The Augustinian Theodicy

St Augustine
354-430 AD
Books include: The City of God
Confessions
On Christian Doctrine

A theodicy is .....................

Augustine’s theodicy is based on two important assumptions:

1 Evil does not come from ...........
2 God has a good reason for not ......................

If these assumptions are true, then the problem of evil is solved.

The argument in more detail:
Augustine’s theodicy is based on the Bible, in particular the book of ............... and on Christian tradition.

Premise 1 God is .............. and God made the world completely free from ......................

Premise 2 .............. is not a substance, it is simply a ...................... of good, in other words it is an absence of good. For example, an eyeball is a substance and a good one. Blindness is not a substance; it is simply lack of goodness in the eyeball.
Premise 3  Evil (the deprivation of good) occurs due to the choices and actions of . . . . . . and . . . . . . (i.e. not from God)

Premise 4  . . . . . . . . and . . . . . . become evil / make evil choices because they are not perfect. Only . . . . is perfect - other things change (which is why an eyeball can become blind).

Premise 5  God gave . . . . . . and . . . . . . freewill. The changes that caused evil in the universe started here.

Premise 6  The free choices of . . . . . . rebelling against God and the free choices Adam (and Eve) changed the balance of God’s flawless earth - pain, disease, earthquakes etc. resulted.

Premise 7  Evil is the appropriate punishment for . . . . , therefore God is right and just in not stopping the . . . . . We deserve it!

So:

God is fair and good. God did not create evil. “All evil is either sin or the punishment for sin” (Augustine)
Natural evil is explained by ..................................................
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Moral evil is explained by ..................................................
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God has not abandoned the human race, however, because he saves some, the worthy, through ..................................................
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Adam’s punishments for his disobedience were .......................... 
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Eve’s punishments for his disobedience were ..............................
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Even good people suffer and are punished today because ..........
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Strengths:
✔ Fits with ........... and Christian .............
✔ Logically God did not create evil
✔ Genuine freewill does involve God not interfering and that there is the possibility of choosing evil (if we had to always choose ...... .... we would not be free, but would be like ...........)
✔ Genuine ........... is valuable
Weaknesses

Schleiermacher (1768-1834) argued that it is a logical ................. to say that a perfectly created world would ............... Since this would mean that evil has appeared from ................. Whether evil is a substance or deprivation is not important - evil is still a ................. of the world that causes immense .................

Schleiermacher concludes then, that either:
• The world was not .........................
• Or God ...............................

A further logical problem comes from the idea that ......... (or knowledge of it) must already exist in order to have a genuine free choice to disobey ..... or not. This must have come from God.

Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution presents a problem for Augustinian theodicy because:

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**Free but Good?**
Is it possible that we could be made with the possibility of free choice to do evil, but such that we find evil so **distasteful** we never choose to do evil? Would this still be freedom?

**My 'Special' Sandwich**
Suppose I offered you a sandwich, the filling of which comprised dog poo, vomit and maggots.

Are you free to eat it? ................................................

Do you choose to eat it? ............................................

Do you have free will? ............................................

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**Write your own Bullet Point summary of the Augustinian Theodicy:**

**Bullet Point its Strengths**

**Bullet Point its Weaknesses**