CHAPTER
FIRST

INTRODUCTION
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When we see around the world in which we live we have to face storms, earthquakes, floods, drought, famines, deaths, mental suffering, blindness, strifes, murders, robbery etc. in our daily life. What are these? No one can deny that these are the evils, then automatically a question arises, what is evil?

The existence of evil is one of the oldest problems which has caused perplexity to the philosophers through all the ages from the earliest time. The abstract notion of good and evil began to be reflected upon since the time when man began to reflect upon himself. We find the discussion on this problem in the scriptures such as Rigveda, the Bible and the Quran and as well as in the discourses of noted eastern and western philosophers. Even today it is the most burning problem.

This problem is very significant for those who believe that God is Omnipotent, All Good and Creator of all things. The difficulty arises as to how the problem of evil can be reconciled with the omnipotence and goodness of God. As Joice says, "The existence of evil in the world must at all times be the greatest of all problems which the mind..."
encounters when it reflects on God and His relation to the world. If He is indeed all good and all powerful, how has evil any place in the world which He has made? If He is all good why did He allow it to arise, if all powerful, why does He not deliver us from the burden? In order to understand the problem of evil it would be better first to have a clear notion of evil. "The meanings and implications of good and evil are most varied such as 'good person, good action, good carpenter etc'. In all cases, in pronouncing a thing good we are judging its value, and the meaning of 'good' or its opposite in any particular case depends on the point of view from which we judge. It may be a purely quantitative judgement, a judgement of sensuous value or an aesthetic one. The good may mean 'well being' or 'well doing' but 'evil is the opposite of the both'; it means ill of good. As its meaning differs from context to context, it has been defined differently by different thinkers.

In the words of Navile, "Good is what ought to be, and evil is what ought not to be". But this definition is open to two objections. Firstly the term 'ought' does not apply to the irrational objects like field and table. Secondly 'what ought to be' means 'what is right', which is quite different from 'what is good', because right means
'according to rules', compelling or prescribing power of that ideal while 'good' means 'valuable' for some end and implies its attractive power of the ideal.

To Sidgwick "the good in all its sense is the desirable, and evil is the undesirable. But here desirable does not necessarily imply pleasurable.

Patrick holds that 'as higher and higher levels of good are successively realized, the lower levels become evil'. The significance is that there is no uniform standard among men as to what is evil -- what is one place esteemed as virtue, in another place it is held to be vice, what some men approve most highly, other cannot find words to express their adherence.

So far the reality of evil is concerned there are two contrary views namely pessimistic and optimistic. For the pessimists the "World is full of misery". Evil is found everywhere in one form or the other. To lay emphasis on the misery of life a pessimist says:-

"Life which ye prize is long drawn agony". Thus for pessimists the very existence is an evil. They say, "No world would be better".
They believe that God is not good, or what comes to the same thing that the goodness of God is something essentially different from what we in every other case understand by goodness. Therefore existence is evil and the root of all evil is the desire for existence. It is also accepted by Buddhists. They maintain that final good is one never to be desired, never to be enjoyed, never to be consciously attained. In view of Schopenhauer "will is the innermost essence of everything and of the totality of things. This will is blind, stupid and groping. He believes that world is so bad that non-existence would be preferable".

On the other hand optimists hold that evil does not exist and even if it exists to some extent, it is promptly solved, conquered and it is good in other extend. They believe that:

good shall fall,  
At last far off, at last to all  
And every winter change to spring".

The characteristic formula of all such theories is "Partial evil is universal good". As Bolingbroke says, "Whatever is, is right, i.e. there is really no evil. Suffering is to be borne with content because the evil suffered is serving a great universal end. Nature is not to be rebuked for enforcing her laws at the expense of an individual. Therefore
nature of evil exists not in the universe.

It may be said that evil appears only in particulars and that when we take a comprehensive view of the great whole it disappears; the world is indeed harmonious as a whole.

According to Stoics "Evil is the necessary condition, the correlate without which good is not conceivable. No evil, no good. In other words, they believe that evil is merely negative or privative conception meaning only the absence of good.

Pessimism and optimism, are not merely estimates of the extent to which evil exists; these are theories of origin, significance and final issue of evil. One who can adopt the pessimist estimate of the extent of evil may yet be an optimistic as holding that good is final goal of ill.

There are quite a number of adequate solutions of the problem of evil and some of these have been adopted by various thinkers, for example, some philosophers denied God's omnipotency and severely restricted its meaning. For some thinkers, 'Evil is an illusion'. According to them
the whole world of temporal and changing thing is nothing other than illusion and that what we call evil belongs only to this world, therefore evil is not really evil. They further argue that it is due to our necessarily limited and short sighted point of view as a finite being, our inability to see things as they really are from the standpoint of eternity; 'Evil is the delusion of mind'. Spinoza calls it "as darkness in us". But according to some, "Evil is an illusion. It is also inconsistent thinking because this illusion is itself an evil. Secondly if evil or pain is due to our mind - since apart from mind it would not exist then to say that all suffering is a delusion of man's mind would be to make the existence of that mind the worst of evils. Thirdly if one of the fundamental elements of human experience is an illusion, this fact is itself an evil.

According to some "Evil is necessary as a counter part to good" or "good cannot exist without evil". To them evil is not an unfortunate blot which the finished picture cannot help having; the blot is essential to its beauty; the artist deliberately put it, there it is an element contributing to the perfection of the whole, like a black cloud in one of contable's picture. In the eternal things pain and sin are nothing to worry. But it limits
the omnipotence of God that God cannot create good without simultaneously creating evil. It may be said that omnipotence has never meant the power to do what is logically impossible, and on the present view the existence of good without evil would be logical impossibility. But this is also true that logic itself is created or laid down by God. Secondly this solution denies that evil is opposed to good in our original sense if good and evil are counterparts, a good thing will not "eliminate evil as far as it can. This doctrine implies that God not only permits evil, but that He deliberately creates it; He purposely does evil that good may come. The argument that the end justifies the means is as morally unjustifiable for God as for men. "The universe is better with some evil in it than it could be if there were no evil".

According to some, evil may contribute to the goodness of a whole in which it is found, so that the universe as a whole is better as it is, with some evil in it, than it would be if there were no evil. The best possible organisation of the universe will not be static but progressive, that the gradual overcoming of evil by good is really a finer thing than would be the eternal unchallenged supremacy of good. It defends God's goodness and omnipotence on the ground that this is the best of all logically possible worlds, because it includes the important second order
goods and yet it admits that real evils, namely first
order evil, exist. Good does not tend to eliminate evil in
general. First order good (e.g. happiness) contrasts with
first order evil (e.g. misery), these two are opposed in
a fairly mechanical way; some second order goods (e.g.
benevolence) try to maximise first order good and minimise
first order evil; but God's goodness is not this, it is
rather the will to maximise second order good. We might,
therefore call God's goodness an example of a third order
* goodness, or good.

There might, however, be several objections to this
solution. As, some might argue that such qualities as
benevolence have a merely derivative value, that they are
not higher sorts of good, but merely means to good. Second-
ly it follows from this solution that God is not in our
sense benevolent or sympathetic; He is not concerned to
minimise evil, but only to promote good; and this might
be a disturbing conclusion for some theists. Thirdly the
analysis shows clearly the possibility of the existence
of a second order evil, an evil contrasting with good, as
evil contrasts with evil. This would include malevolence,
cruelty, callousness, cowardice, and states in which good
is decreasing and evil increasing.
"Evil is due to human free will". Evil is due to the independence of the actions of human being it is not to be ascribed to God at all. It is supposed to have been endowed by God with freedom of the will. God gave men freewill, although it would lead to some important evils, it must be argued that it is better on the whole that men should act freely, and sometimes err, than that they should be innocent automata, acting rightly in a wholly determined way.

But to some 'if God has made men such that in their free choices they sometimes prefer what is good and sometimes what is evil, why could He not have made men such that they always freely choose the good? There was open to him the obviously better possibility of making beings who would act freely but always go right. His failure to avail himself of this possibility is inconsistent with His being both omnipotent and wholly good. But to some wrong choices is logically necessary for freedom'.

There are, in fact, many so-called solutions which purport to remove the contradiction without abandoning any of its constituents propositions. These must be fallacious, but it is not so easy to see in each case precisely where the fallacy lies. These fallacious solution often turn upon some equivocation with the words
'good' and 'evil', or upon some vagueness about the way in which good and evil are opposed to one another, or about how much is meant by 'Omnipotence'.

Thus evil is a problem for the theist in that a contradiction is involved in the fact of evil on the one hand, and the belief in the omnipotence and perfection of God on the other. God cannot be both all powerful and perfectly good if evil is real.

Evil may be classified into various categories. For convenience it may be broadly divided into two:

(1) "Evil which befalls us and which we suffer and endure"
(2) Evil which we do

These two broad categories may be further sub-divided into four classes:

(1) Natural Evil
(2) Physical Evil
(3) Metaphysical Evil
(4) Moral Evil

(1) **NATURAL EVIL**

Natural evil is the evil or pain inflicted upon humanity through particular arrangement of natural elements or forces in accordance with their sin as storm, famine,
flood and earthquake etc and evil with which so many are
born, the various physical deformities and defects such as
blindness, deafness and dumbness etc. Most of these evils
contribute towards increasing human pain and suffering,
but not all physical evils are reducible simply to pain.
The natural evil creates not only one problem but a number
of distinct problems. According to Joice "the actual
amount of suffering which the human race endures is immense.
Disease has a store of torments for the body; and disease
and death are the lot to which we must all look forward.
At all times, too great numbers of the race are pinched by
want. In short the problem is not one that results from
looking at only one aspect of the universe. It may be the
case that over all pleasures predominate the pain and that
physical good, in general, predominates over physical evil.

(2) PHYSICAL EVIL

'Physical evil means all the sufferings, a man may
have to endure with bodily and mental, nervous and sympa­
thetic, alike as a distinct individual and social unit,
alike as a natural being-fleshy and mortal and as a human
being, sharing in the special history of people and in the
collective fortune and immortality of the race'.

No doubt the animals too have sufferings and pain and
sustain injury due to natural evil and in case of human
being the possible explanation for that may be moral evil but it cannot be applied to animals. The Augustinian Christian Theodicy tries to justify the animals suffering on the basis of fall of Adam. They say that fall of Satan perverted the entire evolutionary process to a savage struggle for existence. According to eastern theodicy animal suffering is explained on the basis of doctrine of re-birth, re-incarnation of soul. A re-born in animal is due to his evil actions.

(3) METAPHYSICAL EVIL

The finitude, contingency and hence imperfection of all created things have been called by some thinkers as metaphysical evil. "Metaphysical evil (the fact that we are finite) is not evil at all. 'To be finite is unsatisfactory, says Royce but it is scarcely a thing to complain about, if we actually find, the finitude is capable of indefinite expansion, and if, we have ground for hoping, this is destined to be immortal. When knowledge can not be extended, when possibilities of discovery and invention have been exhausted, it may be time to find our finitude an evil. When our world is conquered, we may weep".

This is the evil which is inflicted upon beings by God as a punishment of their sins which are committed on
account of imperfect, inherent nature through natural agencies or physical element.

(4) M O R A L E V I L

Moral evil is purely the outcome of the human actions, particularly of his voluntary actions. Moral evil is simply immorality, Evil such as selfishness, envy, greed, deceit, cruelty, callousness, cowardice and the larger scale evils such as wars and the atrocities they involve. It may also be called sin, therefore, its problem is nothing other than that of sin. This is what is most perplexing, persistent and difficult to overcome. And this is what has found greatest treatment by the philosophers, theologians and saints and this is what creates a dilemma between man's free will and God's goodness and Omnipotence. There is a room for moral evil only where there is freedom of will because acts done under compulsion have nothing to do with morality. One who does good deeds is said to be morally good and one who commits evil ones is stamped as morally evil provided he enjoys the freedom of will.

"We may hold that it was God's purpose to have in man not merely an intelligent fellow-worker, but a moral being who should be partly the architect of his own character and worth", therefore, a man is better who may do evil
than a man who cannot do evil. The possibility of evil is always possible for a moral being. Further we may say that the possibility of evil is necessary for a moral being. Further we may find that God wills not merely the possibility, but the actuality of evil. Because the actuality of evil is the only ground we can see on which there arises any need or a possibility for the manifestation and development of some human virtues, and the revelation of some Divine excellence, which we regard as among the best.

Similarly for the theists "moral evil must be interpreted as a breach of God's law and as a rejection of God himself. It may involve the eternal damnation of the sinner, and in many of its forms it involves the infliction of suffering on other persons. Thus it aggravates the problem of physical evil, but its own peculiar character consists in the fact of sin. How could a morally perfect, all powerful God create a universe in which occur such moral evils as cruelty, cowardice and hatred, the more especially as these evils constitute a rejection of God Himself by His creations and as such involve them in eternal damnation.

Now it is clear that evils are of different kinds and raise different questions and of all kinds two questions may be asked, "what is the terminus a quo and what is the
The problem of evil exists in most acute perplexing form for those holding a theistic view. Just in proportion as God is held to be omnipotent, all wise, all loving, the blessed and the only potentate, the creator, the Disposer of events and so on, the existence of evil becomes an ever deeper mystery. It is meaningless to criticize and protest against the scheme of things as we find it, if there is no one responsible for it, who, we can conceive rightly or wrongly, might or should have made it other than it is. According to Job, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him and fill my mouth with arguments, I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me".

Thus all the problems of evil merge into one - the problem of Theodicy: Si Deus bonus est unde Malum.

After discussing the kinds of evil, now we present the various approaches to the problem of evil.

GREEK APPROACH

Greek approach may be divided into many phases such
as (i) Pre-Platonic (ii) Platonic (iii) Aristotelian (iv) Stoic and (v) Greco-religious approach.

Pre-Platonic approach is an optimistic one. To them there was no evil as a whole we see the things according to them, individually good and evil. But God sees harmony and in harmony there is no evil rather than it is another good because it is part of the harmony. This was the theistic point of view but Atomists argued that "goal of life is happiness and it was an inner condition or state of tranquillity which depends upon harmony of the soul, a balance of life, an attitude which combines reflection and reason". As Democritus says, "Goodness was not only a matter of action but depended upon man's inner desire". The good man is one who does good but one who wants to do good at all times such goodness brings happiness.

On the other hand according to sophists the evil does not exist in itself but everything in itself is indifferent. Its goodness or evil depends on man. To them goodness does not lie in harmony but it depends purely on individual thinking of man as Protogoras says: "Man is the measure of all things". Therefore in Pre-Platonic approach each man had his own code of good and evil. To them morality was as mere conventional habit. That actually there was no moral law, no all-inclusive principles of right and wrong. The result of this position was moral anarchy and pure individualism.
(ii) In Platonic approach this problem is tackled in a different way. According to Plato the world of sense is unreal, fleeting, changing. This is evil. It is not illusionary but it exists in a form of sensual world. This sensual world is lower than the ideal world which is unchangeable and which can be known through reason. "Reason therefore, is the highest good for man". On the other hand through senses one can know only this physical world, which is a shadow of reality. According to Plato happiness and goodness go together and this happiness can be attained only in good life and good life is possible only when reason rules the lower will and appetites because if one indulges in these lower appetites, he turns away from highest good and it is evil. This evil can be overcome by surpassing lower desires and appetites. Goodness comes because one has met evil and overcome it, and thus he has made a real choice and has chosen well. Therefore, man is not determined in the universe, but is able to choose and is free to determine his own fate. This approach is followed by christian scholastics or medieval thinkers, specially by St. Augustine, a great scholastic thinker and precursor of medieval period.

(iii) The another important approach is Aristotelian approach. Though Aristotle was influenced by Plato but his trend was rational and practical. Reason or true knowledge in his opinion is good but it is treated only as good and
not as the highest good but the "self realization is the highest good". Man has not only reason but he has feeling, desire and instincts also, and when all these factors are realized in perfect harmony, it is the highest good. The aim of everything in the universe is to realize itself to the fullest sense. Each thing is different from all others. It has certain talents and abilities and when these talents and abilities are realized in a fullest sense it is good. Therefore self realization is the highest good and this self realization is the complete realization of reason and this realization brings happiness. To Aristotle actions conducive to the attainment of this good or end are good and right. And the actions opposed to the attainment of this true good are wrong (evil). Man is free to strive for that which is in him. The ultimate choice is with man. Aristotle says, "Virtue as well as evil lie in our power; we are free to do that which is good or to do that which is evil. There is no power in the universe which can force anything on us. In other words, virtue is a disposition or habit involving deliberate purpose or choice. The good man, he held, was one who made the right choice and through the force of his will realized the best. The bad man was one who made the wrong choice." The Aristotelian approach was an intellectual one and we find the echo of this intellectual approach in the teachings of Thomas Aquinas in medieval period.
(iv) After Platonic and Aristotelian approach we come to stoic approach which is midway between early Greeks and later Greeks.

According to them man's highest good lies in acting in harmony with the universe. Man is a part of universe, with a definite function to perform for the complete development of the whole universe. As the ruling power in the universe is reason, so reason should rule each man in individual action. To them "man's will is determined" and "Everything in the universe has its beginning and source in the will of God. God is the ruler and determiner. Everything which has evolved has been the result of God's purpose," therefore, evil can not be conceived without good. In short this approach seems to be optimistic and though they were purely determinists but when they come to the problem of good and evil, "they abandon the complete determinism of their metaphysics. A man, in their opinion, may give himself to his passions and become their slave or he may escape from his passions and, rise to a moral life. Thus he conquers his passions and becomes free. A true freedom lies in following reason and realizing supreme good." The Stoic conceived "goodness as a harmony within the universe and evil as an imaginary."
(v) After Plato and Aristotle men were turning towards religion and seeking comfort in it. They were confused and lost among the many conflicting theories of evil which had been developed in the past. The time was ripe then for merging the many religious doctrines or beliefs with one or more of the Greek philosophies which had come down to that day. With the rise of the religious movement in philosophy a sharp distinction was made between the principles of good and evil, light and darkness, life and death. In many instances they conceived special God ruling over each realm, as Manichains maintained a dualistic theory. According to them, there are two ultimate principles, that of light, and an evil principle that of darkness. They are eternal and their strive is eternal and this world is the result of the mutual conflict of these two principles. In man the soul composed of light is the work of good principle while the body composed of grosser matter is the work of evil principle. Thus the soul or spiritual being is good and body or material thing is evil. On the other hand in Neo-Platonic approach this dualistic problem is tackled monistically. They agree that in man there are two different realities, spiritual and material and consequently when the soul is incorporated in the body, it suffers a fall from Divine perfection and becomes predisposed to evil. "The goal of man is freedom from body and all its sins and return to God and perfect Goodness." To them
This is possible because soul is a part of the Divine or the world soul and possesses pure intelligence. "It can turn away from God towards body and from the body towards God and regain its freedom. Thus for Neo-Platonists, God, the source of everything in the universe, is absolutely good, perfect bliss and cannot be the cause of evil."

Therefore, they presented the theory of Emanation. According to this theory "out of a pure God flow beings, as a stream might flow from an inexhaustible source. And at the far extreme is darkness or matter." Thus matter does not exist in itself or positively but it is merely a privation of good. The evil, therefore, is nothing other than "Privation of good".

After Greco-religious approach we come to Christian approach. Christian approach may be divided into two, (i) early Christians and (ii) the later Christians.

VI. The early Christian thinkers had to face the dilemma as to how the existence of evil might be reconciled with absolute good, perfect and all powerful God. They followed Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian approach. Early Christian thinkers such as St. Augustine and Anselm were the followers of Plotinus and Neo-Platonists, while St. Aquinas was the follower of Aristotle.
According to them God is eternal, unchanging and good and He is the first cause of everything in the universe. He is the creator of the universe. He is an abiding principle in all changes, the eternal pattern which never changes. He is the unity of all forms and all ideas. The world is created through Divine Emanation and everything in the world so far as it is a part of God, strives to be more like God to return to Him. But matter holds them back and its turning from God is evil. As Apologists says that God created man good but he turned from God to the flesh, the body. By this, sin came into the world. And he turned towards flesh on account of his freedom of will.

According to them God created man with free will, when he goes towards God through his will it is good and when he turns it away from God it becomes evil. While Augustine says, "Man should turn his back on the pleasures of this world which are thin and pale and direct his attention wholly to God who is perfect goodness".

But Augustine denied the individual freedom. For him mankind was free in Adam, but since Adam chose to sin he lost freedom not only for himself but for all mankind. Now no one is free, but all are bound to sin, are slaves of evil. Thus in his thought man is free and determined at a time. To him Adam’s sin became hereditary, with the result
that the future of every man is completely determined. But it does not mean that evil is created by God because God created first man with free will and the first man himself chose sin and by the act of first man, his future is sealed and this turning away from God is evil. Thus evil is privation of the right order in the man's will. Now it is the grace of God due to which a man can get rid of evil and attain goodness and salvation. Then evil is only a lack of good. He explains the problem with a simile, i.e. everything in the universe is good, even that which appears to be evil to us, is actually good in that it fits into the whole pattern of the universe as shadow or darkspot is necessary for the beauty of a painting.

Evil, to him, is a relative term. Where there is good, there is a possibility of evil. If there is evil, good is must because evil is good in itself.

This general idea was carried over into the period of Christian thought known as Scholasticism, from the ninth to the thirteenth century. By this time Christian Church dominated everything - the State, man's lives, education and thought. The thinkers had to confine their thinking to the belief which the Church accepted. Thus, all thinking was limited to church doctrines. In most cases men attempted to show that the beliefs of the church were true, reasonable.
The position of Augustine is also held very largely by the philosophers of Scholasticism. Believing in all-good God who created everything, they had to explain apparent evil as actually a part of the good as a whole and thus actually good. According to Abelard "the rightness or wrongness of an act does not lie in the act itself but in the intention of the actor. And God considers not what is done, but in what spirit it is done; and the merit or praise of the agent lies not in the deed, but in the intention". The truly sinful man is one who acts with a desire to do wrong.

This scholastic movement, with its problems and difficulties, reaches its climax in Thomas Aquinas. Thomas Aquinas tried to show that the universe as a revelation of God is rational. In his theory of good and evil we find the philosophy of Aristotle joined with the basic principles of Christianity. God made everything, including man, for a purpose, and the highest good of all things is the realization of this purpose. As one realizes the purpose for which he was created, he reveals God's goodness. Therefore, "the highest good is the realization of oneself as God has ordained".

Similarly the highest form of action is the contemplation of God. This may be done through reason and faith.
Further, he says, "the goodness or badness of a particular action depends upon the aim or purpose of the actor. Intention will not make a bad act good, but it is the Divine purpose that will make a good act truly good". Evil to him, is the privation, a lack of the good. All things created by good God, aim at goodness. When they fail, evil results.

In short Christian scholastic thinkers emphasized the great gulf between God and all that is less than God. Goodness is created by God and is to be found in adjustment to God's plan or purpose. Evil is in some way, attached to matter, the body, or the world. But God being the sole Creator of the Universe, would not create evil. Therefore, evil must not actually be evil, but must be part of the great good. They were confronted with the fact of human degradation. Consequently "they had to tie this up with the body, the sinful will of man which was in some way inherited from Adam, or the perversity of matter".

**Muslim Approach:** After Christian approach we now come to Muslim approach. Muslims believe that "God is a living, self-subsisting, eternal, and absolutely free creative reality which is One, all powerful, all knowing, all beauty, most just, most loving and all good. It is He, the creator, who began the process of creation. There is nothing to oppose
His will. He is creator, evolver and restorer of all forms.
he is also the cherisher, sustainer, protector, helper guide
and reliever of distress and suffering. God is all knowing
and He is the best judge".

In short "God is all good, free from all evil, He is
also the source of all good. The Quran lays a great stress
on the beauty of action. It exhorts mankind to do the deeds
of high value. Man is the best of creation for God has
created him in the most beautiful form, he is born with
the Divine spirit breathed into him; he is made in the image
of God."

Human perfection consists in the fullest achievement
and assimilation of Divine attributes, for God desires no-
thing, but the realization of His light, the realization of
His attributes in man. God has given man the will to choose,
decide, and resolve to do good or evil, he has endowed him
with reason. Whatever evil comes from him or to him is
from his own soul. His plan envisages man's free use of the
Divine attribute of power or freedom to choose and take all
judicious and precautionary measures to suit different situ­
at ions. In the providential scheme man's role is not that
of a blind, deaf, dumb and driven herd of goats, so even
his free choice of evil is a part of scheme of things and
no one will choose a way unto God, unless it fits into that
scheme or is willed by God. He is given the power to distinguish between good and evil and, therefore, he alone is responsible for what he does. He is endowed with freedom of action, but his freedom is limited by the free causality of God. His responsibility is proportionate to his powers; he has been shown the path of righteousness and it is up to him to accept the path of good or evil.

Being created after the pattern of God's nature man is capable of developing from one stage to the next higher stage. But this development involves struggle against the immoral forces of the external world which he is able to meet successfully with the co-operation and help of God.

To realize the moral law in his individual and social life, man has often to struggle against evil forces represented in the person of Satan. But it is within his power to resist and overcome them. Though man is always prone to weakness and susceptible to seduction by the forces of evil, yet his weakness is rectifiable under the guidance of revelation, and such men as follow the law of righteousness shall be immune from these lapses.

"The Quran refers to several static tendencies in man such as pride and a conceit in times of prosperity, and false sense of self-sufficiency". These tendencies
often lead to different form of wrong-doing and, therefore, must be counteracted by all right-thinking people.

This is the main spirit of Muslim approach. But the problem of criterion of good and evil follows as a corollary to the problem of reason and revelation, and on this basis there are two main approaches, viz. (i) Mutazilite approach and (ii) Asharite approach.

Mutazilite Approach:

Mutazilite approach is purely a rationalistic approach. The Mutazilites believe that the reason is more fundamental than revelation. It is to be preferred to revelation. Revelation merely confirms what is accepted by reason and, if there be a conflict between the two, reason is to be preferred. They held that reason, and not revelation, is the criterion or standard of moral judgement, i.e. of the goodness and badness of an action. The truth and moral value of things and human actions must be determined by reason because the moral qualities of good and evil are objective; these are inherent in the very nature of things or actions and as such can be known by reason. They maintained that human reason is competent to know the verities of the universe and is completely free to go searching after the Truth. They interpret good and evil into three senses:
(i) Gain and Loss: A thing in which there is gain, that is good and the thing which brings loss, is evil.

(ii) Merit and Defect: A thing of merit is good but a thing having defect is evil.

(iii) Reward and Punishment: A thing which is rewardable is good and a thing which is punishable is evil.

Reason is the absolute judge in all the three senses in judging as to what is good and what is evil. Through reason one knows that thankfulness, truthfulness and the like are right (hasan) and ingratitude, falsehood etc. are wrong (qabih) Shara simply confirms what is already pronounced by reason. They believe that things and acts are good in themselves and their goodness or rightness (husn) may be known by reason. This assertion implies that the meaning of the good or evil is completely rational. In short to them reason is the source of moral obligation. It not only informs what is good, but also commands it. Man is the creator of his volitional acts. He creates some acts by way of perception and cognition (mubasharah) and some by way of invitation (Taqlid). When man is the author of his own acts, it is necessary for God to reward him for his good deeds and this be justly claimed by him, as Al-Sharastani
The Mutazilites unanimously maintain that man decides upon and creates his acts, both good and evil, that he deserves reward and punishment in the next world for what he does. In this way the Lord is safeguarded from association with any evil or wrong or any act of unbelief or transgression. For if He created the wrong He would be wrong.

They believe that wise can only do what is salutary (al-Salah) and good, and that God's wisdom always keeps in view what is salutary for His servants; therefore He can not be cruel to them. He can not bring into effect evil deeds. He can not renounce that which is salutary. He can not ask His servants to do that which is impossible. Further, "reason also suggests that God does not place a burden on any creature greater than it can bear".

According to them, things are not good or evil because God declares them to be so. Goodness or evil are innate in the essence of things themselves. This very goodness or evil of things is the cause of the commands and prohibitions of the law. As Sharastani says, "beauty and ugliness are qualities belonging intrinsically to what is beautiful and ugly. The human intellect is capable of perceiving the goodness and evil of a few things and no laws are required to express their goodness and evil, e.g. it is
commendable to speak the truth and despicable to commit oneself to untruth. This shows that the evil and goodness of things are obvious and require no proof from the Shariah.

In short they judge all Islamic beliefs by theoretical reason and renounce those that relate to all that lies beyond the reach of reason. They totally ignore the limitations of reason.

**Asharite Approach:**

Asharism is a philosophico-religious school of thought. It laid the foundation of an orthodox Islamic theology or orthodox Kalam, as opposed to the rationalist Kalam of Mutazilites and in opposition to the extreme orthodox class, it made use of the dialectical method for the defence of the authority of Divine revelation as applied to theological subjects.

According to Asharites, God is one, unique, eternal, existent Being. "He possesses attributes such as knowledge, power, life, and will". They believe that God has attributes which inhere eternally in Him and are in addition to His essence. They held that revelation is more fundamental as the source of ultimate truth and reality, and reason should merely confirm what is given by revelation and thus
they prefer revelation to reason. Islam is based on certain fundamental principles or concepts which, being super sensible in nature, are incapable of rational proof. These principles, first, be believed in on the basis of revelation. Revelation, thus, is the real basis of the truth and reality of the basic doctrines of Islam. This faith based on revelation, may be rationalized. Reason must, therefore, be subordinated to revelation. They held that revelation is the real authority or criterion to determine what is good and what is evil. "Goodness and badness of actions (husn wa qubah) are not qualities inhering in them; these are mere accident (a'rad). "Actions-in-themselves are neither good nor bad (evil), Divine law makes them good or bad (evil)".

Good and evil, in their opinion, generally are used in three senses as are seen in the case of Mutazilites, (i) In the sense of perfection and defect respectively. (ii) In the utilitarian sense, meaning gain and loss in worldly matter. (iii) In the third sense of commendable and praiseworthy and punishable in this world and in the next world.

Both the Asharites and the Mutazilites agree that in the first and second senses, mentioned above, reason is the criterion or standard of good and evil. But according to Asharites the third sense must be known through revelation
and not by reason as it was held by Mutazilites. Revelation alone according to Asharites decides whether an action is good or evil. As actions by themselves are neither good nor evil; as there is no quality of good or evil seated in the very nature of an act, therefore there can be no question of knowing it by reason.

On the other hand on the question of free-will of man, to choose and produce actions they took up an intermediate position between the libertarian and fatalistic views. They made a distinction between creation (Khalq) and acquisition (Kasb) of an action. God is the creator (Khalq) of human actions and man is the acquisitor (Muk-tasib). Thus the actions of human beings are created by God, the creatures are not capable of creating any action. There is no creator except God and the actions of man are, therefore, His creations.

To them power is either (1) Original (qadimah) or (ii) derived (Hadithah). The original power alone is effective. Derived power can create nothing and the power which is given to man is derived, therefore, man can not create any thing; he can not initiate work, because God creates in man the power and the ability to perform an act and to make a free choice (Ikhtiyar) between two alternatives, between right and wrong. But this free choice of man is
not effective in producing the action. In making this choice and intending to do the act, acquires (iktisab) either the merit and reward for right choice or demerit and punishment for wrong choice.

Thus, to them there are two causes in voluntary actions: (1) Effect of the real cause, God, (ii) The choice and intention of man, the acquisitor. "God creates in man the power, ability, choice, and will to perform an act, and man, endowed with the derived power, chooses freely one of the alternatives and intends or wills to do the action, and, corresponding to this intention, God creates the actions". It is this intention on the part of man which makes him responsible for his deeds. He cannot take the initiative in any matter, nor can he originate any action. But the completion of the act is partially due to his intention, therefore, man's free choice is an occasion for God's causing the action corresponding to that choice. And this correspondence and harmony between the choice of man and God's creation, according to the Asharites, is not due to a harmony established by God previously, but because of His habit or nature to create the harmony whenever human action is done.

This school of thought believes that God is the only real cause of everything; He alone possesses real and effective power and this is unlimited; His will is absolutely
free - not determined by anything. Whatever power human beings apparently possess, is given by God. Man does not possess any real and effective power, God, being absolutely free in His action, is not bound to act rationally and teleologically, for, otherwise, His actions would be determined by something external to and other than Himself and He would not remain absolutely free. External purpose would put a limit to God's omnipotence. He is not bound to do what is best for His creatures. He does whatever He wills. But as He is an absolutely intelligent and just being, His actions, as a matter of fact, are all full of wisdom.

**Modern Approach:**

Modern philosophy wrestles with the same problem but has introduced many new elements in its attempt either to meet the original difficulty or to put the whole matter on different level. The interpretations of problems were in many instances very different from those of Middle Ages. It became obvious that reason was very different from faith. Consequently, it happened many times that a philosopher was not a theologian.

With the Renaissance man undertook to free himself from the dominance of church and its doctrines. The human mind refused to be tied to the doctrines and beliefs of the church but aspired to search the problem with unblinded eyes.
It is a curious fact that as men undertook this search, they began to discover inexorable laws and mathematical consistencies by which everything in the universe seemed to be controlled. They found the things happening in what appeared to them in mechanical ways. They, therefore, interpreted the entire universe on materialistic basis. Thus good and evil were for them matters in motion. When motion is successful, it generates pleasure, and when it is a failure, pain results. But good and evil are relative to the particular man. That which pleases one man may not please other. Consequently, there can be no absolute criterion for good and evil.

To Spinoza "Everything which helps man to reach the goal of his striving is good. The highest good of man is the complete realization of his striving. But Descartes tried to reconcile the mechanical theories of his time with the ideas of God, soul, and freedom. His solution lies in making a sharp distinction between soul and body. The body is governed by mechanical laws but the soul is free. It wills as an active principle. It is free to will, to love and not to love God. Further he said that "God is perfect and incapable of causing us to error. But man does fall into error and suffer from mistakes. This is explained on the theory that the power which God has given to man to distinguish the true from the false is not complete. Thus, man is often guilty of making judgments and in such cases he may
error lies not in God's action but in ours. Leibnitz tackled the problem in the same manner as Descartes. Man, for him is, composed of a number of monads well organized, so man must be free from external influences. Thus in the universe of monads how is evil possible? He thought that "World is the best possible world, but it is not perfect". God limited Himself when He expressed Himself in finites. These limits results in suffering and sin. But evil serves to make good really good. Man has certain innate principles, which, if followed logically, led to criteria of good and evil.

**Contemporary Approach:**

Recent philosophic thought regarding the problem of good and evil has been concerned with man's social relationship. It has been an ethics of the human group rather than that of Divine laws. Consequently, it has taken on the tinge of relativity. "Goodness and evil become qualities of acts related to the situation in which these are performed. According to Mill "Goods differ in quality and that the goods of the intellect are better than the goods of the senses. To Bentham too, good is the measure of good in term of the "greatest good of the greatest number". But he does not admit that goods differ in quality. His only criterion is the number of individuals affected by the acts done by a man.
Good and evil are determined by social factor. The emphasis is placed upon the consequences of one's act in the experience of others.

The social and individual consequences of actions are also emphasized by philosophers of pragmatic school as the criteria of good and evil. This is called pragmatic approach. According to them "the good is that which serves the ends of the group and the individuals in the group. A good act is one which considers the individual as an end in himself and not as a means. But, by so considering each individual, a pragmatist considers the welfare of the group as a social unit, the ultimate measure of good and evil.

In short, we can observe two fundamental positions. According to some the criteria of good and evil are "thought to be inherent in the nature of the universe". And no one can understand good and evil without understanding the universe and its nature and its creator. To them good and evil are absolute, having been established from the beginning of time, and are applied in all situations and at all times. These criteria are for ever true, never changing, either by reason or revelation.

The other position is that "good and evil are relative terms, and the criteria, are to be discovered by a study of
the particular situation involved. Time and place play a great role in determining the good and evil. This position looks at the consequences of the particular act in terms of the life of society and determines the ethical quality of the act in terms of the good of the whole. Thus these two lines of the thought have been followed throughout the history, that is either good and evil are absolute or relative. But now-a-days the relative attitude is the most pronounced because in the scientific and modern age to find out the absolute standard for good and evil is too difficult. With this gestalt of the problem of evil now we come to the problem of the present study.

In the thesis at hand we propose to present the problem of evil in Christian and Muslim philosophy with special reference to St. Augustine, Imam Ghazali and St. Thomas Aquinas. We have chosen St. Augustine because he is the central figure of Christian thought. St. Augustine was greatly influenced by Platonic and neo-Platonic thought and later on he has deeply impressed the Christian Thought. Even today we find a great imprint of Augustinian thought on Christian philosophy.

Imam Ghazali is the towering personality of Muslim philosophy. On the one hand he examined the main problems raised by his predecessors such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskeweigh and others, and on the other he
deeply influenced the different disciplines of Muslim thought such as pure philosophy, Ethics, philosophy of religion and Sufism. We find the Ghazalian stamp till today. The philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas is the meeting point of both, that of St. Augustine and Imam Ghazali. The problems which were raised by Augustine and Ghazali regarding evil, we find the elaboration and rationalization of these problems in the philosophy Aquinas.

In making the study of these illustrious personalities we have tried our best, to go through their original sources.

In the end I would like to submit that till today no such comparative study has been made on this problem, therefore, it is my humble attempt in this direction which needs a due attention.