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**Can God Take Responsibility for Evil and Still be Good**

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**Introduction**

I believe that God takes responsibility for evil and he is still good. I will prove that God takes responsibility for evil in the world because he is the primary mover of all that exists even if it was mankind and the devil and his demons that are responsible for creating sin and evil. God is still good because what he created and continues to create is always good. Just because mankind misuses the good things does not make God bad. I will show that the free will phenomena and the law are some of the good things that God created but by which sin and evil was hatched. The following words or terminologies; free will, the law, sin, evil and goodness will be predominant in my discussion in this article. God is good because he is the only person who sought and seeks to eliminate evil in the world.

The two terms that proves that mankind, Satan and his demons are responsible for what is wrong in the world are *free will and the law*. The law and free will are the major two elements that can shed light on how sin was hatched. When sin was hatched it produced a bi-product known as evil. Since God created mankind with a free will disposition and also gave the law he takes responsibility for evil in the world. Notice the distinction; God takes responsibility even though he is neither the creator nor the cause of sin and evil. God is good because he did not create evil. Human beings and Lucifer and his demons are the cause of moral and natural evil and not God. It is accurate, therefore, to state that free will and the law are the only basis for the Consistency Theory of Truth <sup>1</sup> when debating whether God is good even though he *takes* responsibility for evil in the world. Evil seems to have dominated the discussion among philosophers and they tend to blame it on God. Blaming God is unjustified because it was mankind who broke the law and introduced sin and evil in the world (Genesis 3:1-15) “The Bible’s first recorded sin.”<sup>2</sup>

#### **How Sin and Evil were Hatched?**

Obviously the discussion of sin won’t require cockpit doctrine because none of us were there when sin was hatched. We know that sin was hatched through the willful breaking of the command (sin was hatched by two good things; the law and free will). But evil is a by-product of sin. Evil would never have existed if sin was not hatched (there is much discussion about evil but not sin. Lack of connection between these two concepts have gravely contributed to our misunderstanding of how evil came to be). Sin was not roaming the earth and then someone picked it up. It was hatched (created). There was only one act of sin that was damnable, theologians call it origin sin. Jesus paid the penalty for the original sin. Subsequent acts of sin are covered by the blood of Jesus if confessed in His name.

Let me emphasize something crucial and important. Sin was hatched by the breaking of the command (a good thing) of God. God

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<sup>1</sup> Mortel, Joseph, A. van de. *The Thinker’s Dictionary: A Handbook for Philosophy, Religious, and some College Vocabulary*, 3rd ed., Burr Ridge, IL. McGraw-Hill Companies, 2002, Page 43.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton, Victor, P. *The Book of Genesis*; Chapters 1-17. Grand Rapids Michigan; Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1990, page 190, points out that the Bible’s first recorded sin is limited to eight words in the Hebrew text.

issued a command (a good thing). If the command (a good thing, “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good, Romans 7:12) was not given sin would not have been hatched (I use the term ‘hatch” because it fits the occasion. Unless there is interaction between a sperm and a gamete-there would be no hatching of a bi-product, a chick or anything else). By freely choosing to break the command sin was hatched. There had to be a mechanism to give birth to sin. That is why God *takes* responsibility for evil in the world even though he did not create it. God gave the law to creatures created with a free will disposition. The creatures violated the law willfully. Adam and Eve did not misuse their free will. They were expected to use it. The difference is that they chose to use their free will by choosing a forbidden thing. That is not misusing it.

#### **Free Will and the Law Hatched (created) Sin**

*The “the initial law” was a mere command but still the means to make free will a reality.* The first command is different from the subsequent laws that followed i.e., the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses had many purposes. One was to prove that human beings were born with a sinful nature in contradistinction from Adam who was created without any defect or the inclination to sin. Adam and Eve broke the command of God freely. That one act by the couple created a phenomenon we call sin from which evil developed.

The intensity and multiplicity of evil in the world is caused by free will agents. God has never and will never ever create evil. It is contrary to his nature. Free agents do not have to create evil either. If they do they should be ready for negative consequences. Free will agents affect other beings who may not have committed that particular act. The law plays an important role in the multiplicity of evil. Different kinds of evil arise due to different laws broken by free agents. Each particular action an individual performs will produce a negative or positive effect. If a mother smokes and she becomes pregnant, there is a probability that she may affect the unborn baby in her womb. The baby had no choice in the action of its mother but will be affected by it. We all have come to know that consequences may extend to what we call “innocent parties.” **Sin had effect on the third party (us) in the action of Adam and Eve.** The natural world

became affected by the actions of the keepers of the universe.<sup>3</sup> The choice of Adam and Eve did not only affect people it extended to the whole world in which man was in charge. Sin of Adam was responsible for creating imbalance in the world order (Genesis 3). That is why sometimes we are affected by natural phenomena such as tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, Tsunamis and so on. All these unfortunately are by-products of sin. We should not rush to blame God for our misfortune. It may help to examine the role the law played in the initial decision of our federal head.

### **Minor and Major Purpose of the Law**

Biblically speaking, the minor purpose of the law was to prove that human beings were all born with a sinful nature. One of the reasons the law was given was to make people be aware that there was a defect in their disposition. The law of God was not and is not meant to make people miserable.

On the other hand one of the major purposes of the Law of Moses was to drive mankind to a savior. The cry for a savior was to destroy the flawed disposition in our DNA. In other words what the federal head (Adam did) had done had to be undone by someone else (second Adam) like him. Since the first Adam failed,<sup>4</sup> the second Adam had to come and face the same circumstances that the first Adam was confronted with in order to undo that fatal wound (Romans 5) we call death the final penalty for evil.

To put it in a lay man's language the Law of Moses was given to drive people to someone who could change their inner nature. We may say that sin is in the DNA of all human beings. The law itself is not wrong. The law helps us realize that we have a flawed nature. Here is the basic truth or call it a naked fact; we need laws everywhere.

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<sup>3</sup> Genesis 3:17, "To Adam he said . . . cursed is the ground because of you. . . . All the days of your life."

Romans 8:20-23, "For the creation was subjected to frustrations, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it. . . the whole creation has been groaning."

<sup>4</sup> Ross, Hugh (a pastor and scientist) states that "Adam and Eve defied God's authority and thereby introduced sin into the earthly environment . . . .These actions restrained the expression of evil and made way for redemption, (page 69)in his book; *Creation Science*. Navy Press, 1945.

### **The Law of Men and the Law of God**

We know that every nation has some form of laws to guide its people how in their relationships. But people do not necessarily make laws to prove that they are sinners. Laws within communities are made as equitable means of justice for all. For example, we have rules at football or basketball games. We have rules as we travel along. We have manners or rules at our tables as we eat food. We have rules in schools, colleges, places of work and at parks or at a party and so on.

Laws are necessarily because they help us observe some form of fair play in communities where different opinions abide. Without laws the powerful people in our society might always dominate and suppress the weak. Thieves might reign freely. Freedom of movements might be curtailed. However, we must distinguish between the laws of men and the laws of God. God's law encompasses all things in the universe. Laws of men affect only their communities. God gave guidelines to Adam how he was going to run the earth. He also forbade him to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But Adam was also free to observe or disobey that command because he was a moral being. The distinction between the command and the law given to Moses lies in their purpose. One of the purposes of the Law of Moses was to prove that mankind was born with a sinful nature. Adam was not created with a sinful nature therefore the purpose of the command (law) to him was strictly definitive in the sense that he was to choose dependence on God or independent of him. It was also a question of trusting God or trusting self. Furthermore the Law of Moses was constructed in such a way that it would drive people to seek a savior. Adam and Eve did not need that before they sinned. They were already God's children. The command to them was to prove whether man would choose God's word or not. Furthermore the Law of Moses was paradigms on how to make laws in order to govern people fairly as we see it today. The command to Adam cannot be repeated because it was a onetime thing.

### Laws are Necessary in the Universe

The majority of all reasonable people agree that laws are necessary in resolving a lot of issues in life. Laws<sup>5</sup> or rules are needed in every facet of our daily lives in order to create peaceful and meaningful interactions with other human beings. We can even go further and suggest that laws are necessarily as we interact even with the spiritual beings. The fact that people have different opinions in life compels us to make laws or rules in our homes and society at large. In some cases laws of the land or at a football game are the only means to settle conflicts. Even though we know that laws or rules might be broken but still it is always better to have some means of finding out who was right and who was wrong.

There is no nation on earth civilized or otherwise, advanced or third world that does not have some form of laws to abide by. There are of course different kinds of governments such are; Anarchy, Aristocracy, Communist, Confederation, democracy, Dictatorship, Fascism, Federation, Monarchy, Parliamentary, Republic, Socialist, Theocracy, Tyranny and much more. All of them have some form of laws or rules they follow. Even when we talk about anarchy, even in that system of governance where we believe it is a lawless society still there are some unwritten and even written laws by which its citizens are guided by in order for that form of government to be what it claims to be; anarchy! How do they know its anarchy? That in itself is some form of law.

The above arguments prove that laws are necessarily in society whether we like them or not. It is factually true that some laws are well appreciated and respected than others. Dostoevsky, Fyodor believed in “total freedom.” Such a position is unattainable in this life and in the one to come because of the simple fact that there has to be some laws even to govern the so called total freedom sentient beings. *Laws then act as a restriction to our free will.* Total freedom as Dostoevsky put it would mean, “No guideline for life.” The limit of freedom, therefore, is the law for all created beings. By limit we mean that since we live with other beings, there has to be some means by which we are allowed to carry ourselves without stepping on other

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<sup>5</sup> Hugh Ross said that, “Through the prophet Jeremiah, God says that laws governing the heavens and Earth are fixed, page 73.”

people's toes. That is not a bad thing to a person who loves and cares for others.

**For the Law to be Effective there has to be some form of Punitive Measures**

We must realize that the penalty imposed for breaking that first command was extraordinary. How important was keeping or breaking the initial law ever given to mankind? It was exceptionally important than any other laws that would follow it. It had everlasting implications on human race. The observing or breaking that one command given to Adam and Eve was decisive in relationship with God, Adam's posterity, the lower animals as well as the rest of the created world. The world was changed by Adam and Eve forever. This is where middle knowledge advocates could make certain assumptions as to what might have been had Adam and Eve never sinned. Even the immediate consequences that Adam and his wife faced there and then had devastating effect to say the least. They lost tranquility and open friendship with their God. They were immediately gripped by it. The consequences that ensued had no chance of being reversed until the coming of second Adam.

According to the Bible, Adam and Eve were responsible for the whole earth (subdue the earth, they were told by the Creator Genesis 1:28). Only Adam and Eve had that one opportunity to lead us towards dependence upon God or independent of God. It was Adam and Eve's call to lead us to eternal relationship with God or enmity with him. It was a command to exercise their freedom one way or the other. Free will had to be exercised if it was genuine.

What God told Adam turned out to be true. In simple terms God said to Adam if you disobey and choose to go your own way, you will open a door to death but also a door to know what is good and what is bad. By telling the couple the truth in advance shows God loved and respected them. If we truly love people we do not muzzle them or lie to them of what might happen if certain steps were taken. By telling the couple the truth also reflects that he did not want them to open a door to suffering and pain. Parents who love their children do not bind them nor lie to them but rather warn them very strongly against their bad behavior. That is love and that is being a good parent. God is good and a loving Father to all his creation. No one is as good and loving like God.



### **The Law and Freedom**

Therefore the purpose of that one command given to Adam and Eve was to let them know that they were not slaves but free creatures made in the image of God. They had to make a choice to follow God or self. Here is a probability fact substantiated by the fact that there is a class of created beings who acted contrary to what Adam and Eve had done. If Adam had chosen to obey God's command mankind would have lived in the same position in which the elect angels are enjoying today. That would have meant that all the offspring of Adam would have been born without a sinful nature. If that were the case evil would only have impacted Satan and his demons.

The fact that we are able to make decisions proves that God truly created us with a free will disposition. Freedom away from God always leads to the knowledge of good and evil. Freedom towards God always leads to life of, security and joy and peace. The tree of life in the middle of the garden symbolized life depended upon God. We always focus on one tree and forget that God planted two trees in the Garden. One that promised knowledge of good and evil and the other that guarantees eternity with God without pain and suffering. If we believe in the Scriptures, we should stop blaming God over the misery we are in. We are still free creatures with moral decisions that we face each day. Today as we write and speak, God has provided a second door to eternal life to all human beings who would dare trust in his word.

Here is the bottom line; sin was hatched into the world by the breaking of the clear command of God with the full knowledge of what would happen. We also know that failing to keep the command carried eternal consequences. It might be helpful to examine how the law and sin relate.

### **How does the Law, Free will and Evil Relate?**

I pointed out that all human beings that live on the face of the earth today are guided by some form of law. The truth is that God himself is guided and obeys his own laws. Angelic beings are guided by the divine law. All human beings are guided by the divine, manmade and natural laws. The most powerful word that has been neglected in the discussion of evil is the *law*. It is imperative that we factor in the concept of the law whenever we discuss the source of evil.



Philosophers and many well meaning theologians have neglected a cardinal point in human suffering, the role the law plays in human drama concerning evil in the world. Through the natural and special revelation, God has clearly communicated to us the importance of observing the law. I was very disappointed when I discovered that none of the people I respect in theological circles made a connection between the law and free will and how these two doctrines led to the creation of sin and evil. The Bible has revealed to us where evil came from. It appears that many philosophers and some theologians today would rather debate man's terminologies and words and just pays lip service to what we find in the Scriptures. God portrays the concept of origin sin as factual information. Fortunately the apostle Paul does not disappoint us but makes it crystal clear how evil and the law relate. In Romans chapter 7, the apostle Paul discusses the Law of Moses but he also insinuates concerning the command given to Adam and Eve. Paul finds a way to marry the law given to Moses and the command issued to Adam. *Paul says sin cannot exist without the law* (emphasis mine). It is very critical that we digest that. On the other hand the law is meaningless if people are not free. The free will doctrine has been well debated by most church fathers including St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas all the way to our modern thinkers the likes of Alvin Plantinga, Austin Farrer, John Mackie, Antony Flew and many others. Unfortunately many even St. Augustine (the bulwark of theological and philosophical mind) neglected to strike a relationship between the law and free will and evil. The law and free will explain how sin was hatched. St. Augustine held that evil is the absence of the good. That means if there is no evil then good exists. That is not totally correct. As I have argued above sin was created by two good things (the law and free will).

We are now getting closer to the crucial reason why I believe God takes responsibility for evil in the world. Here is a stunning revelation from the mouth of the apostle Paul who was led by the Spirit of God. Paul discusses in the New Testament a point Adam might have alluded to in the Garden of Eden (it is the woman YOU gave me, Genesis 3:12) "I would not have come to *know sin except through the law*. . . If the law had not said, "you shall not covet. . . .For apart from the law sin is dead. . . . But when the command came, sin became alive and I died (Romans 7:7-23)."

Who gave the command to Adam? It was God. If God did not command Adam not to eat from that tree and yet Adam still went ahead and ate from it he would not have committed a sin. Point number two, Adam implied that if Eve was not with him he may not have sinned against God. In other words if these provisions were not there sin would not have resulted. God made these provisions. But these provisions were not wrong. Wrongness came by going contrary to what God said. Therefore there would not have been sin in the world if the command was not given! *God takes responsibility because he put everything in play.* He did not tell them to sin. He told them to obey his word. Sin was born by disobeying the command by free creatures. **Where sin does not exist evil wouldn't there either (heaven). Evil always follows sin.** Sin was hatched when the law was broken. To be able to do that Adam and Eve must have been free creatures. They were not muzzled at the core of their being. Let us explain this principle of the law and free will because it is the real source of all that has gone wrong in the world even though these concepts by themselves are good. A person cannot be charged with a speeding ticket if there was no law of speeding. Similarly, sin could not be hatched if the command was not given (the argument of the apostle Paul). There would be no law to break and no sin to result. Human beings hatched sin by breaking the command. There is no mystery to how sin was hatched into the world. It was by using two good things contrary to God's command i.e., free will a good thing and the law another good thing. That begs an obvious question. Is the law sin then?

### **Is the Law Sin?**

Is the law sin? We have to ask that question. Fortunately the Bible itself asks that same question. The answer is absolutely no. The fact that it is a “negative” answer exonerates God from being responsible *for* sin and evil in the world. How do we know? First, God did not break his law. He did not eat the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve did. Two, God has never been found to break any of his laws. Three, Jesus fulfilled the law when he came into the world. Four, God has no reason to break the law. Five God can't qualify to judge if he were to break the law. Therefore God did not create sin; man and the devil did. God created the law because he knew that it is the only means to ascertain equitable justice in the universe by which he

himself could be examined (Jesus asked can anyone accuse me of sin; John 8:46). It is astounding if not amazing to learn that God subjects himself to his own law (Jesus was born under the law; Galatians 4:4. We can examine whether God is just or unfair by checking if he broke his own laws. Jesus said he fulfilled the law Matthew 5:17).

### **The Law is Holy and Good**

Paul writes; “the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.” God is still good even though he takes responsibility for evil in the world. Sin was hatched by two good things; free will and the law both of which were authored by God. If there was no possibility of sin the concept of free will makes no sense. We know now that what brought about sin or evil was a good thing (the command or the law and free will) but Adam and Eve chose willfully to disobey the command having known the consequences in advance.

Let me demonstrate by using analogy. How could any legitimate government equitably guide and lead its citizens?<sup>6</sup> By making good laws to which all its people would submit to at all times. We all know the phrase, “no man is above the law.” The law creates equitable means of justice or at least it aims for that. Let me state a specific analogy. Let’s consider the law regarding speeding limit. Every state posts some form of speed limits along its roads so that every drive can read and obey the required speed limit whether the police officer is there or not.

Here is a question we must objectively answer; is the speed limit law a good thing or a bad thing? Most will say it is a good thing. It is good because the purpose of that law is to protect its residents from unnecessary accidents especially the pedestrians. If one were to break the law they would face some form of punitive measures. If there were no penalties involved the law is meaningless. Every driver knows that to go beyond a given speed limit is to break the law. How many people have gone beyond the designated speed limit? I have and I believe many more people have done the same thing. We know that if we were caught we would be in trouble. The law itself is a

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<sup>6</sup> Baylis, Albert H. discusses the whole range of Mosaic Law to the community of Israel as guidance for its people in his book” From *Creation to the Cross: Understanding the First Half of the Bible*, page 124-125.

good thing but to a law breaker if caught the good thing becomes painful. The law breaker might be made to pay a fine. If that person fails to pay he may end up going to jail. The idea of going to jail and eventually to prison if possible may spell big trouble to begin with. If that individual who broke the law has children and is the only source of income his family may indirectly pay the price too even though they did not participate in breaking the law themselves. But listen; that individual was exercising their freedom of choice! But alas when consequences were in effect the ball game becomes sour and many more innocent people ended up paying the price for the action of one person? Why should God be held responsible for the actions of a law breaker even though he made the law? The likelihood of that person becoming bitter for going to prison is huge. That law breaker may have some issue with the law enforcers but not necessities against the law itself. The reality is that the law makers *take* responsibility for that person's predicament even though they are not the cause of his predicament. They can't go to jail for making the law. They did not break the law even though they made the law. They are bound by the law they made. But they cannot be taken to prison if they did not break it. In fact what they did was meant to help or protect even the law breaker. God is a law maker and Paul says the law is holy, righteous and good. But that good thing led people to create evil it does not make God bad. God is still good.

**The Law Governs all things and is the Chief Principle means of  
Discovery of the Unknown Elements in Universe when its  
Precepts are Properly Applied: That's how Important the  
Law is**

Everything in the universe is governed through some particular rules or laws without exception. That is why people are able to carry out research. Relationships demand boundaries and laws because by them we can determine whether we are being fair to other people. That is why I believe God has given rules to govern the relationship between a man and his wife (man is to love and the woman is to obey-simple but profound commands, Ephesians 5:22-25).

The law is by all means a good thing if not the next best thing in life. It sets boundaries (not for pain but justice for all parties involved), brings order, sets limits, helps define things, gives directions, helps extrapolate and interpolate the unknowns, above all

acts as the chief means of justice among moral beings. Everything in the universe is governed by some form of laws. The critical point to remember is that the law is neutral and does not take away from our enjoyment of life. In fact it drives and creates an equitable environment for people concerned in that society. The law has potentiality if kept right to help us maximize the enjoyment of life that is dependent upon God rather than independence of him. We are contingent beings and therefore our fulfillment and enjoyment of life correlates with our relationship with our Creator. Even if sin was not in the world, the law would still be necessary. We know that natural law helps us investigate and uncover things we are not aware of. Even in the jungle where there is unwritten law, there is the law of instinct. Certain animals know that to come out during the day time might mean food for other beasts. A mosquito knows that it is better to breed near the pond where there is stagnant water so that its eggs are not washed away; there is the unwritten law of stagnation that helps protect the eggs. There are other kinds of laws we find in other disciplines. Philosophers talk about laws of logic for example, “law of noncontradiction (LNC), laws of excluded middle (LEM),”<sup>7</sup> and much more.

There are laws everywhere including the heavens. God himself has the highest law on how to govern himself and his creation. One of the obvious laws about God himself is that He can’t contradict his own character. He wouldn’t break the law of the Godhead. If he did at that moment we would not have a Supreme Being. We know that God is an absolute law keeper. That is how he runs his cosmos twenty four seven. To an open minded thinker the point I am making is reasonable. We need laws to run the universe and its occupants. We need the law in the natural realm so that we could rely upon it. We need the law in the spiritual realm so that we could have confidence that when we submit to it we shall get what it promises. We need rules (laws) in homes, on the streets and so forth. The law is good and holy because; it is the sure equitable means of justice and it sets boundary to all things.

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<sup>7</sup> Snyder, Frances Howard, Daniel Howard Snyder and Ryan Wasserman. *The Power of Logic*. New York, NY. McGraw Hill 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2009, Page 659.

Laws are necessary because they preserve freedom for individuals! Without the law freedom can't exist. It follows therefore that there is no such a thing as total freedom per say. *The law limits that freedom for all rational beings.* God has a higher kind of freedom in the sense that he is not subject to man's laws but he nonetheless is bound by his own laws. God can change our laws but he can't change laws by which he abides by (i.e. he can't change the law of immutability, necessity, eternity and so on). To break the law is to annul the equitable means of existence. Furthermore even as individuals we form certain norms and principles by which we distinguish ourselves from others. If we break such self made internal rules we feel that we have lost our integrity and direction in life. Why? Because as rational beings we are subject to a certain flow of life and thought guided by our unwritten rules. The point I am pressing is that do not hurry and say we do not need rules or laws, we do. Try not to follow the law of nature when you feel like going to the washroom and see what happens then! That is an example of unwritten law right there. Try not to breathe for ten hours and see where they will take you! Try not to talk to your friends or spouse for days and see what happens. These are example of unwritten laws which we must observe or else we become miserable creatures.

### **Without the Law Sin is Dead**

Let me repeat myself, *the limits of freedom or free will is the law.* Both God and man are bound by God's law. That means God limits himself by his own law... Unlike men who make laws and yet break them, God has never broken his own laws. The law can also prove the sovereignty of God. How is God sovereign? The answer is that he makes universal laws that affect all things in the universe. God is not subject to the laws of man i.e. He is a Spirit. But man is subject to the laws of God. Furthermore he made everything therefore everything belongs to him. He can't steal what he owns. He can' "murder "what he creates from nothing. I have the right to destroy my lap top computer and no one will arrest me for that. It's my lap top! The only problem with this analogy is that whiles as God can create and "destroys life" I don't know how to make a laptop I have to buy another. God is self sufficient and I am not.

*As we pointed out above, apart from the law sin is dead.* Without the law one cannot know if what has been done is right or wrong. The

law helps us to know what is expected of us. It defines what is right and wrong. If there is no law, there is nothing to fear. If the law says there is no speeding limit, no law officer can give you or me a speeding ticket because I have not broken any law since there is no speeding law. There are different categories of laws in the universe. There are written laws and unwritten laws. There are laws we know by intuition. There are some laws that are revealed through our consciences (the inner light that a light up tells us that something is not right or it is ok).

According to the Judeo –Christian Bible, before the Law of Moses was given there was no written code but an inner law (conscience) existed. People knew that killing was wrong either by natural law or by mere intuition (Genesis 4, Rom. 2:14-15). The Law of Moses was established in Israel. Nonetheless the surrounding communities who did not have the Mosaic Law frowned on divorce. They disapproved those who tried to sleep with other people’s wives. Some knew that it was wrong to sleep with another man’s wife (Gen 12:10-20; Rom. 1:18- ) without the written code. People knew that sleeping with their parents was unnatural.

### **Free Will and the Law and their Bi-Products**

Let’s now conjoin these two mega issues of free will and the law which I think led to the hatching of sin and the multiplicity of evil. Many have faithfully deliberated regarding the nature of free will. One of the well respected Church Father, St Augustine defined free will as ” the set of capacities that enables a person to take decisions and carry them out, that determines whether or not she will she seek the objects of such desires.<sup>8</sup>

Mankind decided to break the law by using his free will. Unfortunately, man was in shock when consequences where in effect. We love the concept of freedom but we hate the idea of facing the consequences. We should bear in mind that every course of action we take will have some effect. Consequences are the by-product of keeping or breaking the law. When consequences are punitive we tend to attack the character of God. When we enjoy the beautiful

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<sup>8</sup> St Augustan’s *Free Will Theodicy and Natural Evil* by Robert Francis Allen, University of Detroit.



things God created we ignore him. The best thing we should do is to follow what God desires willingly and then enjoy the positive consequences that may follow. Some angels decided to keep and obey the command of God and right now they enjoy the positive consequences of being on the side of God.

We have tried to show that God takes responsibility for evil in the world even though we broke the law and introduced sin in the world. It is impossible for God to ignore the law when it is broken. God is the Supreme judge of the whole world. But there are provisions set in place to correct the wrongs. Someone must pay the penalty for the wrong doing. Jesus did. From that we can again conclude that God is love cares for all that he made.

But how can we affirm that God is good? Ask that same question to yourself. How could you tell that you are a good person? Unless there are certain conditions that we have set in place by which we can determine that judgment. We talked about that above. We can examine if we have kept or broken the law. Did God break the law? God did not break the law. That means he is good. He is also good because he hates evil. He is good because he put in place some mechanism to try to eliminate evil. God is good because he hates it when a person dies just as he does as when millions of people die at once. God is good because he does not look at numbers that die at once as determinative how bad evil is. To God life is just as important when a single person dies as when millions die at once. It is not the large numbers that counts before God but each person that dies in sin.

Human beings raise noises and complain when thousands of people die at once but they never do when individuals dies every single day. Who is good in this instance? I believe the person that cares everyday and that is God. We should not summon God when thousands of people die at once. We should be appalled every day at the death of an individual. God does not focus on numbers to measure evil. God focuses on the life of an individual. Each life matters not just a group of people. To a mother who has lost her child the pain is the same. God made all human beings. He feels more pain than anyone else in the world if one person dies in sin. He made that person we did not. God is the one who truly loses because he made man for his purpose. He does not rejoice when millions die at once

because it makes no difference to him. Life is life whether millions dies or a single person dies before God. He bares the pain more that is why he decided to send a savior because he is so good. When we see our friend lose their house, we feel for them but the truth is they feel more than we do because it is their property. In the same way God feels more pain than the rest of us because he made us for himself but we rejected him. God won't impose himself on us. Forced love is rape.

God has given us liberty to carry on life. If God were to stop every major natural disaster in the world he might as well stop every minor "evil" that each individual is about to experience if we are interested in God preventing evil. If a woman is about to incur an accident, God should stop it not just when millions are about to die in Tsunami. If a child is about to kill another child God should stop it not just when a tornado is about to sweep the whole town. If a man is about to commit suicide God should stop it not just when a lunatic is about to tell a group of people to die by drinking poison. If a drunkard is about to run over a child God should stop it not just when the plane is about to crash. If a police officer is about to shoot somebody intentionally God should stop it not just when war mongers are about to run down a village in Africa. If a woman is about to poison her husband God should stop it. If a man is about to kill his wife, God should stop it. If you are about to sleep with your neighbor's wife God should stop it. If you are about to lie to cover your tracks to avoid being caught God should stop it. To be consistent with our righteousness that if God is good and all powerful he should not only stop natural evils such as Tsunami, Tornado, Hurricane and the like that are about to take people's lives but we should also wish God to stop every negative action that might impact people. Each individual's life is important before God because the multitudes are the sum total of each individual life. My point is that our thinking is very erroneous (God says my thoughts are thoughts) in the sense that when we sees natural disasters then we wish God should intervene but we rarely think like that when a life passes away. If God were to stop every negative action including natural disasters, life would come to a standstill. If God where to intervene in every negative choices people make he would be interfering in their free will. That would amount to forced love.

Philosopher mislead people when they focus on the amount of evil in the world and question the goodness of God based on that rather than focus on each individual person that dies every single day. Consistence is important. Furthermore our definition of love is slightly different from God's. God's love is part of his essence (God is love). Our love has been communicated to us but has become tainted with sin. In other words our way of love is derivative from some other source. We are taught to love. We tend to love those who love us. God loves even his enemies (John 3:16). What do we mean when we ask does God love? Part of the essence of love is speaking trustfully even when it hurts. Real love also allows free creature decide their fate. We tend to speak half the truth. God always tells the whole truth because that is his nature. We have accused God with something we don't fully comprehend.

True love is also sacrificial. In other words it is selfless. God according to the Bible has been proven to be selfless. He is always in the habiting of giving. He sacrificially gave his Son to die for people because he is love. There is no greater love than that is there? Yet he does not point a gun at them to believe in his Son. Rather he still pleads for them to freely come to him.

Yes God takes responsibility for evil in the world and he is still a good God. We have shown what that responsibility mean. He did not sin. He did not break his laws. He is responsible because he made us with a free will. He made the law. He is love because he is still the same person who found a way to defeat sin even though he himself did not break the law. Those who trust in him when he makes the new world will never experience evil again because they will have submitted to God's perfect will. God is good. We question God's goodness because we are flawed and not good. What really is the big issue in the world? Is the big issue sin or evil?

### **Sin is the Big Issue and not Evil?**

Many philosophers have concluded that the presence of evil in the world is the major stumbling block for disbelief in the existence of the Judeo- Christian God. The Judeo Christian God is portrayed as one who is all powerful, all loving and all knowing and yet it's quite obvious that he has allowed evil to exist. How can we reconcile the presence of so much evil in the world on one hand and also claim that there is an all powerful and loving God on the other hand?

The paradox is that God is love and powerful but yet evil still exists. That shatters the imaginations of many good willed people. Let us make a distinction and clear the linguistic misunderstanding right away between *taking* and being responsible *for* something. To *take* responsibility is not the same thing as to be responsible *for* something. God is not responsible *for* evil. Human beings, Satan and his fallen angels (demons) are. God *takes* responsibility because he created all primary things in the world. Primary things include the law and free will. Primary things the direct acts of God and that is what I mean by primary things. God does not originate all secondary things. Some secondary things we find in the world such as sin, evil, houses, cars, trains and so on were made by man.

Even though sin has been around for a long time it was hatched by mankind willfully. In fact God told mankind not to bring to fruition good and evil which had already taken place among fallen angels. Unfortunately the first couple decided to go their own way and chose to create sin and now we all reaping the fruit of their labor.

### **The Devastation Effect of Evil**

We know and have seen what evil has done around the world. Just at the beginning of the year 2010, thousands of people have perished in Haiti. Haiti is a country in the Western hemisphere closer to the greatest country on earth in our time, the United States of America. The number of people who have died in Haiti exceeds 217,000 and they are still counting those who have perished<sup>9</sup>. The earth quake was 7.0 magnitudes! It is reported that it is the highest quake in the last 200 years in Haiti. Haiti is not the only country that has experienced these diabolical sufferings. The United States had its share of catastrophes not too long ago when Hurricane Katrina hit its shore in 2005. In the recent past decade we have witnessed the vicious face of evil in its various forms. We all

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<sup>9</sup> 2010, Haiti earthquake. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010\\_Haiti\\_earthquake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_Haiti_earthquake). The **2010 Haiti earthquake** was a catastrophic magnitude 7.0  $M_w$  earthquake. Its epicentre was near the town of Léogâne, approximately 25 km (16 miles) west of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. The earthquake occurred at 16:53 local time (21:53 UTC) on Tuesday, 12 January 2010. By 24 January, at least 52 aftershocks measuring 4.5 or greater had been recorded. As of Feb. 12, an estimated three million people were affected by the quake;<sup>[2]</sup> the Haitian Government reports that between 217,000 and 230,000 people had been identified as dead, an estimated 300,000 injured, and an estimated 1,000,000 homeless. The death toll is expected to rise.

remember the Tsunami of 2004, as though it just took place yesterday. We shall never forget the September eleventh (9/11) attack of 2001 that shook the United States. The list is endless. But when we examine the universal record of global disasters that has taken place since we began keeping natural disasters records, we might be appalled at what we might discover. Our planet has been plunged with, famine, plagues, typhoons, volcanic eruptions, Tsunamis, flooding, pandemics and many more catastrophes that have claimed millions of people around the world. The devastating effect of evil has been well documented in our time. Its impact has been gruesome to those who have personally witnessed it.

### **Kinds of Evil that have Plunged the Earth**

If we were to include wars and other man made evils the number of people who have perished is staggering. Why didn't an all powerful and loving God step in and stop all these untold miseries that have affected people? Some of the disasters mentioned above are known as natural evil. Wars and homicides and 9/11 fall under another category called moral evil. These are the two well known kinds of evils that have been caused by sin. The Wikipedia encyclopedia defined natural evil as: "Natural evil . . . is generally taken to be the result of natural processes. The "evil" thus identified is evil only from the perspective of those affected and who perceive it as an affliction.<sup>10</sup> "On the other hand moral evil is defined as: "Any morally negative event caused by the intentional action or inaction of an agent, such as a person."

What is worth observing is that no philosopher has ever alluded to the disasters in the universe as due to natural or moral *sin*. Such a concept or term is not even in our dictionaries yet. My philosophical, theological and biblical examinations led me to believe that sin is the primary cause of all that has gone wrong in our world. Sin hatched natural and moral evil. In other words, moral and natural evil came as a result of sin. Many philosophers object to my point above and consider it no sense. I understand their fear. To accept that sin hatched moral and natural evil is to concede to the notion that the fall of mankind was the real cause of evil. If that opinion is accepted then

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<sup>10</sup> Natural evil. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural\\_evil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_evil)

God is exonerated from the blame for evil in the world. If God is not to blame then the debate whether God is good or not would be meaningless.

However, many philosophers deny that the source of evil was due to the fall of man. On the other hand we should not be presumptuous and assume that the whole realm of human race believes in the doctrine of sin and evil. Performing miracles do not guarantee that every human being will believe in God? Jesus performed great wonders and miracles and yet he ended up being crucified rather than trusted. That is no surprise at all to the followers of Jesus since the Bible itself has never claimed that when miracles and wonders are performed then people will believe in Jesus. Similarly if miracles were performed to prove that evil originated from sin, not everyone will believe either. My point is that we shall never convince the whole world that evil is a bi-product of sin no matter how logical or convincing our arguments might be. Many well informed individuals, philosophers, and even some theologians today find it repulsive to seek answers from the pages of Scriptures because they think it is too dogmatic. Nothing explains the suffering we go through than the Bible. The Bible makes sense.

### **Whence then is the Source of Evil?**

The Bible explains to us the source of evil (Genesis 3). Jesus affirmed that the source of evil was from the hearts of human beings (Matthew 15:19). From the biblical stand point it seems clear that there is sufficient data that explains where evil originated from to an open minded enquirer. In fact one of the major reasons the Bible was written was to disclose the source of evil itself.

The problem with the post modern man is the fact that he has rejected the authority of the Scriptures as a literary piece of information and has embarked in his own theories of how evil came about.

Philosophers long ago 'tossed aside' the Scriptures (except when they want to prove their own theory that contradict it) and have formulated syllogistic arguments to deny the existence of God. They have come up with their own compelling arguments that could be stated in the following logical presentation:

1. If God were all-good, he would destroy evil.

2. If God were all-powerful, he could destroy evil.
3. But evil has not been destroyed.
4. Therefore, God does not exist.

To rebut the above logic we find the following statement in the Bible that makes some philosophers furious; “The fool has said in his heart, ‘there is no God’” (Psalm 14:1, NIV). However, there are always free thinkers who are interested in investigation the truth wherever they could find it including the Bible. One such great thinker was C.S. Lewis who originally was an atheist. Lewis wrote a very provocative book called the “Problem of Pain.”<sup>11</sup> Those who have read this book will find it helpful as we study the issue of evil. His work is a masterpiece to those interested to learn more about the problem of pain caused by evil. The Scriptures throughout its pages has presented sin as an indubitable fact. In the end the Bible does not debate the concept of evil but rather presents the solution to it. The story we find in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is how God one day will eradicate sin and consequently evil as well for ever. The obvious question most thinkers ask is where did Adam get the ability to choose? The idea of choice is inscribed in the doctrine of free will and Lewis is one of the believers in it. To understand how God is good we should examine how mankind created evil by his choice and that God wanted man not to go that route.

### **Free Will and some of its Related Terms**

It is amazing to realize that people all over the world would like to express their freedom without exception. Free will<sup>12</sup> (a concept most believe originated from St. Augustine) sometimes manifests itself in the following concepts: Privacy, freedom, my rights, leave me alone, exclusion from the influence of others and many more expressions like that that demand individual reflection.

From the concept of free will we have the closest term we call *freedom*. What a word. Every government, every community, every

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<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S. *The Problem of Pain*. England, UK. Harperone, 2001

<sup>12</sup> Whitney, L. Barry. *Theodicy: An Annotated Bibliography on the Problem of Evil*, 1960-1991, page 14. Whitney points out that, “Augustine exploited (indeed originated) the free explanation as the central feature of his theodicy, arguing that evil is the result of human free will.”



circle of togetherness be it in a group of people or as an individual, we all love the sense of freedom. The teenager loves freedom and so does the husband, house wife, slave or servant. That moment alone is well cherished in life subliminally. “Leave me alone” we dare to challenge even our parents, school teacher or even our lawyers. What we imply by the term “leave me alone” is that I want freedom to do my own thing. That one minute to eat my fries at my favorite restaurant without the knowledge of my wife is very precious. The wife enjoys that second when her husband is no around to do her private thing. When we say we want some privacy we are looking for the same thing, freedom to be alone and by extension we are crying out to exercise our God given free will. It is one and the same thing. We should appreciate that mankind is master piece created by an inscrutable Yahweh. Isn't that the one thing philosophers hate the most about God? That God is inscrutable? He is beyond our reach and experimentation and yet it is still in him ‘we live among and have our being?’”

#### **Free Will and its Consequences**

Freedom or free will comes at a cost known as consequences which I had alluded to earlier. Consequences can be good or ill depending on what you do with it. Evil came as a result of the choice Adam and Eve made. They made a deadly choice in human history. They could have made a life giving choice. To put blame on God concerning the state of affairs in the world is wrong. We know that the couple brought disaster upon themselves when they chose to break the law. Adam represented all humanity and whatever he did affected all his posterity. Mankind through Adam and Eve took a wrong move and many of us are still repeating the same mistake in the choices we make daily.

Blaming the devil for all the evil in the world is equally poor judgment and misleading. We must own our sins. If mankind had chosen a different path, i.e., not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil there would have been no evil in the world at all. Adam and Eve followed the footsteps of fallen angels (demons) and their leader the devil.

### **Evil and Fallen Angels**

Evil first existed among demons and Lucifer who had already sinned before mankind did. We know this to be true because of strong inference we find in the book of Genesis 3:1-3. In that portion of the Scriptures we are able to notice the structure of the opening statement alluding to the fact that the serpent who spoke to Eve was characterized as one who was craft and was already in opposition to what God had said to the couple. Right in that passage he is telling lies about the character of God. He insinuated that God was lying to the couple. Such inference makes us conclude that the devil had already fallen from grace. Adam and Eve had the power to refuse to break the law of God just like some of the angels who have never sinned. The devil would not have affected mankind and his cosmos at all if they chose not to break the command. Sin and evil was hatched when the couple freely made a choice between God and themselves. God chose to create creatures with a free will. If Adam and Eve were forced to eat from the tree they would not have been responsible for breaking the law. If they were forced they would not have incurred the consequences. God is righteous to condemn a person who is forced. Adam and Eve sinned willfully.

### **Who Possesses Free Will Phenomena?**

There are three proper persons in the universe that possess free will. First, God himself is the supreme person and he is a free agent. Second, all angelic beings good or bad are persons and they too are free agents. Thirdly, all human beings are persons too and have been endowed with free will phenomena. The level of their freedom is distinct. God possess inherent free will because he is a necessary being. While Satan, demons, elect angels and mankind possess derived or communicable free will since they are by nature contingent beings.

Fallen angels chose (Matthew 25:41) to rebel against God. Some angels sinned without any coercion from the outside influence. It is, therefore, logical to assume that mankind too could have sinned with or without deception from any outside influence. Human beings chose to cooperate with Satan and hence lost their authority over the earth. The devil was not the leader of human race nor did he have power over mankind to inject rebellion in the mind of people at will.

**We are Responsible for Creating Sin Because we are not Automata**

At the risk of being redundant let me emphasize the fact of free will one more time. Free will disposition is the most highly treasured trait by all rational beings in heaven and on earth. It is the core difference between mankind and lower animals. To take away the concept of free will is to reduce mankind to mere instinct like lower animals or worse still it is to render mankind a mere automata. If we are automata we would be devoid of moral responsibility.

God being the perfect person and all knowing was willing to *take* responsibility when he made free creatures. He anticipated the consequences for creating creatures that would be free. God was ready for all that would happen without necessarily being the cause of what free creatures would do. He knew that some of his creatures would turn away from him or even challenge him. If God were not a loving being he would not have created free creatures that would insult him. The idea of negative consequences is the thing we dislike the most about the whole notion of free will. The positive consequences we like involve the freedom to choose. But when the negative consequences affects arise we tend to hate the notion of free will and wish we were automata. It's not the concept of free will that we should hate but the poor choices that brings pain and evil upon us. Free will is the highest definition of love. For God to have created us with the ability to make choices means that he is good and not afraid. God in his foreknowledge knew what would happen but he went ahead anyway and made us with a free will disposition. It is a known fact all over the world that mankind love freedom and hates those who try to take it away from us. On the other hand we do not like the negative consequences it brings when we make poor choices. For example, we do not like to kick old habits because we derive pleasure from them. If a man is a thief, he derives pleasure from stealing. He does not want anyone to stop him. But notice the following inconsistencies in people. The same thief who loves to steal from other people does not like anybody else to steal from him. Why not? Because whoever steals from him takes away something he treasures even though he himself is a thief. Isn't that ironical? What is even more puzzling is that the thief who steals from other people

would like God to catch the thief who steals from Him. However, he does not God step in and stop him when he steals from other people!

### **The Dilemma of Free Creature**

The point of all this is that those habits that bring pain to us we want God to exercise his power and get rid of them. On the other hand we do not want God to intervene into our habits even though such practices hurt other people because we derive pleasure from them. If a natural disaster were to happen to our enemies we would rejoice and claim that God has vindicated us. If the same disaster were to be upon us we wonder whether God is all powerful and loving. If he were, he would have stopped such and such calamity we might argue. God must be on our side for him to be good and loving even if we ourselves have are hurt other people. A murderer was caught ready handed committing murder and yet he pleads not guilty. A good lawyer helped him set free from murder charges. The man claimed that God has proved him innocent. If he had ended up in jail he would have questioned whether God exists let alone if he is good, loving and powerful. That is playing God. As long as he does not go along with our thinking, he is not good or does not exist. We want to be God! We do not want him to really interfere in our lives as long as we like what we are doing even though it is detrimental to other people. He should be on our side when we wrong other people. Sometimes our actions affect innocent parties or what we call thirty parties.

### **Consequences due to Third Party's Actions**

The majority of philosophers' atheist and theists alike love the term called, *freedom of expression*? That is why they write what they do and yet complain about a lot of things they do not like. Freedom of expression is as a result of free will given by God to all human race. We use that same freedom of expression to deny God's existence because there are certain things we do not like about God. We should bear in mind that some things we do not like may have come into existence due to the freedom of other personalities, (demons, Satan or people) who were exercising their rights too. Sometimes the performers of certain actions know the consequences that might arise but they still do it anyway (Genesis 2:17 states "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for

when you eat of it you will surely die.”). No one loves pain. But sometimes pain comes to us through third parties who enjoyed what they did. For example, a mother who enjoyed smoking may have affected a fetus in her womb. That child might be born with a disfigurement and when it has grown up may question why God allowed such a thing to happen to her. The mother who bore that child meanwhile may have enjoyed the freedom of smoking without considerations to the unborn child. The unborn child pays the price for the free action of its mother. An evil act was enjoyed and someone else paid the price. Where then did that evil arise? It came from its mother’s freedom of expression.

### **The Real Seat of Evil-Heart**

The worst kind of evil is not out there. Evil is within each of us. Evil is in our individual hearts. If we express our freedom in a wrong way we shall definitely suffer the consequences. If we are really serious about God removing evil in the world we must be prepared for the ultimate consequences (1 Cor. 15:50-56) death itself. If God were to eradicate evil in the world right now all human beings would disappear from the face of the earth. How can that be? The simple answer is that we all have some measure of evil within our hearts whether we are claiming to be Christians or not. If we want God to eradicate evil we should be ready to disappear from the face of the earth. God is holy and we should not keep pushing God because of his kindness. Trusting what God is doing in the universe might be the wisest choice mankind could ever make. There is evil in each of our hearts without exception. Should God remove it? You will end up dead. We do not want that. In actuality we want God to remove the evil in other people that we do not like but not evil within us. If we find a way to exploit others in our business in order to make gain like **Bernard Madoff did** (stole billions of dollars from his clients) we wouldn’t want God to eliminate our source of livelihood and end up in jail.<sup>13</sup> But most of us do not want God to eliminate our freedom because we derive profit and pleasure from it

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<sup>13</sup>BernardLawrenc"Bernie"Madoff.[http://www.bing.com/reference/semhtml/Bernard\\_Madoff?src=mtoc&fwd=1&q=bernard+madoff&qpv=bernard+madoff](http://www.bing.com/reference/semhtml/Bernard_Madoff?src=mtoc&fwd=1&q=bernard+madoff&qpv=bernard+madoff) is a former [stock broker](#), [investment adviser](#), non-executive chairman of the [NASDAQ](#) stock market, and the admitted operator of what has been described as the largest [Ponzi scheme](#) in history.

The most common kind of evil practiced by almost all sentient beings is telling a lie. Telling a lie has led to a lot of sufferings in the world. The devil lied to Eve. Lying is one of the best ways to escape from punishment. We love to use it if it is to our advantage. We hate if we are being lied to. At that moment we do not like the lie. It is hindering the truth. We summon God to intervene or help us find the culprit. If God does not intervene we question whether he is good, powerful and loving. The simple question is; are you prepared to stop lying, coveting, looking down on the poor, bragging or boasting, cheating, hating those we do not like us? The Bible clearly says all liars will go to hell (Rev.21:8) not just homosexuals or people who perform abortions or murders. We may be strong in resisting sexual sins or abortion, murder, stealing, envy, hate, racism but we practice other vices like lying, coveting, distortion of truth by telling half truth, keeping quiet when those we do not like are in trouble and so on. All these are expressions of evil and come from within our own hearts. Should God eliminate our hearts since all these negative expressions come from there? There will be no human being left on our planet if God stopped us from all forms of evil.

Someone said that if God were to intervene in all that is wrong life would come to a standstill. C.S. Lewis was quite helpful on this point in his book, “The Problem of Pain.”<sup>14</sup>

We are not really interested in God stopping us even though we know that what we are doing is not right. What we don't really like are the consequences that bring pain in our lives.

If we were to be honest with ourselves what we really want is to run the affairs of the world our own way. In other words we want to be God. We want to dictate to God what is right and what is wrong. If he does not, we claim he does not exist or he is unloving or impotent. Strictly speaking that is the mind set of Satan. He wanted to be like God or higher than God (Isaiah 14). We want the same thing. That is what free will conjures up. Self exerts itself. Self is

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<sup>14</sup> We Lewis, C.S. *The Problem of Pain*. England, UK. Harperone, 2001: can, perhaps, conceive of a world in which God corrected the results of this abuse of free will by His creatures at every moment: so that a wooden beam became soft as grass when it was used as a weapon, and the air refused to obey me if I attempted to set up in it the sound waves that carry lies or insults. But such a world would be one in which wrong actions were impossible, and in which, therefore, freedom of the will would be void; nay, if the principle were carried out to its logical conclusion, evil thoughts would be impossible, for the cerebral matter which we use in thinking would refuse its task when we attempted to frame them

the most important thing in the world. Self wants to run the affairs of this life and not God. The only problem is that we are created beings. We can't actualize certain phenomena to enable us arrive at our dreams. We blame God for all our wrong choices. We are very frustrated to realize that we are to report to someone higher than us. If we accept our position as contingent beings and trust our Creator, life might be less stressful. If we deny that there is a higher being out there we will continue running in endless circles.

If God knows all this, why did He create mankind and angels who might act contrary to his purpose? The short answer is that if mankind and angels only acted exactly according to what God wanted in every circumstance then mankind is not free. We would be mere automata. The fact that some creatures chose to take a different path while others chose another route proves that God created all rational creatures with a free will disposition. Proof number two is that not all rational beings sinned (there are some angels who did not sin). God knew what would happen among angels and human beings and yet he still went ahead and creation. God had middle knowledge became actual.

### **Why Should God Take Responsibility for Evil in the World?**

The free will disposition led some angels and human beings to sin. God takes responsibility for evil in the world because he made free beings. Free beings created sin. We must make it clear when we say that God takes responsibility for evil in the world. First God never authored sin. There are thousands of other things that exist in the world today which God never created. For example, God never invented electricity, computers, cars, phones, air planes etc. directly. Most machines such as; cars, trains, computers, bicycles and much more are were made from existing materials. God never directly made these things. These things can bring joy or pain depending on how they are used. They are not evil in and of themselves because the intentions are good even though there is a probability of misusing them. What we do with these will determine the kind of consequences to expect. In the same way evil is a by-product of two good things; free will and the law. The choice of Adam and Eve led to sin. God did not create evil as such. It is very unusual for people to give credit to God when a person invents electricity. We tend to question God if something bad happens. Going back to my paradigm



above; we give credit to people when they invent something. We give them standing ovations. But when something bad happens God is to blame. We question his power and love. Nevertheless still God takes responsibility for everything because he made us and everything in the world even though he did not invent electricity directly or sin. That is what I mean when I say God takes responsibility for evil in the world. Without the first cause bi products can't exist. But secondary causes have potentiality to create other entities. We do want to accept that because we will have no one else to blame but ourselves.

**God Takes Responsibility because Nothing Could Exist without Primary Causation**

God takes responsibility because he made human beings and everything in the world. Since human beings are free, they can make things by using existing entities. Human beings were able to create sin by choosing to disobey the law. We can lump all by-products together and confidently proclaim that God takes responsibility for all of them even though he did not directly create all these things. The reason is very simple. All that exists is as a result of God's creative work; first causation. Without the primary work of God no by-product could ever come into being. God takes responsibility for the existence of the devil and all fallen angels (now called demons). If Judeo-Christian religion denies that God takes responsibility for all that exists in the universe, they would be challenged to answer the question whether the God of Abraham' Isaac and Jacob is sovereign and all powerful. To deny that he takes responsibility including evil would mean that there are other powers out there that could have actualized things. May be things just happened by the Big Bang as some theologians, scientists and philosopher would claim. God taking responsibility makes more sense than any other theory. It proves that he is sovereign but not the direct creator of sin. By the way sin is not the major that exists as we are made to believe. The major things in life apart from God are freedom and the law. Sin is a bi- product of the law and freedom. Sin is a lesser concept because it's not original creative work of God and that is why he will eliminate it but free will and the law abides in eternity. Let me quickly dispel what might be a misconception when I talk about the law. I am not referring to the law as a means of salvation but as equitable means justice among

moral being and necessary means of balance for things in the universe.

### **Human Beings are Responsible for a lot of things Including Creating Sin**

We must affirm that sentient beings are capable of producing things from existing material into something completely new without God's involvement. Sin is one such by-product that angels and mankind are responsible for. Sin in turn produced all the evils that we see in our universe. That is the essence of free will. We are endowed with productivity. But productivity has the probability of creating negative or positive entities if not the creature is not truly free.

It is not difficult to understand that angels and human beings are capable of creating new things by using existing materials already in the universe. The difference between God and his creatures is that God creates from nothing while created beings create from existing materials. Sin was created from two concepts; free will and the law both of which are origination of God. In that sense God takes responsibility. Hall Ronald 'Responsibility and intentions'<sup>15</sup>, argues that God is responsible for suffering in the sense of being the creator (status responsibility) but not in the sense of "doing it." God is responsible in the sense that he made the worlds in which there are free creatures." I disagree with Ronald unless he was not aware of the use of the word, "for." God is not responsible for suffering he *takes* responsibility for suffering. Human beings are responsible *for* evil in the world and so are the fallen angels. Here is why I disagree with Ronald. Whatever God created initially was good (Genesis 1) but unfortunately human beings and fallen angels both creates both good and bad products God does not. The negative product called sin was created out of the desire to be like God by Satan and human beings. Satan wanted to be like God and so did human beings (Genesis 3; Isaiah 14). We have spoken at length about the idea of evil. The question is what is evil? I have space to answer the question concerning the quantity of evil. I will attempt to address the source of evil so that we could see that it was not God who brought evil but man and that God is still good.

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<sup>15</sup> Whitney, L. Barry. *Theodicy: An Annotated Bibliography on the Problem of Evil, 1960-1991*, page 28, article 58-60.

Biblical fact: There was no evil in what God initially created that includes man and angels. What God made, “was very good (Genesis 1:31).” That answers half the question of what is the source of evil. God is not the source of evil. That is why God is and will always be good.

### **Source of Evil**

There are some things that are primary and others that are secondary. For example a tree is primary thing in relationship to anything made from wood. A chair is secondary in the sense that it is a bi-product of wood and wood is made from a tree. Sin is primary from man point of view. Sin came as a result of man’s action. Evil is secondary (by-product of sin). Evil springs from sin (moral evil or natural evil both have one source, sin). God is not responsible for sin but he takes responsibility for evil. Evil did not exist in the initial creation of God but he knew that such an entity has a possibility of being actualized by free beings. That does not make God responsible for sin. Evil is the pain or suffering we create when we choose something we know will create pain and joy and we still do it. Sometimes evil is created by third parties but nonetheless others reap negative consequences. It is not completely true that evil is absence of the good because when at the time an act is undertaken there was some pleasure that was derived even though afterwards pain followed. For example a man stole some money which he could use to buy stuff but if he is caught he will be fined or goes to jail. So evil is an act that breaks the law not necessary absence of good. God has never broken the law and whoever keeps the law is good. God has kept the law therefore God is good.

### **Conclusion**

Can God take responsibility for evil and still be a good God? I have consistently answered in the affirmative throughout the article. I have presented in a logical sequence how the doctrine of free will in conjunction with the law provided the means by which mankind choose one way against the other. Furthermore I have argued that both the law and free will are necessary and good things that we need. Unfortunately the things that were meant good for us were wrongly employed.

I have also shown how sin was introduced into our hearts and consequently in our world. I argued that when sin was hatched it produced a bi-product we call evil today. Furthermore I have shown that in spite of so much evil in the world God is still good and loving. The goodness of God is further proven in the sense that he did not only create us and left us alone but after the fall he came up with a plan to save us from evil and its power. Regrettably since God is love; he cannot force people to love him. From all that has been propounded it would be wrong to hold the view that God is malevolent and lacks goodness. Not only do I believe that God takes responsibility for all that has taken place in the universe but the Bible itself seem to affirm that position. The Scriptures clearly portrays God has a person who created the world and everything in it. That means God takes the responsibility for everything including evil and yet he is a good God. That is not an admittance of wrong doing on God's part. Rather it is an acknowledgement of God's sovereignty without attributing to him wrong doing. I have given sufficient illustrations in my article to prove that taking responsibility is not the same thing as being responsible for something that has taken place. I believe I have logically proved that sin and evil were created by mankind through the application of free will. Sin is not the absence of good but a willful desire to disregard God's law. Indeed God takes responsibility for evil that by itself makes him a good God. When he takes responsibility he is acknowledging that he made all primary things. Some of those primary things created certain things that God did not make directly. God did not create sin mankind and the devil did. God creates only good things. God is still good.

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