

(input to
philosophy &
G-D existence)

There are many conjectures, coming from many prominent individuals in many fields of endeavor. We shall not try to exhaust them, but only attempt to illustrate a few of them.

1. David Hume. He believed that, genetically, primitive religions began with polytheism^S. Due to a preoccupation of primitive men with the many contingencies of every day experience - as, disease, hurricane, heat, flood, etc. Monotheism is a later development, following upon the emergence of a sense of law-abiding universality for the world in which man lives.

4 The basic idea, if not the direction of development^S, was already noted by Philo: the interrelationship between monotheism and peace, and polytheism and war.

Most anthropologists agree that man began as a polytheist and then developed^{ed} towards monotheism.

2. Malinowski. This Polish-born Oxford Anthropologist maintains that, contrary to usual anthropologists' opinion, man was at first monotheistic, then degenerated to polytheism, only to rise again with Abraham and Moses to monotheism.

3. The Torah. Biblical tradition had^S Adam as a monotheist, with polytheism entering human history with Enosh^c.

READ FROM MAIMONIDES, MISHNEH TORAH,

ש"ח פ"ד נ"ה ט"ו

4. ^{RU}Frued. Following upon the opinions of a number of atheists and agnostics, who maintain that the origin of the belief in God is in fear and the dread of the unknown, Frued maintains^{ed} that when the child learns that he will always have to remain a child, i.e. that the world will always be too big for him to cope with, he then ^{projects}suggests the father image onto his God or gods. In other words, the origin of religion is in the projection of a father-image to compensate for the need for an all-mighty protector.

5. ^{Critique}The Book. Whatever may be the origin of religion, - historically, theologically, ^{sh}psychologically, or anthropologically - we must never commit ^{the}~~the~~ ^sfallacy of origin/: to suppose that the origin of an idea has a bearing on the truth of that idea. For instance, Plato believed that the earth was round for the naive reason that the god would have made the world in the shape of the most ^{perfect} figure, which is a circle. Thus, the problem of the origin of ~~the~~ religion is in essence a historical or scientific one, not a religious one.

THE DEFINITIONS OF g-d

1. Polytheism. The belief in two or more gods. The exact number is irrelevant: in the ancient Roman pantheon there were at one time thirty thousand gods, each with a different assigned task. In Orthodox Vedic Hinduism, three hundred thirty million gods were asserted.

From Maimonides, Yehudah Halevi^x, and my own experience with Buddhists and Hindus in India - that despite the proliferation of individual idols, there was essentially one vitalizing Force which they equate with our God.

The danger of idol^atry (polytheism) during the biblical period amongst Jews. The end of the danger after the destruction of the Temple.

Two different categories of polytheism: Henotheism - many gods, but one of them more potent (for a particular group) than any of the others. So amongst Hindus, etc. Kathenotheism: many gods, but they take turns being the most powerful. This is usually determined by which natural phenomena dominate at the moment.

The universal and enduring appeal of polytheism: as late as the seventeenth century the worship of many deities still prevailed in essentially Christian circles. Even Bishops acted as spokesman for horned god and led the people in rites to propitiate these deities. In 1282 a Christian Priest led his

parishioners in a fertility^d dance in his churchyard. In 1453, during the trial of Joan of Arc, a Prior led his people in a ceremony of homage to a horn^{ed} pagan god. Maimonides, along with Moslem thinkers, declare the Christian trinity as an expression of polytheism.

2. Pantheism. Literally: that (god is all that there is, or that all is (god.

Probably no religious thinker ever meant in a literal sense that one could walk on or breath pieces of (god etc. Rather, asserted the doctrine of the universal immanence of (god.

Thus, for Spinoza, his pantheistic "god" refers to the systematic and mechanical order which the physical universe possesses. Whatever individual things there are, such as persons, trees, or planets, are nothing but "modifications of the attributes of (god." According to this concept, the idea that one can pray to (god or that He can alter the course of human events is absurd.

Similarly, for Hegel, his pantheistic "god" stands for the elan vital which accounts for the dialectic of human and non-human processes. For both Spinoza and Hegel, (god is totally immanent. For both, He is more nearly a process than a person.

Pantheists have a great deal of difficulty with their theodicy: if all is God, how do you account for evil? Similarly, they have great difficulty in accounting for human freedom.

ה'אברהם אלהים אחד - אין לו שותף (אברהם אלהים אחד - אין לו שותף)
It is understood that Judaism totally rejects pantheism. (But: Scholem - pantheism of the Kabbalah.)

3. Deism (or: ^{deistic} ~~diastatic~~ supernaturalism). A far-off God, whose sole contact with the universe was to create it. From then on, He is aloof and remote and indifferent. The motive for this concept is: the awareness of natural evil.

Deism comes in various degrees: either as a ^{belief in} God so totally ~~sp~~ transcendent that He has absolutely no relations with man, or as Kierkegaard's ~~gods~~ "wholly/-other" God. Or, in the idea that the object of faith is something which is absurd to reason. The sense of divine remoteness posited by deism can possibly be related to the sense of alienation in human experience. While some

deists, such as Emil Brunner, maintain that a divine-human encounter could occur, some, like Nietzsche, leave man with a feeling that for all practical purposes God is dead.

{ i.e. there is a god, but no relation or communication with him is possible. This has been called "religious atheism" }

(Theism)
4. Personalism. This is obviously the God of the Bible and the Jewish

tradition. He is not a person, but He possesses personality. Like man, He thinks, feels, and makes decisions (allowing for the ~~medicological~~ metaphorical

nature of anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms. Unlike man, God possesses these attributes in an absolute form).

The relation between God and the world is for the personalist ~~fairly~~ fairly complicated. While He is the cause of this systematic universe, He is not so close to it as to be inseparable from it. God and the world are distinguishable.

On the other hand, the personalist God is immanent enough so that the despair which has been a concomitant of deism is absent.

*maybe here: Transcendence = immu-
Talmud → deism, or "religionism"
I ahm → pantheism + polytheism
Hence: both - Upr 1/13 - line 1/112*

5. Critique. Already mentioned that the Jewish concept is that of a personal God, and that any assertion to the contrary places one outside the Jewish fold.

Some have taken a relativistic position: since there are so many varied definitions and shades of meaning applied to the term "God" therefore the word ceases to have any meaning, in an absolute sense.

But in Judaism, ~~tho~~ despite diverging and varying conceptions, all identify Him as the Giver of Torah. This identification is based upon an experiential event, not on the concept of that identity. Thus, differing conceptions are permissible, provided they do not confute the validity of the identity of the Revealer.

ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

1. The Ontological Argument. Origin: in the metaphysics of Plato. Advocated by Bonaventura (1221 - 1274), Leibniz (1646 - 1716) and Hegel (1770 - 1831). But chief proponents have been the Christian scholastic Anselm (1033 - 1109) and Descartes (1596 - 1650).

The argument (as we shall later, this is more in the form of a philosophic intuition than a proof) revolves about the term "being" or "existence". According to Aristotle / "being" is the most universal concept; other terms can be applied to a limited number of objects, while "being" can be applied to everything. Some modern thinkers maintain that "being" can be comprehended only by an intuition. ~~All~~ All one can say about it is that it is. The question of "being" has always entailed a simple distinction: between existence and essence. Existence is concerned with the observation that a thing is; essence is concerned with observing what a thing is. [Kant maintained that the idea of existence does not add anything to a concept. In the present century, logicians have maintained that the verb "to be" is a mere logical connective, which has no content function. (Compare the fact that in Semitic languages, there is no copulative verb.)] It is the most difficult of all the arguments for the existence of god. The ontological argument is the most difficult to understand, but perhaps one of the most plausible.

certainly one of the most interesting of all.

Basically, the ~~ant~~/ological argument is that a being, than which a greater cannot be conceived, must exist. This being is identified with ~~G~~od. While this is essentially a profound intuition, it can be stated as an argument as follows: I have~~n~~ an idea of a being who has all properties, i.e., he is perfect. Now everyone knows that perfection entails existence as one of its properties. It therefore follows that ~~G~~od exists - because if He did not exist, ~~th~~^en the original premise, that I have an idea of an omniproptied being, would be false.

Descartes, while also not intending the ~~ant~~/ological defense to have the force of a ^Syllogism, structured the argument as follows:

- a. I have an idea of an omniproptied being. ^This being not only has all significant properties, but he has them in a universal degree.
- b. Every effect must have a cause which contains at least as many properties as the effect.
- c. If, then, we consider the idea I have expressed in premise a) as an effect, it must have had a cause. The cause, of course, must be omniproptied, or else the second premise would be denied.
- d. I am not the cause of this idea, for then I~~y~~ would be omniproptied.

If I were omniproptied, I would ^{know} ~~no~~ that I possess all properties and that I

possess them in an absolute degree. Since I do not know this it follows that I am not omnipropertied, and hence I am not the cause of the idea.

e. But the effect, expressed by the first premise, must have a cause.

Therefore we may say that an omnipropertied cause of the idea exists. This is the same as saying that God exists.

Spinoza, Kant, and many other thinkers who disagreed with the ontological proof nevertheless gave it a great deal of credence, as well as treated it reverently. The argument against/^{is,} mostly, that it is too skeletal, ^{too} ~~too~~ bare, too remote from religious experience and ~~existence~~. It seems to be emotionally uninspiring. Another objection is, that it blurs the necessary epistemological distinction between having an idea and knowing that the idea is true. Might we not derive, via the ontological process, proof of the existence of an absolutely omnipropertied ghost or witch or gremlin? The ontologist, however, might answer that if such an omnipropertied being is derived, ^e then you may call it what you will, it still is identical with God. Furthermore, one who thus derives the existence of ghosts is merely playing a game with clever fiction^s, while the ontologist has truly and ⁱ philosophically intuited an authentic idea.

2. The Teleological Argument. From the Greek telos: purpose, order, design, plan, or system. This is one of the most psychologically compelling arguments, especially because of the simplicity and directness of the analogy.

Basically, it maintains that we live in a world where order is found. Order cannot reasonably be derived from chance or contingency. Hence, an ordering mind is required to account for the world as we find it.

Jewish tradition ascribes the teleological inclination to antiquity: the Midrash concerning Abraham and the "birah."

A.S.Eddington's illustration: An army of monkeys banging on an army of typewriters for a finitely long period of time could produce all the books in the British Museum with greater probability than the chance that all the molecules in a vessel would at any moment all be in one half of the vessel. Thus, even a monkey mind, as a cause of order, is more likely than pure chance.

The traditional teleological argument: The list of orderly events can be divided into two categories: One, such as chair, houses, books, tables.

Two, such things as planets, trees, oceans, human beings. From the first set, a human designer can be inferred. A like conclusion must be drawn from the

fact of order in the second category. If it is inconceivable that a reasonable man would deny chairmakers when he is confronted by chairs, would it not be equally

inconceivable that a reasonable man would deny a maker for planets and human bodies? If we called the events like books and chairs O_1 and the events like planets and human bodies O_2 , then the analogical inference would appear as follows: if from O_1 we reasonably infer D_1 (human designers), then may we not equally reason that from O_2 a D_2 (non-human designers) may be inferred?

While this is the argument most compatible with common sense and ordinary human experience, some opponents have mentioned a number of objections. Kant: objection that it went beyond the powers of mind because it transcended the empirical data which were ^{its} ~~his~~ premises. At most, this proof can demonstrate the existence of an architect of the world whose efforts are limited by the capabilities of the material with which he works - but not of a creator of the world to whom all things are subject, an ^{all} ~~all~~-sufficient being. Schleiermacher: all such approaches miss the essence of religion. They are a matter of cold argufying, which do not share the character of religion. For him, the essence of religion is a feeling of God. David Hume: can infer more than one non-human designer. Also, the order of the world is humanly predicated. The uniformity of nature is a judgment of an organizing human mind, but this may not correspond to actual reality.

Handwritten notes:
1. A. P. N. L. Former, not a / 11/11/11 C. creator -
same as all $O_1 \rightarrow D_1$ is e. n. e.
all

3. The Cosmological Argument. Whereas the ontological approach assumes that the existence of God is self-evident, and therefore all that is necessary is intuit this fact, the cosmological argument is based on the epistemological premise that the only beings directly accessible to our knowledge are sensible things, and since God is not a sensible thing we must have proof of His existence.

Essentially, the cosmological argument is a defense of a First Cause. It is based on Aristotle's maxim that every effect must have a cause. It is intended to establish not merely the existence of a cause but of a First, Necessary, and Sufficient Cause. Whereas in the Christian world, the cosmological approach is attributed primarily to Thomas Aquinas, the originator of the whole argument is: Maimonides.

Maimonides (Guide for the Perplexed, Part II, ^{Introduction and} Chapter I) lists a series of "Propositions" predicating the premises from which he inferred that a First Cause must exist. Some of them are:

a. When an object moves, there must be some agent that moves it, from without.

b. Everything ^{that} passes over from a state of potentiality to that of actuality, ~~and~~ is caused to do so by some external agent.

c. A thing which owes its existence to certain causes has in itself merely the possibility of existence.

d. Everything that exists potentially, and whose essence includes a certain state of possibility, may at some time be without actual existence.

^{postulates}
From these ~~postulates~~, several possibilities may be inferred. Thus, an explanation for a motion which never rose above the plain facts of experience would move backward in time infinitely: every effect having a prior cause, and that cause itself being the effect of a cause ^{before} ~~anterior to~~ it. But, in the Aristot^elian structure, ~~and~~ infinitely regressive explanation is inadmissible; therefore some element in the essential argument is missing. For further, ^{if} ~~its~~ every potentially existing thing may at some time not exist, there may have been a time when nothing existed, and hence it would be impossible to explain how anything came to exist after this. The only way to square the facts as we know them with our logic, is to predicate a Prime Mover. This Prime Motor of the sphere ^{is} ~~is~~ God. As with the other arguments, there are objections and opponents to this as well. Thus, some modern commentators have declared that the argument is incompatible with modern knowledge, because it assumes motion to be essentially different from rest, whereas modern physics regards rest as merely one form of motion. Furthermore, modern science assumes ~~the existence of~~ both motion and existence;

they are not explained. Thus, "energy (or matter) is neither created nor destroyed" means that we accept the existence of matter and ~~energy~~ energy, and hence motion, as a given. (This attack is not necessarily a strong one...)

Kant, while evincing respect for the cosmological argument, attacks it on the same grounds that he did the ontological: it too transcends the bounds of human reason. It begins with experience, and hence/^{gives}the illusion of being empirical, but it really is a disguised form of the old ontological argument. He therefore dismisses the cosmological on the same grounds proof.

4. The Moral Argument. This has had many formulations, one of the earliest and most typical being that of Plato (Laws, Books X). ~~One~~ While the arguments is not structured in Plato, it may be identified as follows:

a. We assume that the purpose of all endeavor is to produce a society of good persons.

b. We further assume that "to know is to do." This means, that if people know what is good they will inevitably do it. The converse is true as well: if people do what is right, it follows that they must have known what is good.

c. A further assumption: no man who believes in God ever commits evil (knowingly) (this is similar to the Jewish position, stated in many ways, that the source and root of all sin is the denial of God). This, too, is convertible.

d. From the above it follows; that if people who do what is right believe in know^{God}, and if only knowledge of what~~is~~ is really the case can produce right action, then it must be the case that^{God} exists.

One of the problems with the moral argument is that it can be used to argue the existence of many gods - as, indeed, Plato does (although we have presented the argument as a monotheistic one).

While Kant denies the possibility of any transcendental/^{proof}of ^{Gods'}existence, he does recommend a practical justification for^{God} on moral grounds. He believes that certain practical moral laws are absolutely necessary, and^{God} must be postulated in order for these moral laws to possess obligatory power. This necessity is, however, practical and not transcendental. Kant is not saying that practical necessity ^{proves} that there is a^{God}, only that a^{God} lends the element of obligation which a categorical command requires; for it remains true - according to Kant ^{that} ~~the~~ no unconditioned practical law, such as the categorical imperative, can be ^{proved} by speculative reason.

~~The next section is~~

ARE ANY PROOFS POSSIBLE?

1. In Jewish philosophy: Generally the question of whether any proof of God's existence ^{is} ~~are~~ possible, ^{and valid} in Judaism, divides along the lines of rationalism and anti-rationalism. The great rationalist, such as Saadia, Maimonides, Gersonides, etc., accepted the fact that ^{proving} the existence of God through speculative reason was mandatory, for since reason could achieve so very much, it certainly could arrive at the existence of God. By the same token, those Jewish thinkers throughout the ages who objected to ~~re~~/ationalism, supposed that it was not within its power and purview to attain any proof of the existence of God. Thus, Yehudah Halevi in developing his ^{historis}ophy, emphasized primarily the historical-empirical experience of the ^{Re}v^el^ation at Sinai as the ^fulcrum of human knowledge of God. He does not completely object to "proof," for he mentioned ^s the cosmological argument at the end of his "Kuzari"; but he implies that the arguments for God's^r existence are of validity only to those who already have a pre-commitment.

Others, such as Isaac Breuer and especially certain Hasidic thinkers, such as Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav, believe that all "proof" ^s are a positive wrong. ^(only)

Breuer believes that were proofs to exist, they would deny the freedom of man to believe or not to believe in God. (The same holds true for immediately apparent reward and punishment.)

ARE ANY PROOF POSSIBLE?

1. In Jewish philosophy: generally the question of whether any proof of

Breuer etc. - compelling "proof" denies freedom.

Q - what of Revelation?

A - still - nothing. There is no freedom; but afterwards self-doubt as to its authenticity.

But a more Biblical approach: problem of a link

when one believes in G-d - but of behavior G-d, trusting. Possibility of atheism is really excluded

(- can author write to reader: believe & exist?).

Have we in this case a link between making

accepting G-d not my faith but works.

his historiography, emphasized primarily the historical-empirical experience of

the revelation at Sinai as the fulcrum of human knowledge of God. He does

not completely object to "proof", for he mentions the cosmological argument

at the end of his "Kuzari"; but he implies that the arguments for God's

existence are of validity only to those who already have a pre-commitment.

Others, such as Isaac Breuer and especially certain Hasidic thinkers, such

as Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav, believe that all "proof" are a positive wrong.

Breuer believes that were proof to exist, they would deny the freedom of

man to believe or not to believe in God. (The same holds true for immediately

2. The Danish existentialist philosopher ~~here~~ Kierkegaard, believing in a "wholly-other" God, declares that any attempt to prove His existence is an act of effrontery to him.

3. Men like Feuerbach, Schleiermacher, William James, and the contemporary Quaker mystic, Rufus Jones, object to all arguments on the grounds that they miss the essential spirit of religious commitment: the assurance of God being internal, immediate, personal. Whereas all arguments are external, mediated, and objected^{ive}. Further, the attempt to prove His existence, pre-supposes that God is an object of knowledge, like other data, which is wrong. ^(cf: Tillich) All arguments are ^{psychologically} unsound. To a great extent this is based upon Schleiermacher's idea - not completely compatible with Judaism - that the essential of religion is a feeling of God.

4. Men like Kant and Hume believe that all arguments for a ~~necessary~~ necessary, absolute, or transfinite being transcends the limits of human experience, understanding, or reason. This has been explained before when we mentioned Kant.

5. Even such staunch advocates of "arguments" as Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Descartes were convinced that no one could be persuaded to belief by their argument unless he first had faith in God. ^(also: remember JIN directed to "proofs" not faith or mysticism) Thus, we may infer that the function of all arguments is not actually to prove God's existence, but to show that

was compatible with the commitment of faith.

{ plus fait that for p. 42 (where:
New Plat. mutation - It is a
divine (circumstance) intellectualism
itself of religion - immutability - 1725 }

6. Pascal's "Wager". Blaise Pascal (1623 to 1662), also denied all

metaphysical proof for God's existence. The "reasons of the heart" (that is, faith) are more important than reasons of the mind. Man is so insignificant compared to God, so far removed from Him in comprehension, that he is incapable of developing any proof for His existence.

Notwithstanding this, Pascal formulated his "Wager." In accordance with Aristotle's law of the Excluded Middle, he posed the following options:

Either God exists, or He does not exist. If He exists, we may either believe it or disbelieve it. If He does not exist, we can either believe it or disbelieve it. These exhaust the options before us. Although we cannot prove His existence or non-existence, we can show ~~the~~ what odds attach to each of the options. If in fact He does not exist, it makes no difference whether we believe or not. Hence, these options may be disregarded. If He does exist and we disbelieve it, possible disastrous consequences may result. If He does exist and we believe it, possible beneficial consequences may ensue. The odds, therefore, are all against disbelief in God and in favor of belief in Him.

[1913: The Wager is valid, if it is at all, only in a Christian context, where faith alone is redemptive. For John, however - 2011 - hence there is a difference bet. acceptance or non-acceptance of it in fact. However, this formula is much too neat. By the same reasoning, one could

equally be led to gamble on the existence of unicorns, witches and gremlins.

There is a tremendous gulf between this conniving gamblers attitude and
the ^{faith and} actions of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There are also logical as well
as ^s ^h ^A psychological objections. It ~~assumes~~ too much about the existence of
the ^God on whom he is betting as a gambler.