This is done by alienating the humanly possessed attributes from God, for example God is not limited, not finite, or not created. Secondly, the cataphatic thought (via positive); it is an attempt to define God by what he is, this is by appealing to those attributes which people presume that God positively possesses. For example; God is Almighty, wholly good, Omniscient and others.

When we analyze the nature of religious language it is evident that we talk about God in three different ways namely; Univocally, Equivocally and Analogically. Univocally is when we have one on one correspondence of concepts, for example, when God is said to be Love there is a direct correspondence to the love

experienced by humanity with that of God. It is the same concept though its degree in God is heightened.

Equivocally speaking is expressed when there is no correspondence of concept, for example, if God is said to be love and human being express and experience love. Equivocally will mean that there is no relation between God's love, and that of human beings. It follows that whenever this concept is used in each case it refers to entire different thing.

Analogically speaking people use concepts in reference to God though they do not match exactly with those of God but are true by analogy. For example, God's love is incomparable with that of Humanity but we can have an idea of God's love from the flawed version of human love.

The idea of God has been argued differently by the scholars; there is what we can call God of philosophers and the God of prophets. The latter understanding of God is reached as a result of religious interpretation or what we can call the traditional understanding of God, much of it as written by the prophets in the holy books (Bible and Qur'an) in this case God is understood as personal, loving, all-powerful, omni-benevolent, omniscient. Thus God is understood as a superhuman for He is seen as a human without any human imperfection. In the holy Bible God is said to have incarnated to be with people, assumes a human body and endures

pains and tribulations of human beings though never sinned (Jn. 1:1-14). The former understanding (philosopher's God) is realized after a critical reflection of rational mind about this concept. In other words the philosopher's God is referred to God as known through human mind trying to reflect on it, or philosophize about what God is like.

The difference between the two understandings is that philosopher's God happens to be more theoretical or abstract compared to the super person God of the prophets. However despite the different approaches the philosopher and the prophet seem to refer to one and the same subject.

2.3. Arguments for the Existence of God.

The question of the existence of God as purported by religious claims or other people can be subjected to a philosophical inquiry, where philosophers ask whether the existence of God can be demonstrated or made probable by arguments.

There are various arguments that have been developed and are divided into two groups namely; the a posteriori and a priori arguments. What is the difference between the two? Take for example the statement, "Kenyatta died in 1978 and 'There are approximately 40 million people in Kenya". Theses two statements are true a-posteriori, that is, we can only confirm that they are true on the basis of

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experience or empirical evidence. We need to conduct some historical study or demographic research in order to establish that these statements are true. This means that arguments involving these statements have to be a-posteriori as well. Consider, on the other hand, such statement such as "A triangle is three sided, and a bachelor is unmarried man". These statements are true a-priori because unlike a posteriori statements, we can confirm that they are true on the basis of reason alone, without any experience or empirical evidence. All we need to do in order to confirm their truths is to analyze the sentences conceptually. This means that arguments involving these statements also have to be a-priori.

The a-posteriori tries to show the evidence for the existence of God by dwelling much on the experiential world. The argument seeks to show that what we experience in the world must have a beginning, and therefore restrict its premises that God can only be known through what we experience in the world. That every event in the world must have a cause and this cause and effect series cannot proceed to eternity, *ad infinitum;* there must be an end somewhere and this is where God is traceable. On the second category a-priori, the proponents of this argument argued that the existence of God can be known independently of experience of the world, for example ontological argument. In this argument the existence of God can be attested by the help of pure reason. Under the a posteriori formulation there are various versions which include; the cosmological argument, argument from contingency and teleological argument.

2.4 Cosmological Argument

The cosmological argument is derived from the Greek words *cosmos* and *logos* which means world or universe and rational account respectively. There are different versions of the same argument but the common factor in all these versions is that there is a world which exists rather than nothing, and therefore, it must have been caused by something beyond it. St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica,* argues, ".because we do not know the essence of God, the proposition [God exists]is not self evident to us, but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature, namely, by His effects"(Aquinas 1749, 11). He articulated the cosmological argument by giving five concise arguments the so called five ways for the existence of God which were cosmological in nature. The five ways propagated by St. Thomas Aquinas were as follows; First way is an argument from motion, which argued that in our world things are in motion and that as a matter of fact nothing moves unless it is acted upon, therefore there is a series of mover since A causes B to move, B causes C and the series continues on and on, but according to Aquinas it is impossible to have an endless of this, therefore, there is a need to think about an original mover who is unmoved yet moves everything else this unmoved mover is referred to as God.

The second way is the argument from efficient causality which stresses that in the sensible world there is observable order of efficient causes. No action or effect can

cause itself since efficient cause is prior to its effect, therefore there is a need of a first efficient cause since without which there would be neither ultimate cause nor any immediate causes.

Thirdly, he offered the argument from contingency and necessity, arguing that in our universe it is possible for things to be and not be. That is, objects are generated and are prone to degenerate; if this series is taken back there will be at time that nothing existed except the necessary. It is from this that Aquinas posits the existence of a necessary being that has its own existence and it is permanent and it is the principle behind the initial generation of that which degenerates.

Other proponents of contingency argument argues that; it is evident that our universe is populated by contingent things, and being contingent means they must have started to exist in some point, and this implies that they are caused. Since they are caused, they will come to their end at some point, and therefore their existence is probable, they could also not have existed at all. They further argue that since nothing comes from nothing the contingent beings must have been caused and therefore there must be non-contingent or necessary things. This non-contingent being must not have a beginning, therefore it is not cause by anything external to it, and this means that its existence is necessary and therefore it will never cease to exist. It is this necessary being who is the author of this contingental

universe who is given the title God. This means that this world with its merits and demerits emanated from God.

On one other hand Russell argues that, there is really no reason why the world could not have come into being without a cause; nor, on the other hand, is there any reason to suppose that the world had a beginning at all. The idea that things must have a beginning is really due to the poverty of our imagination (Russell, 1957, 12).

David Hume 1711-1776 in his work *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, argued that, if one part of the whole can be explained fully there would be no need of explaining the whole. Therefore, the need to account for the cause of the whole universe negates the need to account for the individual parts in the series. According to Hume this is to deny the contingency of the world (Hume, 1998, 56). This argument is much connected to the argument from the sufficient reason. From the contingency of the world there is a need to have a sufficient reason for the existence of anything that does exist. This argument was invented by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716).

The argument starts with a presumption that there must be a sufficient reason for the existence of anything that does exist. And that this sufficient reason must reside within the being or outside the being. All that exist in the universe cannot be

capable of providing its own explanation and therefore its sufficient reason lies outside them. And therefore, the sufficient reason for the whole universe lies somewhere outside. To avoid the possibility of an infinity regression of sufficient reason there is a need for a fixed first self-explanatory being whose sufficient reason for its own existence resides within itself and whose non-existence cannot be thought.

The above has been criticized since there is no means to prove that sufficient reason which argues that, every fact and true statement has a sufficient reason for why it is the way it is and not otherwise. Scientifically it is impossible since there is no empirical evidence that can be realized to prove this principle this is because our sense cannot be able to sense that every fact and true statement has a sufficient reason. The principle is not a logically necessary truth that it cannot be logically denied like a statement; a square has four equal sides. Thirdly, this 'principle is no an a-priori truth' (Meister, 2009, 74).

The only defense to the above objection is that believing in the principle sounds plausible than denying it. This principle falls under basic belief that it is possible but foolish to require verification.

Another interesting objection stressed by Meister, states that:

> Either the explanation for the existence of the contingent universe is itself in
> need of further explanation, or it isn't. If it is in need of further explanation,

then it is too contingent and so it doesn't provide an ultimate explanation (i.e. it isn't a sufficient reason) for universe. On the other hand, if the explanation for the existence of the contingent universe is itself a necessary one, then what it explains (the universe) must also be necessary. The universe would have to be necessary rather than contingent, since that which is explained by sufficient reason is also entailed by it. So if the universe is entailed by a necessary being, then it must also be necessary (Meister, 2009 75).

The above statement however interesting it is, it lacks traditional theism which held that God created the world out of free will. This means that he could have created another universe different from this and this make our universe contingent since it does not exist by necessity. Therefore the universe cannot be necessary as purported by the above objectors.

The forth way is from the degree of perfection we experience in our universe. Aquinas argues that when we look around us we experience things exhibiting differing degrees of qualities like, truth, goodness and nobility. Some people are said to be ethical, courageous than others. The reason why we are able to recognize these various degrees in degradation is because we have a standard against which we measure all these things. So there must be something that is highest good, highest truth and highest nobility, according to Aquinas this something is God.

The fifth way is the argument from design, stressing that from the nature of things which lacks intelligence such as inanimate objects, there is orderly movement, all seems to act towards an end. This is evident from their mode of being; they seem

to act in the same manner so as to achieve the best results. There must have been an intelligent being behind this order. 'Therefore, some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being is God' (Aquinas 1749, 14).

Cosmological argument falls under the a-posteriori argument. As we have seen above, it begins from an a-posteriori assumption that the universe exist and therefore something outside this universe is required to account for the existence of the universe. The universe as we experience it is contingent therefore it requires a higher source which owns its own existence from which the existence of world emanates.

The argument goes:

Everything in this universe has a cause.

An endless series of cause and effect is incomprehensible without a first cause.

So there must be a first cause with capacity to produce everything that exist.

This first cause must be necessary and infinite.

This first cause is God.

Therefore God exists.

This kind of argument has faced some criticisms over the assumption that everything must have a cause. Physicists have been quoted denying that, 'the principle of causality applies to some behavior of sub-atomic particles' (Pojman, 1986, 16). The non causal thesis has raised questions also but the underlying question remains, how sure are we that everything must have a cause? The critics also questioned the issue of impossibility of having an infinite regress of cause and effect. They argue that we cannot ascertain to this allegation. If in mathematics infinitude of numbers is possible why is it not possible when applied to physics? (Yujin, 2011, 125). Still further since every cause has an effect and that effect becomes a cause of another effect to think of the 1st cause is as hard as thinking of the last effect and since we can foresee an infinite future what bars us from foreseeing the possibility of infinite past? Another query is directed towards the assumption or naming of the infinite being or necessary being as God. To call the first cause God does not solve anything since it is as complicated as the other, this is just trying to demystify a mystery with another. The order we experience in our world can as well be associated to unintelligent, slow and probabilistic process called natural selection. (Russell, 1957, 10)

2.5. Ontological Argument for the Existence of God

The distinction between a-priori and a posteriori explains clearly why the Ontological argument is so unique. Unlike other arguments as have been discussed above, the ontological argument says that the conclusion that God exists is an a

priori statement, and hence can be derived solely through a-priori reasoning. As we have seen, various cosmological arguments adopt a-posteriori reasoning by appealing to observations regarding the external world, to trace the origin of the universe. The ontological argument is in this sense a pure 'armchair proof'; it claims that we can prove the existence of God through mental exercise alone, sat on an armchair without going out to the external world like in the case of cosmological arguments.

The argument is based on a-priori assumption that we do not require any external evidence like in case of cosmological arguments to ascertain to the fact that God exists. It begins from the concept of God to derive His necessary existence. The key proponent of this argument is Anselm who sought to offer a lasting solution which would answer the question of existence of God properly.

> A single argument which would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that God truly exists, and that there is a supreme good requiring nothing else, which all other things require for their existence and well-being…'(Anselm 1962,47).

Anselm wanted to offer a demonstration which would not leave any gap in convincing others about its truth. He argued that even a fool is 'convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be convinced' (Anselm, 1962, 48). This is because upon hearing of this, he understands it and it follows that, that which is understood exists in the understanding. It follows that, that than which no greater can be thought must not

just exist in mind but also in reality, since by so doing it proves its greatness. (Existence in reality is superior to existence in thought only).

The argument can be framed in the following prose;

- Everyone is capable to derive from the term God a being than which no greater can be thought.

- It follows that a being than which no greater can be thought exist in mind whenever it is thought about.

- We can think of a being than which no greater can be thought which does exist in understanding and in reality.

- To exist in reality is to be in act form compared to existing in mind which is in potency and therefore existence in reality is superior.

- The being than which no greater can be thought cannot be so if it exists only in mind and not in reality.

- Therefore, a being than which no greater can be thought can be conceived to exist in reality (Marmysz, 2012, 130).

In real sense according to Anselm the existence of that which no greater can be thought applies in two different ways whether the one conceiving it affirms or denies it. This is because there are several modes through which a thing can be said to exist. A thing can be said to exist only in the mind and not in reality, or exist in reality and not in the mind like the undiscovered stars, or can be said to exist both in reality and in mind. In our case here we can say that this being than

which no greater can be thought exist either in reality and in mind or in mind and not in reality or vice versa. So even if an atheist denies the existence of God, by the fact that he understands that concept, its existence in mind is affirmed only that he denies its existence in reality.

Anselm's effort faced criticisms, a monk by the name Gaunilo of Marmountiers argued that there is a room where by someone can think of another possible existence of that which no greater can be thought which does not end up ushering in the idea of God. He gives an example of a possibility of thinking of a greatest possible, an island that exists but was lost to humanity. Gaunilo was responding on behalf of a fool whom Anselm had chastised for absurdly rejecting the existence of God.

 He argued that,

> If someone should tell me that there is such an Island, I should easily understand his words, in which there is no difficulty. But suppose that he went on to say, as if by a logical inference, "You can no longer doubt that this Island which is more excellent than all lands exists somewhere, since you have no doubt that it is in your understanding. And since it is more excellent not to be in the understanding alone, but to exist both in understanding and in reality, for this reason it must exist. For if it does not exist, any land which really exists will be more excellent that it; and so the Island already understood by you to be more excellent will be more excellent (Anselm, 1749, 115).

Anselm argues against Gaunilo saying that even if it is possible to think of such an island you cannot infer from that its existence, but from his argument you can infer

the existence of God. This argument is based on the assumption that existence is a predicate of God, which means you cannot think of God who does not exist.

Immanuel Kant in his celebrated work *Critique of Pure Reason* 1789 argued that since the idea of that which no greater can be thought is purely a concept of pure reason, it is easy to define this being as absolutely necessary and therefore its non-existence is unthinkable, but in so doing Anselm does not explain the conditions which make it necessary to regard the non-existence of a thing as absolutely unthinkable. Kant argues that it is these conditions that would determine whether or not we are thinking of anything at all. This conditions that Kant is interested in are the conditions that would determine something as necessary. For example, it is absolutely necessary for a triangle to have three angles or it is absolutely necessary for bachelor to be unmarried. We cannot have a triangle without three angles a same way we cannot have a bachelor without him being unmarried. It is the same thing with absolutely necessary being in relation to existence. If we deny the predicate we right away deny the subject and the vice versa and there is no contradiction. According to Ontological argument the denial of God and existence of God poses a contradiction. This is because there is an assumption that every reality includes existence and therefore every concept that is thought with possibility of existence possesses possibility of existence internally and the denial of this concept denies its internal possibility existence which in turn appears as self-contradictory. Kant argues that "The concept of a highest being is a very

useful idea in many respects; but just because it is merely an idea, it is entirely incapable all by itself of extending our cognition in regard to what exists"(Kant 1929, 529).

There is a need to analyze whether the proposition that a being than which no greater can be thought can be conceived to exist in reality is analytic or a synthetic. Analytic statement or judgment is (explicative) in the sense that it does not give out any new information in the predicate which is not already contained in the subject. For example, all bachelors are unmarried. It should be noted that in the analytic statements we cannot deny the predicate and keep the subject without contradiction. Synthetic judgment is (amplicative) it gives out new information in the predicate which is not contained in the subject. For example; this bachelor is bald. In this synthetic statement a predicate can be denied without contradicting the subject. In our proposition that God must exist, the assertion of existence adds nothing to the subject God if our proposition is analytical. And therefore further explanation is mere tautology. If this statement is synthetic it would therefore be possible to deny the predicate without any contradiction (Meister 2009,117).

The above arguments for the existence of God have been faced with a lot of criticism we can therefore conclude that, none of the theistic proofs succeeds in demonstrating the existence of God. They are unpersuasive meaning they cannot convince anyone to believe God exists.

Steven M. Cahn argues that whether a philosophic argument triumphs or fails, it does not affect a religious believer. He will neither be elated nor dejected by any. Nevertheless critical examination of existence or non-existence of this Being is vital. Steven argues, 'suppose we assume, contrary to what most philosophers, I among them, believe, that all of these proofs are valid. Let us grant the necessary existence of the most perfect conceivable Being, a Being who is all good and is the designer and creator of the universe. What implications can be drawn from this fact which would be of relevance to human life? In other words, what difference would it make in men's lives if God exist? (Steven, 1969, 5). The question whether God exist is a fundamental question since the answer to this will immensely affect men decision making in life. Some will feel secured in the knowledge that the universe was planned and governed by an all good God. Others will feel unsecured since their life depends on the will of such God who dictates moral principle. Others will feel annoyed in the knowledge that they are the children of a loving God yet they are tormented in this world with all kinds of evils.

2.6. Arguments against the existence of God

Can God be shown not to exist? Many of the traditional theists ascribed three main attributes to God; omniscience, omnipotence and omni-benevolence. There are

other additional attributes as indicated in chapter one, as timeless, changeless, immutability, simplicity and in corporeality. The arguments against existence of God can be used to argue that there can be no such a being that possess the above attributes given by religious people. Hitchens argued that religion is man-made, that even men who made it cannot agree on what their prophets or redeemers or gurus actually said or did about God. (Hitchens 2007, 10). Therefore, this preceding section will present arguments which has been established to negate the three main attributes of God, namely; Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omni benevolent.

2.6.1. The Omnipotence Paradox

It is argued that if God is omnipotent can He create a stone too heavy for him to lift? This is a paradox since if God cannot create such a stone, then his omnipotence is doubtful and if he can create such a stone, his failure to lift it will also put his omnipotence into doubts (Barrett 2004,76). It follows that both sides of this paradox negates God's omnipotence, and since omnipotence is an attribute of God then such a God does not exist. From the above argument we can ask if an omni-potent, or all-powerful being can make a thing that He cannot later control? Can He who is all powerful make something over which He does not have any power? If you say yes, then he is not all powerful, and if you say no then he is still not all powerful. In both cases there will be something he cannot do. He will not be able to control something that he made, or he will not be able to make

something He cannot control. Someone could say that people are not free; that God made them to act the way they do, and He knows how they will act and that God therefore determines and foresees the way people will act. God is here like a man who builds a machine to act in a certain way. But someone who holds this position still faces this paradox of Omnipotence. How can you say that God is all powerful if He can not make something which He does not have control over?

God is said to be both omnipotent and omni-benevolent. The argument from God's inability to sin holds that, if God is omni-benevolent, He should be unable to perform morally wrong or sinful actions, such as brutally torturing hundreds of innocent children. Still, if God is omnipotent, He must be able to perform such an action; after all even us humans can do so in principle. Therefore, God cannot be omnipotent and omni benevolent at the same time, which means that God does not exist (Barrett 2004, 86).

If God is omniscient, then He must understand fully what fear and frustration are. However, an omnipotent God cannot grasp the concepts of fear and frustration fully because He who is omnipotent, cannot experience what it is like to suffer fear and frustration. Therefore, God cannot be omnipotent and omniscient at the same time, which means that God does not exist.

2.6.2. The Logical Argument from Evil

Mackie agrees that there is no explicit contradiction between claims that God is omnipotent and all-loving; and that evil exists. However, if omnipotence means there are no limits to what an omnipotent being can do, and if good and evil are opposed so that a wholly good being eliminates evil insofar as He can, then a contradiction arises (Mackie, 1982, 150). It seems obvious that, as a matter of contingent fact, there is evil in the actual world. However, if God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omni-benevolent, there must be no evil. If God is omniscient, then He must know that there is evil in the actual world. If God is omnipotent, then He must be able to eliminate evil from the actual world. If He is Omni-benevolent, then He must be willing to eliminate evil from the actual world. Therefore, the existence of evil in the actual world logically entails the non-existence of God.

Theists tried to justify the existence of evil by arguing that, "evil is often necessary as a means to good' (Mackie, 1982, 151). This means that something considered evil is deemed causally necessary for some good end. Human agents are often willing to put up with or even bring about actions/events which in themselves are evil, because they lead to a good end. Mackie refuted this saying 'If there is an omnipotent creator, then if there are any causal laws He must have made them, and if He is still omnipotent he must be able to override them. If there is a God, then, He does not need to use means to attain his ends. So it is idle to refer, as in

theodicy, to any ordinary, factual, means-end, or in general causal, relationships (Mackie, 1982, 154).

Linked together with the problem of evil is the problem of hell. If God exists how could he allow perishing of his beloved human beings in the eternal torment in hell? How can we reconcile the attributes of God with the existence of hell? This will be expounded further in chapter four.

2.6.3. The Argument from Divine Hiddenness

This argument stressed that if God is omniscient, omnipotent and omni-benevolent, then He must bring about a state of affairs in which His existence is manifest to everyone in the actual world. It is not the case, however, that His existence is manifest to everyone in the actual world. Even many people who want to believe in God cannot clearly see that He exists. Therefore, God does not exist (Yujin 2011, 159) 'But if I go to the east, He is not there; If I go to the west I do not find Him. When He is at work in the north, I do not see him, when he turns to the south. I catch no glimpse of Him' (Job 23:8-9). In actual fact, according to the catholic catechism the main reason, why God created us is to know Him and serve Him. If this was the main reason why could he not make it easier for the humanity to access him? If He is there why has He hidden Himself so much? Could it be possible that the efforts by humanity to search Him are a struggle in futility?

People spend a lot of time and money going to pilgrimages in search of this supreme God. In Christianity much is spent on pilgrimages to holy lands (Israel, Vatican). And Muslims too spend a lot of money to travel to Mecca, while their brothers and sisters die from hunger and other preventable diseases due to poverty. Why is this God so hidden and sometimes accessible only to the rich who would afford such expensive trips in search of Him, if at all they find him in those historical places?

2.7. CONCLUSION

Having discussed the arguments for and against the existence of God, it is clear that both sides have a case to argue, however the arguments for the existence of God seems to fail to stand their critics. The proponents of the arguments for the existence of God tries to show that the world and all it holds emanated and is being watched over by an all-powerful and all-good God. It beats logic to hold such a belief alongside our daily experience. This is because humanity frequently tries to eradicate evil which in contrast the sovereign God does not even bother. Can a world full of natural calamities, disease causing germs, strifes and conflicts be a fruit of such a God? As much as humanity continue to accept its responsibility of solving out its own problems especially through advanced science and technology the lesser and lesser the space available for such God is left. The shift from relying on God for solutions in life puzzles should be ushered by the inconsistency between our belief and reality. It does not make sense in holding a belief that you

are created by an all-powerful and all-good God and continue praying to such a God to be rescued from all sorts of hardships which He hardly answers. If He exists He would make our lives better than we wish for our own children, If I am a human being lesser than this God and I always do my best to have my children live a better life, what about Him who have all powers and goodness? Further, why does He not make sure His creatures understands His intentions? Why does He allow countless doubts to persist for so long? He must then be a very cruel God who possesses the truth and behold humanity tormenting itself in the search of Him. It makes sense to argue that such a God of traditional theism does not exist.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. EXISTENCE OF EVIL

3.1 Introduction

As indicated in chapter one the problem of evil is a philosophical puzzle in the attempt to reconcile the existence of God and evil. In the previous chapters I have discussed the concept God and His existence, with this understanding we now move to analyze the other concept of our problem; evil. As stated in the literature review the problem of evil was propagated by Epicurus (341-270 BC) whose philosophy was based on maximizing pleasure by minimizing pain; he advocated for a state of mind called *ataraxia*, a state of joy and pleasure which is attained when man satisfies all worldly desires and therefore extinguishes them (Long, 1986, 50). In real sense whether Epicurus' argument is sound or not we leave it to be debated but human needs and desires are insatiable. The desire to get fulfilled is a life time struggle and this makes human life miserable. And in the struggle for fulfillment, our universe becomes pool of evils of all kind. There are other kind of evils which human being are not liable namely natural evils or gratuitous evils they are experienced by man yet he or she does not have any responsibility.

As a result humanity has tried to seek answers towards fulfillment in different concepts and entities, for example, in witchcraft, voodoo science, self gratification,

power and wealth. But others have sought refuge in God. As some try to argue for God as the answer to their fulfillment, others negate the possibility of such a being. Epicurus articulated the problem of evil he thought of the idea of heaven as the place where our struggles will be rewarded and the hell as place where our mis-deeds will be punished. He argued that the religious systems have instilled in man destructive fears which result as the greatest source of human unhappiness (Marmysz 2012, 106). The intention of this chapter therefore is to analyze the concept of evil, causes, and its relation with God. I will also present the biblical understanding of evil, the psychological and social side of evil.

3.2. Definitions and roots of evil.

Evil has become a central theme in media, and in human conscious, for example, the evil of terrorism, the evil of secular culture, concerns for poverty and diseases, and natural catastrophes and others. Yet different cultures and religious traditions have different ideas of what evil is and what its root causes are. Although there is no massive clash of cultures, many disagreements and also conflicts in the world arise from the deep differences in views of evil. Evil has different definitions, for example, (of people) enjoying harming others; morally bad and cruel. Having a harmful effect on people; evil deeds, for example, the evil effects of racism. The evil connected with the devil and with what is bad in the world, evil spirits, or extremely unpleasant thing, an evil smell.

Evil is then a term which means 'bad state of affairs', but where it is not clearly stated whether the evil is genuine or only apparent. This means that 'evil' could be called '*prima facie* evil' to signalize the undetermined status of the term. For simplicity, we will generally use the term 'evil', to mean an undetermined sense.

St Augustine defined evil as a privation of what ought to be there, (Augustine 1963, 151). That evil is not a positive thing; it is an absence of something that ought to be there. If evil is a privation it follows that it cannot exist by itself. It must exist in something and that is why we cannot attack evil directly but we can overcome evil only by restoring the good that was damaged. But still St. Augustine does not solve our problem since we still wonder how God could cause things that are not what they ought to be, and still cause people, who make free choices which are not what they ought to be to exist.

There are three major schools of thoughts in discussion of the metaphysical problem of evil; the pantheists who view their God expressed in nature, the dualists who sees reality as a constant struggle between good and evil and the monotheists who believe in one God.

The monotheist argues that God is the creator of everything but this does not make Him the creator of evil. In the Gospels, John states that "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1, 5). God created everything including Angels *ex-nihilo*, hence everything was different from Him, He endowed those angels with

mind, feeling and will (1 pet 1, 12, Luke 15, 10 and Jude 6) And they were not embodied. According to the Bible, evil emanated from rebellion led by Lucifer, one of God's Angels. This means evil emanated from the angelic realm, out of the disobedience of the angels.

Pantheists regard evil as ultimately unreal and they explain human suffering as a product of spiritual ignorance gathered in the previous lives and distributed in the present one according to the dictates of Karma. Our contemporary Pantheists are Hindus and Buddhists. In the hymns addressed to *Varuna,* evil is a matter of human not fulfilling his laws, or not performing the ritual properly. Those who commit evil deeds must repent before *Varuna* and try to repair their evil deeds through ritual sacrifices (*Rig Veda 5, 85*). Buddhists rejected the teachings of Hindus and argued that evil is the perpetuation of illusion by the factors that fuel the chain of dependent origination' (*paticca-samuppada*).

On the other hand Buddhists hold that ignorance in perceiving that the world is impermanent, devoid of a self and in constant becoming lead to suffering. Buddha proclaimed that the whole existence is suffering.

> The noble truth of suffering (dukkha) is this; birth is suffering; aging is suffering; sickness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; dissociation from the pleasant is suffering, not to get what one want is suffering- in brief the five aggregates of attachment are suffering (Samyutta Nikaya 56,11).

On the other hand, dualism holds that there are two antagonist and co-eternal deities involved in creation and in governing the destiny of humans. They are two competing and approximately equivalent gods. So the forces in history were God and devil, good and evil, light and darkness, righteous and unrighteous. The cosmic battle between these two kingdoms is ongoing and fought out on the battlegrounds of human history and the human heart, examples of dualism includes gnosticism and cartharism.

The dualists seem to accept the God of the Old Testament but rejected His power, arguing that He is a minor deity among the higher spiritual deities *(Aeons)*. They argue that the Old Testament deity created the world out of His ignorance and that is why there are all problems we experience. They also see humans as superior to their creator since they are endowed with higher spiritual essence by the *Aeons*. The only impediment which humans have is physical body which bounds them in a miserable condition which perpetuates through reincarnation. The only way to escape this bad reality is through the attainment of true knowledge (*gnosis*) (Velea, E. 2011).

The work of humans is to realize themselves on which side of the battle they stand. This line of thought heavily influenced the Jewish answer to their central questions. They believed that evil was a cosmic force that would eventually pitch a huge catastrophic war with God and His minions. That war would end in

a cataclysmic termination of history. When that happened, if God was lucky, He would win and exterminate all the wicked and all the cosmic forces of darkness, and gather into His kingdom all the righteous, and if not forces of darkness exterminates Him. This solved a central problem for the Israelites who followed this trajectory (Marmysz, 2012, 121).

It meant that the good God, Yahweh, is justified in causing or allowing Israelites to be exiled and their kingdom reduced to irrelevance (Ex 1:1-11:10). They were unrighteous, and so they had to live with the consequence of that. They had found themselves on the wrong side of the cosmic battle. But this kind of understanding still ushered in the question of how did the righteous ones got into the wrong side? Some say that God has desired it that way that some may be doomed while others get saved. It was out of these two destinies that the idea of hell and heaven came into existence, hell for the doomed and heaven for the righteous. But in real sense there is no rational, empirical, phenomenological, or heuristic basis for any notion of a cosmic battle with evil in this world, or for the devil, demons, or hell. And therefore, the idea of evil emanating from the devil must be ruled out (Plantinga, 1977, 50). And since evil is confined to the experience humans have of undesirable or uncomfortable aspects of this world of time and space, how shall we define "evil," and what is its scope?

Evil can be thought first as destructive things that we do to each other, ourselves, or God's created world, by our bad will and bad intention; and that which we do to ourselves and the universe out of ignorance and neglect. Those destructive things we do through bad will and intention fall into two categories also: those that are a result of unnecessary calculated intention to do harm, and those we do because of psychopathology. Of the former, we are morally and ethically culpable. Of the latter, we are not but should do our best to get help. The destructive things we do from ignorance and neglect fall into two categories too: the actions of which we could have been informed and therefore responsible, and those about which we had no way of being informed and hence not responsible. Of the former, we are culpable. Of the latter, we are not culpable. Still we also experience evils that are natural in nature; meaning they are not caused by human beings though they cause much pain and suffering to human life, these evils include; earthquakes, tidal waves, and virulent diseases and we question the prowess of God in creation (Plantinga 1977, 16). Thus how the Almighty, good God could have created a world so populated with evil to overrun the loved ones of His creation?

3.3. Nature of Evil

Evil presents itself in two main categories namely; Moral evil and natural or physical evil. Moral evil is an evil committed to humanity by a human being and is responsible and therefore should be held accountable i.e. are evils attributable to

human beings through misuse of their free-will on one hand. Natural or physical evil on the other hand are evils committed against humanity but unlike moral evil human beings are not responsible and therefore cannot be held accountable for them. It means that the existence of evil requires that there must be a victim; this is the person who experiences evil. There must also be the agent; this is the origin of that evil. Finally there must be an act; this is the wicked or cruel situation that is experienced by someone. Later in this chapter an elaborate explanation of these two different types of evil is will be made available.

In determining the nature of evil there are terms worth examining: first, wickedness, secondly, cruelty and thirdly malevolence. An evil action can be committed by an individual, an organization or nature where physical evil is concern. It can be termed as an action which is so bad, so awful, and so horrendous that no ordinary decent reasonable human being would consider doing it. Therefore, an evil person or organization is one who/which wills or orders such an action, or remains indifferent to them when performed by another in a situation where one could do something to stop or prevent it from happening (Plantinga, 1977, 17).

It follows that for an evil action to occur it must be horrendously bad and must be proceeding from an evil intention. An evil intention is that which an agent may have to do something that one knows or believes or has a reason to believe is

horrendously wrong or bad intentionally causing immense suffering. And more appropriately something God has opposed. But then when we say a person is evil do we mean that this person is totally evil? In real sense even the most seeming evil person is good to some people, this seem to be the paradox of evil doer. A murderer for instance can be a modest family man to his family members.

However Marcus Singer argues that for something to be evil, something has to be done in a horrendous way and for something to be horrendous it has to be done with cruelty. But then what are the qualifications of a cruel action? Cruelty can be defined as a wanton infliction of pain or suffering on a sentient creature.

Many times bad things are termed evil, there seems to be a thin line between bad action and an evil action. The criterion to tell a pure or ill intention or motive of an action is a tougher encounter. For example, in Islam Jihad is a justified war which can be done in good faith of magnifying Allah, but when some Muslims kill the innocent people it is termed as terrorism. Some Philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle and Kant argue that no one can do something wrong because it is wrong, that no one can do evil for the sake of doing evil, that an agent in his/her acting must conceive of that action as good, and therefore if the agent is said to have done something evil this must be out of ignorance. Should we use this argument to state the case above? I tend to differ with the above argument and stress that, there are many occasions that I have acted contrary to what I consider to be good. Felix Adler in his work *Ethical Philosophy of Life,* (1918) argues that 'Many a man has

done is evil, and done it most deliberately, knowing evil as evil' (Felix, 1918, 112). We can still move further and investigate even if people may do evil knowingly, is it necessarily that they do it because it is evil? It is evident that a part from knowledge of what evil is, there are people, especially in our contemporary world who choose to do what they know is evil for its own sake. Thus, their aim is entirely destruction of human life, it is as if they uphold the saying, evil be my aim, my purpose, my happiness, my end. Gewirth Beyleveld (2000), in his *satanic poem* says, 'human beings cannot transform evil into good, though they can persuade themselves that their evil purpose are good, to be sure evil can be their aim, their purpose their goal, and in this sense, their good'. Just as Kantian Categorical imperative requires people to act in such a manner their maxim can be universalized, there are those who uphold their immoral maxim to be universalized. When this takes place then it is what we can regard as the epitome of evil, evil in its most extreme form.

When discussing the issue of evil, we are deeply convinced that the different evils around us are not of the same level. That lunatic who rapes a daughter in front of her dad and later kills the dad in front of that daughter can never be weighed the same as a dad who steals a sweet potato in the neighbor's garden to feed his starving daughter. It is thus important to discuss the different degrees that evils may manifest to us.

The above discussion of the nature of evil revolves around moral evil. In all instances there is an agent and therefore the agent should be held morally culpable. This kind of evil can be easily understood since we have the agent and in some instances some justification from the agent as to why he or she commits that kind of evil. Its origin and purpose can be analyzed. When we turn to natural evil it becomes difficult to device the agent and purpose too. Natural evil is the evil that originates independently of human actions for example earthquakes, droughts, floods,etc (Hick 1978, 5). But it should be noted that the nature of moral evil and physical evil are closely related only that in physical or natural evil the human beings are not responsible and the agent of this evil is not clearly defined. Some argues that God is responsible others attribute it to natural forces and others to super human agent called demon.

3.4. Psychology of Evil

Evil is a very real phenomenon. But it is not a "thing," with physical properties of its own apart from those human actions which comprise it; nor is it an "entity" with a will of its own, as the traditional doctrine of the devil advocates (Diamond, 1999, 4).

"Evil is grasped by the mind immediately and felt by the emotions; it is sensed as hurt deliberately inflicted (Russell, 1977, 1). For something to be evil or good we need first to agree on what qualifies for either. In the history of philosophy, there

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are two main groups of thought the consequentialist (theories claims that the rightness or wrongness of an act is determined by its results) and non-consequentialist (theories claim that consequences should not enter into our moral judgments. Actions are to be judged right or good in accordance with other criteria like, intuitions, divine command among others.

For our case in this work we use divine command theory meaning that God's prescription about something is what makes it good or evil (non-consequentialist). For the consequentialists consequences of an action are that which determine its morality, if the outcome is pleasant the action is good and vice versa. For them the end justifies the means. They are regarded as ascribed to the utilitarian theory. There are also those who scrutinize the intention of the individual before performing an act no matter what is the outcome of the action, if the intention was right the action is applauded as morally okey. These individuals follow Kantian theory of deontology. The non-consequential camp seems to be backed by the majority against the consequential camp and for this study I take the divine command theory under non-consequential camp to be more plausible since the traditional theism which shapes our argument in this work is based on this theory. It follows that God is a fundamental idea to be considered in every act, the reason being He is the one who prescribes every act to be good or evil. The question remains on how He executes that, is it arbitrarily or under certain principles (Diamond, 1999,12).

The difference between consequential and non-consequential is that the former argues on how people formulates an ethical rules and get committed to what is ethically good or bad while the latter believe that there are rules to guide our moral judgments independently of their consequences. Our main concern is divine command theory, that God reveals to mankind what is good and evil. The answer to the question what determines the morality of an act is that they are so, because God willed them to be that way. Since God is understood to be impartial His will applies equally to the believers.

When we reflect on the universe it is evident that there are many evils around, but the question is that, is there something intrinsically evil? Intrinsically in the sense that God created it evil and therefore its essence is evil. For the divine command theory there are things or actions which can be said to be intrinsically good or evil; this is because the action is determined prior to the implementation. It is determined by weighing the conformity of an action with the nature of God, if there is conformity of the pursued act with the nature of God then that act is good and if there is a contradiction between the two then that becomes an evil act. For example, if we believe that God is truthful, anything that negates this attribute of God is evil (Peterson et al, 1982).

If then God is the one who prescribes what is good and evil, and He remains the author of everything as the orthodox religions believe, then how do we talk of the evil in the human race? Can this God create human beings who entirely depend on Him, including their reasoning and then talk of a wicked generation? Why do we have evil in the world created by a good God in the first place? Could it be that there is no evil in the world and what we call evil is but an illusion? If evil is an illusion, then how do we account for discomforts, pain, sorrows and disappointments we experience in the world? I think it does not matter the label we use for the aforementioned life degrading qualities, but the fact remains that they exist and since we use the term evil to label them, then evil exists since evil is just a term illustrating those qualities and many others. We are witnesses of evil that wrecks aircraft, and burns and maim people, blasts that shock our cities killing people, the tornadoes which wipe thousands of innocent souls, people mourn everyday. In our media you read, listen, watch evil takes precedence over good.

In short the history of man can be described as a martyrdom of man, *homo homini lupus* (man to man is a wolf) society. The stronger preys on the weaker and keeps them in a perpetual fear (Hume, 1949, 70). Visit the main museums where they depict man's struggles to survive. I once visited the Elmina castle in Ghana where the inhumane act of slave trade was executed, it is depicted with ancient drawings and the writings of the slaves on the walls and as we walked around we were ushered to the 'non return gate' which is the small door at the dock where the

slaves were brutally forced to walk out of the castle to the ship behind the castle and they were forever taken to the land of miseries never to return. Still within that age, there were oppression in the Russian concentration camps and this destruction of human life and oppression has continued to the recent HIV epidemics, the starvation, the post- election violence in Kenya, the terrorist attacks for example, the September 11th in the USA, and hundreds of Kenyans who have been killed by the supposed Allshabbab attacks. Though evil is vividly evident in the world we live in, it becomes candid on the personal level. When I am faced by a specific type of evil I really understand its pinch rather than seeing someone experience it. Four year ago I was in the seminary and I used to see seminarians unjustly being kicked out of seminary, I did not reflect so much on their dismissal but I would see bits of injustices in their dismissal. It came to be my time to experience the same on that fateful morning, yet I had no premonitions that I would ever leave the seminary. I really felt how those who left before me suffered. I calculated the magnitude of injustices done to those undeservedly who faced what I faced. And surely it was unimaginably too hard to bear that ordeal. In short, the personal encounter with evil makes the individual get into deeper thought about it. This is the situation faced by the Biblical Job, a righteous man who was subjected to suffering by Satan through God's permission. He questioned his personal relationship with God and cursed the day he was born (Job 3: 1-26). Even Jesus Christ who used to comfort the victims of evil, when faced with a personal evil

questioned the presence of his father. He felt forsaken by His father on the cross of His death.

Our post modern generation way of living can be likened to the period of Epicurus that of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain. It is evident that most people are running away from pain but the more we run from it the more it catches up with us. Evil can be said to be metamorphosised on daily bases. The perpetrators of evil, for example, the terrorists always change their tricks to fit today's lifestyles. No moral prescriptions seem to stand; each man is by himself seeking what befits him. What befits him or works for him is what is good for him. No fear of what is regarded as good or bad and therefore it is in order if I stress here that there is a misconception of what evil is (Meister, 2012, 125). At this level let us discuss the degrees of evil so that we may have a clear indication of what we are talking about.

3.5. The Degrees of Evil

As stated earlier evil is that which horrendously wrong, that causes immense suffering and are done with an ill motive or intention. And an evil person is the one who does, or wills what is wrong because it is wrong and it is at this level that evil gets to its climax.

To rank evil in its proper place we should pay attention to the following conditions;

1. Whether the agent knew an act is evil and did or allowed it because it is evil.

2. Whether the agent knew an act is evil but never bothered to reflect further.

3. Whether the agent judged an act evil because it affected those he loved or have some ties with, for example, religious or cultural ties or not evil because it inflicted on others or inflicted by themselves.

4. Whether he did or allowed it knowing it is evil but did it due to other reasons.

5. Whether he did or allowd it knowing it to be evil but in light of a fair and full consideration of all the factors reasonable for the sake of some other greater good to be achieved, he did it.

6. Whether he did it not believing it to be evil but judging it to be good.

Pure evil is characterized by case 1and 2, case 1 is ultimate pure evil unmixed extreme evil like that of killing of the Jews by Hitler which is more excruciating than 2. In case 2 evil can be described as ruthless evil, together with 4 they can be termed as criminal evil. Case 3 is exhibited by the fanatic like Taliban, Allshabbab and in earlier times the Militia wars weighed by Catholics against Muslims and Mungiki.

In the Catholic faith there are also degrees of evil; there are those which are classified as mortal and venial sins. Under the mortal category of sin, these are the sins of first order that 'kills off our friendship with God. This is a seriously wrong action that we perform, having thought it through, and fully aware of what we are doing. These sins seriously go against the ten commandments such as murder, rape, adultery, fornication, violent assault, and major theft' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1999). Under venial sins category, these are less serious sins, which damages our friendship with God without destroying it. 'This can mean things which are less serious in themselves such as unkind words, gossip, bad thoughts, minor theft, or serious things which we undertake without realizing they are serious, or which we undertake without fully willing to do so'(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1999).

3.6 Types of Evil

3.6.1. Moral Evil

In the Christian bible James 1:13-15 he says;

> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt any one. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

From the above text evil emanates from person's lust. This is the desire towards doing something freely. It is described as evil resulting from a misuse of person's

free will. Some philosophers like St. Augustine (354 – 430) argued that God created pure human race without any evil and He gave human being free will to choose rationally between good and evil.(Augustine,1964, 14). If man decides to misuse the freedom given to him, he is free to do so and in doing so he is said to commit a moral evil which is accompanied with a moral blame or sanction since he did it out of freedom and intentionally, for example, stealing. If I decide to steal, I willingly choose to do so knowing that it is immoral and I have a choice not to do so but I decides to do it, then I must be held accountable for my stealing. These are evils originating from humans stupidity, arrogance or cruelty (Plantinga 1977, 8). Part of these evils is to gratify the agent or to punish the victim. However there those evils which are pointless or gratuitous in nature

Gratuitous evils are evils committed to a person and upon scrutiny of it, it neither benefits the offender nor the victim. In other words; it is unnecessary or pointless. It is evil for the sake of evil. Using the traditional theistic understanding of God, it is evident that God would always annihilate that which contradicts His able nature. As I have explained above, evil is understood as opposite of that which God would desire. God therefore, as a matter of right reasoning is expected to reduce if not stop evil from happening to His beloved creatures. The two principle that is God and evil are like the principle of light and darkness that the two cannot be understood to co-exist. The powers of God must be questioned on the event of evil since God being powerful and good cannot allow evils to triumph over good.

3.6.2. Natural Evil

Contrary to moral evil, natural evil results from the operation processes of the universe. It exempts man from any blame. But a more traditional line of thought is indicated by St. Augustine who attributes much of the evil we find to Satan or to Satan and his cohorts. Satan, so the traditional doctrine goes, is a mighty nonhuman spirit who, along with many other angels, was created long before God created man. Unlike most of his colleagues, Satan rebelled against God and has since been wreaking whatever havoc he can. The result is natural evil. So the natural evil results according to traditional theism from free actions of nonhuman spirits (Augustine, 1964, 26). But this can only be true if God is overpowered by those spirits or He is malevolent God. We can still question the importance of free-will of those non human spirits, how can we equate that free-will to the massive destruction of innocent lives?

Natural evils can be characterized by the following; earthquakes, pains, droughts, floods, physical deformities such as misshapen limbs, blindness, mental retardation or deficiency, insanity, fires, and diseases of seemingly limitless variety (Marymzs 2011, 192).

Existence of natural evil becomes a more compelling reason for atheist to reject existence of God. For better understanding we can classify natural evil under four

categories as follows; the first contains evils that are attributable to human agency. It includes many of the pains we have. Moreover, fires are often caused by human agency, and sometimes misshapen limbs, blindness, and mental deficiency result from something one person does to another. As for insanity, some say it is hereditary, and others say it is environmental. Without resolving that debate, we can say there are cases of insanity whose cause at least in part stems from things done by other people that contribute to that insanity. Think, for example, of cases where someone is severely mentally and physically abused as a child. (Plantinga, 1977, 59).

A second category of natural evils includes all the disorders caused by some genetic malfunction. Nothing the expectant parents do prior to or during pregnancy causes the problem. Genetic processes just malfunction somehow. These disorders may result from a harmful genetic mutation that is passed down through generations, or reproduction in a specific case may somehow produce a defective gene.

A third category includes all those natural disasters produced by some process within nature but outside of human beings (genetics is a natural process, but within us). These are events over which we have no control. In this category are items like fires caused by a bolt of lightning, earthquakes, floods, droughts, plagues or

pestilences, and crop failures and famine that result from floods, droughts, or pestilences(Marymzs, 2011, 193).

The final category of natural evil includes diseases. For some diseases, we do not yet know the cause. However, in many cases, we know that bacteria or viruses of some sort are the cause. These diseases may be transmitted intentionally or unintentionally, but that is not the focus of this category. Instead, the emphasis is just that there are such diseases which result from bacteria or virus.

When we look carefully in the above categories there those evils which seem to hold man responsible due to his free-will and there are those man cannot be held responsible. All together it is just a question of benevolent God allowing them to exist or unable to handle them, this brings us back to question his goodness and powers. Think of a benevolent father who gives a farm to his loving children and before giving it to them, he plants upon it thousands of deadly plants and shrubs. He then stocks it with ferocious beasts and poisonous reptiles. He takes pain to put a few swamps to breed malaria, and then arranges matter that the ground would occasionally open and swallow a few of his loving children. Besides this he establishes few volcanoes in their immediate vicinity that would erupt anytime and overwhelm his children with rivers of fires. Suppose this father neglected to tell his children which plant or reptile is poisonous, failed to say anything about earthquakes and volcanoes and kept this as a profound secret. Should you call this

father an angel, an omni-benevolent father? And yet this is what orthodox God has done. In our world it is hard to discover the purported infinite intelligence and love. Man should therefore embrace the fact that he is the highest intelligence in the universe and stop seeking aid from on high and instead solve his own problems. No other savior will save him apart from his reason which religion tries to betray. Reading the bible and Koran and listening to sermons can not ameliorate his life condition.

3.7. CONCLUSION
We have seen different definitions of evil, though this does not exhaust them, but we humbly submit that this does provide a sufficient ground for our discussion. The problem of evil touches many religions. It is out of the many suffering in the lives of people that endless questions about the meaning of life are asked. It follows that religions have to come up with proper answer regarding the origin, nature and the end of evil.

We have seen that evil has its roots beyond human realm many religions traced their origin from the angelic realm. It is unfortunate that the origin of evil is above human reach, yet the humans are the ones to experience its excruciating effects. As we live in this world (If at all the attributes given to God are true and if such God exists) no matter which intention that the author of life had in mind, it is very unfortunate and unjust to expose men, weak species to all possibilities that would

eventually lead to a miserable life. For the Christian as we are going to see in next chapter, free-will is seen as the greatest gift that God gave to humanity that could supersede the suffering and pain in human experience. This free-will however, with all its benefits, cannot be equated to the sufferings and pains it leads to, therefore, it does not do us any good.

We have also seen that evils are of different degrees and types depending on the intention and consequences. The next chapter will discuss the impact of evil on the belief in existence of God. The most important thing to note here is that evil is real in this world.

CHAPTER FOUR.

4.0. DOES THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL CONTRADICT THE EXISTENCE OF GOD?

4.1. Introduction

It is no secret that the major objection to believing that God exists is the plentiful presence of pain, suffering and dysfunction in the world. Can one rationally believe that there exists a good and omnipotent God when there is much suffering in the world? This question will be answered at the end this project, but first we need to draw a larger picture of the problem and various shapes that the arguments have taken, before it narrows down to a precise presentation of how the problem can be understood. There is much pain and suffering in the world. By pain we mean a physical sensation which people and animals generally want to avoid, but there are exceptions. Sometimes pain, can be used as a precursor for a greater good. For example, an injection against measles will cause physical pain to a child but the child will be covered against measles. Suffering on the other hand involves a clear negative evaluation of one's own situation. Other situations that involve pain and suffering may also be considered as bad, in the sense that it was better if it had not happened.

As J. L. Mackie (1981) noted that it is true that there is no explicit contradiction between the statements; that there is an omnipotent and wholly good God and that there is evil. But if we add atleast an initial plausible premises that good is opposed to evil in such a way, that a being who is wholly good eliminates evil as far as he can, and that there are no limits to what an omnipotent being can do, then we do have a contradiction. A wholly good omnipotent being would eliminate evil completely; if there really are evils, then there cannot be any such being.

In this work we will use the available theodicies in line with the critique of J. L Mackie. We will present the arguments, critique or rejected by Mackie and then we present Mackie's work together with its limitations. We will conclude by giving my recommendations showing how the apparent contradiction may be solved.

4.2. Nature of the Problem of Evil.

Evil in its different forms raises existential questions. An existential question is a practical question that relates to how a person shall live his or her life, how can that individual make his or her life meaningful? How does the individual tackle different difficult situations in life? It revolves around where the hope of that individual is grounded and what comforts that particular individual. All this entails a very individualistic answer. Opposed to the existential question are theoretical questions, these are questions concerning what is true or false, they do not regard

the individual views but it is a generalized question requiring a general answer. But we should note that despite the generalized manner of theoretical questions sometimes they are viewed as existential questions in the sense that theoretical questions may have an existential importance to the individual. For example, someone may ask, what is evil? What is its origin? Does God exist? Can God stop evil from happening? Or do prayers work? These are theoretical questions but depending on the individual's answer they shape a person's life. The problem of evil is a cluster of problems, where different people acknowledge different problems with different strengths depending on their existential interests and what else they believe to be true. Theoretical questions give rise to practical questions which relates to existential concerns as earlier mentioned. Philosophers or psychologists are interested in how to understand evil and why people do evil to others and many other questions of that kind. Answers to these questions may be of importance to those fighting evil in the society. Most religions and ideologies give answers to the above questions depending on what they hold as true in their ideologies or religions. It is common for such to offer a positive solution to the existential problem, may be seeking meaning in different difficult situations and giving reason and hope that evil will be averted one day.

As stressed by Peter Berger (1969) in his book *Sacred canopy*, religions aim at making order out of chaos, but unfortunately it has not been put to practice since there seems to be more cases of disorder in theistic religions. Evil is a reality, and

the problem of evil remains a puzzle that has attracted a lot of discussion from the inception of life. Philosophers and Theologians have deliberated over this problem in different ways trying to solve it. Unfortunately up to date no definite answer has been proved to be correct. Could there be no problem at all? One may be tempted to think so, otherwise how can a single issue, if real be a problem forever? The origin of this problem is traced back to Epicurus who wondered, 'Is He (God) willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then is He impotent. Is He able, but not willing to prevent? Then is He malevolent. Is He both and willing? Whence then is evil? (Hume 1948, 72). In our puzzle whether this is a real problem, one thing that remains evident and true is that people are in different forms of pains and sufferings in our world which many traces it architecturally to a powerful and good God.

The question of the compatibility of God and evil has two elements namely; the belief in the existence of God and the reality of the existence of evil in our world. From this debate we realize that there are those who do not believe that this is a problem (theists) and there are those who vehemently affirm that, evil causes a problem to the belief in God (atheists). We need therefore to survey broader outlines of the arguments by which theists reach the conclusion that the problem of evil is but a pseudo-problem, and still the arguments that the problem of evil is a real problem to the existence of God and therefore God does not exist. In the analysis there are steps that have been observed to tackle this issue. The first step

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is to observe that there are two ways in which the problem can be formulated namely; logical or deductive version and evidential or probabilistic version. According to the logical version where Mackie is grouped; existence of evil is inconsistent with the existence of an omni-potent and wholly good God while in the evidential version, argues that God could have created a better world therefore it is improbable that the world which exists, which is filled with large amounts of horrendous and gratuitous evil, is the best of all possible worlds. Therefore, it is improbable that God, an omnipotent, omniscient, and omni-benevolent being exists. In short, according to logical version, existence of evil in general contradicts the existence of a good God, while in evidential problem the quality and quantity of the world's evils constitutes the evidence against theism (Rowe,1987 335). For the evidentialists, the greatest worry is not just existence of evil, but why do we have a lot of evils in the world and some of them are pointless? That is to mean they are just evil in themselves and they are not meant to bring any good whatsoever.

The next step for a theist is to examine every version with an aim of dissolving the seeming problem by showing that neither of the two versions constitutes a genuine problem. It should be noted that the key point of theists is to prove that skeptics had no case, that is, there is no contradiction in the existence of the two entities (God and evil). And that no evil can be proved pointless and therefore no amount of evil as evidentialist would argue can make existence of God improbable. They

urge that God had a good reason without stating this reason of allowing both moral and natural evil to happen, and therefore no real inconsistency is evident.

In the logical argument the premises are as follows:

Evil exist

And God exist who is omni potent, omniscient and is perfectly good.

In the above statements there is no *prima facie* difficulty since there is no inconsistency, but no person of logical mind will uphold the two statements whether there is no contradiction or not right, bearing in mind the two principle seems to co-exist in the world created by a wonderful omnipotent, omniscient and prefect God. The first obvious doubt would be to question the power of the architect and his responsibility in the creation. J.L Mackie in his presentation of logical problem of evil argued that,

> The contradiction does not arise immediately; to show it we need some additional premises, or perhaps some quasi-logical rules connecting the term 'good', 'evil', 'omnipotent'. These additional principles are that good is opposed to evil, in such a way that a good thing always eliminates evil as far as it can, and that there are no limits to what an omnipotent thing can do. From these it follows that a good omnipotent thing eliminates evil completely, and then the propositions that a good omnipotent thing exists, and that evil exists, are incompatible (Mackie,1955, 206).

Thus the logical arguments as stressed by Mackie would follow:

> 1. There exist instances of intense suffering which an omnipotent, omniscient being could have prevented without thereby losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.

2. An omniscient, wholly good being would prevent the occurrence of any intense suffering it could, unless it could not do so without thereby losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.

3. There does not exist an omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good God.

Theists have tried to argue against the conclusion arrived at above, with some claiming that the third statement is not necessarily true and others claiming that God could be having a good reason to allow evil to happen and therefore both are compatible. These claims will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

4.3. J.L. Mackie's argument on the Problem of Evil

As discussed above in the nature of the problem of evil, J.L Mackie is one of the major proponents of this argument. He was staunchly opposed to those who claimed that the problem of evil was a pseudo-problem giving reasons to show that either there was no problem at all since evil does not exist, or that evil's existence brings about greater good, or that God could not have created this world without evil, or more so evil is a result of misuse of freedom that God had given to people. Mackie opposed those theodicies as follows.

4.4. Problem of Evil as Pseudo-problem

Theists' ambition remains evident through the discussion of the problem of evil, that the purported inconsistency and improbability of the existence of God rendered by existence of evil is not real. As the Skeptics presses hard for an explanation on how God could allow evil to happen, theists on the other hand do

not care much to answer this since for them evil poses no problem to be solved. But one of the most prominent theodical suggestions developed by Hick is that God allows suffering because He is interested in a 'vale of soul making'. He takes it that by confronting difficulties, hardships, frustrations, perils, and even suffering and only by doing this, we have a chance to develop such qualities of character as patience, courage, and compassion, qualities we would otherwise have no opportunity to develop. Thus God's purpose is to make it possible for us to grow into the kind of person that is capable of an eternal life of loving communion with Himself (Hick,1978, 255). To be that kind of person one will have to possess traits of character like those mentioned above, traits that one cannot develop without meeting and reacting to difficulties and hardships, including suffering. Many questions can be asked regarding this process, since through suffering humanity grows into a person that is capable of eternal life, what about those who die at their infancy? What right do we have in expecting that things will be better in the next world? Will God have more powers or His goodness increased?

Swinburne argues that the problem of evil is not a tenable problem since there is no existence of genuine evil in the world. He argues that genuine evil should fulfil the following criteria;

a) God has the right to allow evil to occur.

b) Allowing evil (or a state as bad or worse) to occur is the only morally Condition of a good .

c) God does everything else logically possible to bring about good.

d) The expected value of allowing evil, given that God does everything logically possible to bring about good is positive.

For Swinburne all evils that do exist fulfill these criteria and therefore no genuine evil is possible. It is very clear from Swinburne's presentations that the crux of his theodicy is the claim for the non-existence of genuine evil. Swinburne's definition of genuine evils explicates the content of what it means for him to claim that there are no genuine evils. By claiming that there are no genuine evils, he implies the following;

    (a) All evils lead to good.

    (b) God has the right to allow these evils,

    (c) That evils are the only way to the goods they posit,

    (d) The value of the good that they make possible outweighs evil

With the above implications, Swinburne (1998) justifies all evils. Though J. L Mackie argued before Swinburne, his critique seems to have been overlooked by Swinburne. This is because Mackie had argued that; claims of these ilks set a limit to an Omni-potent God. How can an Omni-potent being be so limited that the only way to bring about good in the world is through the intervention of evil? Still more, humanity has experienced many and pointless evils yet Swinburne want to claim that those seeming pointless evils have good outcomes. How can a cases of terror in Kenya like Westgate 21st sep 2013, Mpeketoni, 16th June, 2014, Mandera 31st Aug 2014 and other areas of Kenya be justified in the name of good to come?

What good do peoples sprayed with live bullets get? Or what kind of good did humanity get after the destruction of many lives and properties when the Tsunami hit the coastal Indonesia, Japan, India and Thailand on 26th Dec 2004? Can the sympathy experienced after the killings from the well-wishers in donating food and blood be better than the lost lives or enough to justify why many victims are crippled or bedridden up to now? We should also think of the injustice done to the victims especially those who died out of those evils. This can only happen if theists are ready to accept the limitedness of God, and therefore the word Omnipotent should be revised and replaced with a more appropriate one since Omnipotence would be misleading.

It is evident that despite the effort of theists to trash this problem, the problem remains real. The case of God as the architecture of the universe allowing evil can be understood from a human perspective. Think of a scenario where a child is drowning in presence of an averaged intelligent and capable swimmer, who is well reputed as a good man. If this swimmer fails to save the child, questions will be raised concerning his behavior; we may say he does not care. Still more we can question his known swimming powers or still more we may question his purported goodness. If he fails to save the child yet he possesses all the qualities then we must re-visit the knowledge we have about him. It is the same case with God who bears qualities as attributed to him by traditional theists. Whenever we experience

evil it raises a question as to how we know him. It is out of this question that Skeptics were ushered to question his possibility and powers.

The theists in their rhetoric may have managed to solve some versions of the problem of evil, for example, that of inconsistence but how do you explain the existence of a good God and existence of a pointless evil like that of tsunami 2004, Mandera Bus attack in Kenya 2nd Dec 2014, where a gang of terrorist stopped a bus heading to Nairobi from Mandera and orders passengers to alight from the bus, then separated the Muslims from non Muslims and they killed all the non Muslims in the name of Allah?. Where was the Christians God at that time? Was He afraid of Alshabbab too, that He could not come to rescue them like He did to Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego (Dan 3;1-23) or Paul and Sila (Acts 16:16-40) in the Christian Bible? What happened to the miracle performing God? Did the miracle working God run out of power or will to perform them? Why did the good God not intervene when nature decided to go wild for example during the times of Tsunamis 26th Dec 2004 , wild fires among others why did he not intervene as he did with Moses and the Israelites? (Ex 14:1-27) Why doesn't He intervene to his loved ones nowadays? Let Him perform miracles as He did those times and we shall believe.

As argued by Alston that If God is using suffering to achieve this goal, He is not doing very well. In spite of all the suffering we undergo, most of us do not get

very far in developing courage, compassion, and so on. He stressed that there are two answers to this: first, we are in no position to make that last judgment. We do not know nearly enough about the inner springs of peoples' motivation, attitudes, and character, even in this life. And we know nothing about any further development in an after-life. Second, the theism under discussion takes God to respect the free will of human beings (Alston, 1991 34). No strategy is consistent with that can guarantee that all or perhaps any, creatures will respond in the way intended. Whether they do is ultimately up to them. God due of self-imposed limitations must use means that have some considerable likelihood of success, not means that cannot fail. That it is amazing that so many critics reject theodicies like Hick's on the grounds of a poor success rate (Alston, 1991 35).

4.5. Free-Will Defense

Another pursuit to unravel this problem is an endeavor to claim the supremacy of freedom in human creation. It seeks to explain why a wholly good God gave men free-will although it would lead to some cases of evils, it must be argued that it is better on the whole that men should act freely, and sometimes err, than that they should be innocent automata, acting rightly in a wholly determined way. Freedom, that is to say, is now treated as a third order good, and as being more valuable than second order goods (such as sympathy and heroism) would be if they were deterministically produced, and it is being assumed that second order evils, such as

cruelty, are logically necessary accompaniments of freedom, just as pain is a logically necessary pre-condition of sympathy (Mackie 1955, 209).

Mackie on free will account makes a distinction between the first order good and first order evil. He takes misery and pain as the first order evil and happiness and pleasure as the first order good. Most of the proponents of this subject often take first order evil as a precursor to first order good. Mackie's critic on the free will defence is anchored on the different levels of good and evil. He argues that free will defence is based on the belief that freedom 'even though it entails committing certain evils, is a third order good, and the goods it produces are of greater value than any second order goods produced in a wholly determined way' (Feinberg, 2004, 77)

Mackie argues:

> I should ask this: if God has made men such that in their free choices they sometimes prefer what is good and sometimes what is evil, why could he not have made men such that they always freely choose the good? If there is no logical impossibility in a man's freely choosing the good on one, or on several occasions, there cannot be a logical impossibility in his freely choosing the good on every occasion. God was not, then, faced with a choice between making an innocent automata and making beings who, in acting freely, would sometimes go wrong: there was open to him the obviously better possibility of making beings who would act freely but always go right. Clearly, his failure to avail himself of this possibility is inconsistent with his being both omni-potent and wholly good (Mackie, 1971, 101).

Mackie's objection of free will may be seen absurd, since most defenders of free will perceive wrong choices as logically necessary to freedom. According to

Mackie these people think that freedom is a complete randomness or indeterminacy including randomness with regard to the alternatives good and evil. Actually, they think of incompatibilism or libertarian free will. Libertarians like Daniel Dennett (1978) deny that their view of free will involves randomness, but determinists such as Mackie obviously think it does if freedom is randomness it follows that God is to be blamed for giving us something that cause more harm than good. It follows according to Mackie that free-will defense is a misnomer and therefore cannot solve the problem of evil.

When we look at our world today even in our country Kenya, and given the recent terrorist attacks in Nairobi, Mombasa and Mandera counties, we may ask so many questions related to what Mackie raised. What good does the freedom of the attackers bring into the world? Could the attackers not be better people if God could have made them in such a way that they always freely choose the good? If there is no logical impossibility in a man's freely choosing the good on one, or on several occasions, there cannot be a logical impossibility in them freely choosing the good on every occasion.

The major point of contrast, then, between a theologian and the defenders of the free-will response is that they adopt disparate views of human freedom: the former a compatibilist, the latter a libertarian view. Both affirm human freedom. But the

former affirms whereas the latter denies that this freedom is compatible with causal determinism.

One hand compatibilists agree with determinists that for everything that happens there are sufficient conditions or causes such that, given them, only a particular effect or event can happen and nothing else. For something different to happen, a different set of causal conditions must be present or have occurred. In other words, all events follow necessarily from their respective causes. On the other hand, compatibilists deny the determinist's contention that since all is causally determined, freedom is only apparent. Rather, freedom is a reality. We are free when we are not coerced to choose or act contrary to the way we want to act (Geivett 1992, 78).

Geivett argues that the libertarian insist that we are free when the causal conditions are not sufficient to cause, determine or coerce us to choose or act in a certain fashion. Where causal conditions are sufficient to determine the outcome, we lack the ability to evaluate those conditions and to select between alternative causes of action. And without the ability to make meaningful choices, we are not free.

4.6. Importance of Free-will

This is the most important solution which has been held by people as a way to solve the problem of evil. This solution holds that God gives free-will to human

persons although this will leads to some serious spiritual evils like unkindness injustice, and so on because it is better for people to be able to act freely, and sometimes make mistakes or even deliberately commit sins than for people to be like machine that must always act in a pre- determined way in a way which is always right or good. In other words, the argument suggests that freedom is the most important thing. That is, it is important than kindness or courage. And it is logically necessary that being free means, being able to make evil choices. It is logically necessary that, if freedom exists spiritual evil or sins also exists.

But is this logically necessary? We wonder why God did not create human person in such a way that they could be free and yet would always make only good choices. There is no logical contradiction involved when a person freely chooses what is good on every occasion. If there is no logical contradiction involved in this, then God could have created a human person who acts freely and who always chooses only what is good and since he did not do this God must not be all good and all powerful (Mackie,1955, 209).

One could reply that there is a logical contradiction involved in the idea of a human person who is free but being not free to sin. Being able to make some wrong choices is a logically necessary part of being free. But whoever says this seems to be using 'free choice' to mean a choice which is completely random or which happens by accident and which is not determined in any way by a person's

character. If this is what it means to be free then it is hard to understand how a free choice would really be a deliberate choice or why freedom would be the most important good. What value would there be in a free choice if it just happens by accident and is not determined or caused by the people who make the choice (David, 1996, 52).

At the end of the freewill discussion, we still ponder why God exposes humanity to a lot of hardship in the name of freedom. The same freedom is the explanation for why human beings are culpable of their deeds. Given that God is Omnipotent and wholly good and that he has a foreknowledge of what will happen I do not see any logic behind God endowing humanity with this freedom that will eventually thwart their happiness in this world and eventually lead them to hell in the next world according to the Abrahamic belief.

God could have calculated the equal measures of the freedom endowed to humanity and the ability to use that freedom. For humanity to be morally accountable we need to call up the necessitating conditions of actions. Looking at the necessitating conditions of human action it is clear that our free-will plays a better part. It follows by extension that God has a hand in that since he is the donor of that free will. And from the look of things this unregulated freedom has brought more harm than good. It is as if a theist supposes that freedom presupposed by moral accountability does not refer to the necessitating conditions of our actions.

For an individual to be held accountable the necessitating conditions are vital considerations. If we human beings finite as we are do know how to nurture our children by controlling their freedom at different levels of their ability, why didn't God call to mind this also? It is my opinion that our amount of freedom should be dictated by our intellectual, emotion and physical abilities. This should be controlled by God who is the custodian of foreknowledge. It follows that if there is a God who is all powerful and all good he would have managed His ability of endowing freedom to humanity and this freedom would not be of any harm to humanity. And since He never did this His existence is not vindicated. In addition to this as much as theists tried to argue for the free will defense it can only argue for the justification of moral evil but natural evil remains a problem to the existence of God.

4.7. Evil as Necessary as a Means to Good

Plantinga (1977, 9) argues that God allows evil since evil is a means towards a good end. That means evil paves way to goodness. Mackie on the other hand urges that the kind of argument presented by Plantinga is self defeating since by so doing you limit the powers of God, this is because causal laws demand that prior to a happening there must be a cause and therefore the preceding events works like a means towards the succeeding event. If God was a subject to these causal laws it means it contradicts the Judeo-Christian belief of omnipotency of God. It would also conflict with the belief that everything including the causal laws were created

by God. God could not be the creator of the causal laws and then be subjected to it. How can God create a law that binds him or a stone too heavy to carry? Mackie argues that this stand can only be plausible if we can accept that omnipotent being can bind himself, a claim that would require further examination (Mackie 1955, 211).

4.8. How Could an Evil Free Universe Be Like?

If God could have created a world free from natural evils and moral evil this world would be a perfect world. It would be a place where God will be properly felt as depicted in the book of Revelation "Behold God's dwelling is with human race. He will dwell with them and they will be His people and God Himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain" (Rev 21;3-4). It is a world closer to the biblical heaven where the blessed will be rewarded, their tears wiped and they will never taste death. This means such a world is possible, if God had promised such world in heaven, why did he have to punish his children first to attain such state? It is so unfortunate for God to have done that since if such world will be there so many people will have unjustly lost it. He should have made our current world like promised; everything would be in harmony with each other.

Contrary to the above theists argues that a world with some evil better than a world without evil, in their effort to justify evil in the world. Mackie argues that

this solution can be analyzed in two ways; that an aesthetic can adapt this solution since beauty is heightened with a contrast. In any work of art, for example, music discord can be used to add beauty to the whole work. The necessity of evil in bringing about good can be understood also in connection with progress. This is to mean that the world with evil will not be static mass, but it will be struggling towards perfection but if we have a world without evil it would mean having a static or rigid world which in Mackie's view would rather be too boring (Mackie 1955, 208).

Mackie argues that the proponents of this argument worked with an assumption that evil meant physical evil or pain. They seemed to be responding to Hume's rejection of theism due to pain and diseases and they, in response, argue that the existence of such pain and disease brings about 'sympathy, benevolence, heroism and gradually successful struggle of doctors and reformers to overcome these evils' (Mackie, 1955, 209). In this view they seem to have capitalized on the materialistic view of good and evil which is also known as hedonistic view which equates good and evil with pleasure and pain respectively. The question which this research posits is that how would the world with evil be better than a world without evil? Is it to say that the worst evil stricken parts of the world are better than less evil stricken parts? Is hell better than heaven?

4.9. Problem of Hell

The doctrine of hell according to the followers of the two Abrahamic religions (Christianity and Islam) believe that after the last judgment, all evildoers/unrighteous will be consigned to hell to suffer everlasting punishment (with no room for escape), while good doer/righteous will go to heaven to enjoy a life of everlasting bliss. But we should not forget that the two faiths hold strongly that God is wholly good and all powerful.

Despite many objections to theism the problem of hell is another blow to a credibility of theism. As theism tries to avoid the explanation of the possibility of the existence of God in the midst of many evils, they must be ready too to explain how a good loving God can forever torture humanity in hell. Just imagine how hard it is to explain the existence of God and existence of evil in this world, how harder it is to explain that kind of experience perpetually? As Feinberg argues 'that any theistic position committed to the existence of hell seems out of touch with the times and seems bankrupt religiously, morally, and theologically'(Feinberg 2004, 396). Thus to the judgment of many, the traditional doctrine of hell is an embarrassment to those who hold it.

Hitchens also expressed his dissatisfaction with the idea of hell and stated that, how can Christians possibly project a deity of such cruelty and vindictiveness whose ways include inflicting everlasting torture upon his creatures, however

sinful they may have been? (Hitchens, 200, 139). Can god be justified by holding people accountable and to punish them *forever* for sins that are temporary and finite in nature?

The greatest problem about this issue of hell is the believers holding a credible and viable belief without first tackling questions like; how can anything like the traditional doctrine of hell be consistent with an all-powerful and all-loving God? How could there be a doctrine more repugnant than this one? How can God be so merciless to subject his finite children to an eternal damnation?

If we survey the idea of hell in the two Holy books: the Qur'an and the Bible, we realize that this is a lace depicted as the culmination of all suffering, take an example in Qur'an:

> And say: The truth is from your Lord, so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve; surely we have prepared the iniquitous fire, the curtains of which shall encompass them about; and if they cry for water, they shall be given water like molten brass which shall scald their faces; evil the drink and ill the resting place (Qur'an 18:29).

And in Holy Bible, the idea of hell is depicted as:

> If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than, with your two hands, to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off, it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two feet, to be cast into Gehenna. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. For everyone will be salted with fire (Mark 9: 43-49).

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Hell thus become a place where no loving father would prepare for his children, and if human beings with their evil inclinations do forgive, and wills good to their prodigal children, how do we explain that our heavenly father cannot forgive and goes ahead to prepare a place like hell for us?

Theists would defend the doctrine of hell by referring to free-will defence, for example, Richard Swinburne argues that, in order for freedom to be genuine, a person must be able to make a choice between good and bad and not just a range of good options. By this Swinburne set to defend God's benevolence and goodness against the attack that the idea of hell comes with. Hell is a state brought about by a natural consequence of free rejection of God's love. As such, the fundamental purpose of hell is not to punish people, but rather to honor their choices (Swinburne,1996, 188). Hell is set as a necessary condition for human freedom, but this argument holds no water since God must have had many options that could have fitted as necessary conditions than hell.

Talbott (1990) also argued that:

> We still have every reason to believe that everlasting separation is the kind of evil that a loving God would prevent even if it meant interfering with human freedom in certain ways … He could never permit his loved ones to destroy the very possibility of future happiness in themselves. Just as loving parents are prepared to restrict the freedom of the children they love, so a loving God would be prepared to restrict the freedom of the children he loves … (Talbott, 1990, 38).

It is at this level of argument that God could have created humanity in such a way that they should always choose what is good (Mackie, 1955, 210). He stresses this logically as follows:

1. If God can make people who freely choose to act well on some occasions there is nothing logically impossible about him making people who freely choose the good on all occasions.

2. God was not faced with the choice of making innocent automata or beings whose free actions would sometimes create evil

3. He had the better option of making beings who freely and always act right.

4. That he did not do this shows he can't be both fully good and fully powerful.

Karori Mbugua (2011) too in his article *The Problem of Hell Revisited: Towards a Gentler Theology of Hell*, contends that the idea of free-will is a misnomer and that free will is not a valuable gift that can justify torments of hell. What is the need of having free-will in a short time and face eternal damnation? It would be wiser to have no free will or enjoy limited free-will in this short life and enjoy eternal bliss. But still what kind of happiness will be in heaven if a mother finds that her child has been sent to hell or vice versa? I agree with Mbugua that the idea of hell call for serious consideration of God's character, and avoidance of imposing unreflected dogmas on innocent mind as the fathers of Abrahamic faith did. Mbugua stresses that:

God's primary motivation is love, he cannot possibly impose endless suffering that precludes the possibility of some degree of happiness on a person or an opportunity for the person to escape from such suffering. This would be a negation of his very nature. We therefore need to modify our theology of hell by taking God's character seriously. His infinite mercy and patience should motivate him to always give a chance to sinners to escape from hell and be reconciled to him. The other alternative would be to reject the doctrine of hell altogether (Mbugua,2011,93).

Hell then becomes unrealistic and a logically inconsistent with the idea of a loving God held by theists. This at the same time makes the existence of God improbable.

4.10. Conclusion

From our discussion of the problem of evil, it is clear that this is a real problem. Despite many arguments between the theists and skeptics, the bone of contention is clear that theists are ambitious to prove there is no problem while the skeptics tries to prove there is. We have seen how the logical problem of evil has to be realized through the formulation of additional premises that show that evil and good co-existing in an atmosphere of perfect good God is untenable. Some theist have tried to prove that there is no contradiction giving reasons like God allowed evil to bring about higher good. The other version has been mentioned as evidential problem of evil which claim the quantity and quality of evil experienced. Theists have come up with different versions of theodicies that set to negate the skeptics case of the non existence of God; on the ground of existence of evil. The most compelling theodicy is the free-will theodicy. The two camps seem to agree on the issuance of free-will by God but diverge on its application. Theist held the libertarian view that claim that man is entirely free and God has nothing

to do to control or direct that freedom towards a willed end otherwise man is not free. On the contrary the skeptics hold the compatibilistic view of freedom that reflect that man is free despite God's involvement in directing that freedom towards a willed end (to do good always). They felt that instead of God giving man, freedom that gives him power to choose evil or good, God would have given man freedom just to choose what is good. Arguing that given that when man choses to do good is free, the same freedom should persist as he continues doing good always. This argument sound strong, since if angels in heaven are free and always do what is good why can the same not apply to human beings? More so why did God with the foreknowledge of a possible misuse of freedom went ahead to issue the same to men? We can still question God's benevolence on this account; as a good father, He should have spared His children from the danger of failing into temptations of evil which in turn make their lives miserable in this life and more miserable in the next life in hell.

I find it very ridiculous when the Qur'an and the Bible express the notion of merciful, loving and caring father as a character of God, and turns to unforgiving and jealous God. It is apparent that the notion of God must change or some doctrine in the Abrahamic faith be dropped. The existence of God who is omnipotent and omni-benevolence and the existence of evil cannot be reconciled. Evil and good are two opposite forces just like light and darkness cannot co-exist. It follows that, the traditional theist's God does not exist since we cannot deny the

existence of evil which is so evident to our sense. Alternatively theists should accept to change the attributes for a weaker God.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. General Conclusion

This work has clearly outlined its research problem that is, the existence of evil possesses a contradiction or rather negate the existence of all powerful and Omni-benevolent, loving God. The objectives of this study were also outlined as; to find out whether or not the available arguments for the existence of God and the existence of evil are logically tenable. To investigate whether the existence of God negates the existence of evil and vice versa. To investigate whether the orthodox believer can. be able to re-examine the qualities they ascribe to God. Last but no the least is to provide a logical ground for the discussion of the problem of evil and existence of God.

In this work the idea of God and his existence has been thoroughly been discussed The idea of the existence of God who is said to be omnipotent and omni-benevolent have been argued through different arguments for the existence of God namely: the cosmological argument, teological argument, and ontological arguments. All these arguments have been challenged and therefore none can be hailed successful especially by the challenge from the existence of evil. It follows that, the available arguments for the existence God are not logically tenable. There

can never be an omnipotent and omni benevolent God in the face of all moral and natural evils we experience.

We have taken effort to explain the concept evil, offering different understandings or definitions of the term evil. Much of this difference may come from different originations of individuals involved. It is notable that there are two main origin of evil namely; human beings and nature. From human it is out of ignorance and neglect and the misuse of freedom to be the origin of moral evil while still some believers hold that God's weakness in the battle between good and evil leads to triumph of natural evil. In the commission of evil, there are those evil deeds committed by human beings which holds them culpable while others do not depending on the level of knowledge or state of mind.

The psychology of evil is also reflected on the two different understanding of what makes an act evil. We have two camps as non-consequentialism and consequentialism. For non-consequentilism, We have tackled Divine command theory which argues that an act is evil since God has prescribed it, and for consequentialist it argues that an evil act is so due to the negative results. For the sake of this study, we have taken divine command theory which is under non-consequential theory as the most appropriate since God in the Orthodox faith is believed to be the determiner of what is good and evil. If then God is the one prescribes good and evil and He remains the author of everything as the orthodox

religions believe, how then do we talk of the evils in the human race? Can this God create human beings who entirely depend on Him, including His reasoning and then talk of a wicked generation? Why do we have evil in the world created by a good God in the first place? Could it be there no evils in the world and what we call evil is but an illusion? If evil is an illusion, then how do we account for discomforts, pain, sorrows and disappointments we experience in the world? I think it does not matter the labels we use for the aforementioned life degrading qualities, but the fact that they exist remain and since we use the term evil to label them then evil exist.

The study also explains two different types of evil namely: the moral evil and natural evil. Moral evil calls for accountability from the offender while natural evil does not hold human being accountable. The nature of evil though understood differently has been characterized with words like, wickedness, malevolence and cruelty. We have also seen that evils are of different degrees and types depending on the intention and consequences.

The problem of evil has been discussed, it is expressed that the existence of evil contradicts the existence of an omnipotent and omni-benevolent God. It expresses how illogical it is to believe in the existence of God who is all powerful and Omni-benevolent alongside the existence of evils in the world. Mackie argues that a wholly good omnipotent being would eliminate evil completely; if there really are

evils, and since He does not then such being does not exist. The nature of this problem has been thoroughly discussed and with no doubt the problem is apparent. From this debate we realize that there are those who are opposed to the idea of having a problem (theists) and there are those who vehemently affirm that, evil causes a problem to the belief in God (atheists). It is out of these that we have logical and evidential versions of evil. Under the logical problem of evil, Mackie urges that the existence of evil contradicts the existence of an almighty, Omni benevolence God. He postulates premises that poses a contradiction between God and evil. Under the evidential version it claims that the quantity and intensity of evils in the world makes the existence of God improbable. Both versions are set to demonstrate that the problem of evil is not a pseudo problem but a real one contrary to theists who disregarded it as a pseudo-problem.

This research also demonstrated the major theodicies which are efforts of the theists to disapprove the skeptics' claim. The major theodicy that both the theists and skeptics seem to have a common ground is the theodicy of free-will. It claims that evil is as result of human misuse of the free-will given to them by God. Both camps do not disagree on the existence of free-will in humanity, but they differ on the implementation. There are those who call for compatibilistic point of view that God could have created human beings who freely choose only what is good. Contrary to this are the libertarians who claim that God could have not limited

what the human do with their free will; since by so doing he will have created automata not human beings.

Free-will is seen as the greatest gift from God, but is the greatest cause of human evil. The importance of free-will sometimes seems to be outweighed by its bad causes. We are led to question its importance due to its consequences. Some contends that it would be better if God never left man totally free since man left to himself can easily destroy himself.

It is the same free-will that justifies hell. Man is left by himself with free-will leading him to glory or hell. When the issue of free-will is critically looked at we are tempted to feel that God has a responsibility in occurrence of evils in this world. He (God) had a prior knowledge of what will be the outcome of free-will; and carelessly He went ahead to administer freedom to human being without considering their levels of knowledge or the capacities to use it. Why He never considered the human abilities puts a hard question to His power and goodness. It is like a mother who leaves a child to play around with a sharp knife knowing very well that the child can injure himself or herself with the knife, due to his or her ability to use the knife is limited. The traditional theistic God contested with the existence of evil, there can never be a logical justification for His existence. It is either the theist gives up his belief and joins Fredrick Nietzsche in pronouncing the

death of God or alternatively the theist can equally accept to change the attributes of God to accommodate the gaps between the belief and reality.

5.2. Recommendations

From the findings the project recommends the following

i) Traditional theistic God attributes be revised for a weaker attributes to accommodate the gaps between the belief and reality.

ii) Theists should alternatively abandon their belief in such a God.

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