



## Research Paper

# David Griffin's Challenge to Some Traditional Theists in Explaining Natural Evil

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[10.22080/jre.2023.24518.1166](https://doi.org/10.22080/jre.2023.24518.1166)

**Received:**

November 8, 2022

**Accepted:**

January 23, 2023

**Available online:**

March 15, 2023

**Keywords:**

David Griffin, traditional theists, the problem of evil, the world of nature, God's intervention.

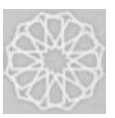
## Abstract

In this article, Griffin's conflict with traditional theists in the explanation of natural evil is discussed. Traditional theists, (Griffin considers theists who believe in the absolute power of God, secondly, believe that the power of beings is the result of God's granting them power, and thirdly, believe in the creation of the world out of nothing) as traditional.) This is how they explain that, first, they are caused by the descent of an angel or demonic power. Secondly, the existence of this villain is an integral part of the natural world with its governing laws. Thirdly, their existence is necessary for the development of moral and spiritual virtues for humans. David Griffin, the philosopher of dynamic religion, although sometimes attributes natural evil to satanic power in a different way, and even considers the evil of this world to be the product of the inherent laws of this world, but his conflict with traditional theists is over the doctrine of God's absolute power, why God has This attribute has not created the world in such a way that there is less pain and suffering in it and intervened in order to achieve this. In other words, why doesn't God exercise his omnipotence in uprooting the terrible evil.

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## Extended abstract

### 1. Introduction

In the philosophy of religion and theology, the problem of evil refers to the incompatibility between God, who has the attributes of absolute power and goodness, and the evil reality that exists in many ways in the universe; it is about why evil is seen in abundance in a world that is in the control of an almighty and purely benevolent God and if God is unable to root out the wicked or he does not want to destroy them. In this study, the arguments of David Griffin, one of the philosophers of contemporary religion, with some philosophers such as Alvin Plantinga, William Hasker, and David Basinger in the explanation of natural evil (evil caused by non-human factors), such as earthquakes, floods, storms, and many deadly diseases and viruses) are discussed.

### 2. Research method

The research method used in this study is the explanation and analysis of Griffin's challenge with some traditional theists.

### 3. Research findings

In the first part of this study's findings, the description of Griffin's point of view against traditional theists (Griffin calls the philosophers who believe in God's absolute power to explain evil, traditionalists) is discussed. Some of them attribute the origin of natural evil to fallen angels. Plantinga claims that there is no evidence to reject the belief that natural evil is caused by the activities of free beings (Plantinga, 1974: 195). Griffin considers this opinion to be the result of naivety; he also accepts the evil, but with the interpretation that he considers it a form of creativity. From another point of view, some traditional theists believe that the possibility of natural evil is part of the natural laws governing the world (Hasker, 2008: 122). In rejecting this view, Griffin points out that Almighty God should have set the laws in such a way

that terrible evil would not result from it (Griffin, 1991: 20). Traditional theists consider the evil that results from natural order as a necessary component of the overall good and the creation of moral virtues in humans. Griffin, on the other hand, believes that some terrible evils not only do not lead to the development of moral virtues but also bring doubts about the existence of God and his benevolence (Griffin, 2002: 220) and God may intervene to prevent this evil. Griffin's point of view in justifying natural evil is that all creatures, both large and small, have an inherent majesty through which they defy God's will and power (Griffin, 1981: 111). The second part of this research's findings criticizes Griffin's view. Griffin considers Plantinga's view of the angels' descent unreasonable. In his answer, it can be said that reasonableness is a relative matter and a theory may be reasonable in the opinion of other people. In response to Griffin's criticism of traditional theists, whose Almighty God should have regulated the natural laws in such a way that no terrible evil would result from it, it must be said that if the rules were different, we would witness a more terrifying evil, and maybe God has a valid reason for prescribing them to which we do not have access with our limited knowledge. Regarding Griffin's accusation that God does not intervene, Hasker believed that repeated intervention negates the purposes of creation (Hasker 2000a: 203). Of course, Griffin does not believe in frequent intervention, but in his opinion, God should have prevented the terrible evil that is not beneficial to mankind. On the other hand, traditional theists consider Griffin's claim to be merely an appeal to people's psychological reactions (Hasker b, 2000:230).

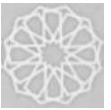
### 4. Conclusion

In justifying the problem of natural evil, traditional theists were more concerned with a kind of logical passage, in the sense



that their concern was to explain the natural condition in such a way that the power of God is not doubted, and they tried to explain the pain and suffering caused by the terrible evil, to which humans respond by believing in God's wisdom and his absolute knowledge. Moreover, traditional theists emphasized the limitations of human knowledge. Although Griffin himself does not believe in God's power as the only possible and absolute power in the world, because he thinks that power in the world is shared and all beings in the world benefit from that power and God cannot take that power either, he uses

a polemical method to debate with traditional theists, that is, he reminds them that the God you believe in, who has the attribute of absolute power, does not use his own power to prevent the terrible and senseless evil of the world, which has no good for mankind. It seems that Griffin is more interested in a kind of psychological transition to the problem of evil because he defers the diagnosis of the horror of evil and the necessity of God's intervention in preventing their occurrence to the normal understanding of human beings and what is going on in the psyche of suffering people.



## Resources

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