

فَلَسَفَةُ الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ فِي الْفِكْرِ الدِّيْنِيِّ وَأَثَرُهَا عَلَى سُلُوكِ الْإِنْسَانِ

The Philosophy of Good and Evil in Religious Thought and Its Impact on Human Behavior

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ملخص:

يعدُّ مَوْضُوعُ الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ مِنَ الْمَوَاضِعِ الَّتِي شَغَلَتْ مَسَاحَةً كَبِيرَةً فِي الْبَحْثِ قَدِيمًا وَحَدِيثًا لَمَّا لَهُ مِنْ أَثَرٍ مُبَاشِرٍ فِي تَشْكِيلِ الْأَنْمَاطِ السُّلُوكِيَّةِ لِلْإِنْسَانِ التَّرْبُويَّةِ مِنْهَا وَالسِّيَاسِيَّةِ أَفْرَادًا وَجَمَاعَاتٍ. فَلِذَا لَا يَكَادُ دِينًا سَمَآوِيًّا أَوْ وَضْعِيًّا وَلَا مَدْرَسَةً فِكْرِيَّةً أَوْ فِلْسَافِيَّةً وَلَا مَذْهَبًا أَخْلَاقِيًّا أَوْ مَادِيًّا يَخْلُوْ مِنْ الْبَحْثِ فِي مَوْضُوعِ الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ، فَالْبَحْثُ عَنْهُ يُعْطِي انْطِبَاعًا وَتَفْسِيرًا عَنْ فِكْرَةِ الْإِلَهِ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ عِلَاقَةً عَلَى قِيَمَةِ الْإِنْسَانِ الَّتِي تَشْكَلُ نَمَطًا خَاصًّا فِي السُّلُوكِ لَمَّا يَسْتَلْهِمُهُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ بِالْعَيْبِ. وَمِنْ هُنَا انْبَثَقَتْ رَغْبَتِي فِي اخْتِيَارِ هَذَا الْمَوْضُوعِ لِلْوُقُوفِ بِصُورَةٍ أَدَقَّ عَلَى الْانْعِكَاسَاتِ التَّرْبُويَّةِ النَّاتِجَةِ مِنَ الْأُذْيَانِ وَالْمَدَارِسِ وَالْمَذَاهِبِ إِزَاءَ تَفْسِيرِ هَذَا الْمَوْضُوعِ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: (الخير، الشر، السلوك الانساني، الفرد، المجتمع).

Abstract:

The subject of good and evil has occupied a significant place in research, both ancient and modern, due to its direct impact on shaping human behavioral patterns, both educational and political, for individuals and groups. Therefore, it's hardly possible for any revealed or man-made religion, intellectual or philosophical school, or even ethical or materialistic doctrine, to be devoid of any inquiry into the subject of good and evil. This research provides an impression and interpretation of the concept of God in

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whom they believe, in addition to the value of humanity, which shapes a particular pattern of behavior inspired by faith in the unseen. Hence, the desire to choose this topic to more accurately examine the educational implications resulting from religions, schools, and doctrines regarding the interpretation of the topic.

Keywords: good, evil, human behavior, individual, society)

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1 Introduction

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and may peace and blessings be upon the noblest of creation and messengers, Abu Al-Qasim Mohammad, the unlettered Prophet, and upon his pure and virtuous family.

Now then:

The subject of good and evil has occupied a significant place in research, both ancient and modern, due to its direct impact on shaping human behavioral patterns, both educational and political, for individuals and groups. Therefore, it's hardly possible for any revealed or man-made religion, intellectual or philosophical school, or even ethical or materialistic doctrine, to be devoid of any inquiry into the subject of good and evil. This research provides an impression and interpretation of the concept of God in whom they believe, in addition to the value of humanity, which shapes a particular pattern of behavior inspired by faith in the unseen. Hence, the desire to choose this topic to more accurately examine the educational implications resulting from religions, schools, and doctrines regarding the interpretation of the topic.

Importance of the study

The importance of the subject lies in two things:

1. To understand the different perspectives of religions, schools, and doctrines on the subject of interpreting good and evil, and their conception of the God they believe in.

2. A statement of the most important outcomes resulting from those beliefs on the subject of good and evil, and the effects reflected on the behavior of the individual and the group.

Research Problem

The research problem is defined by the nature of the questions it poses and attempts to answer:

1. What is good and evil?
2. Why are there differing interpretations of good and evil?
3. How has the interpretation of good and evil influenced the belief in God?
4. If God is the source of good, why does evil exist in the world?
5. What premises do these schools of thought base their interpretations of human nature on, as being purely good or purely evil?
6. What is the nature of the relationship between human behavior and abstract metaphysics, and does this relationship have a positive or negative impact on humanity?
7. Does the act itself inherently possess goodness or evil, or does the description ascribe goodness or evil?
8. Is the human mind capable and independent of discerning good and evil in actions, or do we need a legislator connected to the unseen to determine good and evil for us?

Research Methodology

This study relies on two main approaches:

1. The historical method, which is significant for relating everything in the study to ancient religions, schools, and doctrines.
2. The analytical method, which is employed in analyzing those interpretations according to the research data.

Research Structure

This research is divided into an introduction, two sections, a conclusion, and a list of sources, in the following order:

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1. Introduction: This section explains the reason for choosing the subject, its importance, the problem it addresses, and its methodology and structure.
2. Section One: This section defines the concepts of good and evil in religious thought.
3. Section Two: This section examines the impact of good and evil on behavioral patterns.
4. Conclusion: This section summarizes the most important findings of the research.

In conclusion, I ask Allah to extend His hand of help and grant me success in completing this work to the best of my ability, for He is the Source of every blessing and the fulfillment of every desire. All praise is due to Allah, first and last.

Section One: Defining the Nature of Good and Evil in Religious Thought

1.1 Defining the Concepts of Good and Evil

1.1.1 Linguistic Definition:

1. Al-Khayr (The Good):

Ibn Faris (d. 395 AH) said regarding the origin of the Arabic word for ‘the Good’: The letters ‘kha’, ‘ya’, and ‘ra’ fundamentally stand for inclination and leaning, and then its base is applied to other meanings. ‘Al-Khayr’ (the Good) is the opposite of ‘Al-Sharr’ (evil), because everyone inclines toward it and feels compassion for its possessor. ‘Al-Khayrah’ means choice as well as generosity. ‘Istikhara’ means asking for the better of two options. All of this stems from ‘Istikhara,’ which is seeking guidance. (Ibn Faris 1979, 232) It has also been said that the original form of the word was ‘Khar’, meaning the ‘ya’ was replaced with an ‘alif’ (letter ‘a’), but the first is more accurate.

Then the root is inflected, so one says: a good man ‘Rajul Khayyir’, a good woman ‘Imra’ah Khayyirah’, good people ‘Qawm Khiyar’, a man of goodness ‘Rajul dho Khayr’, and so-and-so is better than so-and-so ‘fulan akhayr min fulan’. (Al-Turayhi 2007, 185)

Al-Fayruzabadi provides an exhaustive account of the derivations and mentions all of their meanings. He states that the term refers to money, horses, and one possessing many horses; the lightened form refers to beauty and distinguishing traits, and the heavy form denotes religion and righteousness. When pronouncing with ‘kasra’, it refers to generosity, honor, origin, appearance, and a man who is preferable than others ‘Khirah’, it also refers to superiority in goodness; that a thing may be originated or brought into being; and the noun ‘Khirah’, meaning choice. (Al-Fayruzabadi 2008, 514) Al-Sharr (Evil):

Ibn Faris said that the letters ‘sheen’ and ‘ra’ form a single root, indicating spreading and scattering. From this comes ‘Al-Sharr’(evil), the opposite of ‘Al-Khayr’ (good). A ‘Shirrir’ is a man described as evil, which is the root meaning, due to its spread and abundance. ‘Al-Sharr’ (evil) also means spreading something out in the sun. From it comes ‘Shararra’ (a spark), and the plural form of it is ‘Sharrar’. Sparks are what fly off from fire, the singular being ‘Shararah’. God Almighty said: “{Indeed, it throws sparks like towering castles}” (*Al-Mursalat*: 32). It is also said ‘Sharshara’ (cut) a thing means he cut something into pieces. (Ibn Faris 1979, 232)

‘Al-Sharr’ (evil) has both physical (concrete) and moral (abstract) meanings, which Al-Fayruzabadi has mentioned, including: ‘Al-Sharr’ (evil) is the opposite of ‘Al-Khayr’ (good), ‘Al-Sharr’ is the hateful, fever, poverty, it also refers to the side of the sea, and to a tree that grows in the sea. ‘Sharrat Al-Shabab’ means vigor of the youth, ‘Al-Ishrah’ refers to ‘Qadeed’, which is the dried meat and refers to a large piece of camel, and ‘Al-Sharashir’ signifies the soul, burdens, affection, and the entire body. (Al-Fayruzabadi 2008, 514)

1.1.2 The technical/terminological definition.

The researcher faces the difficulty of reducing the essence of good and evil to a single definition, because they are controversial and disputed topics. It is not possible to combine their details with just one or two definitions. Therefore, this research will briefly address the most important schools of thought that have defined these two concepts.

1. The Idealist school (Idealism)

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The Idealist school of thought traces its origins to the great philosopher Socrates, who emphasized reason and made it the cornerstone of his philosophy in the pursuit of truth. For him, human beings are more important than nature. He also asserted that moral values are unchanging regardless of circumstances. This philosophy was associated with his student Plato, who recorded and systematically organized it. (Al-Hayari 1993, 21)

Socrates believed that man is comprised of spirit and intellect, which governs and controls the body. Just laws, he argued, originate from reason and are in accordance with true nature. They are a reflection of unwritten laws inscribed by the gods in the hearts of humankind. Whoever respects just laws respects reason and divine order. Human beings always desire good and necessarily flee from evil. Whoever understands their true nature and recognizes their inherent goodness will inevitably pursue it. The wicked person, however, is ignorant of themselves and their own goodness. Thus, virtue is knowledge, and vice is ignorance. (Karam 1946, 53)

In the idealist school of thought, goodness is embodied in the world of ideals and forms and is realized through adherence to order, moderation, and dealing with things according to their true nature without diminishing them. Evil, on the other hand, resides in the world of the senses; it is the physical force that impairs the intellectual faculty, leading the mind astray and hindering higher intellectual processes. (Al-Hayari 1989, 156)

2. The Realist school (Realism)

The Realist school traces its origins to its leader, Aristotle, a student of Plato. He rejected the world of Forms as the basis of existence, clinging instead to the world of reality. He viewed nature with a meticulous scientific eye, applying the laws of logic and its foundations to order and organization. For him, intellectual abstraction is subordinate to sensory existence and a consequence of it; it has no existence except through the existence of the intellect. (Marhaba 2007, 156-157)

Aristotle argues that the only real sphere is the evolving natural world. Reality and the ideal, the natural and the spiritual, are one indivisible truth. This dualistic premise means that the good life should be described based

on our world, without reference to the higher or supernatural realms. Therefore, to uncover the nature of the good life, or the highest form of good, we must study human nature. The good examines human actions insofar as they are human, and it concerns itself with assessing what should be done and what should be avoided to regulate human life. (Abdulhaleem 2012, 8)

So, ‘AL-Khayr’ (the good) is everything real that we sense and see in the world of the senses, and everything that operates according to natural laws. While ‘Al-Sharr’ (the Evil) is the lack of harmony between mind and body, and between human beings and the laws of nature. (Barqawi 1986, 13)

3. The Naturalist school (Naturalism)

Naturalism is considered the wellspring from which all other philosophical schools emerged. Its principles were reflected, to varying degrees, in other schools. The history of this school dates back to the 6th century BC, with the philosophers of Mytilene who lived in eastern Turkey. They were the first to attempt to discover the truth about things by relying entirely on nature, asserting the necessity of water for everything, as it is the common element among all things in nature. It then developed through the work of many philosophers, gradually growing until it reached its culmination in the 18th century AD with the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who is considered the pioneer of Naturalism. (Al-Hayari 1993, 20)

For Rousseau, good is: “necessarily generated from infinite potential and from the self-love inherent in every sentient being.” (Rousseau 1761-2012, 59) This means that man is “born purely good, free from evil, and nothing diverts him from this goodness except the man he lives with and the environment that nurtures him—that is, society, civilization, and social systems.” (Rousseau 1761-2012, 32) Evil, for him, is “that which a being feels through suffering; this is a feeling that man does not receive from nature, but rather brings upon himself.” (Rousseau 1761-2012, 58) Therefore, according to the naturalist school, good is an essential and intrinsic aspect of human nature, while evil is an acquired and incidental quality, obtained from the surrounding factors.

4. The Pragmatist school (Pragmatism)

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The pragmatist school emerged in America in the nineteenth century, founded by the philosopher Charles Peirce, and further developed by William James and John Dewey. This school asserts that reason only reaches its full potential when it leads its possessor to successful action. A correct idea is a successful idea, that is, an idea that is validated by experience. The truth of a proposition is measured only by its practical results; in other words, the results or fruits obtained determine the value of any idea. (Al-Murhij 2008, 18)

John Dewey believed that good and evil reside in the nature of the circumstances under which actions are performed. An action may be good in some circumstances and evil in others; that is, there is no absolute separation between good and evil. It is the nature of the circumstances that determines this, not the quality of the work or behavior. (Al-Hayari 1989, 157)

5. The Existentialist school (Existentialism)

The roots of existentialism can be traced back to the Greek philosophy of Parmenides and Plotinus. Its branches grew and flourished in the 19th century CE at the hands of the Danish thinker Søren Kierkegaard, who is considered its true father. This school believes that a person is defined by their actions; human actions determine their existence and being. Therefore, a person is measured by their actions, and their existence is judged and defined accordingly. (Badawi 1980, 5)

For them, good is represented by everything a person does to realize their existence through fulfilling their desires, inclinations, and personal interests. Evil, on the other hand, is the inability of a person to achieve self-realization, leading to constant fear and anxiety, or it encompasses all the negative things imposed on humanity by others to deprive it of its freedom. (Barqawi 1986, 17)

1.2. Good and evil in religions.

In this section, the research will review the concepts of good and evil in man-made and heavenly religions, and how they believe in them according to the beliefs from which those religions proceed in managing their worldly

life and the afterlife. I will mention some examples that are appropriate to the research.

1. Buddhism

Buddha viewed the world and life pessimistically. He depicted life as full of sorrows and evils, an inheritance of calamities and pains, misery and wretchedness, and that this existence is deceptive and vain. For him, evil is a real pain that a person experiences throughout their life, a pain not worth living. According to Buddha, life is pain stemming from desire, which arises from the attachment between the senses and external things. He says: "From desire, passion, and lust come sorrow, pain, doubts, and illusions. Attachment to things is greed, and sensation is an inheritance from one's previous existence, and all these are the cause of unhappiness and injustice." (Numsok 1999, 259) The only salvation from this oppressive prison is material annihilation, which can only be achieved through asceticism and through renouncing all worldly pleasures and desires. (Ghallab 1938, 123)

Thus, goodness and happiness are linked to the elimination of the chains of pain, the source of which is the carnal desires that breed misery and evil. But if one does not rid oneself of these constraints, and one's actions and deeds are driven by desire or fear, then happiness will not be achieved. He likens this to the roots of a tree, saying: "Know, you who are gathered here, that you must rid yourselves of your egos as one uproots a large tree to reach its roots, so that dangers do not strike repeatedly. The proverb says that if a tree is cut down, its roots will grow back and sprout; if its roots remain, they will grow stronger and more potent. Likewise, if the ego clings to a person and is not completely eradicated, then troubles and pains will return to him again and again." (Numsok 1999, 260)

2. Zoroastrianism:

Zoroaster made 'Al-Khayr' (the good) the foundation and center of his religion, while evil was something resulting from an external factor outside of humanity, contrary to what Buddha believed. He spoke of the principle of ethnicity, tracing it back to two conflicting origins from which all creatures arose. These are light and darkness, that is, good and evil.

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Zoroaster believed the world was governed by the principles of light and darkness, interpreting the two elements of existence as light and darkness, good and evil. The first, light, has true existence, while the second, darkness and evil, do not, like a person's shadow, which appears to exist but is not as real as the person themselves. He also explained the movement of existence through his doctrine of light and darkness as two opposing principles. Good and evil, righteousness and corruption, purity and impurity, according to his interpretation, arise from the mixture of light and darkness. If they did not mix, the world would not exist. They resist and struggle until light overcomes darkness and good overcomes evil, then good returns to its realm, and that is the cause of salvation. (Al-Shahrastani 2009, 266)

3. Manichaeism

The Manichean religion is attributed to Mani Ibn Fatik. It proclaimed him the messenger of light, who came to complete the work of Zoroaster, Buddha, and Christ. All of these, however, are incomplete fragments of the truth, but even these fragments have been corrupted by their followers. (Imam s.d., 383)

This religion is also based on the duality of light and darkness. The action of light is goodness, righteousness, benefit, joy, order, system, and agreement, while the action of darkness is evil, corruption, harm, sadness, confusion, severance, and discord. Light and darkness mingled by chance and coincidence, not by intention or choice. The reason for their mingling is that the dark bodies became somewhat preoccupied with something other than their souls. They looked towards the soul, saw the light, and in turn, they urged the bodies to mingle with it. The bodies responded because of their eagerness for evil. When the King of Light saw this, He sent one of His angels, and the smoke mingled with the breeze. Indeed, life and spirit in this world come from the breeze, while destruction and calamities come from the smoke and the fire. Light mingled with darkness, the scorching wind with the clouds, and the fog with the water. Thus, all benefit, goodness, and blessing in the world are from the realms of light, and all harm, corruption, and evil are from the realms of darkness. When the King

of Light saw this mingling, He commanded one of His angels, and he created this world in this manner. (Al-Shahrastani 2009, 271) Judaism.

Anyone who examines the concept of good and evil in Judaism will find it ill-defined, appearing only vaguely and obscurely, confined to a few instances in the Old Testament. I will attempt, to the best of my ability, to clarify its meaning.

After God created the first human being, His first commandment was not a moral one outlining his role in life and history, but rather an incomprehensible prohibition. When a prohibition is incomprehensible or unjustified, it often leads to disobedience. This is precisely what happened at the dawn of time. After the completion of creation, God (Yahweh) planted a garden in a place on Earth called, in the Bible, the eastern part of Eden. In the center of the garden, He caused the Tree of Life and another tree, the Tree of Knowledge, to grow. Then He placed Adam, whom He had fashioned from the clay of the earth, in that garden to work it and protect it. After creating a wife for him from his rib, he commanded them, saying, “You may freely eat from every tree in the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (*Genesis 2:17–18, New International Version*) This incomprehensible taboo made it easy for the serpent to tempt Eve and make disobedience seem appealing to her. As she walked near the tree of knowledge, the serpent crept up to her. It was the most cunning of all the wild animals, according to the text, and revealed to Eve the true nature of the taboo and its purpose. The fruit of the tree will not kill them, but will make them like their Creator, free and knowing good and evil: “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not certainly die! For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one look at, she took some of its fruit and ate it. And she gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.” (*Genesis 3:4-6, New International Version*) Yahweh lied to Adam and Eve, saying that the Tree of Knowledge would bring death. Through this lie and taboo, the nature of the relationship between God and humanity in understanding good and evil

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is established—a relationship based on divine command and human submission. Between this command and submission lies the nature of good and evil that binds the two parties. (Al-Suwah 2000, 117-118)

4. Christianity:

The concept of original sin in Judaism is the secret of sin in Christianity. Indeed, it is the foundation of evil in the world, stemming from their view of Adam's fall from Paradise. Therefore, according to Christianity, humanity does not inherit Adam's actual sin, but rather the weakness of human nature that leads to sin. It seems that what makes sin inevitable is that it has become part of human nature, thus making responsibility collective. Christianity embodied the gravity of original sin, equating it with the doctrine of divine grace and the crucifixion of Christ. The problem then became one of collective responsibility, since the crucifixion leads to the dissolution of individual responsibility, which Islam emphasizes. If this sin was the cause of Adam's fall and the subsequent beginning of divine accountability, shouldn't it be the root of all evil and sin? This was the view of figures like Saint Augustine and Pascal. However, the moral implications of original sin are serious. As Pascal himself said, it seems utterly irrational to punish a person for a sin committed by one of their ancestors more than four thousand years ago. And while some Christians themselves acknowledge the irrationality of this theory, they maintain that evil or sin originates from within humanity, and that humans, by their very nature and freedom, are tempted by virtue just as they are tempted by vice. (Imran 2020, 251) Islam

Good and evil in Islamic thought are interpreted on the basis of the action issued by man. The good deed is characterized by being good, and the evil deed is characterized by being ugly. The good is a comprehensive concept for the good deed, such as truthfulness, trustworthiness, chivalry, and others, and the ugly is a comprehensive concept for the evil deed, such as lying, betrayal, debauchery, and others. They differed into two different schools of thought in this interpretation. Some of them see that actions are characterized by being good in themselves, and likewise the evil deed, and

some of them see that its characterization is legal, decreed by the Lawgiver, so it became so. To clarify the matter, I will summarize it as follows:

A. The Rationalist Doctrine:

The Mu'tazilites, Imamites, and Karramites held that human actions are inherently good or bad. Some actions are inherently good or bad, as reason dictates, such as the goodness of fulfilling one's obligations and the badness of lying when it serves no purpose. Other actions are understood through revelation, such as the goodness of performing prayer and the badness of neglecting it. The role of Islamic law here is to reveal what is good and bad, not to determine the underlying cause of these actions.

Judge Abdul-Jabbar said: "An action is divided into two categories: one has no attribute beyond its mere existence, and this cannot be described as either good or bad... such as the actions of someone who is absent-minded or asleep. The other has an attribute beyond its mere existence, and thus it is not devoid of two aspects: either it is bad or good, because it is known from its state that it is not deserving of blame in any way, and therefore it is good." (Al-Mu'tazili 1960, 7)

Allamah Al-Hilli said: "Goodness and badness are matters of reason, and this is a judgment agreed upon by the Mu'tazilites." (Al-Hilli 1988, 280) They supported their statement with several sound arguments, including:

1. Rational necessity: We know by necessity that some things are good and others are bad, without regard to religious law. Every rational person is certain of the goodness of doing good and praises it, and of the badness of doing wrong and injustice and condemns it. This is a necessary judgment that admits no doubt.
2. Deniers of Divine Laws: Those who reject divine laws and deny prophethood understand the ugliness of injustice and ingratitude, and recognize the virtue of gratitude. If the matter depended solely on revelation, those who deny it would not be aware of what is good and bad.

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B. The Legal Doctrine:

The Asha'rites and the scholars of Hadith held that good is what the divine law praises, and bad is what the divine law condemns. Human actions do not possess inherent qualities that necessitate their being good or bad.

Imam Al-Haramayn Al-Juwayni said: "Reason does not indicate the goodness or badness of anything in matters of religious obligation. Rather, it receives the determination of goodness and badness from the sources of Islamic law and the dictates of revelation. The fundamental principle in this matter is that a thing is not good in and of itself, nor is it inherently good or a necessary attribute of it. The same applies to what is bad in and of its equivalent in the overall rulings concerning the attributes of the self... So, what is meant by good is that which Islamic law praises its doer for, and what is meant by bad is that which Islamic law condemns its doer for." (Al-Juwayni 1950, 278) They cited Quranic verses as evidence for their belief, including the Almighty's saying: "{And We would not punish [a people] until We sent a messenger}" (*Al-Isra: 15*). And His saying, may He be exalted: "{And your Lord would not destroy the towns until He had sent to their mother-town a messenger reciting to them Our verses}" (*Al-Qasas: 59*). And other verses indicating the state of affairs before the punishment of the wrongdoer. This argument, however, contains some shortcomings and does not reach the level of a complete proof or a safe conclusion. For fear of prolonging this discussion, we refer it to specialized books on this subject.

Section Two: The effect of good and evil on behavioral patterns

2.1. Behavior

The concept of behavior has been defined in several ways depending on the science and discipline. Since our study is socio-psychological, we focus on the most important aspect of the subject, which is learning the psychological concept of behavior. It has been defined as: (the reactions of an individual, viewed within a specific environment and time frame, to a stimulus or set of stimuli). (Selami 2001, 1347) In the light of psychology, and specifically within the behaviorist school, behavior revolves around two fundamental factors: influence and response. This means that human behavior has a mechanical explanation based on the existence of a number of habits that arise automatically as a result of physiological and psychological changes in the individual. For example, social customs and norms often begin with an individual's response to an external stimulus. Through continuous response, these habits become ingrained and integrated into the individual's behavior, eventually becoming part of their personality. These habits, as behavioral patterns, are what the individual relies on to face different situations. (Al-Silmi s.d., 45)

Human behavior has three patterns: (Tawq 2003, 8-9)

1. Cognitive Pattern: We perceive the various phenomena and events around us, and we interact with specific symbols and meanings. Similarly, you are aware that you are reading these pages, and if you think about your future, you can define your path and goals in life. This process of reflection, envisioning, or thinking about your future is a cognitive pattern of behavior.
2. Motor Pattern: This is the response to specific instructional movements or verbal cues, such as responding to a traffic signal by walking or stopping, or typing on a typewriter.
3. Emotional Pattern: This is the emotional state that accompanies behavior. Inclination towards a subject, enthusiasm for it, and engagement with it are motivators and stimulants for behavior. Feelings of comfort or discomfort also influence and reinforce behavior.

2.1.1 The fundamental factors influencing human behavior are:

1. The psychological factor: The primary factor in shifting human behavior from positive to negative is psychological. Unjustified

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anxiety and fears produce undesirable behavior. For example, envy, which is rooted in psychological factors, arises in an individual due to a psychological condition such as hatred or resentment. This manifests as envy, which represents revenge against others and the loss of their blessings.

2. The social factor: By nature, humans influence and are influenced by the circumstances that shape or control their value system. One such factor is the environment in which an individual lives, encompassing family, friends, school, and society at large. This is due to the individual's needs for work, food, shelter, and the conversations they hear. (Dewey 1963, 84)
3. The Religious Factor: Religion is a set of laws that regulate societal behavior. Its purpose is to refine individuals based on morality and non-aggression. Religion acts as a check on the individual even in the absence of supervision. For example, theft is forbidden whether committed openly or secretly; it is the hidden deterrent that restrains its adherents. Therefore, religion is one of the factors that elevate human behavior.

Based on the foregoing, the concept of behavior has been defined, its patterns explained, and the most important factors influencing human behavior have been identified. The first section of this research clarified the concepts of good and evil and their philosophies in human thought and in both revealed and man-made religions. All of this falls within the theoretical framework of the research. With God's guidance, I will now begin the applied aspect of the research in the following order:

1. Ethics (Deontology).

The ethical principle put forth by any religion or doctrine in the refinement of individuals aims to elevate society. This principle is thus dependent on preconceived notions and beliefs regarding the interpretation of the deity in whom they believe. Ethics is a clear reflection of the extent to which they are influenced by the dictates of its commands and prohibitions. Whether this deity is the God we worship or the positive law that regulates individual behavior, both constitute the influential factor in the recipient's mind, from

which they derive their strength in refining their conduct. Therefore, ethics is defined as: “The science that clarifies the meaning of good and evil, explains how people should treat one another, elucidates the purpose behind people's actions, and illuminates the path to what is right.” (Amin 2012, 9) Based on this definition, two important ethical aspects of human development and the extent to which one's belief in their deity is reflected in their behavioral patterns can be highlighted.

a. Freedom:

One of the most controversial and divisive issues is the question of human freedom, which has been and continues to be a subject of debate among religions, sects, and schools of thought. This disagreement stems from the importance of freedom, as it is the foundation and starting point for determining the ethical principles of human behavior, whether in self-improvement or in interactions with others.

Some believe that God Almighty is the agent of human actions, whether good or evil, without humans having any choice in performing or refraining from the action. Thus, they believe He compels them to do evil, yet punishes them for it, and compels them to do good, rewarding them for it. This is because they consider human actions to be truly God's actions, and metaphorically attribute them to humans because they are the recipients of these actions. They denied the natural causality between things, asserting that God is the only true natural cause, and there is no other. (Al-Muzaffar s.d., 58)

Others went further, claiming that God Almighty delegated all actions, both good and evil, to humankind, removing His power and decree over them. Thus, humans are free in their actions, completely independent of divine power and will. They argued that attributing human actions to God implies a deficiency in Him, as it implies compulsion, and that the causes of these actions are separate.

The truth is neither of these. Humans are neither compelled nor independent in their actions. They exist in a state between two extremes: they are free in their actions, but their choice does not exempt them from the divine dominion under which they operate. Good deeds originate from the individual, and God Almighty commands them to perform them. Evil deeds

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also originate from the individual, and God Almighty forbids them from committing them. God Almighty knows the servant's capacity to do good and refrain from evil; therefore, He only burdens him with what he can bear and does not burden him with what he cannot bear. (Al-Muzaffar s.d., 60) This clarifies the extent of this belief's influence on human behavior, which is fundamentally composed of both good and evil.

b. Self-Discipline:

Human beings are created with both higher and lower instincts, and they possess conflicting inclinations. Each seeks something different from what the other seeks. They are divine beings, ideal beings inclined towards the metaphysical and connection with the principle of existence. Thus, they are inclined towards good in all its forms, such as truthfulness, justice, loyalty, and other virtuous qualities. At the same time, they also have inclinations towards animalistic instincts such as selfishness, aggression towards others, lust, and other base instincts. Both of these inclinations constitute the human being. (Al-Subhani 2005, 154-155)

From this concept emerged studies prioritizing the second inclination over the first in achieving human happiness at the expense of self-discipline, which is called (Egoistic Hedonism). This doctrine states that a person should seek the greatest pleasure for themselves and should direct their actions towards obtaining it. Accordingly, this doctrine asserts that if a person is hesitant between two actions, or hesitant about whether to do one or leave it, they should calculate the pleasures and pains involved and weigh them. Whatever brings more pleasure is good and should be done, whatever brings more pain is bad and should be left alone, and if pleasures and pains are equal, then they have a choice. (Amin 2012, 31)

Human nature is inherently self-centered, striving for whatever brings it happiness. However, noble morals refine the soul by combating the ego, recognizing it as the source of evil and human misery, and instilling in it a love for altruism and selflessness, for it is the source of good. This is evident in what the Holy Quran calls for, as God Almighty says: “{And they give preference to others over themselves, even though they are in dire

need. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.}” (*Al-Hashr*: 9). And the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (Al-Bukhari 2009, 13) In his will to his son Al-Hasan (peace be upon them both), Imam Ali said: “My son, make yourself a scale between yourself and others. Love for others what you love for yourself, and hate for them what you hate for yourself.” (Al-Sharif Al-Radi 2004, 31) This clearly reflects the correct interpretation of the concepts of good and evil, which the individual believes in.

2. Creed (Ideology)

The most important aspect of the Muslim belief in interpreting evil is justice and wisdom, two attributes inherent in the Almighty Creator. God's justice means that He does not neglect the merit and worthiness of any being, giving everything what it deserves. His wisdom means that the system He created is the best and most perfect system, the best possible system. (Al-Mutahhari 2005, 62)

- a. Justice: Divine justice is the second fundamental principle of religion for the Mu'tazilites and the Imamites. They are also called the 'Adliyya' (those who uphold justice) due to their profound emphasis on this principle, as they consider justice the most important attribute of divine action. This is not the view held by the Asha'rites and the Ahl Al-Hadith, who take a different stance in interpreting divine justice. They do not consider it the most important attribute of divine action, as it is a necessary consequence of power and will. Consequently, there are two conflicting approaches to understanding divine justice, and this conflict is considered the central point of contention in all other points of disagreement. The source of the disagreement lies in the correct understanding of the concepts of good and evil in actions, and the core idea of these two approaches can be summarized in this brief explanation.

The first view: Justice has an independent reality, and since God Almighty is just, He carries out His actions according to the standard of justice. If we

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look at actions themselves objectively, apart from the law, we find that they are characterized by their own nature and differ from one another. Some actions are inherently characterized by justice, such as rewarding those who do good, and some are inherently characterized by injustice, such as punishing those who do good. Since actions are inherently different from one another, and since God Almighty is absolutely good and absolutely just, He makes His actions according to the standard of justice. (Al-Mutahhari 2005, 16)

The second viewpoint: Justice does not have a pre-existing, fixed reality that we can define and use as a standard or measure for God's actions. If we were to make it a measure, that would be a limitation and restriction of His will and decree. It is impossible to impose a law and then make it the governing principle even for God's actions, because all of them are His creations and subject to His will. Any assumption that subordinates God's will to His actions contradicts His attributes of transcendence and absolute power. Being just does not mean that He follows pre-existing laws of justice. Rather, it means that everything He does is just, but not everything that is just is done by Him. Justice is not the measure of God's actions, but rather God's actions are the measure of justice. (Al-Mutahhari 2005, 16)

- b. Wisdom: Wisdom is connected to many important issues, including the issue of explaining evil. This leads to the question: If the Creator is wise in His actions, perfect in His work, creative in His creation, and organized in His universe, and is free from all that is inappropriate in terms of frivolity, play, idle talk, and amusement, then how do we explain natural phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, and others that are considered sources of harm to humankind?

The answer: In truth, this question has been answered in many ways. What I want to address is the behavioral dimension in explaining these phenomena, as this is the subject of my research. Therefore, I say: God Almighty created the universe with a purpose in mind, just as He created humankind with a purpose. The purpose of human creation is nothing other than for humanity to reach its full potential and attain the highest possible level. The mission

of the prophets is solely to achieve this noble goal of human perfection. Since sins and transgressions are among the greatest causes that cause a person to stray from the purpose for which he was created, and hinder his progress, calamities and misfortunes are the best means to make the disobedient person realize the consequences of his arrogance and disobedience so that he may return to the truth. God Almighty said: “{Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of people have earned, so that He may let them taste some of what they have done, so that perhaps they will return [to the right path]}” (*Al-Rum: 41*). The enjoyment of material possessions and indulgence in pleasures leads to a profound neglect of moral values. The more a person immerses themselves in pleasures and blessings, the further they drift from spiritual matters. This is a reality that every person experiences in their own life and the lives of others. Therefore, it is essential to awaken from this heedlessness, like a bell ringing to rouse one from their slumber. God Almighty says: “{And We did not send any prophet to a town except that We seized its people with hardship and adversity so that they might humble themselves [to Us]}” (*Al-A’raf: 94*). And He says: “{And We certainly seized the people of Pharaoh with years of famine and a deficiency in fruits so that they might humble themselves [to Us]}” (*Al-A’raf: 130*).

Thus, calamities and misfortunes become a cause for a person’s awakening and a reminder to him, as they are like a doctor slapping the face of an anesthetized patient to wake him up, without whose slap the patient’s life would have ended. (Al-Subhani 2005, 283-284) Legislation.

The issues related to interpreting the good and badness of actions (their virtue and vice) were not limited to ethics or creed, but extended to the legislation of legal rulings. Disagreements arose among the schools of thought based on their interpretations of the actions upon which their principles were founded, specifically regarding whether goodness and vice, or virtue and vice, are intrinsic or divinely ordained. There are many points of disagreement in Islamic law, but I will limit myself to two:

- a. The inseparable link between the rulings of reason and the rulings of Islamic law:

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The Mu'tazilites and the Imamiyyah held that there is an inseparable link between the rulings of reason and the rulings of Islamic law. This means that whatever reason dictates, Islamic law dictates. For example, if reason dictates the obligation of something with a definitive and independent ruling, then Islamic law must also dictate it, because the two rulings are inseparable. In reality, the ruling of reason, which is the domain of rational beings insofar as they are rational, is identical to the ruling of Islamic law, without any separation or difference. Therefore, the obligation to know the Creator, to contemplate His creation, and to obey His commands, which is an independent rational obligation, is precisely the same as the legal obligation. As for His saying, may He be exalted: {And obey God and the Messenger} {So that you may receive mercy} (*Al Imran: 132*) and all other verses pertaining to knowledge, contemplation, and obedience serve as guidance for the rational fulfillment of the Resurrection. (Al-Mustafawi 1425, 268)

As for the Asha'rites and the Akhbaris (The Akhbari movement is a Shiite movement led by the hadith scholar Muhammad Amin Al-Astarabadi, who died in 1036 AH. He took Karbala as the starting point for his call, which is to return to the narrations of the Ahl Al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and to suspend the fundamentalist reasoning in deriving legal rulings. This movement caused a great rift in the Shiite community, and this movement was eliminated by the two great scholars, Sheikh Al-Wahid Al-Bahbahani and Sheikh Murtada Al-Ansari (may God have mercy on them)). They held that there is no necessary connection between the two rulings. Thus, reason has no authority before divine law, and many have explicitly stated this. Imam Al-Haramayn said: "The position of the people of truth is that reason has no authority before the arrival of divine law. They expressed the absence of rulings as 'suspension,' not intending the kind of suspension that constitutes a ruling in some matters of Islamic law, but rather the absence of rulings." (Al-Juwayni 1950, 473)

b. The Impossibility of Imposing Obligations Beyond One's Capacity: One of the issues extensively discussed in the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*Usul Al-Fiqh*) across the various schools of thought is the

issue of capacity in religious obligation. Its essence is that it is impossible for God Almighty to hold someone accountable for an action or omission not performed by their own choice. This is because capacity is a prerequisite in both punishment and obligation, the latter being a means of motivating action. Without it, punishment is invalid, just as obligation is invalid as a means of motivating action. This is clear and agreed upon by the theological and legal schools, based on God Almighty's statement: “{God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity}” (*Al-Baqarah*: 286). However, they differed on its origin and the basis from which they interpreted the goodness and badness of actions: whether it is intrinsic or divinely ordained. The Mu'tazilites and Imamites, according to their belief in God's obligation to do what is best, and in the rational basis for good and evil, and in the rational explanation of God's actions through wisdom and purpose, held that issuing a commandment beyond what is required is contrary to divine wisdom and is reprehensible in the eyes of rational people. Since the Lawgiver is the master of rational people, it is therefore impossible because reason dictates the reprehensibility of such a judgment. The Asha'rites, however, based their doctrine on the opposite premise, as they rejected the principles of the Mu'tazilites. They considered it impossible, not because it contradicts wisdom, or anything similar to what the Mu'tazilites claimed, but because it is rationally impossible and inconceivable. (Al-Shityawi 2018, 303)

Al-Ghazali said in his argument for his doctrine: The preferred view is that it is impossible to impose an obligation to do the impossible, not because of its ugliness, nor because of any corruption arising from it, nor because of its form, since it is permissible to reject its form, but because of the impossibility, since an obligation is a request for something that involves a cost, and a request requires a request, and that request should be understood by the one obligated by agreement, and the impossible is inconceivable, and it cannot be understood because it has no meaning in itself, and since it is not rational, it is not permissible to demand its occurrence from the one obligated, so how can it be said to the one obligated to stand up while you are sitting? And how can the creation of the eternal exist by itself, or the

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combination of two opposites like blackness and whiteness? For that is not conceivable at all. (Al-Ghazali 1993, 290)

Research Findings

After this arduous journey amidst sharp disagreements between religions, sects, and schools of thought, I can highlight the most important points contained in the research, which are as follows:

1. The philosophy of good and evil and the interpretation of their true nature is the fundamental factor in an individual's faith and the formation of their behavioral patterns. Accordingly, this philosophy has produced diverse religious schools and visions in their foundations and outcomes, as well as differing religious ethics and justifications in determining the educational path for the individual and society. Indeed, the Abrahamic religions share a single source - God Almighty- but the understanding and interpretation of the concept of good and evil has directly influenced the course and vision of these religions in shaping the value system for the individual and society.
2. We find that Zoroastrianism has an optimistic view of the world and life, unlike Buddhism, which is a highly pessimistic religion. These two contrasting visions of the universe are fundamentally based on faith and belief in the concepts of good and evil, which in turn have influenced the understanding of life and the universe in general. This is not significantly different from the Abrahamic religious perspective. For example, Christianity is based on tolerance and redemption through the expiation of sin for society, a concept embodied in Christ himself. Judaism, on the other hand, is based on deceit and trickery in the relationship between the individual and their Creator. All of this stems from their respective interpretations of good and evil.
3. The Islamic religious perspective was not immune to the turbulent differences arising from philosophies and religions. Indeed, it was influenced by both. The Holy Quran established the principle of

“good and evil,” stating that good originates from God Almighty, while evil stems from humankind's alliance with Satan. This is an accepted principle within the Islamic religious perspective. However, Muslims differed in their interpretation of actions, specifically regarding their inherent goodness and evil: whether these are intrinsic and rational or divinely ordained. This disagreement significantly contributed to major schisms within the Muslim community, leading to the formation of independent Islamic sects. This, in turn, gave rise to numerous important theological, ethical, and legal issues.

4. The intrinsic and rational nature of good and evil is the most distinguishing characteristic of the Mu'tazila and Imamiyya schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence, setting them apart from other schools. They became known as the 'Adliya' (those who adhere to divine law) due to the foundational principles they established for interpreting human action as intrinsic rather than divinely ordained. This also relates to the necessity of prophetic missions, the inherent goodness of divine assignment, the free will of the individual, and other essential matters.

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