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A Brief Comparison Between Systematic Theodicy and The Qur'anic Theodicy

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Abstract

One of the most debated problems in the history of philosophy is the problem of evil. Since classical times, philosophers have started to think about evil, a phenomenon that exists in the world and that almost everyone encounters. With questions such as why there is evil in the world we live in or how we can deal with evil, the problem of evil began to be examined philosophically. However, this is not only unique to the history of philosophy, it is also a topic of discussion that religions with a tradition of revelation have dealt with. Religions such as Judaism, especially Christianity and Islām have to some extent dealt with this problem. The means by which these religions respond to this problem is different from that of philosophical explanation, in which the process of reasoning and each philosopher's own logical process is heavily involved. Philosophers have tried to explain evil within the framework of neo-platonism and argued that it is actually the absence of goodness. While matter takes its most concrete form at the lowest levels, it moves far away from the good. Therefore, distancing from the perfect brings evil. Scholastics and Islāmic theologians, on the other hand, have tried to show that the evil in the world is not incompatible and contradictory with the existence of God by providing explanations that are partially in line with the doctrine of their religion. These theologians sometimes went beyond the framework of the doctrine and carried their reasoning tools quite far. Philosophers and theologians have tried to act according to the religious tradition to which they belonged in offering some solutions to this problem. Nevertheless, they did not always take the religious tradition into

consideration when providing these answers and often tried to produce philosophical answers. In the modern period, the problem of evil has been seen as the soft belly of the Abrahamic religions. Since the seventeenth century, it has become one of the strongest atheistic arguments and has been used intensively today. Academically, this issue has generally been dealt with within the framework of philosophy of religion. It seems possible to say that a Qur'an-oriented study is relatively rare compared to the philosophical one. Therefore, in this study, the researcher has tried to focus on some Qur'anic verses that can be associated with the problem of evil and to show the relationship between the concepts used in the Qur'an in this context. He then discusses whether some of the Qur'anic parables can be evaluated within the framework of theodicy. In addition, the researcher has tried to reveal the differences between the arguments and style in the Qur'an and philosophical theodicy, also called systematic theodicy, throughout this study.

Keywords

Qur'an, God, Evil, Theodicy, Parable.

Citation

Sistematik Teodise ve Kur'ānī Teodise Arasında Kısa Bir Karşılaştırma

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Öz

Felsefe tarihinde en çok tartışılan problemlerden biri kötülük problemidir. Klasik dönemlerden itibaren düşünürler ve filozoflar dünyada var olan ve hemen herkesin karşılaştığı bir olgu olan kötülük üzerinde düşünmeye başlamışlardır. Yaşadığımız dünyada neden kötülük vardır ya da kötülükle nasıl başa çıkabiliriz şeklindeki sorularla kötülük problemi felsefi olarak incelenmeye başlamıştır. Ancak bu sadece felsefe tarihine has değil, aynı zamanda vahiy geleneğine sahip olan dinlerin de uğraştığı bir tartışma konusudur. Yahudilik, özellikle de Hristiyanlık ve İslām gibi dinler bir dereceye kadar bu problemle ilgilenmişlerdir. Bu dinlerin bu soruna cevap verme araçları, akıl yürütme sürecinin ve her filozofun kendine has bir mantıksal sürecinin yoğun olarak devrede olduğu felsefi açıklamadakinden farklıdır. Filozoflar yeni-platonculuk çerçevesinde kötülüğü açıklamaya çalışmışlar ve bunun aslında iyiliğin yokluğu olduğunu savunmuşlardır. Madde en alt seviyelerde en somut halini alırken iyi olandan oldukça uzaklaşır. Dolayısıyla kemal olandan uzaklaşma kötülüğü getirir. Skolastikler ve İslām kelamcıları ise benimsedikleri dinin akidesine kısmen uygun açıklamalar getirerek dünyada bulunan kötülüğün Tanrı'nın varlığıyla uyumsuz ve çelişik olmadığını göstermeye çalışmışlardır. Söz konusu kelamcılar bazen de akidenin çerçevesi dışına çıkarak akıl yürütme araçlarını oldukça ileriye taşımışlardır. Filozoflar ve ilahiyatçılar bu soruna bir takım çözümler sunarken ait oldukları dinî geleneğe göre hareket etmeye çalışmışlardır. Ancak onlar bu cevapları verirken her zaman dinî geleneği göz önünde bulundurmamışlar ve çoğu zaman felsefî cevaplar üretmeye çalışmışlardır. Modern döneme gelindiğinde kötülük problemi teistik bir yapıya sahip

olan semavi dinlerin adeta yumuşak karnı olarak görülmüştür. Kötülük problemi argümanı on yedinci asırdan itibaren yoğun bir şekilde ateistik argümanların en güçlüsü haline gelmiş ve günümüzde bu argüman yoğun bir şekilde kullanılmaya başlamıştır. Akademik olarak bu konu genellikle din felsefesi çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır. Kur'ân odaklı bir çalışma felsefi olana nispetle az olduğunu söylemek mümkün görünmektedir. Bundan dolayı bu çalışmada araştırmacı, kötülük problemi ile ilişkilendirilebilecek bazı Kur'ân ayetlerine yoğunlaşmaya ve bu bağlamda Kur'an'da kullanılmış olan kavramların birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerini göstermeye çalışmıştır. Daha sonra Kur'ân'da bulunan bazı kıssaların teodise çerçevesinde değerlendirilip değerlendirilemeyeceğini tartışmıştır. Ayrıca araştırmacı Kur'ân'daki argüman ve üslupla sistematik teodise de denilen felsefi teodise arasında farklılıkların nasıllığını bu çalışma boyunca ortaya çıkarmaya çalışmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Kur'an, Tanrı, Kötülük, Teodise, Kıssa.

Introduction

The problem of evil has been discussed throughout the history of both Western and Eastern thoughts. Both traditions have searched for some answers within the framework of their own thinking to overcome this philosophical problem. In addition to being discussed from various angles by philosophers and theologians in ancient and medieval times, the problem of evil has become one of the most complex and important weapons of atheism in the modern period. Before briefly discussing what this article aims to achieve, some studies on the Qur'anic perspective on evil will be mentioned. Before this study, Lutfullah Cebeci presented subject of the problem of evil in the context of the Qur'an as his doctoral thesis in 1981. And later published as a book.[1] Cebeci prepared his work in two parts. In the first part, he evaluated how the problem of evil was handled in religions before Islam. In the second part, he considered the problem within the framework of God's attributes and the creation of human beings. Finally, the author discussed the issue of good and bad (al-ḥusn wa-l-qubḥ), which is the subject of famous debates in *Kalām.* Another work published before the present article is M. J. L. Young's *The Treatment of The Principle of Evil in The Qur'an.*[2] The author has dealt with the problem of evil only in the context of devils and tried to show that the concept of devil in the Qur'an is ambiguous by discussing various verses. The problem of evil has been analyzed in academic studies from the perspectives of philosophy in general and religious and Islamic philosophies in particular. However, this study, apart from these, tries to investigate how the Qur'anic parables deal with the problem of evil. After briefly discussing some of the solutions put forward regarding the problem of evil within the scope of some works, it will be determined what some of the verses of the Qur'an, which constitute the main aspect of this study, say about this subject. However, in this paper, we will limit our subject to some remarkable Christian theologians and thinkers. Nevertheless, we also briefly touch upon the thoughts of some philosophers who do not have a direct place in Christian thought, such as

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[1] Lutfullah Cebeci, *Kur'an'da Şer Problemi (*Ankara: Akçağ Publications, 1985).

[2] M. J. L. Young, "The Treatment of The Principle of Evil in The Qur'ān", *Islāmic Studies* 5/3 (September 1966).

David Hume (d. 1776) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (d. 1716). Thereafter, both explanation ways of this subject will be compared and evaluated in the conclusion part. Finally, the statement "*systematic theodicy*" that I will use throughout this study is equivalent to the statement "*philosophical theodicy*".

1. An Overview to the History of Theodicy at Christian Thought

In this section, the perspectives of some thinkers who grew up in the West, both in Christian circles and outside of them, on the problem of evil will be briefly discussed. In this part, due to the limitations of the study, theodicy will only be analyzed within the framework of a few names.

The problem of evil is one of the most debated questions in the minds of philosophers and theologians in the history. Some of the philosophers and thinkers have endeavored on this issue to make it one of the best arguments or evidence that there is not an omnipotent and wholly good God. These philosophers have argued that the existence of a powerful and wholly good God contrasts with a great amount of suffering in this world. According to Lactantius, an apologist of Christianity and vicar apostolic, and who lived in the fourth century, the debate was formulated by Epicurus (d. 270). Hereunder, Epicurus had claimed that if God is powerful and wholly good, then, there would not be presense of any kind of evil or affliction.

> *"God either wishes to take away evils, and is unable; or He is able, and is unwilling; or He is neither willing nor able, or He is both willing and able. If He is willing and is unable, He is feeble, which is not in accordance with the character of God; if He is able and unwilling, He is envious, which is equally at variance with God; if He is neither willing nor able, which alone is suitable to God; from what source then are evils? Or why does He not remove them?"[3]*

The problem of evil has been one of the problems for which philosophers, as well as theologians, sought answers throughout history. One of them is Plato (d. 347 B.C.E.), a philosopher from Ancient Greek time and Saint Augustinus (d. 430), a Christian theologian from early times of the history of Christianity, who has deeply

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3   John Hick, *Evil and God of the Love* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 5.

influenced Western philosophy and theology via his works from the fourth century to this day.

When attention is paid to the history of philosophy, it is seen that Plato dealt with the subject in a scattered and unsystematic way.[4] He discussed the problem in his certain works such as *Timaeus, Phaidon* and *Republic.* According to Plato, God regulated the Universe, which is already available in the form of chaos. Plato, in *Timaeus,* believes that the Demiurge was not a God which created all universe from nonbeing as Judaism, Christianity and Islam describe. He describes it, as John Hick mentioned, that "our spatio-temporal world as having been formed by a divine power who made use of an existing chaotic material which he ordered within a likewise existing framework."[5]

In searching for an answer to solve the problem of evil, Plato had appealed to dualism which appears in the thought of Zoroastrian religion which teaches that there are two divine powers in the world. One of them is Ahura Mazda, the god of good and the other is Ahriman, the god of evil. According to him, there are two powers in the world. He described that God can only do good because he is purely good and merciful. On the other hand, the presence of suffering and malignancy in the world is due to the restricted nature of uncreated matter.[6] God as regulator of the world is benevolent. Therefore, the world he ordered must be excellent.[7] Plato claimed that the evil existed in the world and manifested itself in the form of disasters and wars were not purposeless. He described that there are two powers in the world, and named one of them Reason and the other Necessity. The former is the cause of good and benevolence; the latter is the cause of evil which he had affiliated with the substance.[8]

As it can be seen, the problem of evil which has gained the attention of philosophers and scholars throughout history goes back to ancient times. However,

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[4]   Metin Yasa, "Eflatun'da Kötülük Problemi", *Ondokuz Mayıs İlahiyât Fakültesi Dergisi* 10 (1998), 315.

[5]   Hick, *Evil and God of the Love*, 26.

[6]   Cafer Sadık Yaran, *Kötülük ve Teodise* (Istanbul: Vadi, 2016), 15.

[7]   Yasa, "Eflatun'da Kötülük Problemi", 316.

[8]   Hick, *Evil and God of the Love*, 27.

the issue have not only concerned the philosophers like Plato but also theologians who belonged to monotheistic religions. It is the theologians rather than the philosophers who are faced with solving the issue in the context of the religious tradition to which they belong. In this part of the article, the problem will be ediscussed from the views of some remarkable theologians especially those who belonged to Christianity and Islam.

Firstly, this article will begin with Irenaeus (d. 202) who was a Christian author and Bishop of Lyons and who lived in the second century. According to Irenaeus, human beings were created in imperfect form but they are capable of their spiritual development and can contact with their creator in this world. He thought that evils exist in the world, in contrast to Augustinus who had been influenced by Neo-Platonic doctrine, and that God has created a universe in which evil was inevitable.[9] According to Irenaean theodicy, the reason for the free will of human beings is due to being created cognitively distant from God. This distance is required to be independent as moral and individual to a certain extent. In this situation, human beings freely perform their behaviors, including evils.

As for Augustinus, he stated that the nature of evil in the world is non beingness and is not a substance in itself, but is rather a form of defection.[10] According to him, God, who is excellent and wholly good, at first created the creature perfectly; but because of free will that given the first human being, Adam, evil occurred. Augustinian theodicy focuses on human being's free will. Accordingly, evil originated from the free will used by Adam as far as the holy books tell. Thus, this sin had committed the first human being descended into successors.[11] By doing so, Augustinus turns the source of evil from God to man.

Having pursued Agustinus and Christianity thought, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) claims that evil in some way has a cause. According to him, evil is the absence of the

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[9]   Hick, *Evil and God of the Love,* 236.

[10]   Nico Vorster, "The Augustinian Type of Theodicy: Is it Outdated?", *Journal of Reformed Theology* (May 2011), 28.

[11]   Vorster, "The Augustinian Type of Theodicy", 3-4.

good which is natural and potentiality to good has the nature of good.[12] He considered evil that was also created by God as a means of the best goodness. In his view, if any kind of evil was not been allowed by God, then, the greater grace would not come to light.[13] He writes in *Summa Theologia* that in God there is no defect, but the highest perfection.[14]

There is Aquinas's other view on theodicy. This type of theodicy goes back to Plato, but it is Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) and later Leibniz who dealt with it systematically. Accordingly, Thomas Aquinas has asserted that the world is the best possible world because, if God is perfect then his creation, namely, the universe must also be perfect. Therefore, the world must be the best of the possible worlds.

In the eighteenth century, the problem of evil and its utilization as an attack on theism, especially on design argument, have been raised by Hume. His views on evil can be pursued in his renowned work, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* Hume has maintained the Epicurus' dilemma that I mentioned above. According to Hume, the question asked by Epicurus has not yet been answered.[15] David Hume has asserted that evils are more than adequate in the world, in which causes doubts about the existence of God. The fact that an all-powerful and perfectly good God does not eliminate the unhappiness of the living creatures in the world is in contradiction with his existence.[16] Hume expressed thoughts on evil through Philo, who is one of three personalities created by him, in his *Dialogues.* In fact, Hume did not debate the existence of God. His aims are open up the argument of design which is a theistic view, and the attributes of God which are supported by theism for discussion.[17]

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[12] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* trs. Sandra K. Perry (Ohio: y.y., 1947), 338.

[13] Özcan Akdağ, "Kötülük Sorunu ve Teodise", *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies* 38 (January 2015), 477.

[14] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 339.

[15] Nelson Pike, "Hume on Evil", *Duke University Press,* 72/2 (April 1963), 181.

[16] Eyüp Aktürk, "Mantıksal Bir Sorun Olarak Kötülük", *Ekev Akademi Journal* 19/62 (Bahar 2015), 38-39.

[17] Julian Wolfe, "Hume On Evil", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34/01 (February 1981), 64-65.

The answers to this question had been given by many theologians in different ways throughout history. On the other hand, the question has been strengthened by many thinkers from especially contemporary times. Now, this paper will examine the main responses and counter-arguments to the problem discussed and formulated by some philosophers on the atheist side. In modern times, the problem is discussed in logical form by some remarkable names like John L. Mackie, A. Flew and H. J. McCloskey. In his renowned article, Mackie has claimed that the problem of evil consists of three propositions simply.

a)   God is omnipotent.

b)   God is wholly good.

c)   and, yet evil exists.

According to Mackie, *"There seems to be some contradiction between these three propositions so that if any two of them were true, the third would be false."*[18]

Mackie added that apart from these propositions there are some important principles that makes incompatible the three with each other. *"These are that good is opposed to evil, in such a way that a good thing always eliminates evil as far as it can, and that there are no limits to what an omnipotent thing can do."*[19]

According to his argument, if there is God who has been claimed that he is all-wise, merciful and unlimited by monotheistic religions, then, there would not be any evil. Mackie has asserted that this contradiction can not show that religious beliefs lack rational support, but that they are positively irrational, that the several parts of the essential theology are inconsistent with one another.[20]

Another philosopher in modern times who made the issue against the existence of God is Antony Flew. He has argued that *"The issue is whether to assert at the same time first that there is an infinitely good God, second that he is an all-powerful Creator, and*

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[18]   John, L. Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence", *Mind Oxford University Press* 64/254 (April 1955), 200.

[19]   Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence", 201.

[20]   Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence", 200.

third that there are evils in his universe, is to contradict yourself."[21] And finally, H. J. McCloskey has set out the problem and said that *"the problem of evil is a very simple problem to state. There is evil in the world; yet the world is said to be the creation of a good, omnipotent God. How is this possible? Surely a good, omnipotent being would have made a world that is free of evil of any kind."[22]*

The issue that challenges theologians as much as philosophers is this: despite of the existence of omnipotent, merciful and just God, why there are so many evils, pains, afflictions in the world? or the problem can be formulated as John Hick said in *Evil and God of the love: "Can the presence of evil in the world be reconciled with the existence of a God who is unlimited both in goodness and in power?"[23]*

As for today, in this period one figure has come to the forefront of this field. He is John Hick who was remarkable in the philosophy of religion. John Hick has extended the Irenaean type of theodicy which asserts that man has been created for fellowship with his maker and is valued by the personal divine love as an end in himself.[24] According to him, it is nonsense that man should be driven away from heaven while he was originally blessed in God's Kingdom because his being at presence of God prevents to commit sins. In comparison with Augustinian type of theodicy, John Hick has asserted that life of man is a hard travel which requires an effort to reach spiritual matureness and is a person-making process which was realized freely.[25]

In accordance with the idea of person-making process, John Hick has upheld that God's purpose in the creation was not to create a world where living beings would experience a *maximum of pleasure* and a *minimum of pain*, contrary to this, God has

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[21]   Antony Flew, *God and Philosphy* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1966), 48.

[22]   Henry John McCloskey, *God and Evil (*The Hague: Springer Netherlands, 1974), 3.

[23]   Hick, *Evil and God of the Love,* 3.

[24]   John Hick, *Evil and God of the Love,* 237.

[25]   Rafiz Manafov, *John Hick'in Din Felsefesinde Kötülük Problemi ve Teodise* (Ankara: Elis Publications, 2019),113-114.

aimed to create a world in which human beings act freely in order to make their souls supreme which Hick has called it the *soul-making*.[26]

Having considered man's free will which causes sin and moral evil, as well as goodness, Hick has stated that this free will determines all of the meaning of life. According to him, the value of freedom is not from itself, but it is from taking a man to the divine authority, namely, the likeness of God.[27]

As can be seen, since the classical period, a wide variety of answers to the problem of evil have been produced and philosophers have defended the answer that suits their own systems or thoughts. With Hume, this problem has been used much more systematically as a counter-argument to the theist side, and some philosophers today have made this counter-argument quite sophisticated. The following chapter will examine how some names from Islamic thought see the problem of evil and how they respond to it within the framework of their views.

2. An Overview to the History of Theodicy in Islamic Thought

In the previous section, a brief history of theodicy in Christian thought has been discussed. And in this part, theodicy will be examined, but only by the viewpoint of philosophy and *kalām*, theology.

Islamic philosophers, including peripatetic philosophers *(Mashshā'īyūn)* which were represented by Ikhwān al-Safā, Abū Nasr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fārābī (d. 339/950), Abū 'Alī al-Husayn b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī b. Sinā (d. 428/1037) and Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Rushd (d. 595/1198) have contemplated and spoken of this problem and its solution. The views of these philosophers on theodicy are usually consonant with each other, and we will try to put forward the important ones of these views.

According to Islamic philosophers, including al-Fārābī both evil and good are from one source, namely, from God. They, like Christian colleagues, have argued that God rules over everything in the world, thus, evil is also in the allowance of

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[26]   John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1989), 34.

[27]   Manafov, *John Hick'in Din Felsefesinde Kötülük Problemi ve Teodise,* 119.

God. But evil, in fact, has no presence, but, contrariwise, it is the absence of good. According to these philosophers who have been influenced by Plotinus and his theory of emanation, everything in the world is good because its existence emerged from God.[28] Considering evil as the absence of being, Islamic philosophers have not meant that there is not any kind of evil but good, they have asserted that evil that is accidental is negligible, in the world, enough to ignore.[29]

Ibn Sīnā, who accepted the theory of emanation like other peripatetic philosophers, has asserted that God created the world compatible with his wisdom (*hikmah*) and power (*qudrah*). Therefore, the world is the work of the all-wise God. The concept of "creation" here in accordance with the Neoplatonic theory is the inevitable and imperative creation. However, evil and suffering in the viewpoint of Ibn Sīnā result from the incompleteness of matter, not by God. For example, fire, according to him, is created to perform its role and it is useful for people but, sometimes it causes undesirable things for instance human burning. It is not right to remove something, like fire, completely, just because contains some potential evil.[30]

Ibn Sīnā, who considered that evil is divided into a) natural evils b) moral evils c) metaphysic evils, has argued that evils in the world do not constitute the majority.[31] Apart from the incompleteness of matter, Ibn Sīnā has claimed that the purposes of God are not parallel with that of human beings. Considering this missing, human beings can not comprehend the wisdom (*hikmah*) of God on evil and good.[32]

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[28] Necip Taylan, "Din Felsefesinde Kötülük Problemi", *Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Journal* 11-12 (1997), 54.

[29] Manafov, *John Hick'in Din Felsefesinde Kötülük Problemi ve Teodise,* 165-167.

[30] Abū 'Alī al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī b. Sīnā, *al-Ilāhiyyāt Min Kitāb al-Shifā,* (Qum: al-Maktab al-ālam al-Islāmī, 1418), 454.

[31] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ilāhiyyāt Min Kitāb al-Shifā,* 459. More information for Ibn Sinā's view see also: Metin Özdemir, "A Comparative Approach to the Problem of Evil from a Theological and Philosophical Perspective", *ULUM* 1/1 (July 2018), 65-84.

[32] Yaran, *Kötülük ve Teodise,* 167.

Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who was considered the great Islamic philosopher that influenced some Western thinkers and theologians, has also discussed the problem of evil in his famous work, namely, *al-Kashf.* He has tackled the issue in the work, entering into an argument against especially Asharites.

According to Ibn Rushd, who claimed that Asharites considered that acts of God can not be described as justice and cruelty, God's purposes are in accordance with the wisdom, and His acts are characterized by justice.[33] Ibn Rushd has discussed the problem in the context of having God to guide some in the true path and to keep some in ignorance and dark, as mentioned in some Quranic verses. For example;

"Thus Allah sendeth astray whom He will, and whom He will He guideth.[34]" (al-Muddaththir 74/31)

Considering some contradictions between wisdom and justice of God and such verses, Ibn Rushd has argued that evil is lesser in comparison to good in the world. Although it is possible for most people to be guided to true path by God, it is appropriate for a small group of people to remain in darkness and ignorance for the purposes of creation of the world. According to Ibn Rushd, it is much better to create this world in which there is more good compared to evil than to not create it.[35]

Ibn Rushd, who has imputed both evil and good to God just as Islamic theologians did, has claimed that God created goodness in its essence, but created suffering and affliction for goodness, in other saying for the kindness which exists within the evil. For instance, fire has been created to be benefit for people, however, there is some damage within the fire. Therefore, not to create the fire on account of some damage in it, is not justice.[36]

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[33] Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Rushd, *al-Kashf 'an Minhāc al-Adillah,* trans. Süleyman Uludağ, (Istanbul: Dergah, 2016), 249.

[34] The source used for the English translation of the Qur'an throughout the study is Muḥammad Asad's *The Message of The Qur'an. See:* Muḥammad Asad, *The Message of The Qur'an* (London: The Book Foundation, 2003).

[35] Ibn Rushd, *al-Kashf 'an Minhāc al-Adillah,* 252.

[36] Ibn Rushd, *al-Kashf 'an Minhāc al-Adillah,* 253.

As for al-Ghazzālī, who was an Asharite theologian and sûfî and who was also a critic of peripatetic school, especially philosophy of Ibn Sīnā, is one of the most influential thinkers of Islamic thought and theology. But what interests us in this article are his views on theodicy. In fact, his views on this issue can be summarised as he has said: "There is not in possibility anything more wonderful than what is" (laysa fi al-imkān abda' mimmā kān).[37]

According to al-Ghazzālī, this world that was created by God is the most perfect one, because if there is another uncreated world that is more perfect than our world, then, God is not All-Wise as theologians claimed. On the other hand, if the most perfect world is not created by God, then, God is not omnipotent, and this inability does not consistent with deity. al-Ghazzālī has claimed that if God had given people his own power, his own wisdom and his own justice, they would not have been able to create a more perfect world than the world created by God.[38] Thus al-Ghazzālī has emphasized that God's wisdom (hikmah) and mercy cover throughout the world.

Having emphasized the mercy and justice of God in most famous work, namely, Ihya al Ulum al-Din, in the fourth volume and fifth chapter which he entitled "the book of oneness and reliance" (Kitāb al-tawhīd wa al-tawakkul), al-Ghazzālī has highlighted that man must resign to God and his justice. Accordingly, al-Ghazzālī has pointed out that all evil and suffering exist in the world under the control and permission of God.[39] In the view of al-Ghazzālī, what is appropriate to man is obedience, because it is God who creates everything, including suffering and evil.

From the point of view of al-Ghazzālī, to know the worth of goodness and beneficence necessitates the existence of suffering and evil. Maturity can not be known unless there is incompleteness. He has said that if there were no night, the value of day, if there were no illness, the value of health if there was no hell, the

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[37] Nasrin Rouzati, "Evil and Human Suffering in Islamic Thought", *Towards a Mystical Theodicy, Religions* 9/47 (3 February 2018), 6.

[38] Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā al-Ulūm al-Dīn,* trs. Ahmed Serdaroğlu. (Istanbul: Bedir Publications 1975), 4/474-475.

[39] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī, *al-Maqsad al-Asnā fī Sharḥ al-Asmā al-Ḥusnā* (Damascus: al-Ṣabaḥ Publications, 1999), 121.

value of heaven could not be known.[40] al-Ghazzālī's view of evil is almost the same that is claimed by other thinkers and philosophers of the Islam. He argued that evils and sufferings are not created without goods because of being of wisdom (hikmah) created by God.[41]

al-Ghazzālī regarded evil as supplementary and necessity. He asks in his work called al-Maqsād al-asnā that if God is compassionate to his creature and all-powerful, then, why does God allow his vassals to suffer? al-Ghazzālī answers this objection by giving an example. A sentimental mother does not allow painful treatment for her child, while a wiser father does, knowing that this treatment will save the child. Likewise, God allows some sufferings and evils for greater favor.[42]

As far as can be seen, Islamic thinkers, like their Christian counterparts, have tried to eliminate the problem of evil with rational arguments. In particular, the Peripatetic philosophers, influenced by the theory of emanation (sudūr), considered evil as a kind of absence of goodness, while al-Ghazzālī, from a theological perspective, used the theory of "the best of all possible worlds" to argue that this world is the best world that God could have created. In his view, therefore, evil is inevitable. We will now take up the Qur'anic theodicy in order to compare both theodicies in the concluding section.

3. The Qur'anic Theodicy

This chapter will try to show whether the Qur'an answers the problem of evil. If the Qur'an has answered, then, how is its answered? Considering the relationship between God and human beings at the highest level, the Qur'an responds to the issue from various aspects. Answers of the Qur'an on the problem are not as common as we see in theology and philosophy.

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[40] Yaran, *Kötülük ve Teodise,* 181.

[41] Eric L. Ormsby, Theodicy in Islāmic Thought (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 255. For more information see also: Jon Hoover, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy of Perpetual Optimism* (Boston: Brill, 2007).

[42] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī, *al-Maqsad al-Asnā,* 48.

When looking at the verses related to evil and suffering in the Qur'an, we see few aspects of its view on suffering. Here, the verses which mention suffering will be analyzed. At first, the Qur'an deals with free will that is given to man (and jinns) and which is sometimes misused. As the most beautiful creation of man, free will must be given to man, in other words in order to distinguish it from other beings, free will must be given to him. *"Verily, We create man in the best conformation."* (al-Tīn 95/4)

The Qur'an repeatedly states that man by using his free will single out the faith (*imān*) and denial (*kufr*). *"Verily, We have shown him the way, either grateful or ungrateful."* (al-Insān 76/3) *"Whoever does what is just and right, does so for his own good; and whoever does evil, does so to his own hurt: and never does God do the least wrong to His creatures."* (Fuṣṣilat 41/46, cf. al-Zumar 39/41, al-Baqara 2/286)

"In return for what your own hands have wrought - for never does God do the least wrong to His creatures!" (Āl ʿImrān 3/182, cf. al-Qaṣaṣ 28/47)

The verses above point out that God has given man free will and because of this freedom, man chooses right and wrong actions. Perhaps the verse that best reflects the free will of man, which is shown as one of the most important causes of evil in the world, is a verse in the Sūrah Rum. *"Corruption has appeared on land and in the sea as an outcome of what men's hands have wrought: and so He will let them taste some of their doings, so that they might return."* (al-Rūm 30/41) Another statement that should be paid attention to is the statement at the end of this verse that God will make them taste some of the results of their actions in the world. What is understood from the verse, that evil and suffering which man experiences are the results of the act that man does. According to the Qur'an, the highest and the worst evil and sin that man committed is the rejection of the existence of God or belief in polytheism. *"Verily, God does not forgive the ascribing of divinity to aught beside Him, although He forgives any lesser sin unto whomever He wills: for those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God have indeed gone far astray"* (al-Nisāʾ 4/116, cf. al-Nisāʾ 4/48). But in conformity with human beings' free will, some become idolaters and some become disbelievers and some believe in God. *"Yet if God had so willed, they would not have ascribed divinity to aught beside Him; hence, We have not made thee their keeper, and neither art thou responsible for their conduct"* (al-Anʿām 6/107). The beginning of the sin and evil

mentioned in the Qur'an is the rejection of Iblis to bow before Adam who was created by the hand of God. *"And when We said unto the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate, all save Iblis He demurred through pride, and so became a disbeliever."* (al-Baqara 2/34)

In the narrative which is mentioned the Iblis' revolt against God's will, we see dialogue between God and Iblis. *"He (God) said: What hindered thee that thou didst not fall prostrate when I bade thee? (Iblis) said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire while him Thou didst create of mud."* (al-Aʿrāf 7/12)

Context of these verses that are mentioned the dialogue points out that first sin, in a sense evil, (because the Qur'an sometimes emphasizes sin as an evil that is committed by human being who has free will) was perpetrated by Iblis who is given free will. The second sin which was committed by free will that of Adam and Eve, who were resided in the Heaven. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat from a certain tree, but Adam and his wife disobeyed the command and ate. *"And We said: "O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in this garden, and eat freely thereof, both of you, whatever you may wish; but do not approach this one tree, lest you become wrongdoers."* (al-Baqara 2/35, cf. al-Aʿrāf 7/19)

The doctrine of original sin mentioned in the Qur'an is also an essential view in the Christian thought that Christian theologians and thinkers have occasionally trouble to explain.[43] But in the context of Islam, this view is not so important, because the verses adverted under the above verses solve this problem with Adam's penitence and forgivingness by God. *"Thereupon Adam received words [of guidance] from his Sustainer, and He accepted his repentance: for, verily, He alone is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Dispenser of Grace."* (al-Baqara 2/37, cf. al-Aʿrāf 7/23) But, this narrative is a par excellence example to denote people that it is important to swear off after sin that man commits it. And this example mentioned in the Qur'an is an optimistic one in contrast to the New Testament and the Old Testament for the relation between man and God.

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[43]   John Norman Davidson Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968), 361-366.

As we already mentioned that there are some aspects on the view of the problem in the text of the Qur'an and there is no justification in it. Rather, Qur'anic passages which relate to the issue emphasize the wisdom of Benevolence God and his plan that no one can have a grasp of it.[44]

Besides the free will of man which causes some affliction and suffering in the world, these evils and sufferings would have been as an instrument of the test. Among the clearest of these statements are in sūrah al-Baqara, 135, 136 and 137. *"And most certainly shall We try you by means of danger, and hunger, and loss of worldly goods, of lives and of fruits. But give glad tidings unto those who are patient in adversity"* (al-Baqara 2/135, cf. Āl ʿImrān 3/17).

The words of *balâ* or *ibtilâ* mean experience and test, and both words are used for the test either by suffering or beneficence.[45] *"Every human being is bound to taste death; and We test you through the bad and the good by way of trial: and unto Us you all must return"* (al-Anbiyāʾ 21/35, cf. al-Aʿrāf 7/141). *"You shall most certainly be tried in your possessions and in your persons; and indeed you shall hear many hurtful things from those to whom revelation was granted before your time, as well as from those who have come to ascribe divinity to other beings beside God..."* (Āl ʿImrān 3/186).

The other word used in Qur'anic passages regarding to the trial is *fitnah*. This word is mostly meant unrest and disorder. This word is used as a trial as well. *"So as to test them by this means: for he who shall turn away from the remembrance of his Sustainer, him will He cause to undergo suffering most grievous"* (al-Jinn 72/17, cf. al-Taghābun 64:/15, al-Mumtaḥina 60/5, al-Ṣāffāt 37/63, al-Furqān 25/20).

The word *imtaḥana* mentioned in the text is also linked to the trial. Even this word literally means 'trial. *"Behold, they who lower their voices in the presence of God's Apostle - it is they whose hearts God has tested [and opened] to the consciousness of Himself; [and] theirs shall be forgiveness and a reward supreme"* (al-Ḥujurāt 49/3, cf. al-Mumtaḥina 60/10).

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[44] Constantin Julian Damian-Nicolae Ghetu-Joan Dura-Vasile Astărăstoae, "The Quranic Instrumentalization of Suffering", *Europen Journal of Science and Theology* 12/4 (August 2016), 243.

[45] Lutfullah Cebeci, *Kur'an'da Şer Problemi*, 133.

So what are the reasons for this trial? Why people are tested by God as mentioned in the text of the Qur'an? Considering some passages related to the purposes of the test, two reasons are seen in the text. The first purpose is faith in God and His plan, aims and wisdom. Therefore, God expects man to show their endurance and patience against suffering as an instrument for test and expect them to believe in His wisdom. *"Do men think that on their [mere] saying, "We have attained to faith", they will be left to themselves, and will not be put to a test?* (al-ʿAnkabūt 29/2). *"O you who have attained to faith! Seek* aid *in steadfast patience and prayer: for, behold, God is with those who are patient in adversity"* (al-Baqara 2/153, cf. al-Baqara 2/155). *"And how many a prophet has had to fight [in God's cause], followed by many Goddevoted men: and they did not become faint of heart for all that they had to suffer in God's cause, and neither did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves [before the enemy] since God loves those who are patient in adversity"* (Āl ʿImrān 3/146, cf. Muḥammad 47/31, al-Insān 76/12).

These tests may be are the instrument of cultivation for men. This aspect, in fact, is related to man's faith in acts or *'amal ṣāliḥ*. According to Qur'an, God aims and wants men to develop some moral virtues such as patience, *ṣabr*, and resignation (tawakkul). For example, there is one passage that God praised some people for enduring when facing some trouble in the time of peril in the text. *"...and [truly pious are] they who keep their promises whenever they promise and are patient in misfortune and hardship and in time of peril: it is they that have proved themselves true, and it is they, they who are conscious of God"* (al-Baqara 2/177). However, gaining this feature is not as easy as it seems, because this is a character that can be achieved by those who have great respect for God. *"And seek aid in steadfast patience and prayer: and this, indeed, is a hard thing for all but the humble in spirit"* (al-Baqara 2/45). Another verse points out that those who show patience are guided to the true path. *"who, when calamity befalls them, say, "Verily, unto God do we belong and, verily, unto Him we shall return." It is they upon whom their Sustainer's blessings and grace are bestowed, and it is they, they who are on the right path"* (al-Baqara 2/156-157). Another passage also states that endurance or patience (ṣabr) is a difficult task that requires great effort. *"You shall most certainly be tried in your possessions and your persons; and indeed your time, as well as from those who have come to ascribe divinity to other beings beside God. But if you remain patient in*

adversity and conscious of Him - this, behold, is something to set one's heart upon" (Āl ʿImrān 3/186).

According to many passages in the text of the Qur'an, suffering and affliction teach believers that God has the command of everything in the universe. Life and death, wealth and health or poverty and disease, shortly, everything abide by the sovereignty of God. He is the creator of everything. If something bad happens to someone such as illness, poverty and even death that person must show endurance, (ṣabr) and must know that all things whom he undergoes are by the permission of God and because of his endurance, must believe that God will give prizes either in the world or hereafter. *"Do you think that you could enter paradise unless God takes cognizance of your having striven hard, and takes cognizance of your having been patient in adversity?"* (Āl ʿImrān 3/142) and the last verse of the third *sūrah* Āl ʿImrān: *"O you who have attained to faith! Be patient in adversity, and vie in patience with one another, and be ever ready [to do what is right], and remain conscious of God, so that you might attain to a happy state!"* (Āl ʿImrān 3/200). *"Save those who are patient in adversity and do righteous deeds: it is they whom forgiveness of sins awaits, and a great reward"* (Hūd 11/11). *"[Such as] these will be rewarded for all their patient endurance [in life] with a high station [in paradise], and will be met therein with a greeting of welcome and peace, therein to abide: [and] how goodly an abode and [how high] a station!"* (al-Furqān 25/75-76).

Parables of prophets that are mentioned in the Qur'anic text are also the instruments of the teaching of some worths. Among the worths encouraged in these tales are endurance and patience (ṣabr) and trust in God. For instance, the tale of Job which is stated both in the Qur'an and Old Testament stands before us as a good example. *"And call to mind Our servant Job, [how it was] when he cried out to his Sustainer, "Behold, Satan has afflicted me with [utter] weariness and suffering!"* (Ṣād 38:41, cf. al-Anbiyāʾ 21/83). Interestingly enough, each verse that is mentioned is different from the other. The verse in the "Ṣād" attributes Job's affliction to Satan, although the verse in the "al-Anbiyā" attributes not to neither God nor Satan. Nevertheless, the dissipation of Job's suffering is attributed to God. *"Whereupon We responded unto him and removed all the affliction from which he suffered; and We gave him new offspring, doubling their number as an act of grace from Us, and as a reminder unto all who worship*

Us" (al-Anbiyāʾ 21/84), *"And We bestowed upon him new offspring, doubling their number as an act of grace from Us, and as a reminder unto all who are endowed with insight"* (Ṣād 38/43). In the verse located under this last verse, namely forty forth, Job is praised, because of his endurance and patience and invocation to God. *"...We found him full of patience in adversity: how excellent a servant [of Ours], who, behold, would always turn unto us!"* (Ṣād 38/44).

One of the most important aims of these narratives in which are stated the tales of prophets and saints is that God wanted the Prophet to be patient and not give up in the face of the violent protests and persecutions he and Muslims were subjected to in Mecca. Similar passages that are stated persecutions and oppression to which previous prophets subjected focus on that God's help will surely reach them. Another example of these parables is that of Luqmān, who gave advice to his child. In his pieces of advice, he preached to his son to be patient when confronted with suffering. *"O, my dear son! Be constant in prayer, and enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and bear in patience whatever may befall thee: this, behold, is something to set one's heart upon!"* (Luqmān 31/17) This verse mentioned in the chapter of Luqmān is in fact God's advice to all believers.

Another verse of the Qur'an cited the tale of Moses and the strange man who is described as "one of our slaves." This tale of Moses may give believers some perspective to contact with divine plan or trust of God's sovereignty. According to the text in which is mentioned the tale, the slave of God who is given "God's mercy and knowledge" teaches Moses what he does not know. But Moses is terrified by what he sees and objects to this mysterious man continuingly. In fact, in Sūrah al-Kahf verses 60-82 contain some messages about how to care for evil. This passage teaches the Prophet and the believers that everything which happened to a person relates to God's plan. The knowledge and perception of man relating to events, especially which is a bizarre one to him, is very restricted. According to this passage, he perceives the events in the short-term not long-term, thus, the nature of action is not explicit for man.[46] This idea is stated explicitly in some passages of the Qur'an.

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[46]   Damian-Ghetu-Joan Dura-Astărăstoae, "The Quranic Instrumentalization of Suffering", 248.

"Fighting is ordained for you, even though it be hateful to you; but it may well be that you hate a thing the while it is good for you, and it may well be that you love a thing the while it is bad for you: and God knows, whereas you do not know" (al-Baqara 2/216) Therefore, he must be patient and endurant against such evil and suffering. The Qur'an criticizes those who do not show patience. *"For [it often happens that] when We bestow Our blessings upon man, he turns away and arrogantly keeps aloof [from any thought of Us]; and when evil fortune touches him, "he abandons all hope"* (17:83). *"Whenever misfortune touches him, he is filled with self-pity"* (al-Maᶜārij 70/20). *"Man never tires of asking for the good [things of life]; and if evil fortune touches him, he abandons all hope, giving himself up to despair"* (Fuṣṣilat 41/49).

The Qur'an wants to console suffered and oppressed believers through parables. These parables teach the suffered believers to show some behaviors that God is consent. In addition, it demonstrates to believers that the previous faithful also suffered, but they did not give way to despair. The Qur'an wants believers to asylum to the Lord of worlds, God, in difficult times, explaining the source of evils. *"SAY: I seek refuge with the Sustainer of the rising dawn, from the evil of aught that He has created, and from the evil of the black darkness whenever it descends, and from the evil of all human beings bent on occult endeavors, and from the evil of the envious when he envies"* al-Falaq (113/1-5). *"SAY: I seek refuge with the Sustainer of men, the Sovereign of men, the God of men, from the evil of the whispering, elusive tempter who whispers in the hearts of men from all [temptation to evil by] invisible forces as well as men"* (al-Nās 114/ 1-6).

There are in the al-Falaq and al-Nās, some hints which are mentioned the source of some evil. The Qur'an attributes evils to both intelligent and non-intelligent beings in these sūras. Moreover, It wants them to shelter to God when they faced with evils. In these two sūras, the Qur'an introduces God as the Lord (Rab) and King (Malīk) and Divinity (Ilāh) of people. Here, the emphasis is both on the omnipotence and mercy of God. In addition to this, some values to be taken here are pointed out such as patience and compliance.

Finally, before concluding this article, dimensions of evil and suffering will be analyzed hereafter. One of the central subjects in the Qur'an is the Resurrection and Hereafter. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes that the punishment for the evils will

be seen in the hereafter. According to the Qur'an, all transgressions, which are described as evil in some verses will surely be punished. Nonetheless, these punishments are given either in this world or in the next world. *"It may not accord with your wishful thinking-nor with the wishful thinking of the followers of earlier revelation - [that] he who does evil shall be requited for it, and shall find none to protect him from God, and none to bring him succor"* (al-Nisāʾ 4/123). *"And so, he who shall have done an atom's weight of good, shall behold it; and he who shall have done an atom's weight of evil, shall behold it"* (al-Zilzāl 99/7-8). *"Verily, as for those who like [to hear] foul slander spread against [any of] those who have attained to faith - grievous suffering awaits them in this world and in the life to come: for God knows [the full truth], whereas you know [it] not"* (al-Nūr 24/19). The day of judgment which is stated as the main belief theme in the Qur'an is the "safe port" for the believer to protect their faith. In the faith of believers, this world is the world of suffering, for this reason, evil and suffering to which is subjected are instruments for their salvation in the hereafter.

According to the Qur'an, punishment may be given in this world by God. In the many passages of the Qur'an, it has been stated that previous nations have perished because they transgressed against God. These people who oppose the messengers which were sent by God have been cursed and destroyed and the Qur'an clearly and repeatedly states these annihilations. *"How many a generations have We destroyed before their time (for this very sin]! And [how] they called [unto Us] when it was too late to escape"* (Ṣād 38/3). *"Oh, regrets that [most] human beings will have to bear! Never has an apostle come to them without their deriding him!"* (Yā Sīn 36/31) *"Are they not aware of how many a generation We have destroyed before their time, [and] that those [that have perished] will never return to them, and [that] all of them, all together, will [in the end] before Us be arraigned?"* (Yā Sīn 36/30-33) *"Oh, the laying-bare of the truth! How awesome that laying-bare of the truth! And what could make thee conceive what that laying-bare of the truth will be? The lie gave [the tribes of] Thamūd and 'Ad to [all tidings of] that sudden calamity! Now as for the Thamud-they were destroyed by a violent upheaval [of the earth]; and as for the 'Ad-they were destroyed by a storm wind furiously raging, which He willed against them for seven nights and eight days without ceasing, so that in the end thou couldst*

see those people laid low [in death], as though they were so many [uprooted] trunks of hollow palm trees: and dost thou now see any remnant of them?" (al-Ḥāqqa 69/1-8)

Conclusion

This study has attempted to introduce the Qur'anic and systematic aspects of theodicy. When the Qur'anic verses related to the problem were analyzed, it has been seen that this issue is not discussed in the Qur'an as philosophers or theologians discuss it. The Qur'an discusses the problem of evil self-confidently as do in the other matters. Firstly, Qur'anic effort is not justifying to deeds of God as seen in the analyses of the thinkers, since the Qur'an does not need this. The language of the Qur'an is theocentric. For this reason, the Qur'an deals with evil in this way, as it does in other subjects. There is a kind of apology in the philosophical or theological defense against the problem of evil. The language of the Qur'an is not this way. Rather, when you read it, you will see that God who is very powerful, dominates everything, and does not give an account to anyone, is speaking. It deals with the problem with its own style and explains it in the required quantity. When the Qur'an deals with an issue, it always emphasizes the wisdom and power of God, and sometimes, it does not give a clear explanation and states that people are limited and cannot understand everything, as in this verse: *"And they will ask thee about [the nature of] divine inspiration. Say: "This inspiration [comes] at my Sustainer's behest; and [you cannot understand its nature, O men, since] you have been granted very little of [real] knowledge."* (al-Isrāʾ 17/85)

Secondly, the Qur'an does not ignore the existence of suffering and hardship, instead accepts it and identifies everything, including evil and suffering as entities under command of God. Nonetheless, those who believe in the Qur'an as a Divine word revealed to the Prophet do not accuse of God because of the suffering and hardship created by God. The Qur'an always points out that any believer who is subjected to some hardship and suffering should show patience and trust in God. Suffering and hardship that occurred in the world have some reasons as mentioned by the Qur'an. These reasons can be summarized as follows.

a) God wants that believers are tested by difficulty and hardship. That's why God creates suffering and evil which some people are subjected to it.

b) By doing so, He reveals those who are more sincere in faith and acts.

c) According to the Qur'an, God wants to introduce people virtues that are praised such as perseverance and trust in God. In this way, one can bear with those who are around him

d) The Qur'an demonstrates that everything which surrounds our world is the command of God. *"For, with Him are the keys to the things that are beyond the reach of a created being's perception: none knows them but He. And He knows all that is on land and in the sea; and not a leaf falls but He knows it, and neither is there a grain in the earth's deep darkness, nor anything: living or dead, but is recorded in [His] clear decree."* (al-Anᶜām 6/59)

e) It should not be forgotten that the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet who is subjected to the suffering and torture of unbelievers. Accordingly, Qur'anic verses related to suffering were revealed in order to console the Prophet and his companions.

When one compares systematic theodicy with Qur'anic theodicy, one sees that the Qur'an is not concerned with logical arguments for justification. Despite the fact that philosophers and theologians have tried to show, in logical forms, that God has ultimate purposes for human being, Qur'an does not concern about justifying the attitudes of God. While philosophers often abandon the text and bring more rational arguments to the fore, theologians, in addition to considering the text, also reveal the reasoning and the basic dynamics of their sects. In place of this, especially the Qur'an, concentrates on two issues in general. The first of them is emphasizing the omnipotence of God and the latter is teaching human values such as endurance, patience, trust in God and obedience to the authority of God. To teach these and emphasize his omnipotence, God uses various instruments in the Qur'an. The most important of them are parables. These parables are so much told in the Qur'an that they have been used continuously from the first passages of revelation to the last ones. In fact, this way is common in such divine revelation and is more convulsive

in respect to the interlocutor. Because such virtues and beliefs which are supposed to adopt in this manner are important for believers. On the other hand, theodicy, in which philosophers and theologians provide an explanation for the coexistence of good and evil in the world, differs from the Qur'an in many ways. Because the methods of their theodicy, both Christians and Muslim theologians, are much more rationally and sophisticated than that of the Qur'an. For instance, Muslim philosophers, such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā, deal with the problem in the theory of emanation. This can also be considered for early Christian thought, which is heavily intertwined with Hellenistic philosophy.

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