

EXCURSUS: NATURAL THEOLOGY

§ I. CONTINGENCY ARGUMENT

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. Every existing thing has an explanation of its existence.
 2. If the universe has an explanation of its existence, that explanation is God.
 3. The universe is an existing thing.
 4. Therefore, the universe has an explanation of its existence.
 5. Therefore, that explanation is God.
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A. What Makes For A Good Argument?

B. Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?

1. Necessity and Contingency

C. Defense of Premise (1)

1. Objection: Universe Has No Explanation
2. Objection: Universe Is Exempt

D. Defense of Premise (2)

1. Objection: Universe Exists Necessarily
 - (a) Cosmological Evidence That The Universe Is Contingent
2. Objection: Universe Is Contingent But It Is Necessary That Something Exist

E. Summary and Conclusion

EXCURSUS: NATURAL THEOLOGY
§ II. KALAM COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
 2. The universe began to exist.
 3. Therefore, the universe has a cause.
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A. Introduction

B. Whatever Begins To Exist Has a Cause

C. The Universe Began To Exist

1. First Philosophical Argument – Impossibility of an Actual Infinite
 - (a) An actual infinite number of things cannot exist
 - (b) A beginningless series of events in time entails an actually infinite number of things
 - (c) Therefore, a beginningless series of events in time cannot exist.
2. Second Philosophical Argument - Impossibility of Forming an Actual Infinite Thru Successive Addition
 - (a) The series of events in time is a collection formed by adding one member after another
 - (b) A collection formed by adding one member after another cannot be actually infinite
 - (c) Therefore, the series of events in time cannot be actually infinite.
3. First Scientific Confirmation – Expansion of the Universe
4. Second Scientific Confirmation – Thermodynamic Properties of the Universe
5. Attempts to Avoid the Beginning of the Universe

D. If the Universe Has a Cause... A Conceptual Analysis

1. Uncaused, Beginningless, Spaceless, Timeless, Immaterial, Changeless, Unimaginably Powerful, Personal

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§ III. TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. The fine-tuning of the universe is due to either physical necessity, chance, or design.
 2. The fine-tuning of the universe is not due to physical necessity or change.
 3. Therefore, the fine-tuning of the universe is due to design.
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- A. Introduction
- B. The Fine-Tuning of the Universe
 1. Constants of Nature
 2. Initial Conditions of the Universe
- C. Our Choices: Physical Necessity, Chance, or Design
- D. Support for Premise (2)
- E. Physical Necessity?
 - (a) Implausibility
 - (b) Arbitrary Quantities
 - (c) Theory of Everything
- F. Chance?
 - (a) Improbability
 - (b) Anthropic Principle
 - (c) Anthropic Principle With a World Ensemble
- G. Objection: Who Designed the Designer?

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§ IV. MORAL ARGUMENT

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
 2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
 3. Therefore, God exists.
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- A. Introduction
- B. Moral “Values and Duties” Defined
- C. “Objective” Defined
- D. Defense of Premise (1)
 1. Objective Human Value on Naturalism
 2. Is *Belief* in God Necessary to Recognize Objective Moral Values and Duties?
 3. Objection: Euthyphro Dilemma
 4. Objection: Atheistic Moral Platonism
 - (a) Unintelligibility of Atheistic Moral Platonism
 - (b) Lack of Moral Obligation on Atheistic Moral Platonism
 - (c) Improbability of Atheistic Moral Platonism
 5. Objection: Stubborn Humanism
- E. Defense of Premise (2)
 1. Objection: Socio-Biological Evolution
- F. Summary and Conclusion

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§ V. ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. It is possible that a maximally great being exists.
 2. If it is possible that a maximally great being exists, then a maximally great being exists in some possible world.
 3. If a maximally great being exists in some possible world, then it exists in every possible world.
 4. If a maximally great being exists in every possible world, then it exists in the actual world.
 5. If a maximally great being exists in the actual world, then a maximally great being exists.
 6. Therefore, a maximally great being exists.
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A. Introduction

B. Philosophical Background

1. Possible Worlds
2. Maximal Excellence and Maximal Greatness

C. Alvin Plantinga's Version

D. The Argument Examined

1. Epistemic vs. Metaphysical Possibility
2. Coherence of a Maximally Great Being
3. Parodies of the Argument
 - (a) The Perfect Island and the Necessary Lion
 - (b) Quasi-Maximally Great Being
4. Defense of Premise (1)

E. Summary and Conclusion

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§ VI. PROPERLY BASIC BELIEF IN GOD

Outline

Premises and Conclusion

1. Beliefs which are appropriately grounded may be rationally accepted as basic beliefs not grounded on argument.
 2. Belief that the biblical God exists is appropriately grounded.
 3. Therefore, belief that the biblical God exists may be rationally accepted as a basic belief not grounded on argument.
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A. Defense of Premise (1)

1. Properly Basic Beliefs Characterized
2. Properly Basic Beliefs Are Not Arbitrary

B. Defense of Premise (2)

1. The Inner Witness of the Holy Spirit
 - (a) Biblical Data Pertinent to the Witness of the Holy Spirit
 - (b) Role of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Unbeliever
2. Warrant and Christian Belief
3. Defeaters and Christian Belief
 - (a) Christian Apologetics
 - (b) Original Belief as Intrinsic Defeater-Defeater
 - (c) What About Other Faiths and Their Claim of Religious Experience?

C. Summary and Conclusion

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§ VII. PROBLEM OF SUFFERING AND EVIL

Outline

1. Intellectual Problem: “It is irrational that God would permit suffering and evil”
 - Logical Version: “It is *impossible* that God and evil co-exist.”
 - Probabilistic Version: “It is *improbable* that God and evil co-exist.”
 2. Emotional Problem: “I don’t like a God who would permit suffering and evil.”
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A. Introduction

B. The Intellectual Problem of Evil

1. Logical Version

(a) Statement of the Problem

- (1) God is all-powerful and all-loving.
- (2) Suffering exists.
- (3) If God is all-powerful, then he can create any world that he wants.
- (4) If God is all-loving, then he would prefer a world without suffering.
- (5) Therefore, God can create, and he prefers, a world without suffering.
- (6) But suffering exists in this world (see premise (2))
- (7) Therefore, God does not exist.

(b) Solution of the Problem

- (1) There is No Proven Inconsistency Between God and Evil
- (2) We Can Prove that God and Evil are Consistent

2. Probabilistic Version

(a) Statement of the Problem

(b) Solution of the Problem

- (1) Our Inability to Properly Assess the Probability that God and Evil Co-Exist
- (2) Given the Full Scope of the Evidence, God’s Existence is Probable
- (3) Christian Faith Includes Doctrines that Increase the Probability that God and Evil Co-Exist

C. Emotional Problem of Evil