

God

A brief philosophical introduction

v

K. H. A. Esmail

University of Oxford and University of Cambridge

Series in Philosophy



VERNON PRESS

Copyright © 2025 Vernon Press, an imprint of Vernon Art and Science Inc, on behalf of the author.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of Vernon Art and Science Inc.

www.vernonpress.com

In the Americas:
Vernon Press
1000 N West Street, Suite 1200,
Wilmington, Delaware 19801
United States

In the rest of the world:
Vernon Press
C/Sancti Espiritu 17,
Malaga, 29006
Spain

Series in Philosophy

Library of Congress Control Number: 2025938157

ISBN: 979-8-8819-0298-8

Product and company names mentioned in this work are the trademarks of their respective owners. While every care has been taken in preparing this work, neither the authors nor Vernon Art and Science Inc. may be held responsible for any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in it.

Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publisher will be pleased to include any necessary credits in any subsequent reprint or edition.

For

R

Table of Contents

Introduction	11
Chapter 1 The Nature of God	31
Introduction	31
An all-knowing or omniscient thing and God's knowledge	45
An all-powerful or omnipotent thing and God's power	85
Chapter 2 Evil being overridden & God bringing about a particular kind of universe	129
Evil states of affairs and an evil state of affairs being overridden	129
God bringing about a particular kind of universe	131
God bringing about this particular kind of universe and evil being overridden in it	148
An observation on God bringing about this particular kind of universe and a moral theory	150
Chapter 3 The Existence of God	
Are there sufficient grounds for the claim that God does not exist?	
God and Evil	157
The principal arguments for the claim that God does not exist	157
Alvin Plantinga's response in <i>The Nature of Necessity</i>	161
Another response	168
Chapter 4 The Existence of God	
Are there sufficient grounds for the claim that God exists?	175
Some Ontological arguments Anselm	175
Some Design arguments	187
Some Cosmological arguments	202
An argument from the experience of God	227

Main Conclusions	277
Appendix 1	
Some remarks on God's sovereignty	285
Appendix 2	
Evil being overridden and some discussions of God and evil	303
Appendix 3	
Some of the moral and other features of God bringing about a particular kind of universe and God being morally perfect	313
Appendix 4	
Are there sufficient grounds for the claim that, very probably, God does not exist?	323
Appendix 5	
Theodicy and some theodicies	341
Appendix 6	
Some further remarks on God and time	365
Appendix 7	
Some further remarks on a living thing which possesses the power to do this or that <i>freely</i>	377
Appendix 8	
Can it be that God knows a fact such as the following to do with some other living thing which experiences (genuinely) a threat to its life and which believes that this is so: <i>this experience is like _____?</i>	451

Appendix 9

Some remarks on God being simple	463
---	-----

Appendix 10

Some remarks on God being present in a spatial realm and God being present in a non-spatial realm	495
--	-----

Appendix 11

Some (other) good states of affairs (including states of affairs which refer to God) and some other states of affairs which are a part of the whole state of affairs which obtains in case God brings about a particular kind of universe

and

a fuller statement of the whole state of affairs which obtains in case God brings about this particular kind of universe and the evil (state of affairs) which is a part of it being overridden

and

a fuller statement of the theodicy which is identifiable in this work	521
--	-----

Select Bibliography	535
----------------------------	-----

Index	537
--------------	-----

PAGES MISSING
FROM THIS FREE SAMPLE

Select Bibliography

- Alexander, H.G., (ed.), *The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence*
Manchester, 1956
- Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*
trans. Anton Pegis
Notre Dame, 1975
- Summa Theologiae* trans. T.McDermott
London: Eyre &
Spottiswoode, 1964
- Augustine, *On the Free Choice of the Will*,
trans. A Benjamin
Indianapolis, 1964
- Boethius, A.M.S., *The Consolation of Philosophy*
trans. S. J. Tester
Harvard, 1973
- Charlesworth, M., *St. Anselm's Proslogion* Oxford, 1965
- Cottingham, J., (ed.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*
Cambridge, 1994
- Hume, D., *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*
N. Kemp-Smith, ed.,
Edinburgh, 1947
- Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, L.A.
Selby-Bigge, ed.,
Oxford, 1975
- Kemp Smith, N., *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*
London, 1929
- Molina, Luis de, *On Divine Foreknowledge:*
Part IV of "The Concordia"
trans. Alfred J.
Freddosso
Cornell, 1998
- Reid, Thomas, *Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind*
Cambridge Mass.:
MIT Press, 1969

Index

A

a part of,
state of affairs is, 21
Abelard, Peter, 120
absence, of God, 533
abstract things, 19, 49, 57, 59,
127, 285, 286, 287, 290, 292,
293, 294, 295, 296
all-knowing or omniscient
it cannot be that God is, 64
[64-67]
[thing] at some time is
[...], 45
all-knowing or omniscient
thing
it cannot be that there is
an, 50 [50-52], 52 [52-
53], 53-54 [54-55]
all-powerful or omnipotent
it cannot be that God is,
101 [102-109], 109 [109-
111]
[thing] at some time is
[...], 85
all-powerful or omnipotent
thing
it cannot be that there is
an, 91, 92 [92-93], [93-
96]
analysis, 13
analytic philosophy, 12, 13, 19
Anscombe, G.E.M., 404
Anselm, Saint, 175 *ff.*, 266 *ff.*,
282, 485

Aquinas, Saint Thomas, 87,
202, 485, 487, 517
argument(s), 15
āśrava, 276
Augustine of Hippo, Saint,
346, 348, 351, 352, 353, 355,
485

B

Beauty,
of God, 518
of the being of God, 524,
525, 526, 527, 528, 530,
Boethius, 77, 78, 80, 121, 122
Brahman, 258, 259, 260, 276
Broad, C.D., 422
Brower, Jeffrey E., 485, 490
Buddha, 11, 27
Buddhism, 11, 27, 257

C

Cantor, Gregor, 155
Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 276
change
extrinsic, 26
God undergoes intrinsic,
114
in a thing, 26
intrinsic, 26
it cannot be that God does
not undergo a relational,
127
Charlesworth, M., 266

Chisholm, R.M., 154, 400 *ff.*,
420
Christianity, 11, 12
Clarke, Samuel, 202, 213, 272
concrete things, 19, 91, 92, 93,
98, 99, 100, 112, 126, 127
consequentialism, 150
cosmological argument
 a final, 221 [221-226]
 [which] includes a line of
 argument which is
 associated in particular
 with early Islamic
 rational theology, 209
 [which] includes a line of
 argument associated
 with among others
 Aquinas, 202 [202-203]
 [which] is a line of
 argument which is
 associated in particular
 with Clarke and Leibniz,
 213

D

Descartes, René, 119, 125, 126
design argument
 which is an argument by
 analogy, 187
design arguments
 which follow use [...]

- the principle of
- likelihood [and increase
- any degree of belief that
- God can exist...], 189,
- [195-196, 197-198, 199-
- 200]

Draper, Paul, 334, 335, 340

E

essence [or nature]

- of a particular or
- individual thing, 214

 eternally in time,

- it cannot be that God does
- not exist, 81

event, 395
evil

- God and, 157
- it is plausible that it
- cannot be that [...]
 - living things [in a
 - particular kind of
 - universe] are *not* liable
 - to experience any, 135
- ff.*

moral, 162
natural, 162
some discussions of God

- and, 303

 state of affairs *being*

- overridden*, 130 [130-
- 131], 303

 states of affairs, 129
which exists is the

- principal grounds for
- the claim that God does
- not exist [...], 157 [157-
- 160]

 experience

- kind of, 232, 233, 273

 experience of God

- an argument from the [for
- the belief that God
- exists], 227 [228]
- human beings', 233, 235

 explanation, of God's

- existence, 103

F

fact, 22

fact

brute, 214

how does a living thing

know this or that, 48,

[48-50]

past, 71 *ff.*

First Cause, 203

Fool [of *Psalms*], 178, 268

Frankfurt, Harry, 426 *ff.*, 437

ff., 445 *ff.*

Frege, Gottlob, 12

G

Gettier, Edmund, 47

Ginet, Carl, 409

God does not exist

another response [to argu-

ments for the claim that

God does not exist], 168

[168-171]

arguments for the claim

that, 157 [157-158, 158-

159, 159-160, 160]

arguments for the claim

that, very probably, 323

[323-325, 328-330, 333-

335]

Plantinga's response [in ef-

fect to arguments for the

claim that God does not

exist] in *The Nature of*

Necessity, 161 [161-165]

Gods,

can it be that there are

two, 115 [115-117]

H

Hasker, William, 362

Herodotus, 28

Hick, John, 343, 351, 352, 353

Hinduism, 11, 257

Hoffman, Joshua, 121

Homer, 28

Hume, David, 187, 188

I

immutable,

it cannot be that God

possesses the property

of *being*, 113 [113-115]

Irenaeus, Saint, 343, 351, 352,

353

Īśa Upaniṣad, 276

Islam, 11, 12

J

Judaism, 11, 12

K

Kane, Robert, 409, 413, 414

Kant, Immanuel, 268

knowledge

God's, 55 [55-64]

L

Lane Craig, William, 270

Lehrer, Keith, 403 *ff.*

Leibniz, Gottfried, 202, 213,

272

Lewis, David, 172

living and non-physical thing,

the claim that it cannot be
that there are instances
of the kind, 35 [35-40]
the claim that it is untrue
that it can be that there
is a, 40 [40-43]

M

Mackie, John, 303, 308
Mann, W., 474, 475, 485, 488,
489, 490
McCann, Hugh, 301
modal expressions, 17
Molina, Luis de, 122 *ff.*
Moore, George Edward, 12,
397 *ff.*
morally perfect, God being
[and bringing about a
particular kind of universe],
313

N

Nagel, Thomas, 408, 428
Nielson, Kai, 27
nirvāṇa, 11, 27, 258, 259, 260,
261, 262
non-spatial realm
God being present in a,
495, 501
it cannot be that God is
not present in some, 501
[501-502]

O

O'Connor, Timothy, 420
Ockham, William of, 70
ontological arguments
Anselm, 175

[*Proslogion*,
Second Chapter, 179-182
Third Chapter, 185-186]
Open Theists, 362

P

Pali Canon, 27, 261
philosophy of religion, 12, 13
Plantinga, Alvin, 161, 164,
165, 168, 172, 173
Plato, 122
possible world
is [...], 18
power
God's, 96 [96-101]
of a thing is [...], 86
to act [or to do this or that]
freely, [34], 131, [278],
344, 346, 356, [377-384]
to act [...] *independently*
[of God], 132, 138, 140,
143, 280
to do this or that [or to act]
freely, 34, [131], 278,
[344], [346], [356], 377
[377-384]
which can be possessed by
a thing at some time, 91
powers
which are *morally*
significant, 144
which are *not* morally
significant, 144
principle of likelihood, 189,
190, 192, 282
Principle of Sufficient
Reason, 214, 273
property
accidental, 30
essential, 30
extrinsic relational, 25

intrinsic relational, 25
 non-relational, 25, 26
 relational, 25

R

Reid, Thomas, 420
 religion, 11
 Ṛg Veda, 276
 Rosenkrantz, Gary S., 121
 Russell, Bertrand, 12

S

sceptic, extreme, 240
self, a, 377, 395, 420, 428, 432
significantly free creatures,
 161
 simple
 God being, 463
 God is, 35, 278
 just in case [...], 463
 it cannot be that God pos-
 sesses the property of
 being, 111 [111-113]
 it is untrue that it can be
 that God is, 480 [480-
 482]
 some arguments for the
 claim that God is, 463
 [464-467]
 some arguments for the
 claim that it is untrue
 that it can be that God
 is, 480 [482-483, 483-484]
 some of the implications
 of God being, 463 [467-
 475]
 traditional doctrine of God
 being, 366
soul, 135
 sovereignty, God's, 285

spatial realm,
 God being present in a,
 495 [495-501]
 it can that God is present
 indirectly in a, 499 [500]
 it cannot be that he [*viz.*
 God] is not present in
 any, 496 [496-499]
 state of affairs
 value of a, 23
 states of affairs
 and propositions, 29
 examples of, 19
 Strawson, G., 408
 Stump, Eleanore, 361
 Swinburne, Richard, 303, 304,
 306

T

teleological argument, 188
The Acts of the Buddha, 27
theist, a, 12
 theodicies,
 Augustine of Hippo (354-
 430)
 sets out one of the other
 principal, 346 [346-347]
 Irenaeus (c.130-202) sets
 out one of the principal,
 343 [344-345]
 theodicy
 free will, 356, 359, 360
 which is identifiable in this
 work, 348 [349-350],
 521, 529 [529-531]
 "theodicy", 341
 time
 God and, 365
 God is in, 34
 it cannot be that God does
 not exist eternally in, 81

it cannot be that God is
 not in, 370 [370-371]
 series, 78, 121, 122
 the claim that it can be
 that God is alive not in,
 74 [74-77]
 the claim that it can be
 that God is not in, 74
 the claim that it cannot be
 that God is in, 365 [365-
 366]
 traditionally, God is [...], 12,
 277
 tri-partite analysis,
 is [...], 46
 of *someone knows this or*
 that, 13
 requires *at least* one or two
 amendments, 46 [46-48]

U

universe,
 a, 135
 universe,
 God bringing about a par-
 ticular kind of, 129, 131
 Upaniṣads, 260

V

Veda, 276

W

Watson, Gary, 397, 429 *ff.*
 Widerkar, David, 442
 Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 12
 Wolf, Susan, 433 *ff.*