

John hick and david hume

Philosophy



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John Hick and David Hume are both concerned about the problem of evil. This problem is made really difficult as if God is powerful, there should be no wrong, but according to David Hume and John Hick, this is wrong.

David Hume is an empiricist, which means that his understanding is formed on sensory experiences. Hume first asks, “Is the world, considered in general, and as it appears to us in this life, different from what a man, or such a limited being, would, beforehand, expect from a very powerful, wise, and benevolent being (Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, 1)?” Basically, Hume is questioning the existence of God.

Hume argues that based on our sensory experiences, we can't know that there is a God that is good and powerful. John Hick's response to the problem of evil is the complete opposite of what Hume argues. He states that if there is a good and powerful God, then he would have created humans in a way that would make them perfect and do no wrong. But because of this, Hick says, “But evil exists; therefore God cannot be both omnipotent and perfectly loving (Philosophy of Religion, 40).”

Some similarities between John Hick and David Hume is that they both agree that there are evils in this world. They both believe that if God is good and powerful, then there would be no evil, that God would have created the world and the people in it as, “perfectly moral persons who could only do good and could not do any evil (Lecture 2, P. 23).”

Differences between Hick and Hume is that Hick believes that there is so much evil in this world is because of one's own freedom given to us by God, whereas, Hume argues that it has to do with how God created the world.

Hick says that, “ If there is an all powerful and all good God, He would have created each and every person as perfectly moral persons who could only do good and could not do any evil (Lecture 2, P. 23).” Hume states that if God was good and powerful, than the world wouldn't be poorly designed, that the world would have been built perfectly without evil.

Strengths about David Hume's argument is his first circumstance, that he believes that we are driven by pain and pleasure. Hume states that, “ However, there is pain in this world, and it is many times used to motivate us to act (Lecture 1, P. 6).” If God designed the world where there was only pleasure and if he created it with no pain, there would be nothing to motivate us. Weaknesses of Hume's argument is his third circumstance, that we are given limited abilities. In the reading, Hume states that, “ An indulgent parent would have bestowed a large stock, in order to guard against accidents and secure the happiness and welfare of the creature in the most unfortunate concurrence of circumstances (Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, 3).” You don't need all these abilities in order to be happy.

There are circumstances where people have very little, and are still able to be happy and appreciate what they have. Strengths about John Hick's argument is the idea of moral evil. Everyone is capable of doing evil and in his argument, he states that God would have created all persons with no evil if He were good and powerful. This is a very strong argument in persuading others that God is not good and powerful. Weaknesses of Hick's argument would be the idea of natural evil. Natural occurrences, such as tornadoes and hurricane has nothing to do with God, it has something to do with nature. I

believe that some things are just out of God's control, that there is a science to how all of this occurs.

I don't believe either have a stronger argument against the other. I believe this because I believe that if there is a God then there has to be a devil. Shouldn't John Hick and David Hume be blaming the evil things that happen in this world on the devil instead of saying God isn't good and powerful? Maybe God did create a perfect world, it is just the devil that is standing in his way of keeping it a perfect world.

Some may say Adam and Eve are to blame for this, that God made them imperfectly, that if they didn't eat the forbidden fruit then the world would just be pleasure with no pain. But what if they were influenced by the devil? Some may say that the serpent in the Garden of Eden was a representation or symbol of our own innate evil and the temptation of making bad decisions can be nature.

According to the Bible, it states that the devil is the serpent. In the book of Revelation, it states, " He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years (Revelation 20: 2)." So when you think about that, the devil is who should be blamed for making the world full of evil, not God. God is trying his hardest to keep this world in order, but the devil interferes with that, making it hard for God to make this world happy and free of evil.

In conclusion, we can't be sure if there is a good and powerful God. What we can be sure of is that the world is imperfect and that there are many problems with it. Maybe God has a reason for this evil that's happening
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today in this world, or maybe there is an evil force (i. e., the devil) forcing humans to act out in an evil way, causing all these natural disasters to happen. We may never be certain whether there is a God or not, and we never may know what is causing all the bad and evil things, but what we can be certain of is that there is evil