

**IS GOD RESPONSIBLE FOR EVIL? THE VINDICATION OF GOD AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL**  
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- I. The Problem of Evil Stated: How can there be evil in a world created by a all-good and all-powerful God? If God is all-good, he wouldn't want evil. And if he is all-powerful, he could prevent evil. But, there is evil. Therefore, God must not be all-good, or all-powerful.
- II. Biblical Support for God's complete control over evil, while Himself is wholly and solely Good
  - A. Spectrum Texts – showing God's control over all things good, and all things evil
    1. Deuteronomy 32:39
    2. Isaiah 45:5-7
      - a. The term *bara* ("create") is used in the OT exclusively with God as its subject. Here it is used in v. 7 for the two negative aspects of God's control – darkness and calamity
      - b. The terms in the second couplet are the strongest Hebrew words, respectively, for all that is good (*shalom*, or "peace") and all that is bad (*ra*, or "calamity," "destruction," "evil").
  - God fully controls both good and evil** (Isa 45:7), yet **God is wholly good** and is **not evil** in any respect whatsoever (see 1 John 1:5 and Psalm 5:4).
  - C. "Compatibilist" Texts
    1. Genesis 45:4-8
    2. Isaiah 10:5-7, 12, 15
    3. Acts 2:23; 4:27-28
- III. Answering the Problem of Evil – Three-Part Argument
  - A. Argument from Compatibilist Freedom – In our moral choosing, **we always do what we most want to do** ("freedom of inclination") while God regulates the conditions of our choosing. God controls the outcome, yet we bear full responsibility (e.g., Gen 45:5-8 with Gen 50:15-20).
  - B. Greater Good Defense – God has **wise and perfect purposes** for all that he has made, and to the magnification of His own glory. In His infinite wisdom and holiness, he has decided that a universe with evil as well as good was necessary for these purposes to be accomplished.
  - C. Asymmetry of God's action toward good and evil, respectively – God brings about **good** directly, out of his own nature. But he brings about **evil** indirectly, through his specific permission of **just those things** which he could, if he so chose, also **prevent**. God retains equal and meticulous control of both good and evil, though each is brought differently.
- IV. The Problem of Evil vs. The Problem of Goodness. The former is the big problem as we see things, but the latter is the *real* problem that God faces: How can God show kindness and goodness to those who deserve only his everlasting judgment? Marvel at the Problem of Goodness and how God has designed to show favor – even everlasting, saving favor – to those who deserve only his condemnation. What mercy, what grace, what love!