

God is Not the Creator of Evil

Tanrı Kötülüğün Yarattıcısı Değildir

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ABSTRACT One of the most important issues in the history of thought is the problem of evil. It has always been a problem for theists to reconcile an omnipotent, omniscient and absolutely good being with the evils that occur in the universe. There are two reasons why the issue of evil is a problem for theists. The first of these is the inclusion of evil in the word "everything" in the proposition "God is the creator of everything". The other is the divide of evil into moral and natural in all studies related to this subject. However, in the proposition "God is the creator of everything", "everything" does not include evil. Because God is perfect and perfect being does not create evil. The evils that occur in the universe are divided into two as evil in terms of itself and its consequences. Evils in itself are the evils such as rape, murder, stealing that occur as a result of the wrong use of human will. Evil in terms of consequences are actions created by God but not evil in itself. Evil in terms of consequences are actions created by God but not evil in itself. Their evil is due to human ignorance and carelessness. Therefore, both evils are not caused by God.

Keywords: God; evil; omnipotence; will; freedom

ÖZ Düşünce tarihinin en önemli konularından biri kötülük sorunudur. Her şeye gücü yeten, her şeyi bilen ve mutlak iyi bir varlığı evrende meydana gelen kötülüklerle uzlaştırmak teistler için her zaman sorun olmuştur. Kötülük konusunun teistler için sorun olmasının iki nedeni vardır. Bunlardan birincisi, "Tanrı her şeyin yaratıcısıdır" önermesindeki "her şey" kelimesine kötülüğün dâhil edilmesidir. Diğeri ise konuyu ele alan tüm çalışmalarda kötülüğün ahlaki ve doğal olarak ikiye ayrılmasıdır. Ancak "Tanrı her şeyin yaratıcısıdır" önermesinde "her şey" kötülüğü içermez. Çünkü Tanrı mükemmeldir ve mükemmel varlık kötülüğü yaratmaz. Evrende meydana gelen kötülükler, bizatihi ve sonuçları açısından kötülük olarak ikiye ayrılır. Bizatihi kötülük, insan iradesinin yanlış kullanılması sonucu meydana gelen tecavüz, cinayet, hırsızlık gibi kötülüklerdir. Sonuçları açısından kötülük, Tanrı tarafından yaratılan, ancak kendi başına kötü olmayan eylemlerdir. Bu tür kötülükler Tanrı tarafından yaratılan ancak bizatihi kötü olmayan eylemlerdir. Kötülükleri insanın bilgisizliği ve dikkatsizliğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla aslında Tanrı her iki kötülüğün de nedeni değildir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tanrı; kötülük; Kadir-i Mutlaklık; irade; özgürlük

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The explanations for the origin of existence in the historical process are generally based on the idea of First Principle, First Cause or first matter, which philosophers have reached as a result of questioning the origin of existence within their own thought systems. Classical theistic religions evaluated the subject in the context of the creator-created relationship. This theology, which is based on religious knowledge rather than philosophical thought, was formulated by both the early church fathers and Islamic thinkers based on revelation. The creator being God is described by eternal attributes such as omnipotent, omniscient, and absolute good. These attributes constitute his perfect nature. When we describe God as absolutely perfect, the act of creation must also be perfect. Because a perfect being does not act in conflict with his perfection in his

actions. Because every skilled creates according to his own knowledge and skill. But when we look at the universe created by the perfect being, God, we see that there are many evils such as disasters, suffering, war, and persecution. This subject has been put forward as proof that there is a contradiction in the idea of God, who is perfect, omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely good. Because if God is a perfect being with infinite attributes, he should not create such disasters due to his perfection. In fact, he must prevent their occurrence. This subject, which is evaluated on the basis of the problem of evil, has been dealt with in the context of omnipotence and perfection, but his perfection has been disregarded by emphasizing the attribute of omnipotence. However, God is an absolute perfect being. His attributes constitute his perfect nature. The perfect being, by his nature, neither creates nor allows evil to occur. By emphasizing the attribute of omnipotence, theists accept God as the creator of everything, including evil. Then they explain why he created evil. That is, they try to justify God in creating evil. In this article I will argue that God cannot be the origin of evil. Because although there is a reason to justify his creation of evil, evil is not something that is compatible with perfection. As long as God is accepted as the creator of evil, the problem of evil will continue to be a problem for the theist. Therefore, in our study, I will try to explain that there is no God at the origin of evil, and I will try to show that the distinction between natural and moral evil is not correct.

*The god is not the cause of all things, but of the good.
(Plato, Republic 380c)*

As it is known, the subject of evil and theodicy is a theological problem in which it is discussed whether it is possible for the evils experienced in the universe to coexist with God, who is omnipotent, omniscient and absolutely perfect, as believed by theists who explain existence in the context of the creator-creature. Because in the universe created by the perfect being many evils such as massacres, wars, torture, rape, earthquakes, and floods occur that are incompatible with His perfection. In this case, as McCloskey states, “evil is a problem for the theist in that a contradiction is involved in the fact of evil on the one hand, and the belief in the omnipotence and perfection of God on the other. God cannot be both all-powerful and perfectly good if evil is real.”¹

The issue is a big problem not only for those who do not accept the creative absolute perfect being, but also for those who believe. For example, the following sentences about what happened during the Nazi massacres in Elie Wiesel's novel "Night" best explain this situation:

“Why, but why would I bless Him? Every fiber in me rebelled. Because He caused thousands of children to burn in His mass graves? Because He kept six crematoria working day and night, including Sabbath and the Holy Days? Because in His great might, He had created Auschwitz, Birkenau, Buna, and so many other factories of death? How could I say to Him: Blessed be Thou, Almighty, Master of the Universe, who chose us among all nations to be tortured day and night, to watch as our fathers, our mothers, our brothers end up in the furnaces? Praised be Thy Holy Name, for having chosen us to be slaughtered on Thine altar?”²

Whether it is this issue that Wiesel expresses and defined as moral evil in the history of thought, or the Lisbon earthquake that took place in 1755 and shown as an example of natural evil, the behavior expected from God here is that he either does not cause these evils or to prevent those who do these evils. Because if God is an absolutely perfect being, he must prevent such evils by virtue of his perfection. If he does not, his perfection will be questioned. If such evils occur even though he prevents it, then there is a deficiency in his omnipotence.

In the history of thought, approaches to the subject have generally been based on finding a good reason for the evils that have occurred. It has been explained that either there is no real existence of

¹ H. J. McCloskey, “God and Evil”, *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1960, Volume: 10, No: 39, p. 97.

² Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Marion Wiesel, Hill and Wang Press, New York 2006, p. 67.

evil, or even if there is, it is reasonable for some evil to exist for a greater good, or that there is a better reason why God allows evil. But no matter what reason is given to justify God's creation or not preventing evil, it will continue to be a problem for theists and a proof/justification for atheists. The perfection of God has once again been discussed, especially as more specific issues such as disabled children, inability to have children, and the difference in intelligence among children have come into prominence. In this context, emphasizing the attribute of power and take no account of to the perfection of God and accepting his as the creator of everything, including human actions, made the problem insoluble, and this issue became an important justification for atheism. Therefore, what I will argue is that God did not create evil, did not cause evil, and there is a reason why he did not prevent some evil, even if it did not originate from him.

■ GOD IS NOT THE CREATOR OF EVIL

Evil usually means something that is not helpful, undesirable, bad, unpleasant, harmful, the opposite of good, something that hurts. In this sense, we can say that everything that the individual does not want, does not like, and harms himself is evil. The aspect of evil that is relevant to our subject is how to reconcile these pains and sufferings with the existence of God, who is believed to be omnipotent, omniscient and absolutely perfect. In substance of the problem, on the one hand, there is the omnipotent, omniscient, the creator of everything and morally perfect God, whom theists believe, on the other hand, there are events that are directly or indirectly incompatible with all these qualities. In other words, the issue of how to compatible a being with perfect qualities and the evils occurring in the universe constitutes the basis of the problem. While dealing with the subject in the history of thought, especially with Augustine, evil was generally divided into two as moral and natural, and this distinction continued in the following periods. According to this, moral evil is the evil that occurs as a result of the misuse of human will, such as war, deception, rape, murder, for which God is not primarily responsible, did not originate, but allowed to happen. Natural evil is events such as earthquakes, floods, and landslides that do not occur directly as a result of man's misuse of his will, but which are the primary origin of God, but which occur as a result of the destruction that man has caused to the environment. In every evaluation that deals with the problem of evil in Western thought, Auschwitz is generally shown as an example of moral evil and the Lisbon earthquake is shown as an example of natural evil. Apart from this distinction, unlike the others, the concept of metaphysical evil was brought up by Leibniz in the history of thought.

One of the most important mistakes in the evaluation of the problem is to divide evil into two as natural and moral. In this distinction, God is accepted as the creator of natural evil. On the other hand, although moral evil is isolated from God by attributing to human will, as long as God is accepted as the creator of human actions, God will still be the origin of this evil. Therefore, in fact, the origin of both evils is God. The fact that God is the origin of evils contradicts the concept of perfect being. Because, as Leibniz stated, the most meaningful idea of God in terms of the history of thought includes being the most perfect in the absolute sense. He has the almighty and infinite wisdom. He is perfect, this perfection includes being perfect not only in the metaphysical sense, but also in the moral sense.³

³ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "Discourse on Metaphysics", *Rationalists*, trans. George Montgomery, Anchor Books, New York 1960, p. 409.

It has been a definition accepted by almost everyone, especially that God, which forms the basis of ontological proof and starts with Anselm, is conceived as a being that cannot be thought more perfect. Therefore, if we define God as a being whose perfection cannot be thought of, then it is not possible for evil to originate from him. Because when we define God as the most perfect being, the attribute of perfection here also includes moral perfection. In this case, his creation occurs according to this perfection. Because it is impossible to distinguish God from His perfection. With his perfect knowledge, he knows whether the things he will create are good or bad, he wishes to create them with his will and creates them with his absolute power. So, in God's creation, there is a combination of His attributes such as omniscient, will and omnipotent. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that God is absolutely perfect. It can even be said that God's eternal attributes make him a perfect being. If any of these attributes is lacking, there will be a deficiency in his perfection. In this case, when creating, God first determines how it is with his perfect knowledge, then wishes to create according to this knowledge, and ultimately creates this will with his power. Although the attribute of omnipotent is essential in the act of creation, it is not correct to consider his creation distinguish from all other attributes. Uninformed and willless power turns God into a mechanical heap of power.

Since existence came into occur in this way, there is nothing evil in itself created. Because creating evil in itself shows the lack of his knowledge. Because creating evil shows that the creator does not have the ability to use the good that he should be or his knowledge is incomplete or not as much as it should be. However, God knows the knowledge of the existence of things in the most clear and distinct way. He creates in the best way according to this knowledge.

One of the important inaccuracy made regarding our matter is the confusion of divine will and human will. As a matter of fact, the human agent sometimes acts in favor of his desire, despite his reason, in cases where his mind and desire are in conflict. In other words, the human agent may act against himself in some cases. This is due to the weakness of his will. God's will is perfect. Therefore, it is not reasonable to wish for evil. What is the basis of the will is important here. In the actions of the human agent, there is a priory-after between the will and the mind. If the mind is first and the will after, the will is subject to the mind. Otherwise, weakness of the will occurs. For God, there is no such a priori-after relationship. Because to think of such a relationship between His attributes reveals the lack of perfection. Therefore, it is unthinkable for God to create something that is evil in itself. To think that he created evil means to isolate himself from his own perfection, and as Leibniz said, no agent has the power to isolate himself from his own perfection.⁴ In this case, God's perfection requires that he act morally while creating. In this case, God's perfection requires that he act morally while creating. Otherwise, he turns into a despotic king who can do anything, regardless of whether he is good or bad, as a mass of power. To act in this way contradicts perfection. Therefore,

- I. God is omniscient, omnipotent and morally the most perfect being.
- II. The omniscient, omnipotent and morally most perfect being creates what is good by virtue of his perfection while acting.
Therefore,
- III. God is not the creator of evil.

⁴ William L. Rowe, "Divine Perfection and Freedom", *Evidence and Religious Belief*, ed. Kelly James Clark, Oxford University Press, New York 2011, p. 177.

One of the main reasons why God is accepted as the creator of evil is that the above-mentioned evils are divided into moral and natural, and in this distinction, natural evil is attributed to God. However, evil is divided into two as evil in itself and in terms of results. The origin of in itself evil is not God. He does not bring about such events. These are evils such as lying, cheating and stealing, which are evil by nature and occur as a result of the wrong use of one's will. God is not responsible for the occurrence of such evils. God has given people the will, knowledge and power to carry out their actions. People perform their actions in the context of knowledge-will-power relationship. For example, stealing is a evil act in itself. But the creator of theft is not God. The problem is to accept God as the creator of human actions in order not to harm God's power and creation. As such, evils that occur somehow are associated with God. Then, in order to solve the problem, God was tried to be justified by revealing the reasons why he created evil. However, since God is absolutely perfect, he cannot be the cause of what is evil in itself.

With regard to human actions, divine creation is not a direct creation that occurs at the time of performing the action, but means giving them the power to perform their actions and the attributions such as knowing and willing related to it. Human also performs his actions voluntarily in the context of these attributions given to him. For example, the primary origin of evil acts such as stealing and adultery is not God. These are created by man. God creates goods and products for people. When a person takes them without the permission of the owner, it is called theft. God creates the feeling of lust in humans, the means of satisfaction of this feeling. If a person tries to meet this feeling outside the limits set, it will be called adultery. So God is neither the creator of adultery nor of the evils in itself, such as theft. Since God is the best of creators, he created everything he created in the most beautiful way. It is man himself who worsen the perfect things he has created. What needs to be done is to evaluate God's actions in terms of their existence.

In terms of their consequences, evils are events such as earthquakes, floods, and landslides that occur directly in accordance with divine laws, resulting from people's ignorance, carelessness, and damage to the environment. Such events are not evil in itself. It is the result of the laws of nature/sunnatullah. Therefore, disasters such as earthquakes, which are called natural evil in the history of thought, are not evil in itself. These are evil in terms of their consequences. According to this, nothing created by God is evil in terms of its creation. What is evil is the negativities that arise as a result of a natural event that is good in itself. When the divine/natural laws in the universe are understood correctly, it is obvious that events such as earthquakes are natural processes and not evil in itself. As it is known, science today states that the universe began to exist with the big bang that took place about 13-15 billion years ago. According to this, the surface of the universe, which was very hot in the beginning, started to cool. The surface of the universe was first formed by molten rocks, then separated into different layers, heavy materials collapsed to form the core, and low-density materials formed the layers around the core. Then the earth's crust was formed. During the first formation, there was compression and expansion in the earth's crust, which created faults. Such forces move rock masses along fractures. If this does not happen, intense energy accumulation occurs in some parts. Earthquakes occur during the discharge of this energy.⁵ This shows us that the universe continues to form dynamically according to natural laws (sunnatullah), and that it is not a static universe. Therefore,

⁵ For detailed information, see. Eşref Atabey, *Deprem*, MTA Genel Müdürlüğü Yay., Ankara 2000.

events such as earthquakes in the existing universe are not evil in itself. Evil is what happens to a person who is victimized by his own recklessness and unconsciousness of events that take place according to natural laws. On the other hand, when we consider that an earthquake is a constant activity that reproduces natural life, vitality and enriches productivity, it is clear that it is not evil in itself. Scientists state that in the absence of earth tremors and movements, the earth can turn into a dead planet.⁶ Moreover, all these are things that today's scientific world has revealed. Since man has the delusion that he can know everything with his limited mind, he describes the earthquakes that occur according to natural laws, which he does not understand why they occur, as evil. As such, he presents God as the creator of evil. However, from the point of view of the divine position, no event is evil in itself. Moreover, when we think that the world is a tiny dot compared to the universe, it does not seem very justified to conclude from this point that it is an evil for an incomplete picture with our limited knowledge. Since man evaluates everything created only in terms of his own ego system, he says that events that occur according to natural laws, such as earthquakes, are evil with the aspect reflected on him. However, such evils arise from people's own ignorance and not making suitable shelters in places suitable for natural conditions. Therefore, there is nothing that is evil in itself that God has created. Evil in itself consists in the conversion of what God has created as good into evil by man. On the other hand, if God creates evil, this means that he creates things that are not morally perfect, which is contradictory to the concept of a perfect God. Such a creation shows that he is deprived of his own attributes and that his other attributes are ignored in the name of his omnipotent. If we accept this idea, we are faced with the following situation:

- I. God can create things that are not morally perfect.
 - II. Moral perfection is God's self attribute.
- Then,
- III. God can bring about a situation in which he is deprived of his self attributes.

In such an inference, a distinction is made between God's essence and attributes. On the other hand, a priority-later relationship is established between His attributes. However, these infinite attributes constitute the perfect nature of God. However, God cannot be separated from his nature. In such a case, it turns out that he is not perfect in his initial state. Therefore, the existence of God as a being expresses the unity of his eternal attributes. Among these attributes, it is not correct to think of anything that prioritizes one over the other or makes one effective over the other. By this I do not mean that his knowledge, will, or morality have an influence or priority over his omnipotent. His omniscient, will and omnipotent are himself. There is will on the basis of the omnipotent for the realization of divine actions, and reason/divine knowledge on the basis of will. Therefore, his creative actions are directed towards good, not evil. His knowledge of existence is impeccable. Therefore, it deals with the goodness of existence. This shows that God is the perfect being. If the knowledge about the being is perfect, the being will be so perfect. God's perfection is eternal. Therefore, God did not create anything that is evil in itself by virtue of his perfection. As Sokrates said, *"Then" I said "the god, since He's good, wouldn't be the cause of everything, as the many say, but the cause of a few things for human beings and responsible for most. For he things that are good for us are far fewer than those that are bad; and of*

⁶ Metin Aşçı - Rifat Oymak - Zübeyde Çabaş, "Yersarsıntısının (Deprem) Türkçesi: Yanılgılar, Yanlışlar, Gerçekler", *Turkish Studies* 2017, Volume: 12, Issue: 21, p. 61.

good things, no one else must be said to be the cause; of the bad things, some other causes must be sought and not the god".⁷

GOD'S NOT CREATING EVIL IS NOT A LIMITATION IN TERMS OF HIS OMNIPOTENT

In the propositions above, I tried to explain that God does not create evil due to his perfection, and that he does not create anything that is evil in itself. For, in the event that what is evil in itself arises directly from God, inconsistency arises between the qualities of the omnipotent, omniscient and absolutely perfect being, as the theist believes. On the other hand, although an event is evil in itself, it is clear that it does not contradict the quality of being good unless it originates/creates from God. But there is another point that we need to explain here. Does God, who does not create evil by virtue of his perfection, have the power to create evil? Is there a limitation that prevents it from creating evil? Does God, who does not create evil by virtue of his perfection, have the power to create evil? Is there a limitation that prevents it from creating evil? Because the conclusion drawn from the above set of propositions is that God did not create evil. Accordingly, as Morrision puts it;

- I. If God is morally perfect by nature, it is not possible for him to create evil.
- II. If God is omnipotent, he has the power to create evil.

In that case,

- III. If God has the power to create evil, there is a possible world in which he can create it.⁸
Otherwise, there will be a limitation in His power.

In order to better understand the subject, first of all, it is necessary to know what is meant by omnipotent. Secondly, it is necessary to look at the circumstances in which the actions of an agent are impossible. Because if what is meant by omnipotence cannot be fully understood, the fields that it will affect cannot be known exactly. It is difficult to find a logical basis for this, if we think that God, with his omnipotence, can create anything meaningful-meaningless, good-bad, beautiful-ugly, moral-immoral. For adultery and lying is also an act. However, it cannot be evaluated in the context of omnipotence. Because it is not possible for God to realize them. This is due to its nature. Performing acts of evil in itself indicates deficiency for a being who is perfect by nature. However, he is a perfect being and it is not possible for him to take actions that would deficiency his perfection. The omnipotence is not an accidental and unintentional agglomeration of power without any reasonable limit. God cannot be thought of as a mass of power independent of all His attributes, more specifically morality. Our main problem is that we conceive of God as a being who can do whatever he wishes, devoid of any moral purpose, in order not to see faults in his absolute power. Such a conception emphasizes the omnipotence of God and separates him from his morality. However, morality imposes responsibility rather than obligation. Therefore, there is a modal difference between the propositions 'God does not create evil' and 'God cannot create evil'. While the first proposition explains the factual situation, the second proposition imposes a necessity, an impossibility on God. When I say "God does not create evil", what I am trying to express is not out of necessity, as in the second proposition, but because of His perfection. Moreover, while creating an intelligent being, he considers the general interest and benefit. For this, he must have absolute knowledge of what he will create. When creating evil is necessary for the general interest, what is created becomes good, not evil. The propositions "God does what he wills" and "God is

⁷ Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, Basic Books, USA 1991, 380c.

⁸ Wes Morrision, "Omnipotence and Necessary Moral Perfection: Are They Compatible?", *Religious Studies*, 2001, Volume: 37, No: 2, p. 144.

omnipotent" should be evaluated not only on the basis of the attribute of omnipotent, but together with other attributes that are necessary for him. In this case, the fact that he lacks the possibility of creating evil due to his perfection is not a limitation on his omnipotence. Otherwise, it is a sign of God's inability. For example, God's inability/not to lie is not a lack of omnipotence. If he lies, then there will be a deficiency in his omnipotence. Because it is unthinkable for a being who lies to be God. Therefore, applying it to every rational-irrational, contradictory-noncontradictory field in order to show the infinity and limitlessness of absolute power is a situation that directly contradicts omnipotence. In fact, this situation is a sign of inability, not absolute power as Anselm states.⁹

When omnipotence is considered together with perfection, God's creation of evil is not actually but potential. It is also not possible for him to actually create evil in terms of reason. It is wrong to involve divine power in an field that is impossible according to by reason. Because the absolute power of God concerns to the field that is possible by reason.

Well, isn't it logically possible for God to create evil? It is logically possible for God to create evil when conceived as an omnipotent being. However, this logically possible situation causes a theological problem when its perfect nature is considered. To solve this problem, what I can say is that not everything that is logically possible is rationally possible. That is, just because something is logically possible does not mean that it is rationally possible. When we think that God is an omnipotent being, it is possible for him to create married and unmarried, but this is not possible in terms of reason. For this reason, when the action is attributed to God, it means to create what is possible in terms of reason. So, although it is potential to create evil in his power, when we consider his perfection, it is not possible for him to actually create it. The fact that it is not possible for him to actually create evil does not indicate a deficiency in his omnipotence. Because his creation of evil, which is incompatible with the divine essence, cannot be evaluated within of his omnipotence. Because evil is not just a negation. It also shows the lack of knowledge that should be in the being that created it. However, God is omniscient. God's actions are essentially to omnipotence; omnipotence is based on will, and will is based on knowledge. In this case, existence occurs when God has perfect knowledge of his actions, and his knowledge is turn into will, and ultimately by his power to do so. Considering his perfect knowledge, he knows the best possible action, then wills it and creates it with his absolute power. A deficiency in even one of these attributes harms divine perfection.

One of the important points to be considered is that having the power to do something and doing it absolutely are different from each other. Because having absolute power only makes it possible for the action to take place. It is not enough to have hands and fingers to draw a picture. We also need to have the will to draw the picture, the knowledge of what and how to draw, and the power to do it. For example, as I write these lines, I have the power to kill my colleague working in the next room. However, I am not doing this. This situation cannot be an indication of a deficiency in my power. In fact, killing my colleague shows that I have a lack of reason, emotion and other abilities. Likewise, the fact that God has the power to create evil does not mean that he will create it.

When we look at the subject in which situations agent's actions are not possible, we are faced with two situations. Accordingly, since some actions are impossible by nature, they cannot be the subject of

⁹ Saint Anselm, "Proslogion", *Reading Anselm's Proslogion, The History of Anselmus Argument and its Significance Today*, ed. Ian Logan, Ashgate Publishing, 2009, p. 37.

any agent's power. This situation shows that the action is impossible due to its nature, not a deficiency in the power of that agent. For example, it is not possible to perform actions such as making a square circle, married bachelor, due to the nature of those actions. On the other hand, performing some actions may be impossible not by itself but by something else. Not being able to bring about such actions indicates a deficiency in omnipotence. When we consider the omnipotence of God, it is not expected that he cannot perform actions that are impossible due to something else. It is for nothing else that God did not create evil. It is by his own perfect nature. This shows that there is nothing external that limits him. Therefore, there is no situation that limits the omnipotence of God. If there is a limitation, the limitation here is due to his own perfection. This does not pose a problem in terms of his omnipotence. Because if we are talking about an omniscient being, he knows whether what he will create will be good or bad in the end, and he wills accordingly. An omniscient being should avoid creating evil due to his perfection. Consciously, intentionally creating evil is an indication that he is not perfect. Therefore, although it is possible for God to create evil when his omnipotence is considered, it is not possible for him to do so when we consider his other attributes. Because the created things come into existence flawlessly in the order of goodness with the perfect knowledge of the creator. Therefore, there is no evil created by God. Therefore, there is no evil created by God. Seeing evil in created things stems from the finite understanding of humans, as Spinoza states.¹⁰ Since they cannot fully understand and comprehend everything created, people call certain events evil. They then put forward many reasons to justify God in the face of evil. However, as long as God is the origin of evil, no matter how it is explained, the problem of evil will continue to be a problem. Therefore, when we say "God is the creator of everything", there is no evil in "everything" in the proposition. There are things that are evil according to people.

The view that it is accepted that God created everything, including evil, is generally based on the proposition that "God creates everything". However, as Aquinas stated, it is necessary to know what is meant by the word "every" in the proposition. In the proposition, everything that is the subject of creation is meant what is possible according to by reason. He can create anything possible by reason.¹¹ That is, if the word "every" is taken with reference to possible possibilities, it is not actually possible for God to create evil. Maybe it's potentially possible. In this case, the proposition "God is the creator of everything" should be evaluated together with the proposition "Everything he created is good because he is the best of creators". In this case, although it is possible for God to create evil considering his omnipotence, it is impossible due to his perfection and morality. This does not reveal any weakness or limitation in terms of his power.

DOES THE ATTRIBUTE OF PERFECTION DETERMINE GOD IN THE CREATION ACT?

One of the important issues related to our subject is that he does not create evil in every possible world due to his perfection, does it not show that his actions are necessarily occurring? That is, the fact that he acts due to his perfection and that the possibility of doing evil is out of question for him does not make God an unfree being who acts by necessity while performing his actions? Because to say that God will not create evil due to his perfection means that he has a good/perfection rule that he adheres to while creating. Acting in this way also contradicts the perfection of God. For perfection also requires acting freely at will. We can summarize this idea as follows:

¹⁰ Benedictus Spinoza, "Short Treatise on God, Man and His Well-Being", *Spinoza Complete Works*, ed. Samuel Shirley, Hackett Publishing Company, Cambridge 2002, p. 39.

¹¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Father of the English Dominican Province, Benziger Bros, 1947, Question 25, Article 3, p. 187-188.

- I. It is necessary for God to create good by virtue of his perfection.
- II. Creating evil is not a good act.

Then,

- III. It is imperative that God not create evil.

In order to better understand this result, it is necessary to look at how the determination is between perfection and creating goodness. As Leibniz did, we can divide necessity into absolute and hypothetical necessity. Indeed, there is an epistemic difference between the two imperatives. According to this, while absolute necessity contains contradiction, hypothetical necessity is contingent in itself and its opposite does not contain contradiction. For example, the proposition $2 \times 2 = 4$ is an absolutely necessary proposition and its opposite contains contradiction. However, the opposite of the proposition "Ismail was born in Erzurum", the proposition "Ismail was born in Denizli" is possible and does not contain contradictions. Accordingly, the relationship between God's being a perfect being and his creation, unlike mathematical and geometric necessities, does not contain opposite contradictions. If the thing to be created is good in itself, God knows that it is good by virtue of its perfection and creates it. This is a contingent reality and is a moral rather than a logical necessity. Absolute perfection obliges God morally to create such actions. Moral necessity, on the other hand, does not occur in the context of a mechanical determination, a necessary cause-effect relationship. It comes out of responsibility. This shows that God is a moral being. Therefore, it is a moral obligation for him to create good rather than evil. The moral imperative here is hypothetical and more subject to God's knowledge and goodness. To do otherwise is to deprive himself of his perfection. Because if there is no moral obligation in his actions, we can neither speak of his goodness nor his wisdom. If we are to talk about a determination here, this determination is not external but internal. Inner determination is suitable for freedom. According to this,

- I. God is an omnipotent, omniscient, absolute perfect being.
- II. While creating an omniscient, omnipotent and absolutely perfect being, he prefers the good.
- III. It is due to God's perfect nature that he actualizes the good in creation. His perfect determines his actions not by physical necessity, but by moral necessity.
- IV. There is no problem in terms of freedom in actions performed with moral obligation. Because the action where there is no causality becomes the action of the agent who does not know what to do and how.

Then,

- V. The fact that God, by virtue of his perfection, does not create evil does not show that he is not free, but rather his perfect freedom because it is a conscious action.

As it is seen, the necessity that directs God to good rather than evil does not arise from a physical reason. God's preference for the good is because of his morality and perfection, and this shows that he is always capable of doing the opposite. The attribute of power is not a sufficient condition for performing an action. The attribute of power is not a sufficient condition for performing an action. The presence of power only makes it possible to carry out the action. There must be other conditions for that action to turn from possibility to reality. Other divine attributes create these conditions. The attribute of power is not a sufficient condition for performing an action. The presence of power only makes it possible to carry out the action. There must be other conditions for that action to turn from possibility to reality. Other divine attributes create these conditions. The attribute of omniscience, absolute goodness, the attribute of will, that is, the divine understanding comes into play. In this case, omnipotence becomes

associated with being, wisdom with truth, and will with goodness. His perfect knowledge, combined with his infinite goodness, enables the creation of good instead of evil. Therefore, it is not a problem in terms of freedom for God to act according to his perfection.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR GOD TO PEREVENT ACTS THAT ARE EVIL IN ITSELF

One of the issues that should be taken into consideration regarding our subject is the idea that the perfect being cannot be indifferent to the evils that occur in the universe, and therefore must prevent them. According to this, if God is an absolutely good being, he must prevent evil from occurring by virtue of his goodness. The important point in this thought is to determine what kind of evil we expect from God to prevent. Above, we have divided evil into two as evil in itself and in terms of its consequences, unlike traditional thought. When we look at it from the point of view of this distinction, if the evil we expect from God to prevent is evil in itself, we must first look at how this evil came about. The origin of evil itself was the misuse of human will. The main thing here is the free use of one's will. Expecting God to prevent such events from happening is, in a sense, to expect people to interfere with their free will. This is evil. God does not perform an evil act by virtue of his perfection. Therefore, it does not interfere with human will. Here the question arises whether the permissiveness of freedom as the price of evil is not compromised by his perfection. In the face of this problem, we are faced with the following dilemma: Did God do good by creating free people who do evil from time to time, or by creating people who are not free and therefore do no evil at all? The plausible answer to this question would be that he did something better by creating free people, although some atrocious incidents do occur from time to time. Considering that God knows this in the attribute of omniscient and is considered to be absolutely good, he created people who are free, but who do evil from time to time due to the nature of freedom. Creating evil or less good when there is something better contradicts God's perfection. Accordingly, God creates free beings; but, by the nature of freedom, he does not interfere with their actions in a way that can bring about the better. Moreover, if he is to take responsibility and hold them accountable for their actions, he should create them free and not prevent them from committing evil due to their freedom. Creating such a being is a good thing in itself. Therefore, due to the nature of freedom, he does not prevent the occurrence of evil in itself, such as theft, adultery, and murder. It is like the relationship between the knife and the master who made the knife. The best knife is the knife with the best cutting feature in accordance with its nature. So the fact that the knife is a cutter is a good situation in itself and the responsibility of the master is to make the knife with the cutting feature in the most appropriate way to its nature. The responsibility of using the knife in the wrong place belongs to the user. Similarly, the agent who gave this will cannot be responsible for the evils that arise as a result of the free use of the will of the free being. Because being free is better than not being at all, so God created free beings for his goodness. Therefore, due to his absolute goodness and perfection, he does not interfere with the occurrence of such actions. In that case:

- I. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely good.
- II. The perfect being acts perfectly due to his perfection.
- III. It is good action to create free beings and not interfere with their freedom.

Therefore,

- IV. God does not interfere with actions that take place freely, even if it is evil from time to time.

CONCLUSION

The issue of evil, which is one of the most important problems in the history of thought, has continued as a theological problem since it has been dealt with in the context of the attribute of omnipotence. God, who is isolated from all his other attributes in favor of his omnipotence, is presented as the creator of good-bad, beautiful-ugly, meaningful-meaningless things, and then the reasons for his creation are tried to be shown. In particular, making a distinction between natural and moral evil and accepting God as the direct creator of natural evil is incompatible with his perfection. For this reason, evils should be divided into two as evil in itself and evil in terms of consequences. From the point of view of this distinction, God is not the creator of evil events in itself. Even though God has created events that are evil in terms of their results, the reason why their results are evil is people's unconsciousness, incautiousness, unwariness, injudiciousness and carelessness. In other words, such events are not evil in itself. Therefore, there is no evil created by God. Not creating evil by virtue of its perfection imposes moral responsibility on him, not an obligation. This means that he acts according to his perfect nature formed by all His attributes. So God is the perfect being. He creates according to his perfection. Therefore, there is no evil created by him. Seeing evil in created things is due to the limited knowledge of man not fully understanding its cause.

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