

04 October 2021

The Problem of Evil and Suffering

Areas of Study	Specific Content
The nature of God	➤ Omnipotent: Exodus 7-11, Exodus 14:21: Omni-benevolent: Psalm 86:15, John 3:16, Romans 8: 37-39. Evil and suffering: Quote on God and evil from Epicurus, Book of Job 1: 8 -12, 42:1-6

Christian Beliefs

1. Nature of God

- Trinity
- Characteristics
- **Evil and suffering**

2. Creation

- Genesis Story / Interpretations
- Role of the Word and Spirit

3. Jesus

- Incarnation / Crucifixion / Resurrection / Ascension

4. Salvation

- Law / Sin / Grace

5. Afterlife

- Eschatological beliefs
- Judgement / resurrection
- Contemporary beliefs

What do you remember about...

- The Trinity
- God's characteristics
- The Moses story

What does the story of Moses show us about God's characteristics?

Does it show an **omnipotent**, and **omnibenevolent** God?



**Our world is,
sadly, full of evil
and suffering**

**With your
partner, list kinds
and examples**



1. Which ones are moral evil?

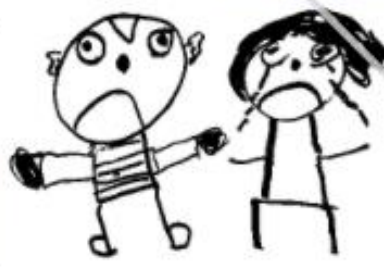


4. Which are results of unanswered prayer?

3. Which ones are reasons for not believing in God?



2. Which ones are natural evil



With your partner, list kinds and examples

**Which ones
are caused by
humans?**

**Which ones
are caused by
nature?**

Highlight them

**Highlight them
in a different
colour**

**Label: Moral
evil**

**Label: Natural
evil**

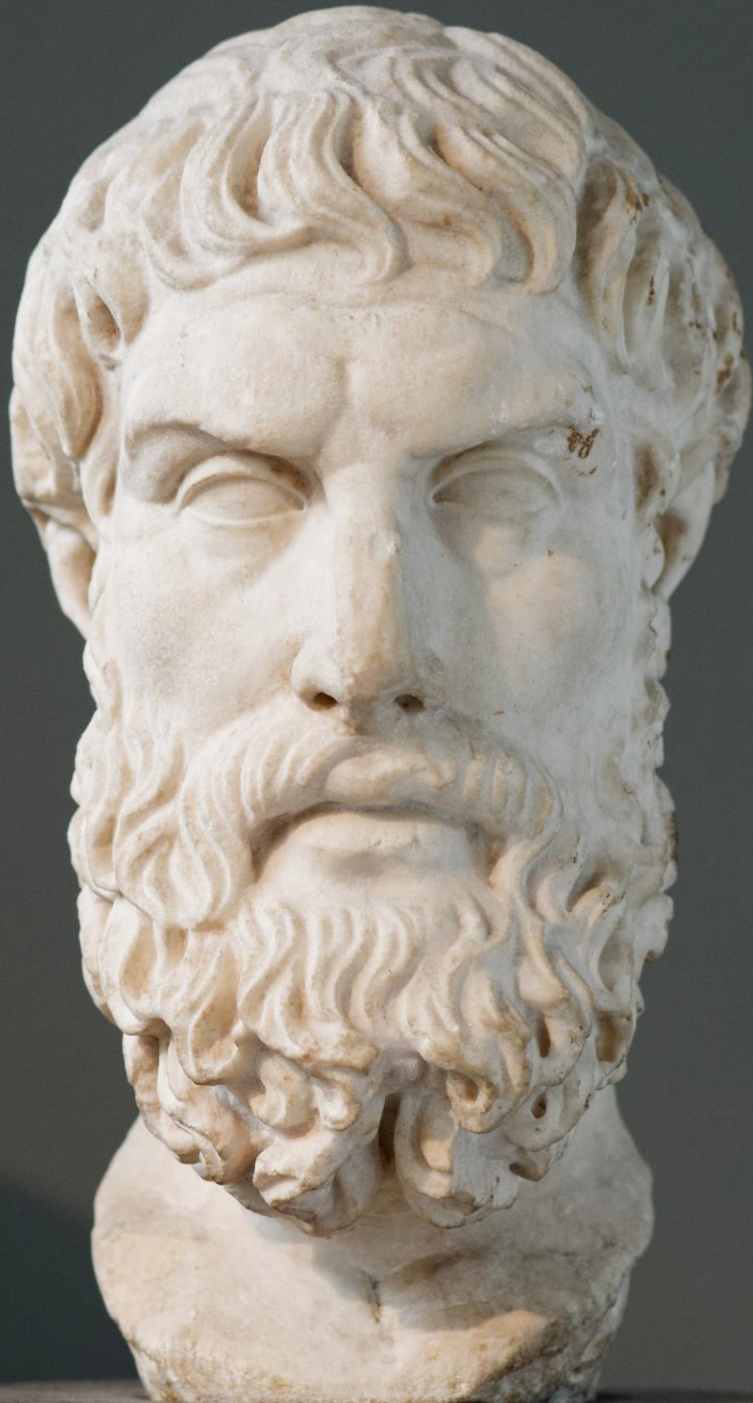
Moral evil is...

**Natural evil
is...**

**There is evil and
suffering in the world.**

**Theists believe that God
exists.**

**What question do these
things this raise?**



Epicurus's questions

Epicurus

Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able?

Then is he **impotent**.

Is God able, but not willing?

Then is he **malevolent**.

Is God both able and willing?

Whence then is evil?

The inconsistent triad

Draw the inconsistent triad then explain this in your own words.



omnipotence



omnibenevolence

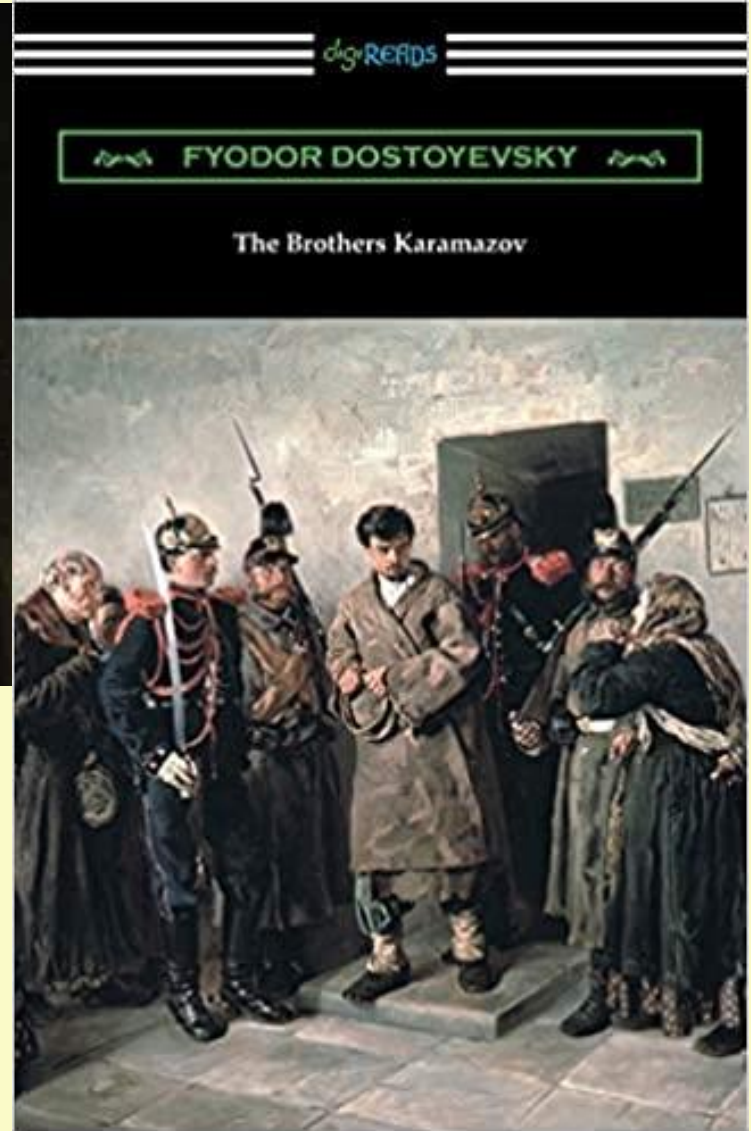


evil



Fydor Dostoevsky

3 examples



Brothers Karamazov

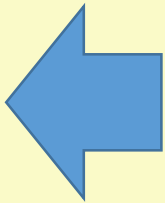
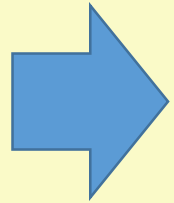
The Problem of Evil and Suffering



Rock of atheism



**How might theists
respond to the
problem of evil and
suffering?**



Defences of God

- God gave us free will and **we** choose to perform evil.
- Force for evil – the **devil** who tempts us.
- Suffering is a **test**.
- Suffering is a result of **original sin**.
- Suffering makes us **stronger**, better people. It is soul-shaping.
- Evil and suffering **aren't real** – they are absences of good.
- Suffering is a **punishment for sin** and wrong doing.

**Which are
strong / weak
defences?**

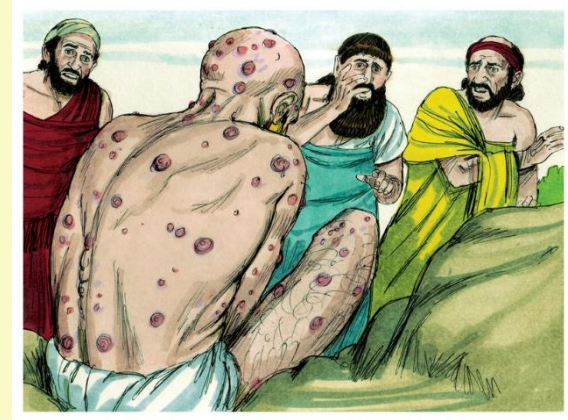
Response 1:

**have faith, and
don't question
God**

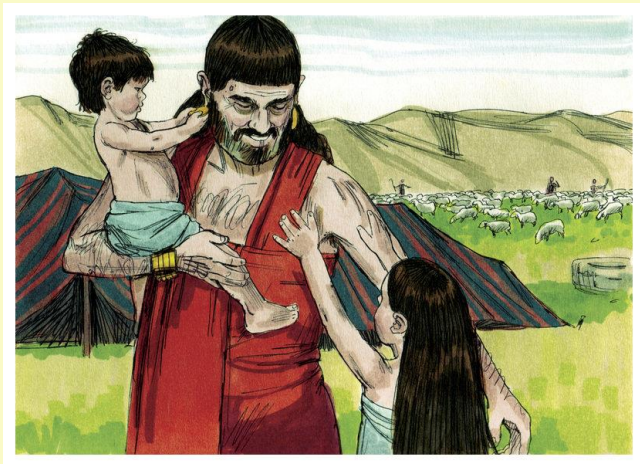


Job

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKilPRcM7j0>



1. Describe what happens to Job
 2. Why may many use this to **support** the inconsistent triad?
 3. What was the teaching behind Job?
- Challenge:** Does the story of Job solve the inconsistent triad?

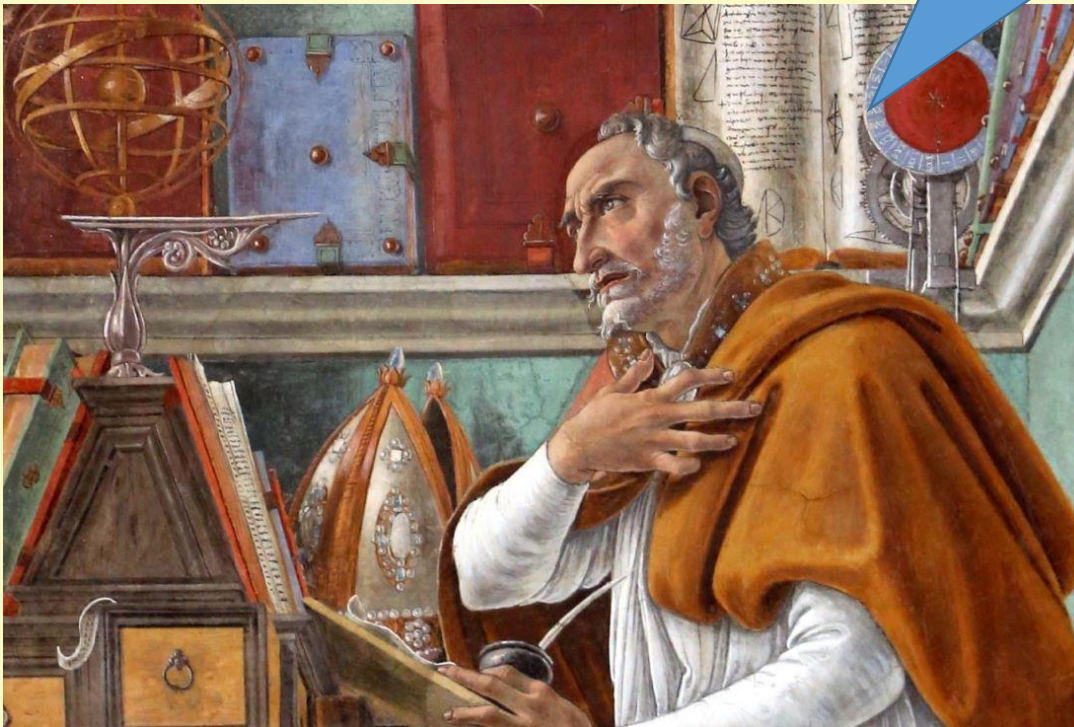


“I know that you can do all things;
no purpose of yours can be
thwarted...

surely I spoke of things I did not
understand, things too wonderful
for me to know” ***Job 42:1-3***

Response 2:
Original sin

All evil is sin or
punishment for
sin



St.
Augustine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1ysPBjXXk4>

The first one is called
The Book of Genesis.

Genesis is divided in
chapters.

You need to know about
chapters 1--3.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiXQmeuHTOY&t=720s>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7TDvJrijz0>

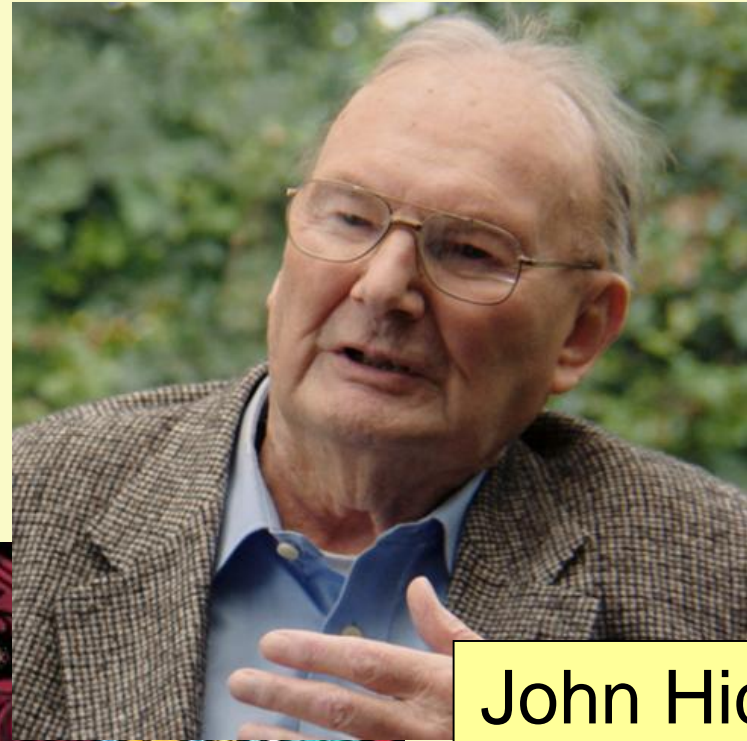
- For each chapter (1, 2, and 3), write a one paragraph summary.
- The summary should capture all of the key points of that chapter.
- You could include short quotations.

Good, Evil
and
Suffering

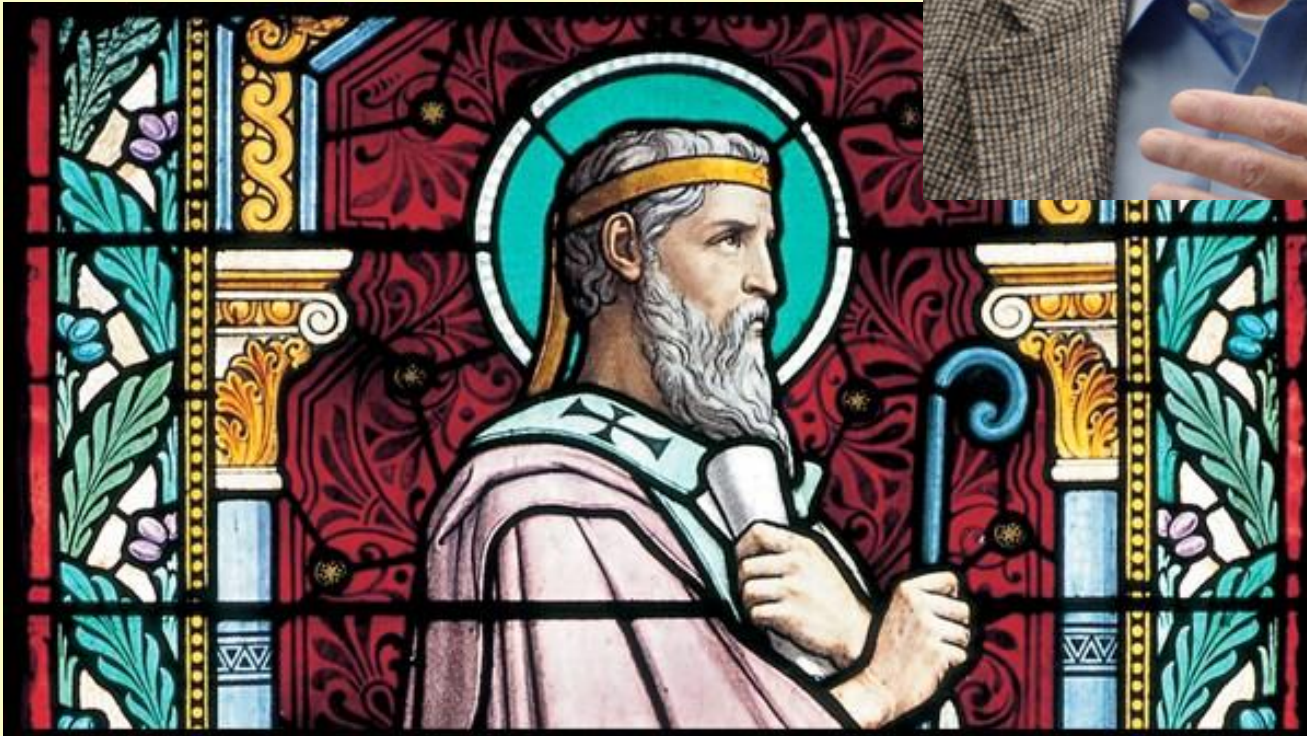
- Philosophical perspectives on the origin of evil: Original Sin (free will) and 'soul-making' (Irenaeus and John Hick)
- Philosophical challenges posed by belief in God, free will and the existence of evil and suffering

Response 3:

**Evil is
necessary for
soul-making**



John Hick



St.
Irenaeus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWcgHmXV09g>

Question

“If there is evil in the world, then there is no God”. Discuss (15 marks)



Fors
Againsts
Religions (including atheism)
My view