

Michael Defends the Throne From Satan

A compact theodicy: why the gift of conscious existence can remain benevolent even in a morally serious universe.

Core Claim: The actuation of even a single moment of consciousness is a gift whose intrinsic beauty and value cannot be nullified by later divine judgment—even if that judgment is severe or long.

The Accusation

The charge is that God cannot be benevolent because He has created many beings who are ultimately condemned or severely judged. If a creator knowingly brings into existence beings who will later suffer, then—so the accusation goes—creation itself is morally suspect. Therefore, we allegedly deserve a “better God” or a different ultimate ruler.

Clarifying the Dispute

This dispute turns on a single question: **Can the goodness of granting existence be outweighed by the moral seriousness of judgment?** Your argument says the gift of conscious existence carries intrinsic value that is not erased by later justice.

Michael’s Response (Formalized)

- **P1. Conscious experience has intrinsic value.** Even a single moment of awareness—perceiving, understanding, loving, or simply “being”—is a real good.
- **P2. Nonexistence contains no subject who can receive good.** There is no one in nonexistence to be “better off.”
- **P3. Creation grants participation in reality.** Existence is the necessary condition for every possible good (love, growth, beauty, relationship, meaning).
- **P4. A morally serious universe requires consequence.** If choices carried no weight, moral agency would be hollow and justice meaningless.
- **P5. Therefore, the gift of existence is not nullified by later judgment.** Justice responds to moral reality; it does not retroactively negate the value of having been given life at all.

The Strongest Objection

A critic presses the hardest point: **“If judgment can be severe or unending, how can a benevolent creator justify creating beings at all?”** The critic argues that nonexistence guarantees no suffering, so creating a being who will later suffer looks like introducing harm where none previously existed.

Objection: The mere possibility of severe or eternal punishment makes creation morally reckless. A perfectly benevolent God would avoid creating anyone who could end in such a fate.

Reply

- **R1. “Nonexistence is better” is not an experience.** Nonexistence has no subject who can be spared, relieved, or improved. It is not a state of well-being; it is the absence of any state at all.
- **R2. Creation enables all goods.** Every good—love, joy, understanding, redemption, growth—requires existence. A policy of “no creation to avoid all risk” also removes every possible good from reality.
- **R3. Moral agency without consequence is not agency.** If nothing ultimately matters, then neither virtue nor vice has real weight. A morally serious universe will involve justice.
- **R4. The gift precedes the judgment.** Creation grants the arena of meaning. Judgment is a response within that arena. One can affirm the goodness of existence while affirming the seriousness of moral reality.
- **R5. The accusation treats the worst outcome as the definition of the whole.** But benevolence is not measured only by worst-case endpoints; it is measured by the nature of what is given and the reality of freedom.

Closing Synthesis

If conscious existence is intrinsically valuable, then granting existence remains a benevolent act—even in a universe where choices carry serious consequence. The throne stands justified not by denying judgment, but by affirming that the gift of being is a real good that nonexistence cannot replace.

Scope Note

This argument defends the coherence of divine benevolence with judgment. It does not attempt to specify the mechanics, duration, or theology of judgment. Those questions belong to theology, revelation, and moral anthropology—and can be layered on top without changing the core logical defense here.