

## موقف الفكر الحداثي من مصادر معرفة الإله وصفاته وأفعاله

### The Position Of Modernist Thought On The Sources Of Knowing God His Attributes And The Acts

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#### الملخص

درج الفكر الحداثي إلى تصورات خاصة في مصادر معرفة الله، والتعرف إلى صفاته وأفعاله. فكان أن قال الفكر الحداثي أن لا طريق إلى معرفة الله بالطرق العقلية البتة. بل إن الطريق الوحيد لمعرفة الله هو الصفاء الذي يجده الإنسان في قلبه. ثم شككت في حدود القدرة الإلهية، وقالت بمحدوديتها. ورأت بأن هناك تعارض بين وجود الإله الرحيم والشر الموجود في العالم. فكان هذا البحث ليعرض هذه الأفكار ويعرض الإجابات الإسلامية عليها.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الحداثة- مصادر معرفة الإله- القدرة الإلهية- الشر في العالم.

**Abstract:** Modernist thought tended to special perceptions in the sources of knowing God, and identifying His attributes and actions. It was that the modernist thought said that there is no way to know God through rational methods at all. Rather, the only way to know God is the purity that a person finds in his heart. Then questioned the limits of divine power, and said its limited. Modernist believed that there is a conflict between the existence of a merciful God and the evil that exists in the world. So, This research was to present these ideas and present the Islamic answers to them.

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## **Introductory Remarks On The Notion Of Modernity (Hadatha):**

Research on the notion of modernity involves a great deal of difficulty, and that is because it is a term that resists clear definition. It has likewise been associated with other concepts and connotations, and has been expanded such that any attempt to arrive at a sufficiently exhaustive definition is incredibly difficult. But difficulty does not imply impossibility, as it is possible to come to some definitions that contain its most distinctive features.

### **Modernity: A Lexical Definition**

The term modernity lexically is the opposite of what is ancient or prior, and to exist after not existing. It also implies an occurrence at the current moment, or it can imply a new thing or event that has appeared without precedence.

### **Modernity: A Technical Definition**

Modernity is for man to place himself at the center of everything, as the measure, the master, and the controller. This occurs for man after achieving the utmost certainty in himself and his knowledge, and his determination to deliberate the affairs of the world.

The feature of modernity around which there is some consensus is "to be free from the past and tradition, and to fight it; and to struggle against every ancient and inherited belief or science."<sup>1</sup>

### **The Relationship Between The Terms Modernity And Post-Modernity:**

(Post-modernity, beyond-modernity) - these terms signify philosophical concepts and technical notions that came the modernist movement, as a reaction to an appraisal of modernism such that it fills in the gaps and

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<sup>1</sup> Alnahawi, Adnan Ali Rida, *Takwim nazariat Alhadatha* (Riyadh: Dar Al-Nahawi lil nashr wa altawziaa, 1992) 41.

corrects its errors, while relying on new foundations that are not contained within modernism, such as the notion of "unreason".

Postmodern philosophy has focused on the denial of a single truth, to affirm the multiplicity of truth, and the reliance upon imagination and whim. In this regard, postmodernism represents the sophists of this age, who rely on skeptical modes of argument to deny realities, and reject the notion of a complete reality, and to affirm epistemological relativism and religious pluralism. Postmodernism therefore does not seek final answers as much as it wrought by anxiety of questioning and feverish research.<sup>2</sup>

### **Currents in Modernism**

Modernism is not capture by a single trend or current but represents a multiplicity. Each of these trends has its own unique features. For the purposes of this study, we may distinguish between the following currents:

#### **First: Realist Modernism (Rationalism)**

This group contends "that it is possible to arrive at certain conclusions about metaphysical questions, including matters of religion, and that this may occur through rational inquiry."<sup>3</sup> This type of modernism also holds that religion is a collection of human constructions that appeared in human history as a result of certain intellectual developments. This trend likewise held that divinity was also a notion that evolved historically according to intellectual and social factors; so, this trend has adopted atheism as an epistemic assumption, and it attempted to demonstrate its truth claims through rational argument.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Second: Skeptical Modernism (Sophists)**

This group of modernists doesn't believe it is possible to arrive at certain conclusions regarding metaphysical questions, and this stance derives from two preliminary points:

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<sup>2</sup> The previous source, 38.

<sup>3</sup> Fouda, Saeed, *Maqalat Naqdiy fi alhadathat wal-ilmaniati* (Beirut:Dar Al-Zakhair, 2015), 21.

<sup>4</sup> The previous source, 13.

First: it is not possible to achieve metaphysical knowledge, because it lays beyond the reach of human reason, even if it is true in itself. Secondly: it is not possible to prove metaphysical theses because they do not exist beyond human belief, as each belief derives from some individual or social need.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the previous current, there is a specific type of modernism that is best represented by the philosopher Taha Abderrahmane, a figure with deep understanding of logic and philosophy, and has been quite prolific and effective in his replies to other modernists and undermining many of their basic principles.<sup>6</sup>

However, in his response to Arab modernists, he does not reject modernism as such. Rather, he too calls for a type of modernism, and indeed he describes himself as a modernist; his main criticism rather is that the reality of Arab modernists in their uncritical adoption of western modernism as the core of their movement. Instead, he seeks a modernism that stems from religion, and calls for an Islamic modernism that opposes a modernism that has waged a war against tradition and judges it to be a hurdle to progress and development.<sup>7</sup>

### **1. Modernist Thought on the Sources of Knowing God and a Reply:**

Modernist thought is antithetical to the idea that one can provide rational arguments for the existence of God, and it attempts to show this in a multitude of ways, such as the denial of the argument from design, and by stating that if God is not subject to experiment and observation then he does not exist, and so forth, it remains to discuss what modernist thought has said about the traditional rational arguments for the existence of God.

The denial that there is any rational argument for the existence of God either leads to the denial of God's existence as we have seen earlier, or, it may lead someone to affirm His existence but in alternative ways, as is the case with several modernist authors.

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<sup>5</sup> The previous source, 21.

<sup>6</sup> Abdul Rahman, Taha, *B'us Al-dahrania Al-naqd al-iintimai lifasl al-akhlaq an al-diyn* (Beirut: Al-Shabaka Al-arabiya lil Abharth wa Al-nashir, 2014), 155.

<sup>7</sup> Abdul Rahman, Taha, *Ruh Al-hadatha \_Almadkhal ila T'asis Al-hadatha Al-Islamiati* (Morocco: Al-Markaz Al-Thqafi Al-Arabi, 2006), 16-17.

### **1.1 Religious Experience as Proof of God's Existence:**

The philosopher Taha Abdurrahman holds that there are no incontrovertible arguments for the existence of God, even if the conclusions they produce are true. In other words, the arguments for the existence of God do not produce psychological certainty, and that certainty in God's existence cannot occur unless one engages in Sufi or religious experience.<sup>8</sup>

Abdurrahman holds that theoretical judgments in metaphysics are not demonstrative propositions as is the case in mathematics, for example, and that the philosopher, no matter how hard they work at refining their proof, it will remain quite distant from what would meet the requirements for authentic inference not subject to disagreement. Therefore, it is only spiritual and religious experience that can give the practitioner objective knowledge of things, but not with introspective means, nor in any organized or principled manner.<sup>9</sup>

In sum then, his views are as follows:

- 1- Arguments for the existence of God cannot amount to more than opinion.
- 2- In religious experience, one may acquire evidence of the truth of their beliefs.
3. He rejects philosophical arguments and says they emerge from pure reason, and they amount to no more than rhetorical arguments. He relies on what he calls established reason and aided reason.<sup>10</sup>

### **1.2 Criticism of Religious Experience as a Source for Knowing God:**

The agreement of humanity is not a condition for the truth of a proposition, nor is consensus, nor the absence of any kind of disagreement.

Why is it acceptable to achieve incontrovertible truth in arithmetic and geometry, but not in metaphysics? Many logical, arithmetic, and geometric propositions lack any extramental referent, and despite that, it does lose its

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<sup>8</sup> Abdul Rahman, Taha, *Alamal Al-Dini wa Tajdid Al-Aqil* (Morocco: Al-Markaz Al-Thqafi Al-Arabi, 1997), 28.

<sup>9</sup> The previous source, 38

<sup>10</sup> The previous source, 28.

certainty and its truth in itself. The subjects of mathematical propositions do not have existence extramentally, there is no "10" nor "100," but it remains possible to construct universal propositions out of these concepts, such as multiplication tables. The same applies to geometric shapes, squares, triangles, and circles, for they do not have corresponding entities in extramental reality. What exists extramentally are physical objects, and despite that, judgments made of these shapes can be true or false.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.3 Religious Experience:

It may be the case that non-inferential knowledge of God, or religious experience, or inborn intuition, all occur. However, there is no opposition between the notion that knowledge of God occurs by natural disposition, or religious experience, and having knowledge through reason. The evidence for the necessity of God's existence is innumerable, and the Noble Qur'an adopts rational arguments as well and they are the most important in affirming the existence of God. For God has held us responsible on the basis of our reason and the reading of the open book of the universe.

But if we concede their claim, it is also true that there is a great deal of people who do not believe in God by their natural disposition or their religious experience but by virtue of reason. And we concede also that there are people who believe and worship in this manner, but that does not mean that one should not pursue rational argumentation, for it is the foundation. So religious activity without proof happens, but the religion itself requires evidence.

Ultimately, these experiential methods are very important in understanding the Sufi path,<sup>12</sup> as it strengthens the connection between man and his Lord. There may be many people who have built their faith on this path, for it develops the tie between theoretical knowledge and experiential knowledge, and there is no doubt that it this method is authentic and beneficial. But there is no connection between the beauty of this path and its attractiveness, and it being evidence for the existence of God. At best, it can only be a proof for the existence of God for a single individual, "and it is not possible to reach the level of certainty in ascertaining its source, even if the

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<sup>11</sup> Al-Amili, Hassan Muhammad Makki, *Nazariat Al-ma'arifa – madkhal ila Al-ilm wa Al-fasafa wa Al-ilahiat* (Qom: Maktabat Al-Tawhid) 218.

<sup>12</sup> Abdul Rahman, Taha, *Hiuarat min ajil Almustakbal*, 140.

inspired person believed it to be authentic by virtue of supporting evidence, that it derives from a divine source." Nor is it permissible to broadcast these experiences to people as if it presented proof for the existence of God and a replacement for the many rational arguments for God's existence.<sup>13</sup>

## **2. Modernist Thought on the Attributes of God:**

### **2.1 Modernist Thought on Divine Omnipotence: presentation and criticism:**

Some modernists believe that monotheistic religions placed limits on divine power that prevent it from being absolute, and rendered it incapable of changing things that it ought to be able to, "thus monotheistic religions placed a limit that divine power cannot transgress, so it cannot violate the principle of non-contradiction, nor can it make what was impossible into what is contingent, nor does it have power over the eternal realities nor over the past."<sup>14</sup>

#### **2.1.1 Criticism:**

All monotheistic religions agree that God must have absolute power, otherwise, it would not be possible to claim divinity for Him. Despite their disagreement over the details of what exactly power is and what pertains to it specifically, they do not differ over the fact that God has the power to create the world, and He has created it.

But it is important to note here that on Islamic foundations, the attribute of Power is that by which God creates or destroys a contingent object, for Power does not attach to necessary or impossible objects.<sup>15</sup>

It cannot be claimed that power ought to effect what is necessary and what is impossible, not on account of some deficiency in the power, but because the effects of Power is to bring into existence or non-existence, and what is necessary is not subject to being brought into existence, because it already exists, and cannot be rendered non-existent, otherwise it would not

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<sup>13</sup> Abdul Rahman, Taha, *Alamal Al-Dini*, 10.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Mazoghi, Muhammad, *Tahqiq Ma lil Ilhad min Maqula* (Beirut: Manshurat Al-Jamalm 2014), 339

<sup>15</sup> Al-Senussi, Abu Abdullah, *Sharh Sagra Al-Sugrah* (Amman: Dar Al-Nur Al-Mubeen, 2014), 124.



be necessary. Likewise, impossible entities cannot be made to not exist, because they are already non-existent, nor can they be made to exist, for they would otherwise not be impossible.<sup>16</sup>

This is all that is meant by kalam scholars when they state that power relates strictly to contingent entities.

As for the claim that God's power is incapable of changing natural laws<sup>17</sup>, that is not a position held by any kalam scholars, because they held that the laws of the universe were posited and not rational, meaning that God has governed nature according to certain rules such that reason does not judge the impossibility of their changing, meaning it is possible to change these patterns.

## **2.2 Modernist Thought on Divine Speech and Historicism:**

### **2.2.1 Presentation and Criticism:**

All sects of Islam agree that God has speech, and they affirm that the Qur'an is the speech of God, but they differed in other aspects: the first: whether or not the revealed Qur'an was eternal or incipient, in which case the vast majority of Ash'aris, Maturidis, and Mu'tazilis held that the revealed Qur'an is incipient, because it is composed of letters and sounds, and letters and sounds are created. The Karramis believed that the letters and sounds were incipient but subsist in God's essence. Further, they agree that the Qur'an is miraculous and demonstrates the prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad, as it incapacitated the masters of the Arabic language to reproduce something of comparable eloquence.<sup>18</sup>

The second point of contention is that beyond the revealed Qur'an, is there an attribute of God known as speech or not? Here it is only the Mu'tazila who denied this on the basis that speech can only be of sound and letter, and sound and letter cannot subsist in the divine essence.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Al Sherwani, Muhammad Amin, *Sharh Qauaid Al-Aqaid li Al-imam Al-Gazali*, ed. Zakariah Jabli (Alaslin li Al-Dirasat wa Al-Nashir, 2016), 105.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Mazoghi, *Tahqiq Ma lil Ilhad*, 339.

<sup>18</sup> Al-Eji, *Adad al-Din Abd al-Rahman bin Ahmad bin Abd al-Ghaffar Abu Fadl*, *Kitab Al-Mauaqif*, ed. Abd al-Rahman bin Ahmad bin Abd al-Ghaffar (Beirut: Dar Al-Jabal, 1997), 293.

<sup>19</sup> Judge Abd al-Jabbar, *Imad al-Din Abi al-Hasan, Sharh Al-'usul Al-Khamsa*, ed. Abd AlKarim Othman (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 2010), 518.



Ash'aris, Hanbalis, and Karramis affirmed speech as an attribute of God. The latter two agreed with the Mu'tazila that speech is only sound and letter, but they affirmed that sound and letter could be eternal. The Ash'aris were unique in affirming that speech refers to two things: one is internal, not composed of sound and letter, and uttered speech, which is composed of sound and letter. The attribute of God they affirmed was the internal one that is not composed of sound and letter.<sup>20</sup>

Modernist writers have made the Mu'tazilite position a means to their own goals, and the importance of the Mu'tazili view is that the belief in the creation of the Qur'an need not be imported from western thought but is a native Islamic development.

But the disagreement between Sunni orthodoxy and Mu'tazilism is not whether the Qur'an is created<sup>21</sup>, because the Mu'tazili position is that the Qur'an is created meaning the book and the sounds and letters that compose it, and that is not unique to them. The Ash'aris agreed with them and said that what is between the two covers of the book is created, but they affirmed something beyond that, namely the divine attribute of speech, and that is the main point of contention between the Ash'aris and the Mu'tazilis.<sup>22</sup> It is only that modernists have taken the Mu'tazili position and interpreted it in a way that desacralizes the Qur'an and renders it into a historical text.

But the truth is that the Mu'tazila insisted on the divinity of the Qur'an<sup>23</sup>, and that opposes modernist interpretations that tried to find a link between the eternity of the Qur'an and the ossification of the text, and in reality: there is absolutely no such connection between the creation of the Qur'an and the historicity of the text, just as there is no connection between the eternity of the Qur'an and the ossification of the text.

The main goal of modernism is to desacralize revealed texts, namely the Qur'an that is God's Speech.<sup>24</sup> In order to do this, they sought to take the Qur'anic text from its divine origin and to give a human origin, and in turn, to make it into a linguistic text like any other human production in a given

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<sup>20</sup> Al-Taftazani, S'ad Al-Din Masoud bin Omar, Sharh Al-Makasid (Pakistan: Dar Al-Ma'arif Al-Numania, 1981), 2/99.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Jurjani, Abd Al-Rahaman, Sharh Al-Mauaqif (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmia, 1998), 8/103.

<sup>22</sup> The previous source, 8/103.

<sup>23</sup> Judge Abd al-Jabbar, Sharh Al-'usul Al-Khamsa, 518.

<sup>24</sup> Hanafi, Hasan, min Al-Aqida ila Al-Thoura (Beirut: Al-Markaz Al-Thakafi Al-Arabi, 1988), 1/262.

historical circumstance and is therefore subject to an infinite number of interpretations. In doing so, they relied on methods adapted from hermeneutics, relativism, and semiotics.<sup>25</sup>

### 2.2.2 Criticism of Modernist Thought on Divine Speech:

It is important to first note the points of agreement between various modernists on historicism and Islamic belief, for they all agree on the following:

- That they all believe in God and that they are Muslims practicing *ijtihad*
- They believe in the prophethood of our Master Muhammad (s).
- Belief that the Qur'an is Divine Speech<sup>26</sup>

These are all points of agreement, but modernist writers at the same time try to render unseen matters to historicism, and rendering it part of the human sciences, like historical psychology.<sup>27</sup>

The Mu'tazili position enjoys an important role in modernist discourse, in order for them to reach their main goal of depriving the Qur'anic text of its sanctity<sup>28</sup>, but there is no proof for them in the Mu'tazili position. When they claimed that the Qur'an was created, that did not change anything regarding their view that the Qur'an remained at the pinnacle of sanctity and divine origin, indeed, their position was merely an expression of their insistence on affirming Divine Transcendence.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, there is no meaning in the insistence of modernist thinkers on the Mu'tazili position, as there is no difference on this specific point between Sunni orthodoxy and Mu'tazilism, as they all agreed that the Qur'an was Divine Speech, and that it was applicable to every time and place, and so it does not help the modernists in achieving the historicist goal.

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<sup>25</sup> Hanafi, Hasan, *Al-Turath wa Al-Tajdid* (Matba'at Al-Inglo Misria, 1987) 389.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Omari, Marzouk, *Ishkaliat Tarikhiaa Al-Nas Al-Dinni fi Al-Khitab Al-Hadathi Al-Mua'asir* (Algeria: Mashourat Al-ikhtilaf, 2012), 157

<sup>27</sup> Al-Omari, *Ishkaliat Tarikhiaa Al-Nas Al-Dinni*, 154.

<sup>28</sup> Arkoun, Muhammad, *Kadaia fi Naqid Al-Aqil Al-Dinni*, trans. Hashim Salih (Beirut: Dar Al-Taliaa, 1998), 279.

<sup>29</sup> Judge Abd al-Jabbar, *Sharh Al-'usul Al-Khamsa*, 141.

### **3. Modernist Thought on the Acts of God and a Reply:**

#### **3.1 Modernist Thought on the Notion of God's Acts**

Some modernists depart from an assumption regarding divinity that is correct, namely that God is not physical, and an assumption regarding acts that is incorrect, namely, that acts only come from bodies, and therefore, they concluded with the rejection of divinity based on these two premises.

The result is the following<sup>30</sup>:

1- There can be no act that is not preceded by a contingent event in the subject, and that means the subject must be a body;

2- If the subject is not a body, then it is irrational and illogical for that subject to perform an act. In other words, there can be no act except through a contingent medium.

##### **3.1.1 Criticism**

What is the basis of the claim that performing an act entails that the active subject must be spatio-temporal and corporeal? The claim above is guilty of question begging.

Their claim that this is a rational judgment is in fact based on an empirical judgment that is derived from experiment and induction and is therefore not a rational judgment at all. It is therefore sufficient to deny their claim on grounds of insufficient evidence.

The claim that every subject must be a body is either: evident or inferential. If they believe that it is evident, then we deny that, for the rational agent does find the claim to be evident, nor do they have no doubt about the proposition, and in fact, the number of people who deny this proposition are many, and they are certainly rational subjects among the ancients and the contemporaries, and of different religions as well. So, to claim that this proposition is evident is mere obstinance that is not permissible in scientific research.<sup>31</sup>

But if it is a theoretical claim, then theoretical claims require evidence. But they lack any evidence for their claim. So, the question that asks itself is: is it impossible for incorporeal entities to exist in reality?

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<sup>30</sup> Fouda, Saeed, Tafnid al-usus aleamalia Lil-ilhad (Kuwait: Dar Al-Diaa, 2014), 17

<sup>31</sup> The same source, 14-44.

## **3.2 Modernist Thought on Determinism and Freewill:**

### **3.2.1 Presentation and Criticism:**

God has given human beings a complete will, i.e., a capacity by which they can select things and do things, and by this capacity, man can be subject to moral obligation, punishment and reward. The acts of man are created by God's executive power, in his bodily limbs and nerves, bringing about what he intended to acquire with his will and choice.<sup>32</sup>

And with the existence of this hidden acquisition by which man determines and choose, God allows man's limbs to move, and creates in it the power of motion in accordance with the volition of man, all of which is known and recorded in God's eternal knowledge.

The opponents to this view could not understand how man could have choice unless he also had complete independent causal efficacy, while Sunni orthodoxy understood power in a different sense, such that God creates the acts of man, and man acquires them.

By the existence of this relation between man and his act, it is sufficient for him to be the subject of his voluntary acts, and for which he is held responsible, and deserves praise and blame; that is the meaning of acquisition.<sup>33</sup>

As for God's creation of his acts, then this is true, as everything that emerges from non-existence into existence is by God's selection, power, will, and knowledge. It is not possible for any contingent to come into existence without God's will.<sup>34</sup>

## **3.3 Modernist Thought on the Problem of Evil:**

### **3.3.1 Presentation and Criticism:**

Atheistic modernist thought holds that there is a logical incoherence between the existence of a God that is completely good, omnipotent, and omniscient, and the existence of the massive amount of suffering and evil in the world.

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<sup>32</sup> Al-Senussi, Muhammad bin Yusuf, Sharh Al-Akida Al-wusta, ed. Mohammed Yusuf Idris (Amman: Alaslin li Al-Dirasat wa Al-Nashir, 2017), 248.

<sup>33</sup> Al-Bouti, Muhammad Saeed Ramadan, Al-Insan Musair am Mukhair (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikir, 2009) 38.

<sup>34</sup> Al-Razzi, Fakher Al-Din, Al-Rba'ain fi Usul Al-Din (Hyderabad: Dairat Al-ma'arf Al-Othmania, 1934), 131.

We may present the argument in the following ways:

- (1) If God exists, then the world would be felicitous and compassionate,  
But the world is not like that; God does not exist. God has the power to remove evil<sup>35</sup>
- (2) Either God exists, or evil exists  
But evil exists.  
Therefore, God does not exist.
- (3) God has power of all things  
Everything that has the power to remove evil must remove evil.  
Evil has remained  
Therefore, God does not exist.

All of these arguments depend on the impossibility of reconciling a God that is completely good, omniscient, omnipotent, and compassionate with the existence of evil. Thus, the existence of God with these attributes entails the absence of evil.

Therefore, the existence of evil contradicts the existence of God, as divine perfection entails that there be no evil in the world, and that God does not create evil. This is why this argument is considered to challenge revealed religion.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.3.2 Criticism

The supposition that a perfect god described with compassion, knowledge, and power cannot create a world with evil and pain is false. There is no logical contradiction between the existence of evil and the existence of God. It is rather quite possible for God to exist and for evil to exist, and that is assuming that there are possibilities that might have reasons that we do not know that justify the existence of evil in the world.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Victor John Stinger, Allah Alfaradiat Alfashila, trans. Kamal Tahir, 209.

<sup>36</sup> Awad, Ramses, Mulhidon Muhadithon Muasiron (Beirut: Muasasat Alaintishar Al-Arabi, 1998), 25-27.

<sup>37</sup> Al-Amiri, Sami, Mushkilat Al-Shar wa wujud Allah – Al-Rad ala Abrz Shubuhah Al-Malahida (London: Takuwin lil Diasat wa Al-Abhath, 2016), 43.

Furthermore, whence does the obligation upon God arise? Reason does not obligate God to do only what is good, for the true understanding of divinity is one that is entirely free.

If they were more precise in their description of God's attributes, they would have at least said this argument weakens the theistic position, but it certainly does not negate the existence of God. For God may exist, but he is not wholly good. Even if this argument is not conceded, it may still be used to argue against the atheist claim.<sup>38</sup>

There is also an important thesis presented in the works of kalam, and that is the absence of cognition does not mean absence of the object.<sup>39</sup> If we search for the reason behind the existence of evil and pain and we cannot find one that does not mean there is no reason or wisdom.

The world desired by the atheist is "a world that is perfect, in which man can reach the utmost limit of happiness, and our world is not that world, because God did not create man in this world to make him happy, but to test him."<sup>40</sup> Simply put, one may interpret the existence of evil by believing that there is a freely choosing creator that chose to create the world in this fashion. It was possible for him to create a different world without evil or deficiency, but God chose this world instead, while informing us that He can create a world that is free of all pain and deficiency, and that is the world of the afterlife.

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<sup>38</sup> Al-Dasuqi, Mohammed bin Ahmad bin Arafa Al-maliki, Hashiat Al-Dasuqi ala Aum Al-Barahin (Beirut: Dar Al-kutub Alilmia, 2001), 226.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Razzi, Fakher Al-Din, Al-Mahsul, ed. Taha Jabir Al-Alwani (Musassat Al-Risala, 1997), 2/351.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Amiri, Sami, Mushkilat Al-Shar wa wujud Allah, 43.

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