

# Does God exist? (part two)

Argument  
from  
Evil

# Theodicy

Leibniz, *Theodiciée* (1710)

Greek:

**theos** = God, the divine

**diké** = justice



**Gottfried Wilhem Leibniz**

1646-1716

# The Lisbon Earthquake



**Lisbon Cathedral**  
November 1, 1755

# Yet Another Theodicy ...



*“I have the whole universe to look after, so I’m putting you in charge of this planet.”*

# Brueghel, “The Fall of Icarus”



# Logical Argument from Evil

- (1) An omniscient being *knows how* to produce a world with no evil in it.
- (2) An omnipotent being *is able* to produce a world with no evil in it.
- (3) An omnibenevolent being *wants* to produce a world with no evil in it.
- (4) Knowledge, ability, and desire suffice to attain a goal.
- (5)  $\therefore$  If there is a being with these three properties, then there is no evil in the world. [1-4]
- (6) God is a being with these three properties. [by definition]
- (7)  $\therefore$  If God exists, then there is no evil in the world. [5, 6]
- (8) There *is* evil in the world.
- (9)  $\therefore$  God does not exist. [7, 8 - MT]

# A Free Will Defense

- (1) The good of human free will outweighs all human evil.
- (2) The good of Satan's free will outweighs all natural evil.
- (3) All evil is either human or natural.
- (4)  $\therefore$  Good outweighs evil. [1-3]
- (5) If God exists, then good outweighs evil.
- (6)  $\therefore$  God's existence is compatible with the existence of evil. [4, 5]



**Augustine**  
354-430 CE



# Evidential Argument from Evil

- (1) An omniscient being *knows how* to produce **the best of all possible worlds.**
- (2) An omnipotent being *is able* to produce **the best of all possible worlds.**
- (3) An omnibenevolent being *wants* to produce **the best of all possible worlds.**
- (4) Knowledge, ability, and desire suffice to attain a goal.
- (5)  $\therefore$  If there is a being with these three properties, then this is **the best of all possible worlds.** [1-4]
- (6) God is a being with these three properties. [by definition]
- (7)  $\therefore$  If God exists, then this is **the best of all possible worlds.** [5, 6]
- (8) This is not **the best of all possible worlds.**
- (9)  $\therefore$  God does not exist. [7, 8 - MT]

# Marilyn Adams on Evil

- (1) A successful theodicy must make possible each person saying at the end of their life: “My life was worth living.”
- (2) The kinds of suffering and goods found in this world make this impossible or unlikely
- (3) ∴ A successful theodicy must appeal to “transcendent goods” available in the afterlife that can compensate for suffering in this world.

God's reason for allowing some evil is hidden from us. We *could* understand the reason, except that...

- (a) we have not been informed of them [or]
- (b) our memory or attention span is too short [or]
- (c) we are spiritually, emotionally, or cognitively too immature.