

# Philosophy- does god exist



A long time ago, a friend of mine wondered much about this God whom people always told her about. I told her that He was an all-powerful, all-knowing and all-good God. “ But where is He?” asked my friend. “ He is everywhere.” I answered. Dissatisfied with my answer, my friend asked me as to how I am so sure that He exists. And so I began to tell her about how I was introduced to a the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas’ formulates five ways to prove God’s existence. Only one however, the argument from change, made an impression to me. It states that things are in motion. If so, then there must be a mover. This mover cannot be the thing itself for a thing cannot itself to move. So it must have been a first unmoved mover, i. e. God. Therefore, God exists. For many years, I was convinced of Aquinas’ argument until I learned of a philosopher who was quite skeptical of Aquinas’ ways. His name is David Hume. Hume was an empiricist who accepted the senses as the source of knowledge. He formulated his empiricist principle based on what we can know through our senses alone. Thus, metaphysical notions such as “ God” are, for Hume, imaginary fictions of our minds, due to our notion of cause and effect. Therefore, the idea of a God is meaningless for Hume. “ So God does not exist?” Asked my friend. “ Hume does not think that should be the question to ask. But rather, is man capable of knowing if there’s anything beyond the realm of sense experience? And the answer is: we don’t know.” I answered. “ But there must be a way to know!” My friend said. So I told her about a philosopher named Rene Descartes. Descartes was, unlike Hume, a rationalist. He provided three proofs for God’s existence. Only one however, drew my attention as well. Here, Descartes uses the process of elimination when asking whether I, who has an idea of a perfect being, can exist without that perfect being, i. e.

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God. So Descartes enumerates all the possible causes for his existence. First, it cannot be himself, for; he would have given himself all forms of perfection. But Descartes did not have the power to do so. Second, it cannot be his parents, for if he traces the cause of all his ancestors, it would lead him to an infinite regress, which cannot be the case for there would not be a beginning. So therefore, Descartes concludes that God must exist as the only causes of his existence. “ But that’s not fair! Descartes could not have enumerated all the possible causes!” My friend argued. “ Why not?” I asked. “ Because that would entail that Descartes was all-knowing, which is not the case.” She answered. Impressed with her reasoning, I told her that there’s one more proof that I wanted to tell her about. This was the teleological argument for God’s existence. According to this argument, the universe itself is a proof for the existence of God. Paley, a philosopher, argued that insofar as there exists a watch, there must have been a watchmaker. Indeed, this is true regardless of whether you’ve seen or met the watchmaker. Now if one would apply this to the universe we all live in, Paley argues that there must be an intelligent designer who created the world and gave its order. Therefore, God exists as the creator of the universe. “ Alright. Lets say that there is a God. But If God is all good, then how can you explain all the evil things happening in the world? Why are so many people suffering then?” Asked my friend. So I told her about a philosopher named Leibniz. Leibniz offers three reasons to explain why God allows evil and suffering, despite his being omnibenevolent and omnipotent. Leibniz explains that God allows evil to happen for a greater good is created after, for God created the best of all possible worlds. God allows ‘ evil’ and suffering to exist, for us to be able to distinguish what is good from what is evil. Our destiny, it being pre-

established, has to be in line with the rational will of God, that being towards our ultimate purpose of the good. God's divine intervention only occurs at times to show us this distinction, and to lead us toward our destiny. " So God wants us to suffer?" She asked. " Not exactly. For example, he allows us to do evil, for us to learn from it and thus, do otherwise - the good." I told her. It is in this manner that Leibniz's theory of the ' best of all possible worlds' justifies the problem of evil and suffering. " Oh, I get it now. So does God exist?" Asked my friend. " Does it work for you if He did exist?" I asked. " Yes. It does." She answered. " Then God exists." I replied. References  
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