

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

PONTIFICAL URBANIANA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

HUMAN SUFFERING AND EXISTENCE: SOREN KIERKEGAARD IN QUEST.

STUDENT'S NAME: OBIRI OMBATI VINCENT

REG. NO: 20/00417

A Long Essay Written in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Award of the Baccalaureate Degree in Philosophy

NAIROBI, 2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare this essay as my original work attained through my personal reading, scientific research method, philosophical consultations and critical reflection. It has not been submitted to any other college or academic institution for any academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Candidate Name: Obiri Vincent Ombati.

Signature:Date:

The Long Essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as a college supervisor and the Head of Department (HOD):

Supervisor: Rev. Dr. Munguci D. Etriga, AJ.

Signature: Date:

Head of Department Name: Rev. Dr. Munguci D. Etriga, AJ.

Signature: Date:

DEDICATION

To all the continents of the world, people of good will, and lovers of knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My acknowledgement first to the Almighty God for his guidance and sustenance of me all over this research period of the thesis. My gratitude still goes to him mostly for having created me without Him I would be no more and no paper could be written.

I would pass my sincere acknowledgement also to all those that have been close to me all over this period assisting and giving me advice that have enabled me reach this far.

I would also acknowledge my Supervisor Rev. Dr. Munguci C. Etriga who has journeyed with me in this long essay, helping me intellectually and spiritually, may God continue to bless you and your family in whatever you do. I also acknowledge my family members, friends and colleagues who have also given me support and challenge to undertake this paper seriously.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge my congregation, The Order of the Ministers of the Sick, M.I, and the Tangaza University College fraternity at large for the good provision of environment that have enabled me to write this paper in good environment despite all the Covid-19 crisis. Thanks so much for the spiritual, material, emotional and intellectual support.

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMES

RSV Revised Standard Version of the Bible

IR Intimations of Reality

ST Summa Theologiae

SG Summa Contra Gentiles

NAB The New African Bible

PBS Public Broadcasting Service

CONTENTS

DECLARATION	I
DEDICATION	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	III
ABREVIATIONS/ACRONYMES	IV
OPERATIONAL DEFINATIONS	VIII
ABSTRACT	IX
CHAPTER ONE	1
THESIS DESIGN	1
1.0. Introduction	1
1.1. Brief Background of the Study	1
1.2.Statement of the Problem	2
1.3.Objective of the Study	3
1.4.Research Questions	3
1.5.Research Hypothesis	3
1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study	4
1.7.Justification of the Study	4
1.8.Literature Review	5
1.9.Theoretical Framework	8
2.0.Methodology	8
2.1.Conclusion	9
CHAPTER TWO:	10
EXISTENTIALISM	10
2.1.Introduction	10
2.2. Soren Kierkegaard's background	10
2.3. A brief review on Kierkegaard thought through his writings	11
2.4. Problem of Human Existence	11

2.4.1. Plato	12
2.4.2. Descartes	13
2.5. Existentialism	14
2.5.1. The Fundamental Concepts of Existentialism as well as its Foundational Principles.	15
2.5.1.1. Existence Precedes Essence.	15
2.5.1.2. Freedom.	16
2.5.1.3. Anguish.	16
2.5.1.4. Absurdity.	17
2.5.1.5. Forlornness.	17
2.5.1.6. Authenticity.	17
2.6. Soren Kierkegaard's Existentialism	18
2.7. Conclusion	18
CHAPTER THREE	19
PROBLEM OF EVIL AND HUMAN SUFFERING	19
3.1. Introduction	19
3.2. Problem of Evil	20
3.3. Evil and Suffering	21
3.4. Soren Kierkegaard on Evil and Suffering	23
3.4.1. Interpretation of the fall	23
3.4.2. Concept of sin	23
3.4.3. Evil and suffering	24
3.5. Conclusion	26
CHAPTER FOUR	26
RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW ON EVIL AND SUFFERING	26
4.1. Introduction	26
4.2. Islam's Conception of Evil and Suffering	26
4.3. Hinduism's Conception of Evil and Suffering	27
4.4. Christianity's Conception of Evil and Suffering	28
4.4.1. Evil and Suffering in Church Documents	28
4.5. Conclusion	32

GENERAL CONCLUSION	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	39

OPERATIONAL DEFINATIONS

Existence: The ability a being to be, that is the ontological property.

Meinongianism: The idea that some objects don't exist that is nonexistent entities.

Existentialism: The philosophical school of thought that holds man searches his essence and responsible for what he makes himself.

Existential Psychotherapy: The psychological point of understanding and confrontation which is individual in regard to existence.

ABSTRACT

Problem of evil and suffering in the realm of existence greatly challenges us in our own existence as well as our belief in the good, all-powerful and all-loving God.

The problem of suffering and the reality of evil reflects daily in the pages of human experience and existence. There are sorts of sorrows and sufferings, all kinds of inhumanities to man and his insecure existence in the world. Evil and suffering is always a dark, ugly heartbreaking and crushing reality.

Therefore, this paper will help us understand the human suffering in relation to existence. The paper embraced philosophical methods of historical, analytical and theological. Historical since I didn't start from scratch, problem of suffering is historical. Our topic being a philosophical problem, the question 'why' this affecting man. Can we address it rationally?

Analytical since we have analyzed ideas developed about the problem of our subject as we came across them in our study. We saw the arguments of different philosophers more so Soren Kierkegaard his ideas and many philosophies more so existentialism school of thought; hence we embraced the method of analytical.

The topic being a theological problem since it touches the person of God and his ways of acting upon His creatures who experience the existence, they are the ones to have faith in him and they are the subjects of evil and suffering; hence again the paper had to take the study of the nature of God and religious belief dimensions.

Thus, our topic tackled different questions in this study, at last we come to agree that suffering can't not be an idea to talk about without existence of human, that is to say actually that is to say, the essential part of existence is suffering.

CHAPTER ONE

THESIS DESIGN

1.0. Introduction

The paper starts by introducing the topic of interest, treats also introduces existentialism thereby we get the subject matter that is human existence, faith and human suffering.

The paper focuses on existentialism the give a subsequent discussion of the problem of suffering with the existential philosophical perspective thus dealing with human suffering in reference to existence or existential view. Lastly, we conclude with the Christian perspective of human suffering since human person or man is a spiritual animal that this suffering in question unequivocally part of the part of the mystery of human person.

As much as human is by this mystery which is mainly untraversable, conceivably twinge is not wrapping up.

1.1. Brief Background of the Study

Actually, there is a roaming idea that if we get along with suffering, misfortunes, affliction, corporal pain and other realities that get away humanity are for the cleansing of the system. Is not realistic, there are a lot of individuals who suffer in regard to their karma or something to do with attacks from undivine forces, though with this we cannot asset that they are getting to their point of disembarkation rather in line with transcendence towards the end of the line. Inter Press Service (2016) affirms that;

Human suffering from the impacts of armed conflicts and disasters has reached staggering levels.

There is need to pay attention to this issue.

People are asking; where was God when this and that happened? Where was he during the killings in Auschwitz? Where was he during the slave trade? Where he is time of storms? What about the genocide of Rwanda? Where he is time of COVID 19? Victims of AIDS virus? Ebola? What does he gain when the innocent people suffer? What about the suffering of children innocently? To answer these questions, therefore we saw the need for this paper.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

The question of human suffering comes at a time when there are so many philosophical insights and trend much as many new lifestyles in the contemporary society. The world is experiencing many problems that are a burden to humanity, when there are so many questions and doubts to the understanding of the meaning of life. There are strong temptations and doubts in believing in God's existence who is the author of the existence that we are talking about, let alone his goodness or His all-powerfulness.

With these and many others realities that are really provoking, the concept in question that is Human suffering tends to take a very deep insight on existence and in this case Human existence not left only to the school of thought, existentialists or rather it is a topic to humanity at large.

The many questions asked in regard to existence, now that perfect supreme created and in use of some arguments like determinism and predestination and of course the idea of free will as posed by St. Augustine and the ideas of theodicy in trying to solve the problem intoned me to take this topic of interest Human existence and suffering.

Only when evil strikes, since for sure it does, do we remember it. In fact, modern civilization with its concerns in the world also contributes to the problem of approaching God.

1.3.Objective of the Study

- i. To plumb the critical question of speech about God in the midst of suffering cosmos.
- ii. Inquire whether God is the cause of evil.
- iii. To enlighten us on the truth about human existence, evil, suffering, its meaning, nature and causes.
- iv. To give meaning to life despite the evils encountered.

1.4.Research Questions

- i. Inquisitive in the cause of suffering?
- ii. What it means to exist?
- iii. What is the relation between human existence and suffering?
- iv. How shall one speak rightly of God in the midst of a suffering cosmos?

1.5.Research Hypothesis

- i. Human existence has no connection with human suffering.
- ii. Man is responsible for human suffering through his evil doings.
- iii. God the giver of existence is responsible for the sufferings.

1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the work is formed from what Kierkegaard used in getting meaning of human existence via authentic individuality that is his ideas on mode of individual existence and the individual.

This study is limited in the sense that the topic is diverse and large and therefore I may not fully tackle the expectation of what really is to be tackled here. It is also limited in the sense that there are so many books written concerning this topic which most of the books are in large volumes and I could not read them all, hence shallow synthesis. Lastly the theme is Limited in the sense that it remains unsolved because of its diverse nature.

1.7. Justification of the Study

This study deals with diverse part of philosophical studies. It entails mostly practical philosophy under utilitarianism, humanitarianism¹, philosophy of pain, existentialism, Moral Philosophy, Political philosophy, Special Ethics and many other fields of knowledge not only to philosophy. It is also anthropological in that it deals with the study of human free will, freedom, human actions, human fatalism and human reasoning. Human intellect and human free will are the main distinctions that separates or rather distinguishes human beings from other animals. It also has got connotations with the philosophy of religion² because; it deals with the religious facet of predestination. This study tries to answer numerous philosophical problems of old and of contemporary times, and the religious questions of human destiny in relation to predestination.

¹Crane Brinton, *article Humanitarianism*, Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1937.

²Pecorino, Philip A. "Chapter 3: 'Philosophy of Religion', Section 11: Problem of Evil". *An Introduction to Philosophy*, 200.

The questions embarked upon here are, how is God related to our free will? Are human beings free? How is the free will of man limited? Are we morally responsible when our actions are determined?

1.8.Literature Review

We reviewed some writings over human suffering and those of human existence, especially writings of Soren Kierkegaard in an existential way of thought. Also, we get into reviewing some great art, literature, drama example the drama of PBS about the Jewish in prison as well as films. Some tremendous works we reviewed in line with our topic are;

i. Essay on man by Pope

ii. The Plague, Camus

iii. The Karamazov Brothers, Fyodor Dostoevsky-Russian novelist

iv. Night, Elie Weisel

v. The book of sorrows, Walter Martin Wangerin Jr. Yet we can say actually that in the field art of both secular and religious they real affirm humans in conflict with anguish and moral evil or willful evil acts, trying to answer or search some compensatory value in misery

With the topic of existence, there are many questions like why we exist? Why do we say they are here? Why do they live and many more. The school of thought that Soren our philosophy lies is Existentialism where these questions are asked, they emphasize to individual existence freedom and choice³. They get to try to response to why beings

³ Lavrin, Janko. *Nietzsche: A Biographical Introduction*. p. 43, 1971

tend to ask such queries, and they tell us whenever humans get themselves in a problem, he tends to point a finger to God, the universe that is nature as well as himself and other human beings net to him and he gets to wonder of his existence.

One of the great fields of knowledge that is philosophy of religion has dealt intellectually or existentially with the idea of evil as a problem which is connected to human suffering that gets us into epistemic and logical matters.

Theologians and philosophers with the idea of *theodicaea* that is trying to affirm the existence of a supreme being in the world before evil consistently especially the medieval thinkers and church fathers they broadened and narrowed the basic concept good and evil until it came to have several, sometimes complex definitions.

Edward Farley (1990) one of the contemporary theologians in his book *Good and Evil: Interpreting a Human Condition* asks the question is what does it take for the idea of human in comprehension, in this world that is full of tragedy if we say. He actually addresses this hunting problem in a I thou relationship or dynamics in a wide sense as a key of human existence and he concludes by saying, it is the corruption of elemental passions and the resulting contagion of the personal and social spheres that provide a total view of human evil and its redemptive possibilities.⁴

We too get examples of suffering from biblical stories what we can regard as world literature, the story of Job suffers in the name of honoring God, here critics gets chance by saying the virtuous suffer along with the evil doers. Even worse, the evil doers prosper, then what is the action of God?

⁴ Farley, E . *Good and Evil: Interpreting a Human Condition*. 1990.

One of the dramas we stated earlier PBS in its conclusions one of it is that: “God is powerful and has been on our side in the past; but is no longer our advocate and protector. God does not represent moral justice.” Does it mean God is power to be the protector is seasonal on what he created, why shall he create and leave what he created to suffer in His presence? Is He a just God?

Yoga school of Hinduism holds that ignorance is the cause of suffering. In their thought they held that Liberation or salvation as we can say in a Christian perspective, like many other schools within the Hindus philosophy it holds that, is removal of ignorance, which is achieved through discernment knowledge and self-awareness.

One of the works of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche works, Genealogy of morals that is on humanity he goes into inquiry to find whether these conventional concepts, in his first essay, on what is good as well as evil help in growing at the same time developing strongly and flourishing of humanity.

The second essay, he declares humanity gets problems once it starts promising, by not fulfilling, the idea of bad conscience comes in, that is guilt, this guilt then it is the cause of tremendous mental tragedy or anguish as he says as well as suffering. He says with the ancient men there aggressive could be directed to killing the prey since they were nomadic predators and they could their instincts of antagonistic by killing the prey which is contrary to the modern man where for him the society has no space where modern man can direct his aggression in so doing, they repress it and eventually they releasing this antagonism to themselves, by this actually they torture themselves by bad conscience. He thinks that promises and what people consider

good that is keeping promises punishing the wrong doers and implementing justice they lead to unnecessary suffering.⁵

Now finally in our review we turn to Soren Kierkegaard his conception on why does human suffering exist? He argues over this and he says human suffering makes the point or the concept human life that is to say it is part of.

1.9.Theoretical Framework

This paper has been informed by Soren Kierkegaard's existentialist theory in that his work he attempts to give a framework which is philosophical in trying to tackle questions of existence like who am I? why do I live? It actually tends to tell of human perspicacity. In this we find him addressing too the idea of suffering in that he says to strive to relate oneself absolutely to one's absolute *telos* is to involve oneself in suffering; suffering is the consequence of the failure to extricate oneself from an absolute relation to relative ends.⁶

2.0.Methodology

The methodology employed here is critical analytical method which will help us to engage in with the objectives above. I have involved myself with the method above and in proper reading of books, articles and journals which have formulated too much in this paper. I have critically and analytically synthesized the points from the primary sources and made sure that the points are clear. I shall also employ evaluative method, phenomenological method and comparative methods where necessary.

⁵ Owen, David. 2007. "The Second Essay: 'Guilt', 'Bad Conscience', and Related Matters.'" Chapter. In *Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality*, Pg 91–112.

⁶John W. Elrod, *Being and Existence in Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous works*, Princeton university press, pg. 167.

2.1.Conclusion

The current chapter has so far presented a concise intellectual geography of the research. Human existence and suffering are a very broad topics and essential, with its central significance in human as well as Human social relations, stands jabbed at in the present times. There is, therefore, a justified reason to probe the conception of this topic by light of existential philosopher Soren; its current predicaments and possible recommendations towards salvaging it in the contemporary times.

CHAPTER TWO: EXISTENTIALISM.

2.1.Introduction

As the chapter introduces us to the person Kierkegaard it continues to get us introduced to the topic as a whole. By so doing the chapter develop the concept of existence its problem as per existentialism, which is our subject matter; human existence, faith and human suffering.

2.2. Soren Kierkegaard's background

Soren son of Michael Petersen Kierkegaard, Aabye Soren Kierkegaard was a Danish philosopher and theologian as well as social critic, poet and a religious author. We turn to brief background on his foundation in existentialism, while in the university as a student, he explored some works in that he was trying to get an existential point on models for his own life. Some works he read are those of Faust, the Wandering Jew and of Juan Don.

He is well known as the first philosopher as an existentialist and also a great protestant theology at around 20th century. Born May 5, 1813 in Copenhagen in the present-day Denmark. Soren thought that philosophers had misrepresented the task of understanding human existence since he felt they shifted from concrete individual and they concentrated on concept of universal. It means that for philosophers like Hegel merely invited humans to think instead of seeing them as existent being that should be involved in decisions and commitment that have bearing to their individuality and existence.⁷ He also reacted to philosophy that was speculative.

⁷ Ozumba, pg. 86.

Soren his thought greatly impacted his thought existentially in a way in that it become an elucidation over the idea existence and an appeal to choose so as men to regard existential situation and the great alternatives with which they are faced⁸.

2.3. A brief review on Kierkegaard thought through his writings

While reading Kierkegaard I think is worthy to mention the trend seen in his thought that it wasn't straightforward in that he isn't consistent thus it makes sense if we say we see a lot of ambiguity in his work. What we're saying is that his work varies from one field of inquiry to another that is Christianity, belief, aesthetics and he moves also to politics of that period in that he was opposing the system of the time like that of idealism of German of Hegel⁹.

After sketching the life of Soren Kierkegaard and his work a little bit, since the paper is not just on Kierkegaard, we are not going to treat his ideas exhaustively. We move ahead and consider the problem of human existence and of course the existential point of understanding.

2.4. Problem of Human Existence

major postulations of existentialism. More less this concept of problem of existence is not only reduced to existential philosophers only rather to field of philosophy only, it is a field of inquiry to many disciplines.

We die after living. The good part of this is living since we have experienced it is not scary as the death part since the after death is something which is mysterious to us the living beings and this the reality that surrounds existence as a mystery. Rationally we turn to questions what is exactly the purpose of existence? Also, what is existence?

⁸ Copleston 336

⁹J. Ree and J. Chamberlain, Kierkegaard, *A Critical Reader*, Blackwell Publishers, Pg 9.

These questions are here, they have been raised and they will still be there in that, what is exactly the meaning of life since all the endeavors of human being aware that at the ultimate of it no being will escape decomposition or death. Can we be wrong if we say that the shadow man lives in is death. The only thing man is sure of or certain with his future is this death, thus all strains of man they worthy nothing.

Yet I don't want to reduce human existence to death. The problem of existence is the intriguing most topic is the realm of philosophy since it tackles our souls, our inner self, the way we look at realities and actually the most important of it our own existence.

In the ancient Greek those times Aristotle declared that, "whether we like it or not we have to philosophize. Even if we don't want to philosophize, we are still philosophizing. Either way, philosophy exists." in this way they thought that through knowledge or by philosophizing we get actually enlightened about the mystery of many realities surrounding us. Now ancient philosophers, renaissance, modern and contemporary philosophies and their theories tend to get us into the point what is existence. Philosophers like Descartes, Hume, Spinoza, Rousseau, Nietzsche Locke and Plato they can lender us with insights into the idea of existence though we ought to point out that their theories may differ in their foundation they ought to claim or converge on one idea that is the existence of the reality. At a glance let us review Plato and Descartes what they say of reality of existence.

2.4.1. Plato

Plato argues that the dimensions or reality are two that is matter and the ideas, in that any existing thing is from a thinking being what we call an idea, this makes the reality and they coexist. For him the idea is perfect and matter takes the imperfections

therefore he said he cannot doubt that he exists as a soul rather than a body therefore his conclusion was that man exist as a soul¹⁰, that is the perfect idea, and not as a body. He says if the soul departs from the body, then the existence of the person too it departs, we are not sure of the material existence.

2.4.2. Descartes

Rene of course too he was for the idea of Plato but he revitalized it in line of rationalist where he credited extension and thought as to characterize a thing. The mind takes part as the thought, the soul that is the reason that resides in a being for this case a human being, simply this is saying to him what gives existence to extensions is the thought. This is seen in his dictum saying I think therefore I exist. He means, human beings exist when they think they do.

One of the most interesting ideas about philosophy, there is no imposition of an absolute response to any inquiry rather it gives variety of perspectives that we ought to go for one that meets our curiosity in any philosophical quest. Then we rather say reality of existence is more complex than what we see and comprehend. This makes the problem of existence more complex and still becomes more and more the topic of inquiry.

Human existence is not to be defined but it should be explained, several philosophers tend to have an idea that human existence mean different things. Ideally our philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard feels that to be is to believe, to suffer while Heidegger is something else where he takes off from the idea of being and time where he does not agree with *cogito ergo sum* of Descartes and replaces it with *Dasein* that

¹⁰ Annas, J., Plato: *A Very Short Introduction*, Pg 66.

is, *the fact that I exist*. Here he says that *Desein* understands itself through only existence here he means existence belongs to a being as a particular entity. Martin Heidegger claims that ‘only the particular *Desein* decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold or by neglecting. The question of existence never gets straightened out except through existing itself.’¹¹

Therefore, since each philosopher has his own point of instance towards the question of man and his existence leads to this problem of human existence, we can’t do away with existentialism as a school of thought in philosophy that widely tackles the question of existence of man.

2.5. Existentialism

This the school of thought we find it worthy in our case study, we are tackling what concerns human, its existence, its nature and many other topics of inquiry. This is already to define existentialism as a philosophical school of thought that holds man searches his essence and responsible for what he makes himself. This is to say it is a movement which holds the reality is made by oneself and it consists living of man making himself and he ought to be accounted for what he makes himself.

In rational metaphysics there is a regard that existentialism deals with or say its focus is on the distinctiveness of each individual as a person that is different from the so-called qualities that are universal to human in an abstract sense. It dwells on the authenticity of human existence and the freedom as well as one’s responsibilities. We ought to say it is the only school of thought in the realm of philosophy that regard the individuality of existence as supreme that is Existentialism emphasizes the importance

¹¹M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Blackwell Publishers, Pg 33.

of man as an individual and his freedom and responsibility¹². In a nutshell we can say that this school attempts to scrutinize the underlying part of human existence in an individual sense and concrete way thus the philosophy of a concrete man.

Although we say this movement is dated around twenty centuries, we can also trace it back to Greek philosophy that is ancient times. In one of the *dictums* that is Socratic, knowing thyself tells of existentialism since it shows question on human existence from Socrates, who was actually the first philosopher to ask on existence of human by his dictum. We also date it with the medieval period philosopher that is St. Augustine of Hippo, whom we see his existential idea when he talks of fallenness of human, he showed the attitude that was existential that is existing individually, and later of course existentialism was deeply inspired with the great 19th century philosopher who was a Danish by origin, considered a father of existentialism, Soren Kierkegaard. Other than our philosopher also Karl Jasper, Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camps and great lady feminist French activist thinker Simone de Beauvoir contributed much in this development of existentialism.

2.5.1. The Fundamental Concepts of Existentialism as well as its Foundational Principles.

2.5.1.1. Existence Precedes Essence.

This is one of the great fundamental ideas of existentialism. Where they differentiate existence and essence and creates a great concept in philosophy. They said existence is that fact the thing is and essence is that what the thing is. Championed by Jean Paul Sartre, he argues using this idea so as to do away with obstacles that faces the idea of Human freedom. What is meant here by saying that ‘Existence precedes Essence’, it means that first of all, man exists, turns up appears on the scene, and only after-wards

¹² Sinha Jadunath, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Central Book Agency (p) Ltd London, Delhi, Pg, 291.

defines himself.¹³ By existence first then man will design his way of life so as creating his own essence. Here they portray non necessity of God's existence. This was against Avicenna who that the necessary being that is God was the source of essence, he says man is not the source of his own existence, thus it is impossible to argue a concept of unlimited freedom.¹⁴

2.5.1.2. Freedom.

This theme in general sense has meaning of having a free faculty to act, think and speaks as one wants, it implies prerogative that is not enslaved. And in philosophy they say it is the power or the state of mind to exercise the will. Now with existential philosophers they argue that basically man is free. Like Jean Paul Sartre says Freedom is identical with existence and man is not only free but he is condemned to be free.¹⁵ They also consider responsibility upon this freedom, so they real emphasize individual freedom, man's choice gives value to life and moral affirmation.

2.5.1.3. Anguish.

Also referred as anxiety, uneasiness as well as dread. It is a result of realizing that life is just absurd according to existential scholars. This is something to do with mental or say pain or suffering physically. Sartre says out of choosing and making our own essence, this despair is there along with the actions that are all for mankind that is when we choose our actions and decision this act of choosing is sometimes source of anguish as Soren Kierkegaard affirms human beings enjoy a freedom of choice that we find both appealing and terrifying.¹⁶

¹³Sartre Jean Paul, Philip Mairet (tr.) *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Public lecture 1946, Pg, 28.

¹⁴ Journal of Islamic Research, *Existentialism and Ibn Sîna* (Avicenna), Vol. 2, Pg, 101-115.

¹⁵Sartre Jean Paul, W.Baskin ed, *Human freedom*, New York 1966, pg 40.

¹⁶Gordon, Marino. *The danish Doctor of Dread*, New York 2013.

2.5.1.4. Absurdity.

They regard life as something of total absurdity, such that it has no sense thus no purpose nor ultimate meaning though man need life to make sense all these that is purpose, meaning. Albert Camus claims, that individuals should embrace the absurd condition of human existence while also defiantly continuing to explore and search for meaning.¹⁷

2.5.1.5. Forlornness.

As the term suggests these talks about sadness of feeling lonely, abandoned or say forsaken. Actually, they argue that ‘God does not exist and that we have to face all the consequences of this. There is no morality a priori. There is no absolute right or wrong. There is no ultimate judge.’¹⁸ Sartre said man is Forlorn in that there is no help from transcendence rather they are set to freedom.

2.5.1.6. Authenticity.

Existentialists viewed that human has need of authenticity that is one is true to his own life no regarded to pressures that are external. Sartre in War Diaries writes that authenticity consists in adopting human reality as one’s own¹⁹ as well as Heidegger who viewed authentic man as a man being one who escaped from the banality of everyday existence by recognizing his state of having limits or bounds and courageously facing up to the fact of death.²⁰

It is worthy saying is some areas existentialists differ since there were atheistic existentialist like Simone, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus etc., As well as

¹⁷Albert Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus and other Essays*, Vintage Books.

¹⁸ L. Nathan Oaklander (ed.), *Existentialist Philosophy: An Introduction*. 2nd ed.

¹⁹Jean Sartre Paul, War Diaries, Pg, 133.

²⁰ Olson Robert G.AS, *An Introduction to Existentialism*, (New York: Dover Publications Inc, 1962), Pg, 149.

de Beauvoir theistic existentialists e.g., Blaise Pascal.

2.6. Soren Kierkegaard's Existentialism

Soren's ideas or stand point showing his existentialism it is not that much different from other philosophers of their thought. We ought to point out that his basic existential interest does not permit him to assume an objective interest in ontological problems.

The profound terminologies in his philosophy are like; truth, passion, personality, subjectivity, existence, self, individual, character, pathos as well as inwardness. He is well known with his idea of authentic along with inauthentic existence.

He belief that a free individual is proper to existence isn't proper to everybody, he says it is a process of gaining of becoming Identical individual that is particular. He says;

To exist means realizing oneself through free choice between alternatives, through self-commitment. To exist, therefore means becoming more and more an individual and less and less a mere member of a group. It means, one can say transcending universality in favor of individuality.²¹

2.7. Conclusion

Having develop the concept of existence and also its problem as per existentialism, which is our subject matter; human existence. Also, it was great introducing our philosopher Soren Kierkegaard.

We fully conceptualize Human existence. Now having introduced the question of human existence as well the different ways of seeing things pertaining to man and his

²¹F. Coplestone, *A History of Philosophy* (New York and London; Image Books, Doubleday, 1994), Pg 335.

existence, we may now turn to the man whose philosophical ideas have had a seminal influence on the known existentialists. We shall see what is existence according to him, what is faith, and how he tackles the question on human suffering. The man I refer to here is Soren Kierkegaard, and the next chapter deals with his life and works.

CHAPTER THREE

PROBLEM OF EVIL AND HUMAN SUFFERING

3.1. Introduction

This chapter turns to the statement of the problem that leads to the questioning of existence that is the problem of suffering leads to many questions man asks about his own existence and too the existence of his creator. Thus, here we will get to the problem of evil, we see the connection of evil and suffering. Towards the end we will get the ideas of our philosopher of course who is representing the existential

philosophy that is Soren Kierkegaard how he interprets fall of man then on concept of sin and finally what he says about evil and suffering.

3.2. Problem of Evil

This idea of the evident or presence of suffering that is as a result in that there is evil in the universe cannot be denied. Consider the genocide in Rwanda. Prevalent propensity of torture where massive loss of life, this was one incident Evil experienced in the world. These are just instances of evil acts otherwise human cruelty of imposing misery on fellow human beings, for no reason. Funny enough these inhuman practices are often imposed upon animals by a human. Along with these, there are natural and metaphysical types of evil for instance earthquakes, illness, and starvation as instances of this evil²². On the Natural tangent, Since the word "evil" is often used to allude to thoughtful cruelty acts, it may not be acceptable to use it to describe natural events that occur as a result of natural causes in certain situations. Though, in as much as we tag it ordinary Evil can be selected in the fact remains that the being of such activities as ailments and catastrophes which are preserved as belief on the compassionate of God.

Accepting the presence of evil actions around the universe, the question is how can we beings actually buy the idea of the existence of the super being that is God if he exists and is, he capable of preventing these inhuman acts as well as the natural causes of human miseries? Why does he allow his creations to suffer from these evil acts? Is he a caring God? The existence of omniscient God, it is believed and known that He is aware of Evil, whereby God who is Omnipotent cannot be able to be overpowered by Evil. And the Benevolent of God could not wish the existence of evil to continue

²² Nigel Warburton, *Philosophy the Basics*, 4th ed, Routledge, London and New York, Pg 21.

to undermine his people. Nonetheless evil continues to happen. The problem can be explained on what is called the attributes of God which are more powerful to irrefutable element of evil. This is how theists feel about the concept of God. The issue of evil has forced many people to lose their trust in the attributes of the Supreme Being, or at the very least to rethink their opinions on God's supposed benevolence, omnipotence, or omniscience, Omnipresent.²³ Since When the supernatural being is perceived as omnipotent, the power believed in Him should be capable of eliminating evil and suffering, nonetheless still evil exists, consequently the Supernatural being cannot conceivably be together all-powerful and impeccably affectionate. The discourses for the existence of Supernatural being have to be balanced in contradiction of the existence of malevolent and the greatest imperative of these is the question of malevolent and misery. An Almighty and impeccably good Supernatural being would not permit the existence of discomfort and misery. There is no effort to repute evil as whatsoever nevertheless dark, threatening unpleasant, and painful and devastating²⁴.

3.3. Evil and Suffering

In our life, some problems come into our way until we question our existence and the existence of the Supreme Being. This has led to the rise of this topic in decades of years in different centuries. The problem of evil and suffering in the broad sense is a question on its existence and what it means. It can be sensed by the following statements on the attributes of God: Omnipotent, Benevolence. The problem is that accepting the first two exposes us to the rejection of the third. If either of the first two are real, the third is false. Demonstrations are not needed to demonstrate the existence

²³ Nigel Warburton, *Philosophy the Basics*, Routledge, London and New York, Pg 22.

²⁴ Hutchins, *Great Books of the Western World*. Plotinus, Pg 27.

of evil in human history today or in the past. Evil and suffering, in all its aspects physical moral, social is a problem intimately connected with the religions and philosophies, and humanities. The Christian message is the most coherent response to evil and suffering from all points of view. Philosophy must also have its word concerning evil and suffering²⁵.

St. Augustine taught following from Plotinus, Evil is the deprivation of the good, evil is not even created, nevertheless only manifests itself through deprivation of choosing what is right from what is wrong. Evil intrinsically cannot be desired by human determination, because the goal of willpower is essentially good. By maintaining the dogma evil is a deprivation. St. Augustine does not mean to suggest that evil is illusory, in the logic of being a deception. Evil is not a being, in the understanding of existence; it falls does not fall under at all in the ten groups of being. Evil occurs as deprivation in the good, as opposed to its right as a positive entity. Privation has no sense or beingness apart from existence. Evil by alone cannot cause anything, nevertheless, it is and can be caused through the deprivation of good. For example, the deformity in the willpower of a deprived angel cannot be the aforementioned because of the positive existence in which it is. The more prevailing the being in which it exists, the superior the effects²⁶. The Longman dictionary defines evil as; something that is morally wrong because it harms people. The notion of suffering is very eminent in the definition of Longman dictionary contemporary English and this can be divided into three terms.

i. Pain to experience physical or mental pain.

²⁵ Luigi Bogliolo, *Metaphysics*, Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, (India: Theological publications, 1987), Pg 36.

²⁶Ulian Marias, *History of Philosophy*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), Pg 116.

ii. Immoral experience or immoral condition when someone agonizes because of unpleasant consequences of not choosing what is right.

iii. Become worse to become worse in quality because a bad situation is affecting something or because nobody is taking care of it²⁷.

Thus, we can say that suffering is serious physical or mental pain.

3.4. Soren Kierkegaard on Evil and Suffering

3.4.1. Interpretation of the fall

In treating the fall, we see analogy of the Paradise lost regarded as one of the Greek mythology, Milton explains the fall in sin that leads to evil susceptibility would feel.²⁸

Soren uses this way to explain the originality of sin rested on humanity, that is his philosophy on the concept of anxiety. He says there is subjective and objective anxiety; subjective is that one which is posited in the individual and is as a result is his sin. Now for Adam is different from us but we tend to be of his origin then we're born corrupt that now we're predestined to sin. We see this as a profound teaching of the protestant in that all men are begotten in a natural way with sin. We can say here Soren was not that much clear with his ideas, he seems trying to fix them with the scriptures.

3.4.2. Concept of sin

Soren sees the teaching of sin as the foundation of Christianity. He sees sin as a condition where one is not a Christian that is *conditio sine qua non*. It is a despair that

²⁷ Longman Dictionary of contemporary English, Pearson, Pg 537

²⁸ William Blake, *The Temptation and Fall of Eve* (Illustration to Milton's "Paradise Lost"), Pg 1908

is before God. It is something that obstacles one from self-realization with the reaction with God, also prevents one from doing his or her will.

We ought to point out that Soren on contrary like other thinkers he didn't distinguish the kinds of sin. He just accepts the doctrine of the original sin; he says of guilt as keeping the inherited sin.

3.4.3. Evil and suffering

In 1846, Soren Kierkegaard wrote on this pathetic question of the goodness of God and his omnipotence as well as its relation to evil. To him the reason to as why God allows evil can be accounted for quite simply in this way. He says the greatest good, which can be done to any being, greater than any end to which it can be created, is to make it free. In order to be able to do that omnipotence Is necessary. After an elaborate explanation, he finishes by saying,

‘If therefore man had even the least independent existence (in regard to material) then God could not make him free. Creation out of nothing is, once again, the expression of omnipotence for being able to make things independent. It is to him who made me independent, while he nevertheless retained everything, that I owe all things. If in order to create man God had lost any of his power, then he could not have made man independent.’²⁹

What we see here with Soren is that, the freedom given by the creator causes man to go astray by misusing the freedom and this the cause of evil that eventually leads to suffering. Actually, according to him man is aware of this misuse that is why there is a concept of forgiveness where we get man seeing sin as misuse of freedom and he

²⁹Soren Kierkegaard, *The Journals of Kierkegaard*, 113-114, 1834-1854.

asks for forgiveness and if not, it leads to punishment that is now where he meets suffering.

Soren in explaining realities, his ideas are intertwined with probably his vision of man. The same case here with evil and suffering, Soren sees suffering as part of man, it is something that constitutes to the life of man as well as Christianity and existence are part of his life. He says; Christianity is the only explanation of existence which hold water in that the earthly existence is suffering and that every man has his share. He thinks that while we're living on earth, we're on examination. On one of his *Journals*, he says;

The necessity for the Christian to suffer does not come from the devil. This is where the highest efforts of the spirit, in relation to

Christianity, begin in the fact that suffering comes from God...But suffering comes from God. Nor does it stand in an accidental relationship with being a Christian. No, it is inseparable from it.

Suffering, is connected with the majesty of God. His majesty is so infinite that it can be characterized or expressed only by a paradox. Majesty to make the beloved unhappy...suffering depends on the fact that God and man are qualitatively different, and that the clash of time and eternity in time is bound to cause suffering.

Suffering depends on the fact that God is the examiner...the examiner must push it to the extreme. So, God, who examines in faith and in the love, must push matters to the extreme (While himself suffering in love more than the candidate...)³⁰

³⁰Kierkegaard, *The Last Journals*, 1853-55, 254-255.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter three we have extensively elucidated and discussed our problem of suffering that makes us question our own existence and the existence of the supernatural being. In a general sense we can opt to see what is the source of this suffering, it starts from human by the misuse of free will give or say the so called freedom that leads to sin and the punishment is the suffering. But this created beings that is human get conscious of this sin and they ask for forgiveness, The supernatural Being is the Giver of the salvation, why can't he give it before man suffers?

Through this chapter and left some questions, since this Topic touches the spirituality of man, we ought to know what is the perspective of Christians rather say regions on the idea of suffering, and thus we move to the fourth chapter to consider that.

CHAPTER FOUR

RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW ON EVIL AND SUFFERING

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter we let the definers of evil or sin tell us their conceptualization of the sin as well as anguish in the universe before the face of their theistic belief of the supernatural being. That is the religious in the world what they say on this idea of suffering, we will consider Hinduism, Islam and lastly Christianity.

4.2. Islam's Conception of Evil and Suffering

Before the birth of Adam, the first human being in existence, Islam claims that Satan, also known as Iblis, was at the cradle and heart of evil. Satan is the source of evil's power and base. He was the first creature to rebel against God and lead a revolt. This

is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an when it says³¹. And don't forget what the Lord said to the angels when he said, "Lo!" I am making a finite out of black mud altered potter's clay, so when I have finished making him and breathing my spirit into him, prostrate yourselves before him. So, with the exception of Satan, all of the Angels prostrated themselves. He denied being one of the prostrate. 15:28–31 in the Qur'an. Thus, even before man was created actually Allah was disobeyed by Satan. Their argument is the first sin of Adam and Hauwa is not desired it is the effect of the evil master that is Iblis.

4.3. Hinduism's Conception of Evil and Suffering

With Hindus, the central idea of Karma, explains the being of suffering as well as evil. It is the simplest concepts among the teachings of Hinduism and also at the same time the most complex-though it goes again the principle of excluded middle in that every proposition is either this proposition or its negation is true. Karma is the intentional action.

They teach that mostly of the suffering is out of our own action, they don't refer as suffering rather as something to learn from it and the response should be kindness and compassion is not so bad karmic will continue. Now with natural disasters they say it is something to do with the '*play of the gods*' that forms the cosmic realm which they say now is beyond what human can comprehend. They too say these disasters are there to balance the life on earth take an example when eruptions of volcano happen helps in growing crops for food even when rivers floods.

³¹ Badru D. Kateregga and David W. Shenk, *Islam and Christianity: A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*, (Nairobi: Uzima Press limited, 1980), Pg 23-24.

4.4. Christianity's Conception of Evil and Suffering

God had given freedom; however, Satan misused his freedom after rebelling against God, and successively became exceedingly evil. The climax of all these is what in the Old Testament is the episode where God and Satan contend with one another about Job's integrity.

Here we see God permitting Satan to give trouble to his servant Job. After a long talk with his friends, Job wanted an answer from God as to why He was suffering innocently. In answer, God puts before Job so many challenges in form of questions that he could not answer. Finally, Job bows out of the contest answering.

From this another closing conclusion that this sharing between God and Job demonstrate that there is no way a man can put God into commission and demand answers. On the divergent, the truth is that man has no rights before God but only duties to fulfil. From the New Testament, there is pinnacle of salvation history, concept of death of Christ.

4.4.1. Evil and Suffering in Church Documents

The apostolic letter of the philosopher pope John Paul II, *Salvific Doloris* that is On the Christian meaning of human suffering serves a very key document with the current church as well as with the universe at large in conception of human suffering.

Lucien R. says that "suffering is a special value in the eyes of the church and it is something good before which the church bows down in reference with all the depth of her faith in the redemption."³² Then there is a lot of conclusions that the integral part of truth as well as authenticity.

³²Rose Foster Lucian OMI, *What are they saying about theology and suffering*, Pg 4.

For Schillebeckx, he sees suffering as a reality that isn't negative, although often it is perceived as such by many people. He believes that in a world without evil and suffering, that world would be unreal, a world of robots. He however affirms:

Evil has no right to exist, and such a refusal is consistent and coherent if it is linked with a powerful involvement in resistance against all forms of evil. Yet there cannot be any total victory over suffering, no complete resistance, for there is always death. Death above all shows that we are deluded if we think that we can realize on earth a true, perfect and universal salvation for all and for every individual.³³

The Christian response to suffering is to be aligned with our redemption accomplished through the suffering of Christ.

Now there is Contrary to what is commonly believed and the question here is what is this that is contrary.

Life without trials would be no life to celebrate since celebration comes from struggles as swahili saying goes '*Baada ya dhiki ni faraja*' that is after struggles or problems there is joy. Imagine the world without evil nor suffering, nobody would care for the other or care about anything. There would not be any need to think either.

No need to love, or even to hate. Keeping laws or not keeping them will make no difference, in short there will not be any challenge in life, no taste in life. According to Philosopher Pope Paul John-II:

³³ Ibid, Pg 33.

Suffering seems to be particularly essential to the nature of man. It is deep as man himself, precisely because it manifests in its own way that depth which is proper to man, and in its own way surpasses it. Suffering seems to belong to man's transcendence: it is one of those points in which man is in a certain sense "destined" to go beyond himself, and is called to this in a mysterious way.³⁴

Here the Philosopher pope John II argues that evil as well as suffering are not constituents to man's existence that is to say there are not in co-existence with man but he agrees that they cannot be separated rather, that is to say man and suffering are inseparable. But why? The philosopher pope tells us that this suffering makes man to gain some human qualities, that is it invokes compassion also it intimidates as well as invoking respect, like for example during Tangaza university opening invocation mass for opening the academic year 2022-2023, In his preaching the Apostolic Nunciature to Kenya Archbishop Hubertus Van Megen said 'Humiliation makes one to be human' in that when you are humiliated you see the sense of being human and by so you develop humanity, his thought though.

Back to our philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, in this view of Pope John, we see his idea that existence interwoven with evil and suffering.

In fact, there is a link in between evil and suffering, man in his life he meets suffering when there is evil in his way of life. In fact, evil and suffering are identical, I mean evil and suffering are identified with each other as seen in the Old Testament something that pope John Paul II says:

³⁴John Paul-II, *Salvifici Doloris*, Pauline publishers, 1984, Pg 6.

Christianity proclaims the essential good of existence and the good of that what exists, acknowledges the goodness of the creator and proclaims the good of the creatures. Man suffers on account of evil, which is a certain lack, limitation or distortion of good...man suffers because of a good in which he does not share, from which in a certain sense he is cut off, or of which he has deprived himself. He particularly suffers when he "ought" in the normal order of things-to have a share in this good, and does not have it, Thus in Christian view, the reality of suffering is explained through evil, which always, in some way refers to a good.³⁵

In the second council of Orange in 529 as well as the council of Trent in the year 1546 we see the idea that the results of original sin from the sin of Adam gets the universe in a condition of sinfulness, they renounce the transmission of sin and they summarize the teaching of evil as:

God is infinitely good and all his works are good. Yet no one can escape the experience of suffering or the evils in nature, which seem to be linked to the limitations proper to creatures. And above all to the question of moral evil. Where does evil come from? I sought whence evil comes and there was no solution, said St. Augustine, and his painful quest would only be resolved by his conversion to the living God. For the mystery of lawlessness is clarified only in the light of the mystery of religion. The revelation of Divine love in Christ manifested at the same time then extent of evil and the superabundance of grace. We must therefore approach the question

³⁵ibid, pg 10-11

of the origin of the evil by fixing the eyes of our faith on him who alone is the conqueror.³⁶

In other words, the church doesn't allow people to justify their sins by blaming the devil.

Lastly in line with church teaching on these prolific teachings it is worthy to mention the angelic doctor his ST, he gives a philosophical approach on the question of evil as he says:

That God did not will moral evil in any sense whatever, but only permitted it for a greater good than could be attained by preventing it, that is by not making man free, and that, though God did not will physical evil for its own sake, He may be said to have willed certain physical evil *per accidens*, for the perfection of the universe.³⁷

The argument is Man has no option rather than being in co-operation with God and keep the commandments.

4.5. Conclusion

After an extensive study on about what the religious in the world what they say on this idea of suffering, thus it is worthy to conclude that, this topic isn't a problem to respond to anyhow, isn't for a non-believer nor is it a problem for religious believers whose conception of the divine differs significantly from the Orthodox or Judeo-Christian conception. For instance, it did not arise from the ancient Greeks since they

³⁶John Paul II, *Catechism of the catholic church, Apostolic Constitution fidei Depositum*, Question 385, Pg 108.

³⁷Aquinas Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, vol II, Pg 374.

did not consider the Olympian gods to be either omnipotent or morally perfect³⁸. For the orthodox believer, however, the problem is a pressing one. Because the history of western philosophy is intertwined with Christianity there have been numerous efforts to solve it. Such effort is known as theodicy, since it typically defends the impression that, appearances notwithstanding, God is just.

In Hume's discourses concerning Natural Religion we find some theodicy that the only way subordinates the ultimate being benevolence is to reject man's suffering and wickedness; well-being outnumbers illness; happiness outnumbers pain: contentment than unhappiness; and the one displeasure we get, we attain upon computation, hundred pleasures. This is to say that we do not agonize really at least not very much. Nevertheless, the philosophical problem of evil does not go away if it turns out that there are fewer evils than we supposed³⁹.

A more appealing endeavor to refute the reality of suffering was advanced by Saint Augustine. He contended that the evils of the world have no positive existence; on the contrary, they are deprivations. For instance, blindness is the absence of sight; sickness is the deficiency of health; poverty is the lack of wealth. In other words, all created by God is perfect, just as the justification of creation in Genesis concisely supports. In this respect, since evils are simply privations, they have no actual existence and God cannot be held accountable for them. Regarding the second theodicy: it is our fault; it affirms that human beings are accountable for their miseries. Since God made us in his image and resemblance and envisioned that we live on a

³⁸ Nils CH. Rauhut, *The Big Questions philosophy for Everyone*, New York: Pearson Longman, New York, Pg 298.

³⁹ Nigel Warburton, *Philosophy the basics*, 4th ed, Routledge, London and New York, 2008, Pg 22.

higher degree than all other creatures in the hierarchy of beings, he gave us with free will. God has created us with full-fledged freedom even to go against his will. This is an unaffected sanctification; it allows our lives to have worthy meaning and value. But then again that blessing comes at a price. Since we are not honorably, morally and ethically perfect beings, and since we do make unrestricted elections, we are then prone sometimes to make faults in our choices and we must then suffer the consequences of those choices. The impression is to extend moral obligation so that each person can be held accountable for all they do. The notion that prosperity must, at some level, be a reward for virtue while suffering must be a punishment for some kind of failing goes back a long way.

Conceivably, the most radical extension of the notion of responsibility, however, the doctrine of original sin was advanced by Christian theologians one of them being Augustine. Consistent with this dogma, not one even one person is perfectly innocent. According to a mythical enlightenment of this idea, after the first man and disobeyed God, they were judged not only shamefaced but also all their pro genies, and the sins of the ancestors were passed on to future generations. A more intellectual version holds that it is basically part of the human condition to be in some way dirtied with sin; this is part and parcel of having a corporeal body and a partly animal nature. Hence, the inference to be drawn here is that since every human being are corrupt by original sin, no suffering is ever completely unjustifiable⁴⁰.

The third theodicy: It is good for us this discourse to come in with a more than one flavor. What has been termed as the “cosmic harmony” defense calls consideration to the fact that our perspective on the universe is extremely limited? To criticize on

⁴⁰ Nils CH. Rauhut, *The Big Questions philosophy for Everyone*, Pearson Longman, New York, Pg 298.

these so-called evils is to be like children who complain about the rain that stops them from playing, not knowing how valuable it is in other respects. To wish that life was jam-packed with pleasures and totally free from pain is as mistaken as thinking that we could have only days and no nights, forgetting that we are part of an ecosystem that needs the change of day and night. This way of dealing with the problem approaches the outlook characteristic of Taoism, an ancient Chinese philosophy, which views the light and dark, the negative and the positive, as correspondingly indispensable to a harmonious universe in which they balance each other out. The notion that our perception of the universe is unavoidably partial and limited is unquestionably true. It follows necessarily that our notion of certain things or events and how they relate to the whole is also bound to be imperfect. For one to be reminded of this is with conviction healthy. In text, the book of Job, there is a reply from himself to Job's grievances by providing just such a reminder: where was God when I positioned the fundamentals of the earth? Declare if God hast. Understanding. Who has laid the measures thereof, if thou know? Who hath stretched upon it? God's magnificent catalogue of things that the creator alone could⁴¹.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Our paper has been exploring this idea of trying to get the meaning of Human existence in relation to human suffering in Kierkegaard, at least there is light now as we come to conclusion though this can be felt not enough, it might seem an introduction to the problem since it requires a deeper inquiry and a deeper understanding

⁴¹ Nils CH. Rauhut, *The Big Questions philosophy for Everyone* (New York: Pearson Longman, New York), Pg 298.

Unfortunately, we are dealing with grounds for disbelief in God where we are faced with the problem of evil, whose answer lies in the very fact of God's existence. Evil and suffering are not evidenced militating against God's existence nor challenging human existence. Those who refute the God's self-evident being due to the evidence of being of suffering caused by sin that is evil on earth have difficulty in understanding this. The difficulty here is the inability to see how two opposing truths are to be reconciled. Difficulties are mysteries and the world is full of them. Among the many things we do not see completely is how to reconcile excess evils and loving God. The inability for us to see the connection does not mean that the two cannot be compatible.

From our study actually in a Christian perspective we can say that regarding the problem of evil and suffering is that we cannot comment about the presence of evil in our world since it cannot be a problem until we admit the existence of God. This is because logically you cannot argue against something that you do not know. For example, how can anyone genuinely call himself an Atheist and argue against the existence of God whom he does not know? How did he know that there is a reality called God such that he can enter into a dialogue with him to argue for or against? In either case, he is caught up because one cannot argue against the existence of what he does not know or even argue against what does not exist. The question of suffering can be valid only after admitting the existence of God. The revelation of JESUS a great deal of the problems of evil is solved in that, in his passion, death, and resurrection, Jesus conquered sin, and as the scripture shows we can learn how to overcome sin, suffering, and death in Jesus. There is no final solution to evil except through Jesus.

Of course, there are many theological arguments put forward to explain this problem since it touches the person of God, it can't be solved extensively only philosophically nor scientifically. These arguments are like

- i.** Suffering as Curative; This argument that God used suffering as a medicine to heal and bring back sinners is not convincing because it portrays a negative image of God.
- ii.** Suffering as Purification; Suffering as purification retains the pedagogical sense of leading one from sinful habits. Though it leaves the question of the innocent people suffering responded to.
- iii.** Suffering as Testing/Discipline; The concept of suffering as testing/discipline argues that God sends suffering to test or discipline human beings.
- iv.** Suffering as Mystery; Admittedly, suffering is a mystery in the sense that it is a difficult reality to understand in its relationship with God.

All in all, the ultimate conclusion of all studies concerning our topic of inquiry ends at man as the author of the shortcoming of the suffering through his sin that cause evil. Soren Kierkegaard says that the will in the world will not get into satisfactory. He views human beings as permanent complaints even where there is no reason of their complaints, there must be something man must attach his problem to even to himself the way we are attaching the cause of suffering to man. In saying man will not be satisfied he says;

When a man has a toothache, the world says: Poor man; when a man has financial troubles, the world says: Poor man; when a man's

wife dies, the world says: Poor man; when a man is arrested, the world says: Poor man. When God lets himself be born and suffers for the world, the world says: Poor man; when an apostle of God is favored with the call to suffer persecution and death in the service of God, the world says of the apostle: Poor Man-Poor world!!!⁴²

We assert that Kierkegaard was close to Luther, in his being anti-philosophical and individualistic. He echoes Luther's famous dicta; "Whoever wants to be a Christian should tear the eyes off reason" and "you must part with reason and not know anything of it and even kill it; else one will not get into the kingdom of heaven" and "reason is a whore."⁴³ Of course it was a bit too much we can see why he said what he said, we cannot declare that we share the same ideas. He was very pessimistic and went too far with his criticism.

Kierkegaard's central purpose was to persuade modern man to the idea that one thing needful was to become a Christian, and he considered philosophy a dangerous distraction and believed that the professors taught a false conception of Christianity. One of his statements was that it was the high time that Christianity was taken away from the people so that they learn how to appreciate it for he thought it was too much taken for granted.

In Jasper's *Existenzphilosophie*, Kierkegaard's revolt against Hegelianism reaches philosophic climax. The protest against Hegel's avowed aim, "to raise philosophy to the level of a science" leads to a philosophizing, which is personal to the point of repudiating all Content in favor of an appeal to man's "inner constitution." The

⁴²Kierkegaard, *Woorks of love*, Pg 419

⁴³Otto, 18.

opposition to the Hegelian professors for whom philosophy was a system and a history of philosophy, and in both aspects a species of objective knowledge, leads to the tireless insistence that philosophic "truth is subjectivity," to cite the fateful paradox of Kierkegaard. The Hegelian principle that any judgment must be mediated and developed is abandoned, and judgments are offered abruptly and apparently dogmatically, but labeled as subjective. Conviction and Conscience are reinstated in their immediacy. "Communication" is made central in Kierkegaard.

We Conclude this paper by asserting that we have seen that to a certain extent, man is responsible for the evil he suffers depending on the different circumstances. A lot depends on the free will endowed to the man by his Creator. We have just explored some avenues, as it were, to understand the problem of human suffering in a broad way in relation to human existence. It still remains a mystery whereby God can be said to know he is not responsible. Neither can He be blamed. The problem of evil belongs to the infinite while man himself is finite.

Will the infinite ever be understood or contained in the finite? Thus like St. Augustine, our hearts will be restless until they find their rest in Him. Maybe God alone can explain suffering, as Kierkegaard would say. The most important question that Kierkegaard raised is that since Christianity is not lived as it should be, what would be the criterion for a good Christian. Or better still, how can the individual follow the model of Abraham, who obeys the call of faith without seeking to be justified before anything, less than the presence of God?

In summary, how can I become a true Christian?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Sartre, J.P. “*Camus’s The Outsider.*” In *Literary and Philosophical Essays*. New York: Collier Books, 1962.

Alfred A. Knopf. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*. New York, 1955.

McBride, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism*, Albert Camus: Philosopher and Littérateur, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992.

Kasyoka, John. *Human Suffering, and Existence, an Enquiry into Kierkegaard*. Eldoret: Zapf Chancery, 2006.

Secondary Sources

Rauhut, Nils. *The Big Questions: philosophy for Everyone*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. London: Christian Classics, 1947.

John Paul-II, Pope. *Encyclical: Faith and Reason*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998.

John Paul-II, Pope. *Salvifici Doloris: Apostolic Letter of the the Supreme Pontiff John Paul-II on Human Suffering*. London: Catholic Truth Society Publishers to the Holy See, 1984.

Fr. Melchior Marandu, SJ. *A Theology of Suffering Quest for Meaning*. India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2018.

Marias, Julian. *History of Philosophy*. New York: Dover Publications, 1967.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, the Living Dictionary, Pearson
Longman, 2008.

Coplestone, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy*. New York: Image Books, 1994.