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## Human Inabilities: Not a Justification for God's Inexistence

### I. Introduction

The problem of evil is persistent and seems to stretch beyond what humans are capable of processing. The capacity of the human mind is almost incomparable to the mind of God, which may account for the theists' lack of rational evidence for their beliefs. The problem of evil is not necessarily a problem for God, but a problem for theists; thus, though it poses a problem for theists, the theists' inability to present evidence is not a rational excuse to deny God's existence.

### II. Background

Plantinga addresses the logical problem of evil by stating his Free Will Defense. He states that moral evil comes from the misuse of human free will<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, he states that it is logically impossible for an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God to force humans to only do good things while also allowing them to have free will. Furthermore, since God is omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient, he has created the best world that is logically possible.

Hud Hudson also defends belief in God by bringing up the proportionality of love. In Hudson's book *Grotesque in the Garden*, Tesque argues that humans cannot become God's friend because being friends requires some level of proportionality. Humanity's relationship with God fails to meet that level<sup>2</sup>. This disproportionality also points towards the infinitesimal capacity of the human mind in comparison to God's. Later on, Tesque tells a story of the village people and the Lazarai stones. In the story, the village people are only able to search for the

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<sup>1</sup> Plantinga, Free Will Defense, 117-119

<sup>2</sup> Hud Hudson, "Lazarai Stones" in *Grotesque in the Garden* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2020), 24-25

stones in certain places, a factor that contributes to their failure to find the stones. Hudson points out that their inability to search elsewhere (e.g. at the bottom of the lake) does not mean that the stones do not exist. In addition, he also points out that even if the stones were easily accessible, it does not mean that the villagers had the capability to decipher Lazarai stones from regular stones. In both cases, Hudson argues that even though the villagers failed to find the stones, their belief in God remains rational.

### III. Main Points

For a theist, the evidential problem of evil arises when one questions the rational justification for evil in the presence of God. To question the coexistence of evil and the omnipotence, omnibenevolence, and omniscience of God is to place blame on God for evil. The questions “why does *God* allow evil in the world” and “why doesn’t *God* stop evil,” are both questions that point fingers at God. However, with God being omniscient, omnipotent, and omnibenevolent, he is perfectly capable of interfering to stop evil if he pleases. But in choosing to allow humans to have free will, he chose to limit his amount of interaction with the world. God’s gift of free will grants humans the option to create evil and allows the existence of a natural neutral world that enables free will. The essence of free will is that it allows one to have the choice to do evil if he or she pleases— without God’s intervention. When the Creator interferes with his creation, it is implied that God is altering the original intent of something or someone. Just as if an art teacher chooses to repaint over and correct his art student's unfinished and terrible painting, the student’s work would not be the same, the picture would be changed, and the original idea would be lost. God’s original intent for this world (after the fall) was to allow his creations to have free will. Thus, if the teacher chooses not to correct the student’s painting, it does not mean that the teacher’s existence and skill should be in question. The art

teacher, like God, has a right to sit back and watch his creation at work without having to prove his “skill” or existence at the first signs of trouble. Although atheists have the right to question God’s existence, his existence should not be contingent on how often God chooses to intervene with the human world.

God’s interference with the human world should not affect our belief in him, just as theists should not have to show proof of God’s existence to atheists or even to themselves. Hud Hudson’s “Lazarai Stones” story tells us that maybe the proof of God’s existence in the face of evil exists outside of the human mind’s capacity and that even if it were within the human mind’s capacity, humanity might not know how to interpret the reasoning<sup>3</sup>. Atheists should not judge theists for something that is outside the bounds of human ability. That line of reasoning is equivalent to someone saying that deaf people should not believe that music exists because they cannot physically hear the sound or that it is unreasonable for a toddler to be confused with quantum physics. It is irrational to question God’s reasoning and expect to find an abundance of answers immediately and clearly. God is not some personal assistant at everyone’s beck and call, and humans are clearly not at the same intelligence level as God. God is above the human level by an infinite amount. Humans will probably never understand the way God thinks because God exists on an eternal timeline while humans are merely transient. Blaming theists for not having strong convincing arguments may indicate that the atheist is ignorant of the fact that God’s level of reasoning and whole existence is above the comprehension level of the human mind. Theists may never completely find or grasp the tips of the problem of evil because it is simply unanswerable based on the fact that they are human, not God, and that they cannot see into the

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<sup>3</sup> Hud Hudson, “Lazarai Stones” in *Grotesque in the Garden* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2020), 24-25

mind of God. Because the problem of evil is beyond human comprehension, it is not rational to use theists' lack of a convincing argument to justify the inexistence of God.

#### IV. Counter-Argument

Suppose the atheist brings about a counterpoint questioning why God allows instances of pointless sufferings. For example, a child who develops Crohn's disease needs to stay in the hospital suffering from horrible pain for his entire life until finally dying. Why does God allow this if he is omnipotent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient; would it not be considered a problem for God then? A theist may respond by stating that the suffering of the child is technically still not God's problem because he could have intervened and performed a miracle on the child if he wanted to; therefore, the child's death was for a higher purpose that both the theist and atheist cannot understand. Even if God needed to sacrifice the child for a greater good to occur, it does not mean that he betrayed his omnibenevolence. According to Hud Hudson, God has a perfect level of love proportionality<sup>4</sup>. In his ship story<sup>5</sup>, he demonstrates that sometimes God chooses to sacrifice people or things that seem outrageous from a human perspective. Because humans do not have perfect love proportionality, humans are not in the right to judge God's actions. They cannot be the judge and jury of a situation on which they have an incorrect and biased opinion about. God's omnipotence, omnibenevolence, are omniscience still accounted for even when humans disagree and are unable to see the situation from a "God's eye view."

#### V. Conclusion

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<sup>4</sup> Hud Hudson, "The God of Silence" in *Grotesque in the Garden* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2020), 35-36

<sup>5</sup> Hud Hudson tells a story that is a representation of God's perfect love proportionality.

Humans are incapable of obtaining and interpreting situations at the same level as God. It is this incapability that makes evil a solely human, and not Godly, problem. Furthermore, humans' inability to understand God should not be a rational reason to disprove God's existence.