

4/3/2021

Lecture 1

Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

INTRODUCTION

- **What is philosophy of religion?**
 - It doesn't describe the beliefs; it's rationally investigating the belief. → (critically investigates the nature of the belief and subjecting them).
 - Some philosophers use it to support religion, and others to criticize it.
- So, philosophy of religion does not describe beliefs, but analyses their meaning.
- **Should we study philosophy?**
 - We should study philosophy because it strengthens our belief.
 - This is something that was discussed in Christian philosophy as well (not unique to Islamic philosophy)
 - St. Augustine said that Philosophy and Theology '*kalam*' are complimenting one another.
 - Philosophy is rational study of religion, and Theology is study whilst assuming a religious text has authority (believing in the Quran).
 - He said that theology compliment philosophy if (ONLY IF) one is a believer.
 - If you're not a believer than it doesn't.
- **Is philosophy and Theology '*kalam*' the same thing?**
 - Nowadays they're very separate.
 - Philosophy takes as its bases as a rational thought, whereas theology takes its bases as a religion text.
 - But, Ibn Khaldun writes that up until his time, philosophy and theology were indistinguishable (not separate) and were studied together and there was no difference between them.
 - Thomas Aquinas says that they are not the same.
 - Theology takes the Bible as its bases and its source, whereas philosophy takes the information that we gather from our senses (sight, smell, hearing).

- The information that we gather from our sense we think about it and that's is philosophy; but he said that this means because they're separate, you could use philosophy to support religion.
 - For example, to make someone who is an atheist to believe in God by using philosophical argument.
- **What about the people who says that in the Quran it clearly says that “يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءٍ إِنْ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ”?**
 - If someone says to you that miracles, for example, are things that you just have to believe in them, and it is just a part of your faith. But they bring forth rational arguments and they prove to you that believing in miracles is irrational and it doesn't make sense. So now you don't believe in miracles.
 - Since miracles are mentioned in the Quran, this leads to disbelief in more important things.
 - The response of a lot of philosophers would be that they actually investigating the super rationality and the numinosity that God is beyond our understanding. So, studying philosophy actually helps us to show how God is beyond our understanding.
 - Just because you don't understand something doesn't mean you can't talk about it.
 - Some Philosophers (like Al-Kindi), they believe, and they used philosophy to strengthen their belief. They used proof from Aristotle to explain the Quran.
 - Ibn Rushed (who was one of the main interpreters of Aristotle in the Muslim tradition and he was more famous when his works was translated into Latin, so he was more popular among Christians and Jewish philosophers), he wrote *fatwa* where he said “what is it to study philosophy?” he came to a conclusion that was “فرض لمن له الاستعداد” for the person who has the capability to understand it, in order to not be confused.
- **What about when *Ulama* ‘Islamic scholars’ cite the Hadeeth “يَأْتِي الشَّيْطَانُ أَحَدَكُمْ” “فَيَقُولُ: مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا وَكَذَا؟ حَتَّى يَقُولَ لَهُ: مَنْ خَلَقَ رَبَّكَ؟ فَإِذَا بَلَغَ ذَلِكَ، فَلَيْسَتْ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَلِيَّتُهُ” and they would say that philosophy comes under this?**
 - if you look at what the prophet had said, that if you reach that point (who created God?), then you seek God's refuge. Until that point, rational inquiry is not prohibited.

- So, there is a limit that before you reach it, it would be okay to rationally justify a lot of things. And if you reach that limit then you stop, and you say I believe in Allah.
- **What is that limit?**
 - A lot of *Ulama* put that limit so low that you can't question anything, and they say that it is *bedaa*.
 - And the problem with saying that is that these questions are questions that the leading Muslim *Ulama* were asking 50 years after the prophet's death. So, they have a pedigree of 1400 years almost that they've been asking those questions, so how can it be *bedaa*?
 - What is *bedaa* is not asking those questions, because Muslim's *Ulama* have always been asking those questions, it is always been part of the Islamic tradition.
- The Quran actually adduces rational argument, which is another bone of contention. (is the Quran 'نقل أم عقل'? **what if there's a contradiction between the two?**)
 - The famous *ashary* Fakher Al-Den Al-Razi, came up with what's known as the Universal Law 'القانون الكلي', where he says that if there is a contradiction between 'عقل' and 'نقل' then you give a priority to intellect 'عقل'. Because your intellect is the first thing that allows you to understand the Quran anyway. And is there's a contradiction you do the *Tawel* of the Quran. (*tawel* → not take the Quran literally but metaphorically).
 - Ibn Taymiyyah says that this is incorrect. Because there cannot be a contradiction between them. If you find that there is a contradiction it is because either you misinterpreted the Quran and the Hadeeth 'نقل', or you misused your intellect 'عقل'.
 - And the since the philosophers misuse their intellect, they find contradiction between philosophy and the Quran.
 - The problem is that Ibn Taymiyyah did study philosophy in order to criticize it. → he uses philosophy to criticize philosophy.
 - Which means that even if you're a critical of philosophy, you have to study it in order to criticize it.

7/3/2021

Lecture 2

The Nature of God

THE NATURE OF GOD

- Definitions
 - **Theism:** The belief that God exists.
 - It could be **Monotheism** (like in Islam where you believe in one God) or **Polytheism** (which is belief in more than one God).
 - **Atheism:** The belief that God does not exist.
 - **Agnosticism:** We do not have enough evidence to decide whether God exists or not.

GOD AND GOODNESS

- **Is the right thing to do because God commands it, or does God command it because it is the right thing to do?**
 - **Divine Command Theory (DCT):** “Morally right” means “commanded by God”, “morally wrong” means “forbidden by God”.
 - The moment God command you to do something it becomes right. The moment God tells you not to do something, it becomes wrong.
 - For example, God commanded Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, that’s why it became the right thing to do.
- **Advantages of Divine Command Theory:**
 1. The main advantage → ‘morally right’ and ‘morally wrong’ (ethics) becomes objective.
 - What is right is what God command, and what is wrong is what God forbid. (no longer subjective)
 2. The second advantage → it tells you why you should do something; if God commands you to do something and you don’t do it you will be punished. If God commands you to do something and you do it, you’ll be rewarded.

- **Problems with Divine Command Theory:**

- An Atheist is not going to accept that the right thing to do is because God commands it, because he doesn't believe in God.
- The other problem is demonstrated in Plato's "Euthyphro's dilemma".
 - Plato is the first one to notice this problem in his dialogue "Euthyphro" where his main character is Socrates (Socrates was Plato's teacher).

- **The Dialogue:** There was a trial of Socrates and he was charged impiety and corrupting the youth and he was condemned to death. Socrates meet Euthyphro at the court's steps and he says, "I've got a problem and I've charged by Meletus with corrupting the youth and impiety and I've been condemned to death" and he asks Euthyphro "what's your story?", and Euthyphro respond "I'm not charged with anything, I'm the one who is charging someone with a crime", "who are you charging", Socrates asks. Euthyphro says, "I'm charging my own dad with murder". So Socrates said, "so you must be really sure of what your dad did", and Euthyphro says "yes, I'm sure", "we had a servant and that servant killed someone, and my dad imprisoned the servant until he conduct his investigation, but he took such a long time that the guy died from dehydration and thirst. He accidentally killed the guy". So, Socrates says to him, "so you must be really sure that you're your father did was the wrong thing to do because you're bringing charges against your own family". The way Socrates phrase it was "you must be very sure of what the right thing to do is". And then he asked him "tell me, because it might help me with my situation, what is the right thing to do?".

- **This is the Socratic method** → he pretends that he is the student when he is the teacher.

Euthyphro says that "since my dad left that servant die, it is the wrong thing to do". And Socrates says, "that's an example of what the wrong thing to do is, that is not what is the wrong thing to do" "what is the essence of the wrong act?"

▪ **What is Euthyphro's Dilemma?**

- It is the question “what is the essence of the right/wrong thing to do?”

Euthyphro says, “what the right thing to do is what is agreeable to the Gods” (what God like). Socrates says, “well Gods don't always agree” (according to Greek mythology where they have lots of Gods). So, Euthyphro changes his definition, he says that “it's what agreeable to all the God's”.

- Euthyphro's definition is the right thing to do is what agreeable to the Gods.

Then Socrates asks “is the right thing to do is what is agreeable to the all the Gods? Or do all the God's agree to it because it is the right thing to do?”.

Euthyphro goes with the 2nd one, he says “God commands it because it's the right thing to do”.

- The reason that he picks the 2nd one is because the first one makes morality arbitrary.
 - He wants to avoid the main problem with the Divine Command Theory which is that if doing the right thing is just what God tells you to do, then it will mean that God could tell you to do anything and it will be the right thing to do.
 - God could tell you to kill your mother and it would be the right thing to do.

Socrates says, “that's fine, but there's a problem with this as well”. “if you're saying this, it will mean that what the right thing to do is separate than what God likes (it exists independent of God's judgement)”. Euthyphro is floundering now, and he can't figure it out. And Socrates helps him out, he says “maybe what's holy and what's the morally right thing to do is what's just”. And Euthyphro says “yes, yes, that's what it is”. So, Socrates says “are the two the same thing?”, and Euthyphro says, “well not exactly, everything that's just is holy, but it is not the other way around”. So, Socrates says “so, what's the difference then?” and Euthyphro says, “the difference is that what's just is what takes care of the Gods”. Socrates asks, “what does that mean?”,

Euthyphro says, “it is like master to a slave”, “so we are the slaves to the God and it’s whatever helps God fulfil his purpose”. Socrates asks, “what’s the purpose of the Gods?”, Euthyphro says, “it is like this; I pray to God. And let’s say I want a new car, and I get it.” Socrates says, “if this is what you’re saying, then I get what I want out of it. What did the Gods get out of it? (if it is like an exchange, where I worship God and he gives me something. I see what I get, what does God get then?)”, Euthyphro says, “God gets ratification”. And when Socrates asks him what he means by ratification, Euthyphro says, “it is what agreeable to the Gods and what They like”. Socrates says, “don’t you see we’ve gone a full circle?”.

- What is moral is what is agreeable to the Gods. And then Euthyphro dismissed it and then he comes back to it.

So now Euthyphro capitulates...

9/3/2021

Lecture 3

The Nature of God

- **What are the problems with both options of the dilemma?**
 - 1st option “it is the right thing to do because God commands it” → the moment God commands it; it becomes the right thing to do.
 - The problem → it makes the right thing to do arbitrary.
 - Another problem is that if you’re saying that the commands of God are goods, then essentially all you’re saying is ‘the commands of God are commanded by God’
 - Good = Commanded by God → the commands of God are Good → the commands of God are commanded by God. → (fallacy)
 - 2nd option “God commands you to do something because it’s the right thing to do” → this appeals to your intellect ‘rationality’
 - The problem → this means that something that’s good exists independent of God’s will, and that he didn’t create what is good, he is just recognizing it as good and that’s why He is telling you to do.
 - Good is just a concept and is not a creation that is created by Allah.
- **What are the responses of the Mu’tazilites on the one hand, and the Ash’aris/Atharis/Maturidis on the other?**
 - **The Atharis, Maturidis, Ash’aris** (They represent the Sunni’s school of thought) assert more the will of God. And they say that morally right is what commanded by God, and morally wrong is what forbidden by God. → no limitation on Allah’s will (it doesn’t exist outside of God’s will). [*this is option 1*]
 - This is why they adhere more to the Divine Command Theory.

- **Mu'tazilites** (they're more rationalistic and they generally influence Shi'ism) say that God tells you to do something because it's right, which means that every act is congenial 'appeals' to my rationality. → I'm responsible for my own action which is why it is just for God to punish me. *[this is the 2nd option]*
 - For example, if God tells me to own my parents, that's something congenial to my rationality → I think about it in a way that even if that command of God didn't exist, I would still own my parent because it makes sense to me. But God still tell me to do it because it matches up to my rationality.
 - The right thing to do exist independent of God and he just tells me to do the right thing.
 - AlMu'azilites says that the problem with this theory is that it takes our rationality completely out of the equation.
- **Ash'aries response to Mutazilites:** say two people die, one person goes to heaven. And the second person was evil and goes to hell. And the third one who is a baby, he goes to isthmus '*barzakh*' (in between place). This is something that Mutazilites would agree with because it makes sense. Now the baby complains to God and says that "if I've lived longer, I could've done good deeds and gone to heaven" and God responds "if you would've lived longer you would have committed sins and you would've gone to hell". Now the person who goes to hell says, "if you have taken my life earlier when I was a baby, then I wouldn't have committed all of these acts and wouldn't be going to hell".
 - So, our idea of what is morally right and wrong (that we think we know objectively), we cannot know it. We never had enough information to know what is moral and what is not, which is why we have to rely on God and just accept what He says is right is right.
- **Mu'tazila's response to Asharies:** is that they're making morality arbitrary, which means that if God commands you to kill your own mother it would be fine.

- **What is Ibn Taymiyya's response?**

- His response was that both sides are wrong.
 - He dismissed Mu'tazila because he is more toward Divine Command Theory, because there can't be anything that exist independent of God because that would take away God's power.
 - Atharis, Maturidis, Ash'aris are wrong as well because they are saying that God's commands are completely arbitrary (God can tell you to kill your mother and that would be moral).
- The Ash'aris responded that, yes, they are arbitrary; however, God can't ever be unjust, so if he tells you to kill your mother, that would be just because:
 - 1- We are God's property, and no one can be unjust with the way they deal with their property.
 - 2- Injustice means that you're commanded to do something, and you disobey that command. And Allah is not subject to any command (no one can command Him), therefore he cannot be unjust in whatever He tells us to do.
- Ibn Taymiyya response to these 2 things by saying:
 - 1- a person can be unjust in their own property.
 - For example, if I own a cat and I imprisoned the cat in my apartment and I don't give it food nor drinks, then I'm being unjust to that cat. Because I'm not letting it free so it can hunt on its own, and I'm not giving it food or water.
 - 2- God isn't subject to any command (no one can command Him), but he has commanded himself to be just → "يا عبادي إني حرمت الظلم على نفسي" he made injustice forbidden on himself.
 - Which means God won't tell me or anyone else to kill their own parent, for example, because this would be unjust.

14/3/2021

Lecture 4

The Nature of God

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

- **What is Omnipotence?**
 - All powerful. → God can do whatever He wants (فعال لما يريد).
- **Why the question: “Can God make a stone so heavy He cannot lift it?” means God is not omnipotent?**
 - Because Either God cannot make the stone, or He can't lift it.
- **Difference between square circle and heavy stone**
- **Response of St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274)**
 - He said that tasks cannot be self-contradictory or intrinsically impossible ‘*mustahil dhati*’. So, something that is logically incoherent like a ‘square-circle’.
 - If I can't draw a circle, it means that I don't have the skills to draw a circle.
 - But if I can't draw a ‘square-circle’, it is not because I don't have the skill, it's because it's impossible anyway. → logically incoherent.
 - Therefore, it is not because there is a thing that God cannot do, it is because that something is not a thing.
 - **Is it the same with saying that God cannot make a stone so heavy He cannot lift it?**
 - For example, I can build a boat so heavy that I cannot lift it. So, is this intrinsically impossible?
 - Thomas Aquinas said that, my “building a boat so heavy that I cannot lift it” is not self-contradictory because me and God are different.
 - I can easily build a boat that I cannot lift. But God is different because He is omnipotent, He has the power to do anything.

- When we say that God is omnipotent, essentially what we are saying is that the statement “can God make a stone so heavy that he cannot lift it”, we are saying that the stone is too heavy for God to lift, which means “a stone that cannot be lifted by He who has the power to lift anything”. → this is clearly a self-contradictory statement.
- It is God’s omnipotence that makes the statement self-contradictory, whereas it is not self-contradictory for me because I am not omnipotent.
- **René Descartes: Can we tie God to logic?**
 - Aquinas’ response is revealed the inherent self-contradictory of the question (logically incoherent), which is why it cannot apply to God.
 - We cannot tie God to logic because God is fundamentally beyond our understanding.
 - Making an unliftable stone for someone who can lift anything is contradiction.
 - If we allow this contradiction because God is beyond our understanding (God is not subject to our laws of logic), why can’t we make 2 contradictions possible?
 - 1st contradiction → God can make an unliftable stone.
 - 2nd contradiction → God can lift it.
- **Harry Frankfurt → “Logic of Omnipotence”**
 - He said that essentially, God is not bound to our laws of logic. So, we can pile one contradiction on top of another contradiction and it still would not be a problem.
 - This is why a lot of Muslim philosophers say that Allah is numinous (He is beyond our understanding ‘super rational’).
 - Not only He is not bound to our laws of physics, He is also not bound to our laws of logic.
- **Difference of opinion between Mu’tazila and Athari:**
 - **Mu’tazila** → it has to be logically coherent (similar to Aquinas)
 - Allah operates within the law of logic; it has to make sense to us.

- **Athari** → Allah is absolutely ‘فعال لما يريد’, which means even the laws of logic cannot hold Him back.
- We understand ‘وحي’ and we know that it is correct and true from our intellect. If you’re saying that we can’t apply our intellect to Allah, then how can we say anything.
 - Our understanding about God, which we get from the Quran, which we think it’s correct because we used our mind. If you’re saying that your mind cannot be trusted when you’re applying it to God, then you’re saying we cannot trust his ‘وحي’ in the first place. And his ‘وحي’ is the first thing that you use to say that Allah is the one true God. Then everything falls apart.
 - Mu’tazila → This is why they’re saying that you have to use your mind.
 - Athari → They disagree with Mu’tazila by saying it only applies to us.

16/3/2021

Lecture 5

The Nature of God

God's Foreknowledge Vs. Free Will 'omniscience'

- **If God knows what you will do, how can you be held responsible?**
 - God knows what choices you would make, but that doesn't mean He makes you do those things.
 - Because God knows our will; He know what we'll do. His knowing doesn't take away from our freewill.
 - (you don't force someone to sin because you know he is going to sin).
 - St. Augustine → just like your memories don't force the past to happen.
- **Why does God's foreknowledge and free will seem contradictory?**
 - Because according to Maimonides, there is absolutely no comparison between our knowledge and the knowledge of God.
 - Everything about God is completely transcendent 'منزه' including his knowledge.
 - Even though it appears to be a contradiction, it is only because we assume to understand God's knowledge.
- **What is hard determinism?**
 - عن أبي عبد الرحمن عبد الله بن مسعود قال: حدثنا رسول الله - وهو الصادق المصدوق -: «إن أحدكم يجمع خلقه في بطن أمه أربعين يوماً نطفة، ثم يكون علقة مثل ذلك؛ ثم يكون مضغة مثل ذلك؛ ثم يرسل إليه الملك؛ فينفخ فيه الروح؛ ويؤمر بأربع كلمات: يكتب رزقه، وأجله، وعمله، وشقي أو سعيد؛ فوالله الذي لا إله غيره؛ إن أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل الجنة حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها إلا ذراع؛ فيسبق عليه الكتاب؛ فيعمل بعمل أهل النار؛ فيدخلها؛ وإن أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل النار حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها إلا ذراع؛ فيسبق عليه الكتاب؛ فيعمل بعمل أهل الجنة؛ فيدخلها»
رواه البخاري ومسلم

- Hard determinism → is that everything written (we don't have freewill).
 - This hadith seems to suggest.
- **Problem** → No freewill. No responsibility.
- **What is omniscience of God?**
 - All knowing → that God knows everything.
- **What is secondary causation?**
 - That Allah create us, once He create us, He leaves us to it. He gives us freewill so we're responsible for whatever we do.
 - If you kill someone, that is on you.
 - This is against hard determinism.
 - i.e., God knowing what you will do, doesn't take away you freewill.
- **Response of St Augustine (d. 430), first great Christian philosopher**
 - **Response of St. Augustine** → Allah knows what we will do (because he knows our nature), that doesn't mean he causes us to do that thing.
 - So, we're responsible for our own actions.
- **Response of Boethius (Roman philosopher)**
 - He says that the omniscience (knowledge) of Allah, is not like our knowledge.
 - Because time doesn't apply to Allah the way it applies to us.
 - For example, I'm walking along the path, and there's a turn in the road. → the other side of the road there is a bear. And my destination is on the other side of that turn. Am I going to carry on walking?
 - Yes, because I don't know that there's a bear there.
 - This is how time applies to us.
 - We move along time not knowing what coming next.
 - Allah's knowledge of time is different. Allah has the knowledge of past, present, and the future all together.

- But with us the past is what had happened already; the present is what is happening now; and the future is what about to happen (I don't know the future).
- Imagine there is a guy at the top of a hill, he can see the whole path (he can see that there is a bear in the other side). All the information is available to that guy. Because his vantage point is different.
 - This is the way Allah's knowledge is. He knows what is going to happen. That doesn't mean he is causing you to do that thing.
- **Response of Maimonides (Medieval Jewish philosopher)**
 - He says that there is absolutely no comparison between our knowledge and the knowledge of God.
 - Everything about God is completely transcendent 'منزه' including his knowledge.
- **Augustine's view similar to Mu'tazilah**
 - **Response of Mu'tazila:** "Secondary Causation" → That Allah create us, once He create us, He leaves us to it. He gives us freewill so we're responsible for whatever we do.
 - This is why they're known for "أهل العدل".
 - Mu'tazilis are more rationalistic so they influence (*ithna'ashareya* 'اثنا عشرية', *Emaeia*...etc)
 - Extreme version of the Mu'tazilis 'Qaderia – قادية → we are completely free to do whatever we want.
 - Similar to St. Augustine.

Advantages:	Disadvantages:
That we are responsible for our own actions.	If we are responsible for our own actions, then who is not responsible for our actions? It's limiting the power of Allah.

- **Response of Ash'aris:** lean toward things being determined (but not hard determinism).
 - They influence Sunnies School.
 - They don't want to agree with limiting God's freewill.
 - **What's the problem with that?**
 - If God is responsible for everything we do, then how are we responsible.
 - They came with the answer of "earning" 'iktesab – اكتساب'. (it resolves the limiting of God's power)
 - Allah creates in you the choice to kill someone or not to kill someone. → so, He is the one who is giving you that choice.
 - Not limiting Allah's power.
 - Then you make a decision that you're going to kill that person.
 - Not limiting you're freewill.
 - Now Allah create the actions (He allows you to act in accordance with the choice that you made).
 - The action belongs to Allah, but since you made it, you earned the responsibility.
 - The extreme "*Jabari* – جبرية" → (they agree with hard determinism), they say that everything written so we are not responsible.

18/3/2021

Lecture 6

The Nature of God

- **Response of Aristotle**

- The statements about future events are neither true nor false.

- **What is the problem of future contingents?**

- If an event occurs in the future, then it is a fact that it will occur, and we cannot stop it.
 - If we can prevent it from occurring, then it will not occur (it is impossible).
 - i.e., if we say that something is going to happen tomorrow, then it is settled that that thing is going to happen (it's a fact). And if we say that something will not happen tomorrow, then that is a fact (it's impossible to happen tomorrow).
 - In both cases the matter is already settled.
 - He gave the example of a sea battle.
 - If I say that there's definitely going to be a sea battle tomorrow. Then it's a fact.
 - If I say there is not going to be a sea battle tomorrow, then this is also a fact.
 - In both cases the matter is already settled, so how can you say it's the future when the matter has already settled? It's either has to happen or cannot happen.
 - This statement contains 2 things. (there will be a sea battle tomorrow – there won't be a sea battle tomorrow).
 - It seems like 1 of those statements has to be correct.
 - If the 1st one is true, then it already determined today that it will be a sea battle tomorrow, which means it has to happen → and that is not the case (so, it can't be true).

- If you take number 2, that means there can't be a sea battle tomorrow (impossible) → which is also not true.
 - Neither possibility is correct. → because it didn't happen yet.
 - You can only have knowledge about things that are actually true in reality. Because reality hasn't taken place yet, you cannot say whether it's true or false.
 - The way we are talking about the future seems like we are talking about the past.
 - For Aristotle, saying "the sun will rise tomorrow is not a fact", however, saying " $2+2=4$ " is a fact.
- **Ibn Sina's answer:**
 - it is based on Aristotle's response.
 - He says that God leaves us to it. (similar to what Mu'tazila said).
 - But he says that God doesn't know what choices we will make. (similar to what Aristotle said).
 - But this does not mean God is omniscient.
 - God doesn't know what I will choose simply because it's unknowable (hasn't happen yet).
 - i.e., God is omniscient because He knows everything that can be known. Whereas something in the future cannot be known because it didn't happen yet (unknowable). '
 - He is saying that God knows everything in a universal way because He knows my nature, so He knows that finite options that are available to me.
 - This is called the **Principle of Gersonides**.
- **What are the problems with his answer?**
 - Abu Hamid Al Ghazali says this is *irtidad*.
 - It is limiting God's knowledge.

- **Why did he give his answer?**
 - If Allah knows the future (in 5 minutes I'm going to drive to the supermarket), then know He knows something that he didn't know 5 minutes ago, which means that He has changed.
- If you're saying that he knows every single thing, then he is gaining knowledge, does that mean that God is changing?

21/3/2021

Lecture 7

The Nature of God

Does God Change? ‘Immutability’

- **If god is timeless, how can He know what is happening on earth and how can He respond to us when we pray to Him?**
 - You have 2 sides: you either go with (God changes) or (God does not change).
- **Plato’s response:**
 - The reason that God does not change is that if God changes (if He were to change) he would either change for the better or the worse.
 - If He changes for the better, then it would mean that God was not perfect. So, God cannot change for the better.
 - If He changes for the worse, then it means that he is no longer perfect. (from being perfect to imperfect). So, He cannot change for the worse.
- **Problem with Plato’s response:**
 - It is saying that if God were to change, it is either changing for the better or the worse. → false dichotomy.
 - False Dichotomy: is saying that there could only be 1 of 2 options, were actually it could be neither.
- **Aristotle’s response:**
 - He wants to maintain that God is perfect, so He does not change.
 - Because God is perfect, He is doing the most perfect thing, which means that God is thinking (because thinking is that highest possible activity).
 - God is an intellect (because an intellect thinks).
 - God is thinking about the highest possible thing, which is Himself.
 - This is why God is a “Self-thinking Intellect”.
 - Because God is only thinking about Himself, so what He is not thinking about is lesser beings (like humans).

- Because this would be He is thinking about something that is lower than Himself, which would diminish His perfection.
- This is why according to Aristotle God does not respond or think about us.
 - This is what Ibn Sina comes up with.
- Ibn Sina said that God does not respond to us because that would constitute a change in God. And that would mean he is changing, and He cannot change because He is perfect.
 - That does not mean He is not perfect. Because (according to Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushed who also followed Aristotle), God has universal knowledge of everything that happen in the universe. And this universal knowledge is a much higher form of knowledge than universal knowledge.
 - Having a universal knowledge is an aim for an intellect.
- AlGhazali says that it does not matter if you say that God has a higher form of knowledge. Saying that there is anything that God does not know is apostasy '*irtidad*'.
- But for Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushed, this would make you adhere to the inevitable conclusion that God is changing, and that is unacceptable conclusion.
 - Because only being that are imperfect change and evolve.
- **Orthodox Scholars** → The problem is that when I do something wrong, for example, God comes to a state of knowing that I'm doing something wrong.
 - This is a change in God.
- God becomes displeased in a way that he was not before I did that thing, which is also a change in God.
- This is the same problem that they had with the creation of the universe, which is why Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd both agreed with Aristotle that the universe is eternal (God did not create the universe in time).
 - Because creating a universe would constitute a change in God (He went from a state of not creating a universe to a state where He wanted to create the universe and created it).
 - This is a change which according to Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd is impossible to God.

- **Islamic response:**

- They say that God knew in his foreknowledge that I would do something wrong. So, his displeasure and his responding to my prayers is based on what he already knew in his foreknowledge.
 - I.e., God is interacting with us and responding to our prayers, but this is everything that He already knew in his foreknowledge.
- Just like in his foreknowledge, He knew at what point He would decree that He would create the universe.
- None of this constitutes a change in God.
 - i.e., God is perfect and unchanging.
- Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd disagree because they believe that no change is acceptable when it comes to God, because He is absolutely perfect in every single way. → so, there is no maneuver in change in His perfect entity.

23/3/2021

Lecture 8

Religious Language

WHAT KIND OF LANGUAGE SHOULD WE USE WHEN WE TALK ABOUT GOD?

- **David Hume (d. 1776): Can we use ordinary language to describe God?**
 - In his work “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion”, he questions whether we can actually use ordinary language to describe something so extraordinary and so mysterious as God.
 - We have an idea of what ‘*AlRaheem*’ is. So, when we describe someone as being ‘*Raheem*’ we know what it means in humans, but in God is something different.
- **Maimonides (d. 1204): Can only describe God with negative attributes.**
 - He was a Jewish philosopher.
 - In his “Guide for The Perplexed”, he said that we can only describe God with negative attributes → Because God is beyond anything we can imagine.
 - Negative attribute is saying what God is not.
 - Because we do not know what God is, we describe him in terms of what He is not.
 - For example, you can’t say that “God is knowing”, (because you don’t know what ‘knowing’ is when it’s applied to God) so you would say “God is not not knowing”.
 - You wouldn’t say that “God is powerful”, because you don’t know what ‘powerful’ is when it’s applied to God, so you say, “God is not not powerful”.
 - You use negative attributes because using ordinary words is misleading.
 - Even when you say, “God exist”, you’re conflating God’s existing with our existing.
 - So, you don’t say this. You can only say that “God does not not exist”.

- Maimonides gives the example of a wall.
 - For example, if you say “a wall does not see” is this statement accurate? What about saying, “a wall does see”?
 - Neither statements are accurate.
 - A wall does not see, but it is also not blind. It is just that these words don’t apply to a wall.
 - In the same way, words generally do not apply to God, because He is totally beyond our understanding.
- **Gersonides: We can use positive attributes to describe God.**
 - Gersonides’s disagree with Maimonides by saying “we can use positive attributes to describe God”.
 - Positive attributes → saying what God is.
 - In his work ‘Wars of The Lord’, he said that we can use words straight forwardly when we are describing God, but whilst maintaining that they refer to God’s essence primarily and only to human secondarily.
 - Whenever we say something (knowing, seeing, hearing, existing, living...etc.), the first thing we are describing is God, and the way we apply it to us is only secondary. And that our knowing and our living...etc. is derived by God (aminate from God).
 - For example, the perfect version of ‘*karama*’ belongs to God, and when you’re being ‘*kareem*’, it’s in a secondary and a lower level to God.
 - Any terms that we mention, the main meaning of that is the way it’s applied to God, and when we apply it to everything else, we are only applying it in a secondary way because it’s getting that quality from God.
 - So, Gersonides is saying of course the knowledge of God is beyond our knowledge. But because we see the knowledge that we have, we can get an idea of what the knowledge of God is like (even though His knowledge is way greater than ours).
 - Gersonides is saying that God can be known to a much higher degree than Maimonides.
 - Maimonides is simply denying that we can know God in any meaningful way.

25/3/2021

Lecture 9

Religious Language

- **Aquinas: We have to use analogy—2 types: Analogy of proportionality and analogy of attribution.**
 - Aquinas says that when names are applied to God or to humans, there are 2 options; there can either be predicated univocally or equivocally.
 - **Univocally Predication** → if something is predicated univocally, it means that it has the same meaning.
 - When I say that “I’m seeing”, and when I say “God is seeing” it means the same thing.
 - My ‘seeing’ and God’s ‘seeing’ would be the same thing.
 - **Equivocally Predication** → if something is predicated equivocally, it means something different.
 - If I say, “I’m seeing” and if I say, “God is seeing”, it means something completely different when it’s applied to God.
 - **Aquinas reject both:**
 - He rejects Univocal Prediction → because it will lead to anthropomorphize “تجسيد”.
 - If I say that “I’m knowing” in the same way that “God is knowing”, essentially what I’m doing is saying “I’m like God in a meaningful way”.
 - Because my existence depending on God, that means that because “I’m like him”, means that God’s existence will also depend on something else. (which is unacceptable)
 - He rejects Equivocal Predication → because that will mean that God is completely unknown to us.

- We do not even know what we are believing in, (it will make faith impossible) and it will also mean that God has made himself unknown to us.
- Aquinas says that there is some similarity there that connect us to God, which is why we can actually forge a relationship with God.
 - If you're saying that God is completely different and there is no source of similarity (no connection between us and God at all), then there is no way we can actually have a relationship with God and there is no way we can believe in Him.
- Aquinas says that we have to use Analogy when we are talking about God.
 - **Analogy** 'تحليل' → it is saying that the quality of something is proportionate to the quality of its nature.
 - It relays on the fact that there is some point of comparison which links 2 things in the analogy. → Comparison of something that is simple and is used to explain something complicated. But there need to be a point of comparison between them.
 - For example, we use a pump to describe a heart "a heart is like a pump". A pump is very easy to understand, the heart is more complicated. But it's also pumping blood around the body.
 - Heart is complicated, pump is simple. (you can use a pump to explain a heart)
 - But there has to be a point of comparison between them (something that links them).
 - The pumping is what links them. (a pump pumps water, a heart pumps blood).
 - We use analogical language to explain the attributes of God. **HOW?** By using 2 types of analogy:
 - He wants to avoid both conclusion that we know God completely, and that we don't know God at all.

- **Analogy of proportionality** → is that the quality of something is proportional to the quality of its nature.
 - In the same way the attributes of God are proportional to His nature.
 - Because God is infinite, the attributes that is applied to His are infinite.
 - Aquinas gives the example of ‘life’ → a plant is living, an animal is living, a human is living, and God has is living. So, we say a plant has a life, an animal has life, and human have a life, and God has a life.
 - There is an analogy because ‘life’ applies to all of them. But there is a proportional relationship between the life that exist in each on of them.
 - The life of the plant is a little bit limited; the life of the animal is a bit better; the life of a human is better still; the life of God is the greatest of all.
 - There is a point of comparison between each member on this list, but God’s life is far greater than any other because His nature is infinite (greater).
 - This helps us understand God in a limited way, even though we have to appreciate that we will never know Him fully.
 - We get an idea of what God’s life is like, because we know life in earth is like.
- **Analogy of attribution** → It is based on derivation, which means that our qualities are a reflection of God’s qualities.
 - For example, if I say the bread is good, this means that the baker is good, because the bread is a reflection of the baker.
 - The baker’s goodness spread through the bread.
 - In Aquinas’s time, if you’re sick the doctor would give you Bull’s urine to drink. Because they thought it was healthy.

- Aquinas says because the bull is healthy, the bull's urine is healthy. → the bull's health spreads through the bull's urine.
- But if I say, "Bull's urine is healthy", what does the word 'healthy' mean in that sentence? It means that it causes health.
- When I say, "the bull is healthy", the word 'healthy' means that the bull IS healthy (the bull is in good health).
 - 'Healthy' means different things in each sentence.
- In this example, a sick person will derive his health from the bull.
- Aquinas is saying that if I say that "I'm knowledgeable", then I'm deriving my knowledge from God.
 - But they don't mean the same thing in God and in me.
 - My knowledge is a reflection of God's knowledge.
- However, if someone is bad, this means that he got the potential of being bad from God. Not that God is bad.
- **The position of Muslim theological schools (Ash'ary vs. Mu'tazila):**
 - **Ash'aries:** leaning more toward what Gersonides and Aquinas says when he uses analogy. That there is some point of connection between the two. Even though we don't know what they mean exactly when applied to God, we have a vague idea of what they mean.
 - They accept '*asma alhusna*' because they were in the Quran.
 - Even though we don't know how they're applied to God, we accept their reality.
 - **Mu'tazila:** they go with basically what Maimonides says.
 - God is completely beyond our understanding, so '*asma alhusna*' cannot be applied to God in any meaningful way.
 - They are just metaphors. (they don't have a reality)
 - They will lead to eternal beings 'تعدد القدماء'.

28/3/2021

Lecture 10

Belief in God

Belief in God

- **Blaise Pascal (d. 1662) was a French philosopher who came up with a famous “wager”:**
 - It is impossible to know for certain that God exist.
 - So, should we believe in God or not?
 - Pascal saying that the rational thing to do is to believe in God.
 - Because you got 2 options:
 - Option A:
 - If you believe in God and He exist, you’ll be rewarded and you’ll get eternal paradise.
 - If you believe in God and He does not exist, you don’t lose anything.
 - Option B:
 - If you do not believe in God and he exist, you would be punished forever. (eternal hell)
 - If you do not believe in God and He does not exist, nothing will happen.
 - So, the smart thing is to believe that God exist because you would have the chance to gain everything, and you would lose nothing.
- **Pascal’s Wager: Rational to believe in God:**
 - Rationally speaking, you should believe in God. Because, according to decision making theory, that is the rational move (to believe in God).
 - And if you don’t believe in God, you are following your passion.

- **Problem with Pascal's wager:**

- **1:** if you believe in God and He does not exist, you will lose nothing.
 - That is not true, because you would be dedicating your whole life for nothing which have to meaning (you would miss out on experiences that you could have had).
- **2:** According to David Hume, Pascal makes it seem like it's an all or nothing situation (you believe in God you'll get everything. You don't believe in God you'll lose everything), that's not the situation.
 - Suppose a Christian believes in God but also believe that God has a son. According to a Muslim he won't be given a *Jannah* because this would be *shirk*. (or the other way around)
 - It's not just an option between believe and unbelieve. It is believing in a way that God wants you to believe in Him and doing that things that He asks you to do to get you to heaven, which is based on scripture. And different scriptures say different things. So, every religion has their own take on this.
- **3:** if we really know nothing about God (because Pascal is saying that we simply don't know anything about God), then what makes you think that believing in Him is what he wants you to do.
 - What makes you think that He will reward you if you believe in Him and punish you if you don't believe in him.

30/3/2021

Lecture 11

Belief in God

Should We Believe in God Based on Weak Evidence? ‘Pascal’s wager’**• WK Clifford, English Philosopher:**

- Believing on weak grounds harms society and is a form of dishonesty.
 - He is saying a person who believes in God does the same thing and is harming society in the same way.
- Because believing on weak evidence, guides our action.
 - Just like the guy who believed on weak evidence (that the ship has always survived) guided the man’s actions and he eventually harmed the people on that ship.
 - So, believing in God guides our actions and effects the society.

• Shipowner analogy

- Imagine a ship owner who is about to send a ship full of immigrants. The ship is old and battered, and the ship owner has doubts that it’s still seaworthy and he keeps thinking about it. But eventually he says that this ship has been going for 50 years it is fine. The ship turned out was not fine and it sinks and everyone on board dies. If the ship owner guilty?

• Problems with shipowner analogy

- The beliefs do not necessarily lead to detrimental actions.
 - Just because you believe in God that doesn’t mean you’re going to go and start killing anyone who doesn’t believe in God.
- Clifford is saying that belief in God is a weak belief and belief that the ship would be okay is also a weak belief.
 - The guy let the ship go based on weak belief even though he had doubts.

- Similar to this, we have doubts to whether God exists, but we still pursue in believing this and that harms the society.
 - However, the difference between these 2 doubts is that the ship owner can get rid of these doubts by repairing the ship. But we cannot get rid of the doubt.
 - According to Clifford, we do great harm to mankind just by believing based on sufficient evidence. Because we make mankind credulous (willing to believe anything) because we stopped investigating and stops us from testing proofs as well.
 - The problem with saying this is that just because you believe, does not mean you stop investigating and exercising your rationality.
 - Also, there is no way of testing a religious theory.
- **William James: when you have the choice between two options and cannot wait (you cannot get) for further evidence, you are justified in believing and acting as your passion decides.**
 - i.e., you shouldn't let the fear of holding a false belief prevent us from gaining benefits of what may be true.
 - Disagreeing with Clifford.
- **Alvin Platinga: Belief in the existence of God is a natural human tendency that doesn't need evidence to support it. He bases his view on John Calvin.**
 - You got three levels.
 - Clifford → wants the proof.
 - William James → says that if you can't decide based on the evidence, you can just go with your hunch.
 - Alvin Platinga → belief in God is a natural human tendency that doesn't need any proof at all.
 - John Calvin → God has implanted in all humans a *nisus*, which is an innate tendency believe in God.
 - *Nisus* → *fitra* 'فطره'
 - This tendency is so strong that you would believe that God exist like you believe a person standing in front of you exists.

- But only that original sin has suppressed this tendency.
- Original Sin → in Christianity, Adam's mistake in heaven in eating the forbidden fruit means that everyone in humanity innately becomes tarnished with sins. And you have to believe in Christ as your savior to whip away this original sin.
- **Islamic view**
 - The concept of *fitra*:
 - (ما من مولود إلا يولد على الفطرة، فأبواه يهودانه أو ينصرانه أو يمجسانه).
 - Every child is born in the innate tendency to believe in the existence of God.
 - This is also based on the Primordial Covenant.
 - It is based on the verse of the Quran:
 - وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ (172)) قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ
 - Everyone testified on the existence and the lordship of God.
 - And this is what gives you tendency, even though you don't remember it, it happened, and it affects us by giving us an innate tendency to believe in the existence of God.
 - **Ibn Taymiyya** → says that there is always going to be a harmony between reason and revelation.
 - Because we have our *fitra* (which is Primordial Covenant).
 - And this means that everything that's in revelation that's in the Quran makes sense to us.
 - Everything in the Quran naturally makes sense to us because we have in us this *fitra*, which is a certain type of rationality.
 - *Fitra* gives us religious rationality that makes it sensible to us.
 - This is why there is never contradiction between our rationality and the Quran and Hadith.

- **Real life consequences to this:**
 - Say there are tribes in the amazon that has never been in contact with the outside world, so obviously the message of Islam has never reached them. So, what happens to them when they die?
 - The schools that give more weight to *fitra* or this kind of innate religious rationality → they would put more emphasis on probability (عقل).
 - Maturidis.
 - The school of thought that place no emphasis at all on your rationality and place more emphasis on just the revelation (نقل) and nothing else → they would put less honest in your responsibility.
 - Ash'aris.
- **Maturidis** → they're saying that if these people who never heard of Islam, they would still be responsible if they reach a certain age and they still don't believe in one God.
 - The *fitra* alone would still be guiding them to this belief that there is a one God by a certain age. And if you don't believe in one God and you die, then you would be punished.
 - If you don't believe in one God if you reach that level, it's because you've suppressed this natural tendency and you're responsible for that.
- **Ash'aris** → if the revelation (Quran) hasn't reached you, then you are not responsible for anything.

1/4/2021

Lecture 12

Belief in God

Faith and Reason ‘the ethics of belief’

- **Many scientific proofs in the Qur’an:**
 - Albert Einstein’s field equations proved that the universe is expanding.
 - (47) وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ
 - Advance embryology
 - وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ (12) ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ (13) ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا (14) آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ
 - Geological research prove that earth’s crust is the deepest under a mountain range.
 - (7) أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا (6) وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا
 - Geological research also proves that if it wasn’t for the mountains, there would be a lot of earthquakes.
 - (15) وَالْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ
- **Should we believe in Islam and the Quran and God on the basis of such rational arguments?**
 - Concordism → interpreting any scripture in light of modern science.
 - If they’re rational proofs and you’re not believing in them, then you’re going against your rationality.
 - Some people might say that science evolve so if you rely on them it might change in the future, so you should base your belief on science.
- **David Hume: “Our most holy religion is founded on FAITH, not reason.”**
 - Rational evaluation has no place in defending faith. And he brands them as (dangerous friends or disguised enemies).
 - Rationality is not as important as faith.

- Whoever defends faith based on the principle or reason (who use scientific proofs that the bible) he calls them dangerous friends or disguised enemies.
 - Because, science is always changing, suppose we discover something is wrong, does that mean that the Quran is wrong?
 - Mere reason is inefficient to convince us of the proof of God.
 - In itself, scientific proofs are not enough because reason isn't enough to give us enough proof to believe in God.
 - If there was so much evidence, it would lean more toward knowing and not believing.
- Belief is like an instinct.
 - When a child sees a lion for the first time (sees his sharp teeth and his claws). He would be afraid of the lion. Because the child believes that the lion is dangerous based on no evidence at all.
 - Belief is the same, it is not based on past experiences nor it is based on scientific proofs.
 - A miracle that is given to you by God.
- **Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240): "Whoever builds his faith exclusively on demonstrative proofs and deductive arguments, builds a faith on which it is impossible to rely. For he is affected by the negativities of constant objections. Certainty (al-yaqin) does not derive from the evidence of the mind but pours out from the depths of the heart."**
 - You can use proofs to strengthen your belief. But strengthening your belief with scientific proofs is not like basing your belief on scientific proofs,
- **The view of Michael Scriven**
 - He disagrees with David Hume in saying that reason justifies belief.
 - Any method that shows belief is likely to be true is by definition a justification of that belief. It an appeal to reason.
 - This is exactly what the Universal Principle 'القانون الكلي' is.
 - This is a proof that Al-Razi and Al-Ghazali came up with.

- Al-Razi says that if there is a conflict between reason ‘rationality’ and revelation, then you go with your rationality.
- **Al-Razi’s Golden Rule:**
 - If there is a contradiction between revelation and rationality, you go with rationality.
 - Because it is your rational which made you believe in revelation in the first place.
 - **Revelation here means Quran or any Holy script.
 - When you get a conflict between your Rational ‘عقل’ and Revelation ‘نقل’.
 - If you choose your rational, then you’ve maintained both of them.
 - If you choose your revelation, then you loose both of them.
- **Ibn Taymiyya’s view:**
 - He disagrees with Al-Razi → There can never be a contradiction between rationality ‘reason’ and revelation.
 - Because our rationality is not a normal rationality. We are given this religious rationality ‘*fitra*’. It makes our reason and revelation always compatible (in harmony).
 - Which means if we find something that is not in harmony, it’s because we have misused our reason ‘عقل’. (we have gone against our *fitra*).
 - Which is what he says philosophers always do.
 - You go with revelation because rationality can be corrupted.

4/4/2021

Lecture 13

Belief in God

THEISM AND MODERN SCIENCE 'Belief without proof'

- **Question 1: If humanity is purpose for existence of world, why do they appear so late?**
 - We are assuming we know why God would do anything when we do not.
 - God is not bound to our rules or logic, so what makes us think that we know why he would do anything.
 - We assume that we know how time operate for God when we do not.
 - Time does not apply to God in the same way that it's applies to us. So, whatever how long ago, it does not mean anything for God.
- **Question 2: If the earth is main place where everything happens, why is it just a tiny planet in a vast solar system that doesn't seem to have any superiority over anything?**
 - We have no idea why God does anything.
 - We cannot question His motives.
 - The reason of the universe (and the Quran itself) is alluding to as a sign to believing in the power of God.
 - (إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ)
 - سَتَرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ
 - All of these verses are teleological arguments expounded by the Quran in order to show us that God exist (to show us his arrangement).
 - So why if other galaxies don't affect our solar system?
 - The fact that they exist shows us just how power and how mighty God is.

- Stephen Hawking in his book, *Brief Answers to Big Questions*, writes: “I think the universe was spontaneously created out of nothing, according to the laws of science. If you accept, as I do, that the laws of nature are fixed, then it doesn't take long to ask: What role is there for God?”

Theology and Falsification ‘faith and reason’

- **Central assertion: It is commonly accepted that for any belief to be meaningful, it has to be falsifiable.**
 - **Falsifiable** → it can be proven wrong by observation.
 - **Is the statement “God is good” falsifiable?**
 - No, it is not falsifiable, which means no matter what happens in the world, there is no act so evil that could occur which will make us believe that God is not good.
 - If the case was that God is good no matter what happens, then what's the difference between a world full of God's goodness and a world without it?
- **Parable of 2 explorers**
 - There are 2 explorers, and they are trekking through a jungle, and they come to a patch of land that has lots of flowers on it, but it also has some weeds. So, one explorer says, “some gardener must come and look after this patch of land, that's why it got some flowers on it” the other one disagrees “no, there is weeds as well so there is no gardener”. In order to proof who is right, they pitched their tents, and they wait to see if someone came and tend to the land. No one come, so the believer who believe there is a gardener said, “maybe the gardener is invisible”. So, they put up an electric fence and set dogs who can sniff out an invisible gardener. Still there is nothing. The believer says, “maybe the gardener is invisible and can't be detected by dogs and he's not picked up by the electric fence”. They other guy says, “what remains of your original assertion?” “how does an invisible, undetectable, unsensible, gardener differ from an imaginary one?”
 - This is known by ‘Death by a Thousand Qualification’.

- **Death by a thousand qualification** → you've added so many qualification (maybe this, maybe that) that the original assertion has no meaning anymore.
 - The question then becomes what would have to occur for you to believe there is no gardener?
- Similarly, one would ask, "what would have to occur for you to believe that God's goodness, and by extension God himself, does not exist?"
- **Counter-parable: Killer professors**
 - Imagine that I am convinced that every professor at GUST wants to kill me except Professor Thorsten. Thorsten introduces me to respectable and nice professors. After they all leave, he says to me "do you see how nice they were? Surly you're convinced that not every professor wants to kill you now". And I say, "that's exactly what professors who want to kill me would do", "this was their plan all along". "all the while they were there, they were plotting to kill me the whole time". Thorsen introduces me to more professors who are also respectable and nice, but I say the same thing.
 - What would you say about me? Paranoid and diluted.
 - You are either a sceptic who believes that everyone is not going kill you no matter what, or you're the person who is paranoid who thinks that everyone is out to kill you.
 - The important thing is that either one of them is right.
 - In this case, either Thorsten is right, or me.
 - Who is right in this situation?
 - Thorsten is right, because he sees what everyone else is seeing, whereas I'm seeing something different so I'm wrong.
- **Hume: Our interaction with the world depends on our perception, our point of view.**
 - Our point of view (perception) of this world can't be settled by what happens in the world.
 - We simply don't have enough evidence to make that determination.
 - This is why the jungle parable fails.
 - It can't be settled by observation → NOT falsifiable!

6/4/2021

Lecture 14

Belief in God

The Existence of God

- **Immanuel Kant (d. 1804): Proof for God's existence are basically divided into 3 categories:**
 - **1. Ontological Argument:**
 - Comes from premises that are supposed to derive from source other than observation of the world.
 - From reason alone.
 - It does not use the world to prove the existence of God.
 - Like Ibn Sina's *Burhan Al-Siddigin*.
 - Because it doesn't use anything to prove God's existence is known as *A priori argument*.
 - *A priori argument* → is an argument that concludes that God exist before considering the world.
 - **2. Cosmological Argument**
 - Is an argument for the existence of God with recognizing the existence of the universe. → (In this world nothing exists by itself).
 - The fact that the world exist must means that someone made it.
 - Proving the existence of God through the existence of the world.
 - These arguments are called "first cause arguments".
 - i.e., everything in this world has a cause, → nothing is the cause of itself, → so, the universe must have a cause, → and that cause is God.
 - **3. Teleological Argument**
 - It is a subcategory of the cosmological argument.
 - The purpose of something.
 - It begins with the existence of the world, but not only that, it is the order and the organization that we find in the world.

- We see that everything in the world is organized so that means there must be an organizer.
 - This is known as “argument from design”.
 - Teleological argument and Cosmological argument are *a posteriori* argument.
 - **A Posteriori argument** → arguments that are based on experience and certain observation of the world.
- **Most famous ontological argument in Christianity proposed by St Anselm (d. 1109) in 11th century: God is “a being greater than which none can be conceived.”**
 - We cannot conceive (think) of a being greater than God.
 - This means that God must exist.
 - Because existence is greater than nonexistence.
 - This means that a being greater than which non can be conceived (if God didn’t exist) would be something greater than Him (which would be a God that does exist). → this is a contradiction.
 - i.e., because God is absolutely the highest possible thing, which mean that God has everything that great. One of the qualities of greatness is existence. So, He must have that (because He is something that is greater than everything else), which mean if God didn’t exist, there must be another being which is greater. So, that means that we can think of something that is greater than God. Which is basically everything that God has but it has existence as well. → so, that would be a contradiction in terms.
 - This proof is only applicable for believers.
 - Actually, it doesn’t restrict to believer only, because if you say to an atheist “if a God were to exist, would He be the greatest possible thing you could think of?”. The atheist would say, “yes”.
 - If that is the case, because existence is greater than non-existence. It means that God must exist, because God is something that is greater than anything we can possibly think of, which mean that all of the

great things that we can think of, God has all of them. So, that means that He has existence as well. Because if God didn't exist, then it would mean that we can think of something that's greater than "something that we can't think of something that is greater". → which is a contradiction.

- i.e., If you are saying that God didn't exist, then we can't think of something that is greater than God. But we have already said that "we can't think of anything that is greater than God" → So, there is a contradiction there.

- **Objection of Gaunilo (French monk)**

- The problem with this proof is that you can apply it with everything.
 - You can use it to proof the existence of anything.
- According to Gaunilo, the argument "God is greater than which none can be conceived, and so He must exist", you can use the same line of reasoning to say than "an island is bigger than which none can be conceived also exist" because your conceiving of an island and existence is part of being an island, then you're saying that an island bigger than which non can be conceived also exists.
 - You can use the same line of reasoning to say anything.
 - It could lead to ridiculous conclusions.

- **Anselm's response**

- He disagrees with Gaunilo. → (false analogy)
 - Because an island bigger than non which can be conceived cannot exist in the mind.
 - Whereas a being greater than non which can be conceived can exist in the mind.

This is why you can't compare the contingent (what's possible) to the necessary.

8/4/2021

Lecture 15

The Existence of God

The Existence of God

- **Decartes (d. 1650) in *Meditations on First Philosophy*: Essence of triangle is that it has 3 sides, God's essence contains God's existence—ontological argument:**
 - Ibn Sina → essence and existence are two separate things, the essence of something doesn't tell you whether it exists or not.
 - He gave the example of a tringle: the essence of a tringle that it has three sides. It doesn't tell whether it exit or not. If I draw a tringle then it exists. Or if I think of a tringle, it will exist in my mind. But the essence of a tringle itself doesn't tell me whether it exists or not.
 - According to Ibn Sina, this applies to everything except God.
 - God's essence is His existence. (God is 'واجب الوجود')
 - This part of Decartes is from Ibn Sina.
 - Descartes → God's essence contains His existence.
 - This is because God is perfect.
 - An existence is a perfection so God must exist.
 - This part is from St Anselm.
 - He combined both arguments.
- **Main critic: Kant. Ontological argument fails because it treats predicate as part of the description rather than an indication that the thing is found in the world.**
 - For example,
 - Sarah is my friend.
 - Sarah, my friend, exists.
 - My friend → 1st order predicate
 - Exists → 2nd order predicate (does not tell us anything new)
 - Kant criticism on the 1st part of Decartes argument:
 - If you have a tringle, then it will have 3 sides. But if you don't have a tringle then you don't have 3 sides.

- The concept stays the same whether you have it or not.
- If you accept that there is a God, then you have to accept that His existence is necessary. (you have to accept that God is 'واجب الوجود'). But you don't have to accept God's existence in the first place.
 - When you say God's essence is His existence, you're not saying anything new.
 - All you're doing is that you're indicating that God's essence exists in reality.
 - That means, if you don't accept God existence in the first place, then He is not going to have existence.
- Kant criticism on the 2nd part of Decartes argument:
 - Descartes and St Anselm both say that "something that exist is more perfect than something that does not exist. And since God is perfect, He exist".
 - However, Kant say, "it's by no means clear that existence is a perfection".
- Existence itself is not a perfection.

11/4/2021

Lecture 16

The Existence of God

The Existence of God

- **Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) in *Summa Theologiae*: 5 ways to prove the existence of God. All are *a posteriori*, relying on empirical evidence:**
 - **1. Motion**
 - All the planets and the stars are in motion. Because they are in motion, there must be someone who is moving them (a mover).
 - Because in this world, nothing moves by itself (everything tends toward rest).
 - The mover is God.
 - He dismisses the possibility of an infinite regress.
 - Infinite regress → a series of appropriately related elements with a first member but no last member. (if God is moving the planets and the stars, what's moving God?).
 - God is the unmoved mover.
 - From Aristotle.
 - Aristotle → there must be an unmoved mover.
 - The process of moving can't go on forever, there has to be one thing at the start that is moving everything, but nothing is moving it, which is God.
 - **2. First Cause (Cosmological proof)**
 - Everything that exists in the world is caused to exist by something other than itself (nothing is the cause of itself). So, there must be a first cause, which is causing everything else to exist, but nothing is causing it to exist. (it exists on and by itself)
 - Taken by Aristotle.

○ **3. Necessary existence vs. contingent existence**

- Builds on the ‘first cause’ argument.
- Whatever has been brought into existence, hasn’t always existed. And it won’t always exist.
 - Everything is contingent on something else other than itself.
 - E.g., my existence is contingent on my parents...etc.
 - If we are saying that every single thing is contingent, then what was it that started everything? (because if everything was contingent, then nothing would exist).
 - Which means that the thing that started everything, cannot be contingent. It has to be necessary (which existence doesn’t depend on anything else).
- This argument is adapted from Ibn Sina
 - Ibn Sina → everything that exists need something else to bring it into existence.
 - Contingently existence → all things that need something else to bring them into existence (everything that exist in the universe).
 - Impossibly existence → things that didn’t exist.
 - **So, what is the states of the thing that brought them into existence?**
 - it’s either possibly existence or necessary existence (واجب الوجود – ممكن الوجود).
 - If it was possible then it is contingent.
 - It can’t be contingent. Because then it will be infinite regress.
 - So, it has to be Necessary.
 - Necessary Existence → God.
 - For Ibn Sina, this proof is ontological ‘*a priori*’. Aquinas made it into ‘*a posteriori*’.
 - Aquinas → every little thing in the world its existence depend on something from the universe.

- The paper depends on the tree.
 - Using examples from the world to prove the existence of God.
- Whereas Ibn Sina's argument
 - Thought about the difference between the type of existence that God has and the existence of everything else in the universe.
- **4. Gradation argument**
 - Aquinas → Some things in the world are more or less good than others.
 - If we look at the general of how good a thing is itself, you can say that something is better than another thing. That means that there has to be something which is the best of all in every respect.
 - And that thing is God.
 - God is the greatest good.
 - And that thing is also the cause of goodness in the world. So, that mean it has to exist because we see that goodness exist in the world.
 - And there is a gradation of how good something is.
- **5. Argument by design**
 - It's a teleological argument. (argument by design)
 - Aquinas → everything in this world work together to achieve a good end (a combined purpose), which is why it's organized in this way.
 - This cannot happen by a chance because they don't have the intelligence to do so.

The Existence of God

- **William Paley d. 1805, English theologian and moral philosopher**
 - He came with a teleological argument to prove the existence of God ‘argument by design’.
 - **The Precision of a watch:**
 - Say I’m walking alone, and I come across a storm. If someone asks me, “how long that storm has been there?” I could say “for all I know it’s been there for ever.” And you couldn’t dispute that.
 - Say I’m walking alone, and I came across a watch on the ground. If someone asks me, “how long has that watch been there?”. Could I accurately say, “for all I know it’s been there forever”?
 - No, because the watch’s sophisticated design that comes together to produce precision.
 - So, the watch has a maker.
- **Possible objections against argument**
 - This anticipate many of the problems that we have when we are talking about the existence of God through the world.
 - For the example above, I could say that the watch has a maker because of its sophisticated design.
 - Even though I did not see the watch being made in order to know that it has a maker.
 - In the same way, we don’t need to have seen how the world was made in order to know that it has a maker.
 - Let say that the watch wasn’t working correctly (it has the wrong time setup), does that mean it didn’t have a maker? No.
 - According to Paley, things go wrong in the world, there is evil, does that mean it didn’t have a maker?
 - Do I need to know each part and each mechanism of the watch and how does it work in order to know how does it operate? No
 - In the same way we don’t need to understand everything in the world in order to know that the world has a maker.

- If someone told me that all the parts of the watch developed themselves over time to produce this watch, would I believe them? No.
 - In the same way, we wouldn't accept that evolution causes the existence of things in the world. These laws are not the efficient cause, it's presupposes an agent.
 - The efficient cause of the universe (the one who made the universe), then can use the laws of evolution (the laws of nature) in order to craft things. But the laws of evolution don't explain how thing came into existence in the first place.

13/4/2021

Lecture 17

The Existence of God

The problem of evil

- **Natural Religion** → the aspects of religion that are provable by reason without appealing to revelation.
 - *Ma'qol alma'na* 'معقول المعنى' → things that we can understand 'natural religion'.
 - For example, *Zakat* in Ramadan.
 - *Ta'abody* 'تعبدى' → things that we do not understand.
 - For example, why do we pray 5 times a day at these exact times.
- **Theodicy** → Why does a good, almighty God, allow evil?
 - (Theo = God, dicy = justice) 'justifying God'.
 - i.e., if God is good, then why does he permit evil.
- **Hume:**
 - **1. Is god willing to prevent evil but not able?**
 - Then this makes Him impotent.
 - Because He wants to prevent evil, but He cannot.
 - **2. If He is able to prevent evil, but not willing?**
 - Then he is malevolent.
 - He is evil himself.
 - **3. Is he both able and willing?**
 - Whence there is evil?
 - Then why there is evil.
- **Leibniz's response**
 - This is the best of all possible worlds.
 - Some evil has to exist in the world.
 - This response is very similar to AlGhazali's response.

- **Muslim response: Leibniz agrees with Ghazali.**
 - (ليس في الإمكان ابداع من ما كان).
 - There is nothing in possibility more wonderful than what it is.

- **Christian Theodicy:**
 - **1. Augustinian** → there is evil because of the fall of man.
 - All wrongs because of the 'original sin'.
 - We are a damned people.
 - Original sin → when Adam ate from the forbidden tree and disobeyed God, he was cast out from heaven. Everyone who was born (a descendant from Adam) are tainted from that sin.
 - This is why Jesus had to die, because it is the only way that the stain from the original sin could be removed.
 - **2. Irenaen (St. Ireaneus)** → Evil exists because it serves an evolutionary function.
 - We might achieve the perfection for which we were created.
 - If we are all good, then we could not develop and achieve our potential.
 - This idea was further developed by an English professor called **Richard Swinburne**.

- **Richard Swinburne** → a mix of good and evil in the world creates a perfect environment for two things:
 - 1. Moral growth.
 - It teaches us forgiveness, patience, thankfulness... etc.
 - 2. Intellectual development.
 - If floods did not happen, we would not know how to build dams.
 - Allows us to solve problems.

- **Types of Evil (by John Hick):**

- **Moral evil.**

- It is what a person is responsible for because of their actions.

- E.g., murder, rape, theft...etc.

- **Physical/ natural evil.**

- Humans are not responsible for this type.

- Natural disaster. E.g., floods, earthquakes...etc.

- According to Hick, the purpose of this is 'soul making'. (improving our personality)

- Soul making → the evil in this world allows us to fulfill our potential.

- Developing us morally and emotionally.

- This requires a belief in the afterlife in order to justify it.

- Because you are basically saying in the hereafter, everyone who did wrong would be punished. And everyone who were innocent but were done wrong would be rewarded.

- Because there are many crimes that does happen in this life and the criminals don't get punished.

- **According to Richard Swinburne.**

- **Moral Evil** → is caused by freewill (we are responsible for).

- God could have created a world with limited possibility for us harming each other but He did not.

- i.e., God is giving us an opportunity to fulfil our potential and to be good in a world full of evil.

- Because this world in which there is a high possibility for harming each other, gave us the highest possibility of doing well (fulfilling our potential to be good people).

- Here Swinburne is combining 2 things.

- Freewill as the cause of people and soul making.

- **Physical Evil** → he calls this ‘natural evil’, the purpose of this is:
 - Intellectual development.
 - God could have just told us, and we would not have any disasters, but then there would not been anything to believe.
 - This maximizes our potential for good.
 - If I see an earthquake and there is a kid who is being harmed, I could risk my life and save that kid.
 - This is more sophisticated version of what is known of Schlesinger’s example.
- **Schlesinger’s Example:**
 - If I have a child with very low intelligence, but a very happy disposition. And there is a minor operation that could fix this. But if I had this child take the operation, then he would become normal with everything that entails (he would be exposed to the same frustration and disappointment that we face in our life).
 - Most people would choose to have the surgery, because if you don’t do the surgery, you would harm the child because you would have taken away what they could have been (the contribution that they could have taken in the society).
 - This is why desirability is a combination between 2 things (potential + happiness).
 - The child’s happiness is at 100, but his potential is at 0.
 - But when he has the surgery both his happiness and his potential are at a higher level.
- **Opinion of Aquinas:**
 - Evil is not an existence reality; it is simply an absence of good.
 - Influenced by Aristotle.
 - Evil is better for the world.
 - Natural evil contributes to goodness in creation.
 - Evil is when stopping someone from fulfilling their potential.

- A child has the ability to walk. If you're impeding the ability of the child to walk, then you're committing an evil crime because you're stopping the child from fulfilling their potential.
- But not everyone has the ability to become the world's first-class footballer. If someone did not become a first-class footballer that is okay because that wasn't in his potential in the first place.
 - **Moral Evil** → is someone doing something to themselves or to others that stops them from fulfilling their potential.
 - 'Evil is a lack' → there is a lack of fulfilling that person's potential.
- The reason commit evil is because they do not understand what good is.
 - We cannot desire evil because we cannot want something that does not exist.
 - So, immorality is something that is good in itself, but it's used in the wrong way.
 - For example, killing something might be good, if that someone is a serial killer.
- God does inflict evil as a punishment in order to maintain order in the universe.
 - For example, a lion eats a gazelle. While it may seem awful. But it teaches us that eating a gazelle help maintain the circle of life.
 - **What is the problem with saying that?**
 - It means that God is not good.
 - God is not bound to our standards of morality. He is beyond our definition of good and evil.
- **Dostoevsky response:**
 - The problem of evil is not really a problem because the world is a test.
 - In his book, he says that evil has to exist in this world because it is a board of trials, but there has to be some justice (every evil cannot go unpunished)

- You cannot say about everything that they would get their punishment in the hereafter. (even though they will)

15/4/2021

Lecture 18

The Existence of God

- **Al-Biqa'i reverses Ghazali's statement**

- Asha'ry is the Sunni orthodox school.
- Al-Biqa'i, who was also one of the Asha'ries, disagrees with Al-Ghazali.
 - Al-Biqa'i → (كان في الإمكان ابداع من ما كان).
 - There is in possibility more wonderful than what it is.
- If God made everyone as wise as Adam, would not that have been much better. God couldn't make everyone as beautiful as Yosef, would not that've have been better. God could have given everyone the memory of Imam Bukhari, wouldn't that have been better.
 - God didn't do this, and it is not up to us to question God.

- **Al-Biqa'i's two arguments**

- 1. How can this be the best of all possible world when there are so many things could be improved.
- 2. How can this be the best of all possible world when we see improvement around us.

- **Julian Norwich:**

- He was an English mystic.
- He says that part of the blessing of the hereafter 'paradise' is finding out why God did the things He did (understand the things that we don't understand right now).

- **Ibn Sina's view:**

- Evil is the result of being combined with matter.
- He differentiates between 'قضاء' and 'قدر' of God.
 - A lot of people do not differentiate between them.
 - The 'قضاء' is free from evil (it is before we combine with matter). But when it meets (combines with) the 'قدر', that is when there is evil.

- God's 'قضاء' does not contain any evil. But once it combines with matter (our immaterial self combines with matter). And Because God gives us complete freewill, now there is evil.
 - It is the combination with matter that is responsible for evil.
- **Mu'tazila's explanation:**
 - God is perfectly good and wise, evil occur because we are the makers of our own actions.
 - The evil comes from our own actions.
 - However, this does not explain natural 'physical' evil.
 - Mu'tazila say that this is a test from God.

18/4/2021

Lecture 19

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Islamic Arguments for The Existence of God

Early Mu'tazilah Arguments from Design:

Al-Qasim b. Ibrahim

- **Al-Qasim b. Ibrahim (d. 225/860), he was Mu'tazili.**
 - Work: (Kitab al-Dalil al-Kabir)
 - The main subject of his *risala* is the argument from design to proof the existence of God.
 - It is Teleological Proof. → a proof from the design of the universe.
 - This type of proof is the most numerous in the Quran. Because:
 - 1. They're easy to understand.
 - 2. There are numerous scientific proofs for the existence of God.
 - And he brings all of this in his *risala* to prove the existence of God.
- **On the verses of Quran that he uses is**
 - سورة الجاثية ← (اللَّهُ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْبَحْرَ لِتَجْرِيَ الْفُلُكُ فِيهِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ) (12) (13) وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ
 - No human ever made the claim that he subjugated the seas, or that he controls the heavens. Even pharaoh who said "I'm the supreme leader" never main this claim.
 - The reason no human ever maid this clam is because it will be immediately falsifiable.
 - This claim can only be made by the creator, and only he has the lordship and only he deserves to be worshiped.

- قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ (سورة يونس (31) (الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ
- This verse, according to Al-Qasim, shows that everything God mentions counts to the universe being created by God and not a creator itself. And that it's arranged 'مدبر' not an arranger. And in general, it contains evidence of an influence 'اثر' from the one who exert an influence.
- سورة الحديد (17) (اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)
- This proof that you got land which is farrow, and nothing is there, and suddenly it's alive and things are growing out of it. So, everyone has to admit that there is no human who can exert this influence. And that the trace of this evidence is from God alone and not from humans.
- سورة آل عمران (49) (وَأَخِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ):
- Even عيسى عليه السلام, who according to the Quran revived the death, did so when God gave him the ability to do that.
- All of these verses are showing us that God alone is the creator and director of all affairs. → (Teleological proofs)
- **Mu'tazilites are known for 'أهل العدل'.**
 - They believe that we are the creators of our own action, which is why it is just for Allah to punish us if we did something wrong and reward us if we did something right.
- **What is the problem with saying that we are the creator "خالق" of our own actions and that God is the creator of everything?**
 - If we are the *Khaliq* of our own actions, and God is a creator as well, then how do we differentiate between God being the cause of things and human being the cause of other things?
- **Al-Qasim response to this problem:**
 - There are many things that humans simply cannot do. (AbdulJabar makes the same point). For example, human beings can't cause earthquakes.

- Which verses provide the solution to this problem according to Al-Qasim?

- سورة القيامة

- (أَلَمْ يَكُنْ تُطْفَئُهُ مِّنْ مَّيِّ يُمْنَى (37) ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ فَخْلَقَ فَسَوَّى (38) فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى (39) أَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَى ((40)).

- سورة الأنعام

- (وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ((97))

- سورة الغاشية

- (أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ (17) وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ (18) وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ (19) وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ((20))

- Why did Al-Qasim say that God is the creator of all creators?

- Because according to the Mu'tazila, humans are the creators of their own actions. So, God is the creator of all creators.

- What are Al-Qasim's two aims in citing these verses?

- Proving the existence of God.

- سورة الشعراء ← الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ (78) وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ (79) وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ (80) وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ (81) وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ (82)

- Al-Qasim says these are things only God can do. (He's the creator beside whom there is no creator).
- This seems to be contradictory but it's not because He is saying that we are indeed the creators of our own actions, but God Himself who created us and who gave us freewill in order to create our own actions.

- Proving the existence of ONE God.

- سورة لقمان ← (خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بَغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرْوَاهَا وَالْفَلَكِ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِي أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ رَوْحٍ كَرِيمٍ (10) هَذَا خَلْقُ (11)) اللَّهُ فَارُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

- All of this is making and creation from God, so Al-Qasim express disbelief at how human can have doubt not only concerning God, but also how they can associate partners with Him “الشرك”. And he says that it’s clear that the one who created the heavens, and the earth is God.
- **What is Al-Qasim’s interpretation of Ibrahim’s interaction with his people?**
 - سورة الأنبياء ← (إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ (52) قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عَابِدِينَ (53) قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ (54) قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ اللَّاعِبِينَ (56) (55) قَالَ بَلْ رَبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الَّذِي فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (57)).
 - Al-Qasim says them worshipping idols and stars along side the worship of God.
 - The fact that they (Ibrahim’s people) asked for proofs, this is because they worship God. But with God they worship other things (stars and idols).
 - (قَالَ بَلْ رَبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الَّذِي فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (56) وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ (57)).
 - His proofs show that multiple Gods are incompatible with these verses.
 - This is his ultimate proof for the existence of ONE God (based on God’s rule as creator).
- **What gives God the right to be worshipped according to Al-Qasim?**
 - God’s right to be worshipped is predicated on His rule as a creator. Al-Qasim preclude other things as being worthy of worship because they are created.
- **How does Al-Qasim prove the oneness of God?**
 - He used “سورة يوسف”.
 - (39) يَا صَاحِبِي السِّجْنِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ بَابٌ مُنْفَرِقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ
 - This means that God is alone in terms of his ‘ربوبيه’ deism. It is based on his rule as a creator.

20/4/2021

Lecture 20

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Islamic Arguments for the Existing of God

• **Hesham Al-Fuwati:**

- He is credited with introducing the concept of ‘The Nature of Things’ ‘الطوابع’ into Mutazili theology.
- The basis his proof of the existence of God on the view that the world is made of bodies ‘جسم’ and accidents ‘عرض’.
 - Accidents → something that other than the essence of something. (Color, taste)
 - Bodies together with their color and their taste and the composition and separation are signs of God.
 - He is using not the arrangement of the world; he is using the arrangement of the bodies themselves.
 - This is a refine version of the teleological argument.
 - This is known by the argument of composition.
- Other early Mutazilis used this idea of ‘طوابع’ and this argument of composition to proof the existence of God in a different way.

• **Ibrahim Al-Nazzam:**

- The first one to use Fuwati’s argument.
- He uses the composition argument in a different way.
 - He first proofs the “originatedness” of bodies.
 - He proves that the world is new.
 - By saying that, opposing accidents (such as coldness and hotness) are present in one body.

- The nature of something means that it cannot have both these qualities because they are opposite. (You can only be either hot or cold).
- But there are things that sometimes hot and cold at the same time.
 - This means that it's going against its nature, so there must be someone who combined and subjugated these bodies and put opposing accidents in them. (جامع وقاهر)
- This proves that everything in the world which has these opposing accidents is weak.
- He is using the is a combination of 'تدبير', and this weakness of combining accidents.

Al-Kindi's proof for God's Existence:

- **Al-Kindi (d. 256/873) was part of the so-called translation movement which took place in the early 3rd/9th century under the patronage of the 'Abbasid caliphs al-Ma'mun (813-833) and al-Mu'tasim (833-842)**
 - He has a lot of similarities with Mutazila, but he didn't have special affiliation with any particular group (he wasn't Mutazili, or a *mitakalem* he was just a philosopher).
 - His main work was '*On First Philosophy*' 'في الفلسفة الأولى'.
 - In chapter one he starts off by praising philosophy as the noblest of all sciences as it seeks knowledge of all things in terms of their natures 'علم الأشياء بحقائقها'.
 - Influenced by Al-Fuwati and Al-Nazzam.
 - He says that you can only find the truth, however, when you are seeking a cause.
 - He uses the term 'الحق' for God. Because He is the only true reality (the only one who has true existence, because his existence is absolute).

- **First philosophy or metaphysics for Al-Kindi: Study of God, not being as Aristotle understood it.**

- According to Aristotle, metaphysics is the study of being.
- However, Al-Kindi disagrees by saying that it is the study of God.
 - He doesn't make a distinguishing between theology and metaphysics.
 - Because God is the cause 'عله' of all being, theology and metaphysics are the same thing.
- Al-Kindi states that the truthfulness of the messengers is only brought the affirmations of God's soul lordship. (الإقرار بربوبية الله وحده)
- In the chapter, he is proving the existence of God and the oneness of God through His lordship 'ربوبية'.
 - The existence of God is dependent on His lordship.
 - Because of the lordship of God, He has to exist, and He has to be one.
 - Knowing the true nature of things 'الطوابع' implies knowledge of lordship of God.
 - Here he is influenced by Alfuwaiti and AlNazzam
 - Because it shows us that God act as he pleases, and this refers to his act of creation itself, therefore the creation of the world contains evidence that the world must be ascribe to God as His work.
 - This is an argument by composition as well.
 - The nature of composition shows us that God create things however he pleases. → 'فعال لما يريد'
 - This shows us that God has true lordship over everything.
 - God's lordship is dependent on His ability to create.
 - For Al-Kindi this shows that God is 'فعال لما يريد' (He is the creator).

- **Al-Kindi: Impossible for any body to be eternal.**

- In Chapter 2 'On First Philosophy', he says that "it is impossible for anybody to be eternal".
 - He uses Aristotle's categories, where he classifies everything in the world.
 - Aristotle has a very influential work where he classifies everything in the world.
 - He has 10 categories for everything.
 - Al-Kindi → Take the body of everything 'جسم الكل' (the universe), it is not eternal.
 - Aristotle → the universe is eternal.
 - Aristotle → no body (including the body of everything) could be infinitely big.
 - Because the size of something is related to space and time.
 - Aristotle → time is a measure of motion.
 - If you think of it in today's term, how long is a day? It is the amount of time it takes the earth to spin on its axis once (24 hours).
 - If the earth were twice the size, would it take longer or shorter to spin around its axis? (longer)
 - According to Aristotle, time is a measure of motion. Say the world is infinitely big. How long would it take now for it to spin around once? Infinity (eternal).
 - But Aristotle said that nothing can be infinitely big, yet he is saying that the universe is eternal.
 - There is a contradiction here.
 - Al-Kindi → if Aristotle agrees that nothing can be infinitely big, then none of its property (its time and its duration) can be infinite (because they are all connected).

- You can't have something that is infinite, and its properties are finite. It has to be consistent.
- Aristotle → "Anything that has genus is not eternal".
 - Genus → take an apple tree, if you say that this is an example of one apple tree. (More specialized)
 - If we make it general, what a more general category we can place it in? (Type of tree).
 - More generalize: (it's alive)
 - Aristotle → will this process keep going? Or does it have a limit?
 - The genus is basically the highest level.
- Al-Kindi → anything that has a genus is not eternal.
 - However, if we say that there is a highest category, what is the most general category? (Anything that has an existence).
 - Aristotle → the existence is not a genus.
 - Because in order for something to be a genus, it needs to have something that will fall outside that (to differentiate that).
 - Being 'existence' includes everything, the only thing that falls outside is nonbeing. (Aristotle says that's ridiculous).
 - Aristotle → being is not a genus.
 - i.e., Aristotle is saying that in order for something to be a category, you have to have something that falls outside of that category.
- Al-Kindi is using Aristotle's arguments against him.
 - Using genus to prove that the world is not eternal.
- **Summary of Chapter 2:** The world is not eternal, which means that it's created, so if it's created it means that it has a creator. → this is how he proves the existence of God.
 - Cosmological proof.

- **Al-Kindi: “The thing cannot be the cause of the being of its essence (‘*illa kawn dhatihi*).”**

- Chapter 3: nothing can be the cause of its own existence. (عله لكون ذاته).
- My own essence isn’t going to actualize my existence.
 - I don’t come into existence from my own essence, I need something else to bring me into existence.
 - That something else is God.
- He is proving that God is the ‘First Cause’.
 - It is Cosmological Argument.
- In the world, everything has unity and multiplicity.
 - For example, I am one person. As one person I have unity. (I am one thing).
 - I also have multiplicity. (I have 2 arms, 2 legs, 2 ears...etc.)
- God only has unity.
- According to Al-Kindi, my existence is different from God’s existence in 2 ways:
 - 1. I have unity and multiplicity, whereas God only has unity.
 - 2. My unity is different from God’s unity.
 - Because I’m one person I have unity in that regard. But my unity is an accident ‘عرض’, it is not part of my essence.
 - He is presupposing the argument of Ibn Sina’s (*Burhan alsidegen*).
 - Whereas God’s unity is an essence.

22/4/2021

Lecture 21

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Islamic Arguments for the Existing of God

Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi

- **Abu Manşur al-Maturidi (d. 333/944): The middle path between traditionalists (Athari's school) and rationalists (Mutazili school):**
 - Athari schools are antirationalistic.
 - Ash'ari schools are more toward revelation (less rationalistic).
 - Maturidi school is more rationalistic.
- **Maturidi's only surviving book is '*Kitab al-Tawhid*'.**
- **Cosmological and teleological arguments**
 - Maturidi follows the same reason as the traditional cosmological arguments.
 - "The existence of the world is effectively demonstration of its contingent nature".
 - He is emphasizing that the world is 'مقيّد', which means that it is dependent on something else.
 - Cosmological argument.
 - Maturidi says that we need reason.
 - By means of reason we know that through the divine wisdom in creation there is evidence of a creator.
 - He is using the cosmological proof also the arrangement and the organization of the world to proof the existence of God.
 - Teleological proof + Cosmological proof.
 - Maturidi → proofs in creation shows us that there is the one who brought it into existence. (الدلالة على من أنشأه)
 - It declares that there is no way to have knowledge about this except through speculation 'نظر'.
 - Rationalistic.

- **Truth of religion can be known through Revelation (*al-samʿ*) and reason (*al-aql*).**
 - **The proof for the originatedness ‘حدث’.**
 - It is the originatedness ‘حدث’ of atoms.
 - Maturidi → Atoms are the smallest known building block of the universe.
 - If the atom is originated, that means that the whole universe is also originated.
 - Because the universe is made of atoms.
 - And if the whole universe is originated, then it must be an originator who brought it into existence.
 - This is a cosmological proof.
 - i.e., though revelation and reason we can determine if the religion is true.
 - For example, Islam teaches us that the world not originated (not being eternal).
 - We know this through revelation and reason:
 - **Revelation** → the proof that the world has a beginning is through our senses of observation ‘حواس’ of the world around us and through revelation ‘أخبار’.
 - Observation → in the Quran, God Himself informed us that He is the creator of everything, and He is the maker of the heavens and the earth.
 - (خلق السموات والأرض)
 - (بديع السموات والأرض)
 - Maturidi is arguing through the originatedness of the world based on it having a creator.
 - Because God has told us that He is the creator of the heavens and the earth, that means that the world is originated.
 - The world is not self-subsisting (كون بنفسه).
 - This is a cosmological proof.

- Another conclusion is that God brought the existence of the universe from nothing.
 - Creation ex nihilo → creating from nothing.
 - For Maturidi this is a logical conclusion; God created the world from nothing. (أكون بعد أن لم يكن).
- Even though one could argue that some verses might give the impression that the worlds being originated not necessarily mean that it came into existence from nothing.
 - (12) وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ طِينٍ
 - Does this mean that God created humans from nothing? Technically it doesn't mean that.
 - Similarly, God says (خلق السموات والأرض) but that doesn't mean that God created it from nothing.
 - This is why, people who follow Aristotle agree that God created the heavens, but they don't believe in 'creation ex nihilo'; because they believe in the eternity of the universe. Because God could have created the universe from something that had already existed,
 - Maturidi reject this.
- **Reason:**
 - **1. Originatedness and dependence.**
 - We know that the world is originated "not eternal" from observation "our senses".
 - Originatedness goes together with dependence.
 - And everything that we observe in the world we see that it depends on something else.
 - For example, my existence depends on my parents.
 - If it didn't need anything to bring it into existence (it was self-sufficient), then it would be eternal.
 - Self-sufficiency goes together with eternity.

- **2. Particularization Argument.**

- When a thing has a characteristic (a quality that could be different), then there must be something to particularize it.
 - For example, why are elephants grey and not blue. They could just as well be blue, but the fact that they are grey means that particularize it to be grey.

- **3. Opposite Traits ‘natures’ Arguments.**

- When a thing has contrary natures, such as being good and small, or good and evil, (they present in the same thing), there must be something that brought these two together despite them being repel to one another.
 - Which mean they were not conjoined by themselves, they were put there by something else, which mean that it dependent on that thing that put them together.
 - For example, when I say that someone is evil, but has good in him as well. And he could have been good, but why is he evil.
 - This is similar to Al-Fuwait’s ‘طبائع’. And Al-Nazzam gave the same idea of opposite trait being pushed together into one thing.
- God is the one who brings together these contrary traits.

- **4. Developing the Idea of Nature.**

- The concept of natures was introduced by Al-Fuwati, but it was Al-Nazzam who uses the natures in a different way (in a way that Maturidi uses here).

- God is the one who brings together these natures in the same thing.
- These opposite natures all bare the signs of:
 - 1. Change.
 - “Change is impossible for something that exist due to itself”.
 - If something would exist because of itself, then it would be in one state.
 - 2. Perishableness.
 - Anything that is perishable and changeable, cannot be eternal.
- Which proofs that they don't exist self-sufficiently.

25/4/2021

Lecture 22

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- **We observe that the world is changing so the world is finite. God is perfect and so does not change.**
 - Change is any change that is observable to the senses.
 - Changes that occur to the body but are not the body.
 - The thing that changes are accidents.
 - The accidents of anything are existence change.
 - The thing in which these changes occur is also finite.
 - Since everything in the world is changeable, then that mean that the world is finite.
 - This is a Cosmological proof of God's existence.
- **5.The analogy of the unseen upon the seen (قياس الغيب على الشهادة)**
 - 'The realm of the observable (*al-shahid*) serves as the basis for knowledge of the realm of the unobservable (*al-gha'ib*).'
 - If you find a book, you will know that it has an author.
 - If we apply the same argument to the world.
 - We see the world around us, which means that it must have a creator.
 - Maturidi is using out senses to proof the existence of God.
 - Every time we see something in the world, we assume immediately that it has a creator. Why could be the case of the universe as a whole.
- **6. God exists because evil exists.**
 - We observe in the world that every single thing reaches its optimum (most preferred potential).
 - It gets rid of the things that are harmful to it and it evolves to it best possible state.
 - This occurs in everything except the world itself. Because the universe didn't create itself.

- If it had created itself, would have evolved by now to its best possible state, which would be a state in which there is no evil.
 - Everything that exists because of itself, it only satisfied with the best conditions. If the world was like this, then evil would not have existed.
- He is using the presence of evil not as a problem for the existence of God, but as a proof for the existence of God.

27/4/2021

Lecture 23

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 324/936)

- Ash'ari had to defend Kalam.
 - In 'رساله الاستحسان' he said that Kalam is not something that is new. It's basically the arguments that are derived from the verses of the Quran.
 - For example, arguments for the existence of God (Teleological, Cosmological, and Ontological).
- ***Kitab al-Luma'*: World is not self-caused but depends on something outside itself for its existence. Cosmological argument.**
- **Al-Ash'ari's teleological argument:**
 - He uses 'سورة المؤمنون' → "وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ (12) ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ (13) ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ (14) ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ (15)".
 - This verse proves of transformation of humans. (From state to another state).
 - He describes it as the greatest miracle and the first in proving the existence of God.
 - Relying of things that human being cannot do. It proves that there is someone else who can make this happen. (Who is God)
- **Argument from Causation:**
 - Every effect needs a cause.
 - Example of a Cotton:
 - You cannot wait for cotton to spin itself into thread, and then that thread into a garment.
 - It needs a maker who will arrange it into a garment.

- Example of Clay:
 - You cannot go into a place and there is clay everywhere, that clay isn't going to make itself into bricks, and those bricks aren't going to arrange themselves into a castle.
 - It needs a builder.
- He derives the principle of causation from observation of this world.
 - This is a Cosmological argument. It's not just a cause, the maker of the garment or the builder of the castle do arrange in a certain way, it is a teleological one as well.
- **Analogical proofs: The seen and unseen world.**
 - He uses the analogy between the existence in the observed world, so it must be true in the unseen world as well.
 - If it applies in the seen world, it must also apply in the unseen world.
- **Al-Ash'ari and *iktisab*:**
 - **Mu'tazila:**
 - They accept the truth of the seen and unseen world; however, they believe that Ash'ari contradict themselves.
 - Because Ash'ari maintain that everything that exists in this world has a creator and the same applies to the hereafter.
 - Mu'tazila say that Ash'ari contradict themselves because of the notion of '*iktisab*'.
 - Mu'tazila → we are all responsible for our own actions and will be held to account because we are the creators of our own actions (full responsibility).
 - It maintains the paradigm of reward and punishment.
 - Ash'ari noted a problem in this → if I'm the creator of my own actions, then God isn't the creator of my own actions.
 - And that is an unacceptable restriction of God's power.
 - In order to make it work by saying that God is powerful over everything, but at the same time saying human beings are responsible, Ash'ari came up with the notion of '*iktisab*'.

- Wherein, God gives me the choice.
- According to Mu'tazila, there is a problem with this.
 - The notion of 'iktisab' isn't just of man. (the act isn't just one person's act, it's connected to God as well). Because God is the one who created that action.
 - God is also connected to these acts in an acquired way. And there are 2 problems with this:
 - 1. Look at the horrible thing people do. Who can you say that God is connected to these actions?
 - 2. If God created that action, not only the person committing the action is responsible, but also God.
 - This is completely unacceptable to say that God is connected to these awful acts.
 - This also violates the maxim of the seen and the unseen world 'غيب الغائب على الشاهد'. Because, in this case it would mean that God is the one who created the action, but He is not responsible, the person who acts is.
 - Ash'ari says that everything in the world needs an agent (creator) to bring it into existence (a garment needs a maker, and a house needs a builder). And the creator is responsible for creation.
 - For instance, If the house falls down, then the builder is responsible for it.
 - From 'قياس الغائب على الشاهد' we derive that the agent is responsible for the thing that he makes.
 - But in the case of me killing a person. God made the action, but I'm the person who is held responsible.
 - Mu'tazila → God is completely responsible and completely connected to every act of His in a full creative way.
 - So, God makes us and that is His action completely. He creates us and then He leaves us to it (Secondary causation). But God is completely responsible for everything that He creates.

- Ash'ari → says that as well.
- Mu'tazili → disagrees with Ash'ari because from the concept of 'iktisab' it seems like partnership. (I make a decision, then God makes the action in accordance with that). So, Ash'ari saying that God is not completely connected to His created acts. (There is an input from somewhere else as well).
 - Ash'ari is saying it's not like that. God who is completely creating all the actions, it is just that He is giving me freewill in order to make that decision.
- **Proof of Ibrahim mentioned in the Qura:**
 - Another proof that Ash'ari gives is from 'سورة الأنعام'.
 - وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ (75) فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْإِفْلِينَ (76) فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ (77) فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِعَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ (78)).
 - All of them disappear, and anything that can vanish cannot be God.
 - Ash'ari develops this argument → the setting of the stars, the sun, and the moon shows that they're moving from place to place. Anything that can move or disappear cannot be a God.
 - Motion means change.
 - Motion is an attribute that denotes change, and if it's changing then it's finite.
 - Because motion is a finite trait.
 - And if it's finite, then the body in which it takes place must also be finite.
- **On the basis of Atoms:**
 - Everything in the world is composed of atoms. and you can divide it into parts.
 - You can divide a body into part, and then divide those parts into organs then cells etc.
 - And anything that is divisible can't be originated.

- God is not divisible in terms of His essence or in terms of His description.
 - He could have been influenced by Al-Kindi.
- This is how he explain the verse (ليس كمثله شيء).

29/4/2021

Lecture 24

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (d. 403/1013)

- Systemized the theological thought he inherited from his Ash'arite predecessors.
- Ash'ari → Atomism is saying that everything in this world is made of indivisible atoms, and it is the smallest building block in the universe.
 - Both Mu'tazila and Ash'aris believe in Atomism.
 - Atoms in itself has no quantitative or qualitative properties. (It has no height, width, or depth)
 - You get the quantitative properties when 2 or more atoms come together, and you get what is known as a body.
 - The qualitative properties (its color, temperature etc.) is given to us by an accident 'عرض' that occurs in the body.
 - These are above and beyond the essence of the body.
 - This means that all the accidents occur in the atoms 'the body', and they cannot exist alone.
- Asha'ry → These accidents cannot exist for more than one instant at a time.
 - This is where they break away from the Mu'tazila.
 - The atoms, even though they seem like the most stable, cannot exist without the accidents in it.
 - Because the accident only exists for a moment at a time, then the atoms also only exist for a moment at a time.
 - Which means that God is recreating the accidents (therefore the atoms as well) every instant.
 - This is what is known as 'Occasionalism'.
 - Occasionalism → God is recreating the accidents and the attributes that occurs in the atoms "the body" every instant.

- This means that because the atoms only occur instant at a time then there must been a time when the first one was created. (The first atom was created and then the accident was created in the atom).
 - Because they only exist for a moment, then they are not eternal.
 - If they are not eternal, → then they must have been created, → then they must have a creator, → who is God.
- **The problem with this:**
 - You seeing me right now, and I'm not disappearing and reappearing, so how is that?
 - Ash'ari say that through God's mercy, He recreates everything every instant in the same place as it was at the last instant that it seems like it's constant 'stable'.
 - This is God's habit.
 - This is the interpretation of the verse: (لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ).
 - There is no change in God's habit.
 - According to Ash'ari, God is recreating everything every moment.
 - Mu'tazila disagree with this.
 - Every single act
 - For example, if I left a pin, it is God who is doing it. God is recreating me every moment and now He is recreating me with the pin in my hand.
 - Which means that everything is depending on God's will. (Everything is in God's control).
 - And this, according to Ash'ari, why the Quran says (وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ عَدًّا (23) إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِّي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ (24)) مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا).
 - Mu'tazila say → that means that I cannot be responsible for my own actions, if that's the case.
 - Ash'ari's acquiring acquisition '*iktisab*'.
 - When God decree that I will study tonight. So, God creates in me the power to study tonight.

- God gives me the choice to study, if I make the choice to do so. Once I have made this choice, and God creates in me the power, now I have to study tonight.
 - Because otherwise it is an unrealized potential.
- That means that every stage of the process is depending on God's will. But because God gave me the choice, and I choose to study tonight, I became responsible.
 - This is what it means when Ash'ary deny what it known as the principle of alternative possibilities.
- Principle of Alternative Possibilities → you have to have the chance to act in more than one way.
 - Ash'ary deny this.
 - This is what the Mu'tazila believe. (we are the creator of our own actions)
 - The problem with saying that:
 - If you say that we are the creator of our own actions, that means that when I study, I am creating the accidents 'أعراض' of studying.
 - Which means that we don't need to believe that God created anything.
 - i.e., If I believe that I can create the accidents, then I don't have to rely on God's being the creator of all accidents and all atoms.
- **Work: *Kitab al-Tamhid***
 - Al-Baqillani says that all the accidents occur at a certain moment in time.
 - It is not something that have always been there (Not born with it).
 - Which means that the body in which it happens, must also occur in time.
 - Because I cannot have one of my accidents 'attributes' as being something that is originated, and the body in which it happens eternal.
 - i.e., because my accidents are finite, then my body must also be finite.

- Since the universe is a collection of lots and lots of accidents, that means the whole world is finite ‘originated’, it must have someone who created it.

2/5/2021

Lecture 25

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- **Al-Baqillani has 3 main arguments for existence of God:**

- **1. Analogy**

- قياس الغائب على الشاهد

- Maturidi and Ash'ary both gave this argument.
- From the 'شاهد' you could proof what things are in the 'غائب'.
- Baqillani further develops this argument.
 - We know that God cannot be preserved by the senses. So, the only way of justifying the description of God is by reference to His acts.
 - i.e., we have to derive proof of His existence and of His nature from His acts.
 - Because His acts are His traces.
 - In the same way the book tells us about the author.

- **2. Temporal progression**

- "تقدم وتأخر"

- The early occurrence of originated things and the later occurrence of other things.
 - e.g., I lifted the phone then I lifted the pin. The lifting phone happened before lifting of the pin. The lifting of the pin happened after the lifting of the phone.
- Baqillani → if we say that the world came into existence on its own. Then that means that the 'تقدم وتأخر' is for one of two reasons:
 - 1. It is because of the thing itself 'لنفسه'.
 - The essence of the thing itself is what is responsible.
 - 2. Its kind "genus" 'لجنسه'.
- If it is because of the thing itself or 'لجنسه' in either case, if that's what causing the thing to come into existence (for example, if I'm human being like anyone else, if I'm causing the 'تقدم وتأخر' then why wouldn't

all the human beings come into existence together. Because my essence and my 'جنس' are the same as anyone else's), then why doesn't all things exist at the same time.

- This means that the universe didn't come to existence on its own, there must be someone who made somethings exists one time and made other things exists other time.
- Not only does it proof the existence of God, but it's also proving that God has the will to decide when certain things are going to exist.
 - This is a Teleological argument. (Sophisticated Particularization argument).

○ **3. Structure (*tarkib*) argument**

- Every structure in the world could have a different structure, but it has that specific structure that it does.
- If God doesn't exist, then the structure of the thing is because of itself.
 - i.e., Its essence is causing its structure.
- If that was the case, that could mean two things:
 - 1. My essence is causing my structure, but then my structure could easily have been any structure.
 - I could have the structure of any shape (elephant or a pin).
 - 2. There is no particular reason to choosing my structure.
- If the thing itself is cause its structure, then all shapes and all sizes would come into existence at the same time. Also, if there wasn't any particular reason for its structure, then the thing itself could have been all the shape at the same time.
 - So, there must be a performer who, according to His will, composed a specific form.
 - This is a Teleological Proof. (Sophisticated Particularization argument)

- **God is an agent possessed of will:**

- God is not only a cause, but God also has a will.
 - He created the world in accordance with His way.

- This idea of God being an entity that has a will wasn't discussed before Baqillani.
 - The early *mutakalimon* thought of God in this way.
 - When we say that fire causing burning, is does because of its nature.
 - A cause without a will.
 - AlGhazali → when fire gets in contact with a cotton, the cotton doesn't get burned because of the fire, rather because of the will of God.
- **If God created the universe, then why did He choose that particular time to create the universe?**
 - Because Baqillani brought God's will into the mix, this allows him to answer a question when it comes to God and the existence of the world.
 - In the will 'مشيئة' of God, He always intended that the universe would come to existence in that specific moment. But temporally its existence in time was delayed 'تراخي'. That doesn't mean that God didn't will it to come into existence from the beginning.
 - Baqillani is using language that is known to 'فقهاء'.
 - For example, if you meet all the criteria of 'حج', is it 'فرض' that you do it as soon as you meet all of them, or do you have 'تراخي'.
 - **For people who say that the world is eternal, then how do you know that God is the cause and the world the effect? It could be the other way around.**

4/5/2021

Lecture 26

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Ibn Sina (d. 427/1037)

- ***Burhan al-siddiqin***

- According to Ibn Sina, the existence of God can only be in metaphysics.
- Because God is not a body; He is free of all matter.
 - That mean God can't be in physics, so he must be in metaphysics.
- Is God a thing?
 - In Quran is says (ليس كمثله شيء).
 - This makes Him seem like He is not a thing.
 - Another verse (قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً قُلِ اللَّهُ).
 - Which gives the impression that God is a thing.
 - Jahim Ibn Safwan, who influenced the Mu'tazila, said that God must not be called a thing.
 - Because a thing is something that's created and has likeness.
 - The vast majority of Muslims say that God is a thing in a sense of His existence.
 - But He is not a thing like anything else.
 - It is the one thing that we have in common with God, but it doesn't mean that my existence is the same as God's existence.
 - If you're denying that God is a thing, then you're denying God's existence.

- **According to Ibn Sina: 2 ways of proving the existence of God:**

- **1. Cosmological and Teleological way. (Lower level)**
 - Using the world to proof the existence of God. 'حكم القوم'
 - This is the level that the Quran uses because it wants to make it easier for people to understand.
- **2. Ontological way. (Higher level)**

- Not using anything else to proof the existence of God. ‘حکل للصدیقین’
- You can get both these types of proof from the same verse in the Quran.
 - سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ (53).
 - The first part of this verse this is the cosmological and teleological proof.
 - Proofing the existence of God through the world.
 - This is the lower level. ‘حكم القوم’
 - The proof for the common people because it is easier to understand.
 - This is why it is the most common in the Quran.
 - The second part of the verse is the ontological proof.
 - This is the higher level. ‘حكم لصدیقین’
 - It is using anything else to proof the existence of God.
 - Here he gives ‘*burhan al-siddiqin*’ where he differentiates between essence and existence.
 - E.g., the essence of a triangle doesn’t tell it whether it exist or not, which means that essence and existence are separate things. The only exception is God, because His essence is His existence.
- **All the attributes are known in terms of God’s essence being existence.**
 - God’s essence doesn’t only just tell us that he exists, it also tells us about His nature.
 - Because Ibn Sina derives all of God’s attribute ‘*asmaa alhusan*’ from His ‘واجب الوجود’
 - **There are 3 types of existence:**
 - **1. Necessary Existence:**
 - God’s essences guarantee his existence.
 - God is the only one like this.

- **2. Impossible Existence:**

- Essence of something rules out its existence.
 - Like a square-circle.

- **3. Contingent Existence:**

- Something that might exist or might not exist. Depends on something else. (It could lead to infinite regress)
 - This is everything else that we see in existence.
 - The fact that we exist, means that there was something that 'preponderant' brought us into existence.
 - I could say that I have a sister who is an astronaut (which is not true), but I could have.
 - What is the difference between me and my sister?
 - God gave me 'ترجيح' (made to) exists. And he didn't give my sister 'ترجيح' to exist.
 - Ibn Sina said that anything that exist eternally is necessary.
 - Because God has always existed, this means His essence is necessary. And anything that has never existed is impossible, like a square-circle.
 - **Problems with this:**
 - Something that has never existed is possible.
 - In the example my astronaut sister, she doesn't exist but she isn't impossible.
 - And she does have an existence, because you could imagine her. Whereas you can imagine square circle in your mind.
 - Which is why Ibn Sina says that there are 2 types of impossible existence:
 - 1. Essence rules out its existence (not coherent idea). (مستحيل ذاتي)
 - E.g., Square-circle.
 - 2. Essence does not rule out existence, but it is impossible through another. (God did not give preponderant 'ترجيح' (مستحيل لغيره)
 - E.g., Astronaut sister.

6/5/2021

Lecture 27

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- **Ibn Sina thinks that the world is eternal, so infinite regress should not a problem to him.**
 - Ash'aries and Mutazili say that our existence is contingent, which means that it depends on something that is necessary existence, which is God, otherwise you would end up with infinite regress, because the world is created.
 - Ibn Sina says that Contingent Existence is depending on something that is necessary existence.
 - So, he agrees with people who say that the world is created.
 - But he came to that conclusion not because infinite regress, but because of another reason.
 - If we think of the 3 types of existence; everything around us has contingent existence.
 - If we take all of the things that exist in the world and put them in a “contingent bag”. What is the cause ‘عله’ of this bag? Is it contingent, necessary, or impossible?
 - We will rule out impossible, because it never existed so it cannot be the cause of anything else.
 - It cannot be contingent because it would also be in the bag.
 - So, it is necessary cause. And the only thing that has a necessary existence in God.
 - He comes to the same conclusion that Ash'aries come to.
 - The Ash'aries come to this conclusion because they say that the world is not eternal, which means that no matter how far back you go, there must be a cause at the start which isn't contingent. Otherwise you would have to keep going.

- **Ibn Sina's conception of the divine attributes much closer to that of the Mu'tazilite theologians.**
 - Ibn Sina extract every attribute 'صفه' of God from the concept of God being necessary existence. Including his oneness.
 - He proven that there has to be something that is necessary existence. Because everything else in existence depends on that thing.
 - However, what makes you think that there is only one thing that is necessary existence, why not 2?
 - Ibn Sina says that if you have more than one thing that was necessary existence, then there would be ridiculous consequences.
 - Let's imagine that 2 persons are both necessary existence, and everything depends on them both.
 - If there is more than one, then there must be a difference between them (they cannot be identical otherwise there wouldn't be 2), which is why there is 2 of them.
 - 1 person cannot be the cause of the other's existence, otherwise he wouldn't be necessary existence.
 - If we think about the difference, what is the cause of that difference? 1 person cannot be the cause of the difference because it would make him the prior of the other person. The only other option is the difference itself is the cause of the difference. (If the difference is beard, then the beard is the cause of the difference), which is absurd.
 - Which is why Ibn Sina there could only be 1.

9/5/2021

Lecture 28

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- The cosmological and Teleological proofs of the existence of God are the lower level.
 - Because they use the world to proof the existence of God.
 - The reason that they are at a lower level is because you can run into problems with these proofs.
 - You are predicating your proof on the existence of the world, and if there is a problem with the analogy that you use, then you cannot use it to proof the existence of God.
 - Whereas with the ontological proof you're not going to have this problem.
 - Motakalmon (Ash'aris specifically) derive God's attributes on the basis of Him being the creator of the universe.
- **What 2 major mistakes do the Ash'aris make according to Ibn Sina?**
 - **First mistake:**
 - Ash'aris derive God's attribute on the basis of Him being the creator of the universe. And this leads to problems.
 - For example, God's attribute of being 'knowing' 'عليم'.
 - According to Ash'aris, the attribute of being 'knowing' is a real entity (it has existence), which exist in God's essence.
 - For Ibn Sina, this is 'eternal beings' 'تعدد القدماء'.
 - Ibn Sina is agreeing with Mu'tazila.
 - *Asmaa alhussna* are just expressions that refers to the prime attribute 'الصفة الأولى'.
 - And the prime attribute of God is His existence.
 - Because they're deriving the proof of God's existence through the world.

- When I say that ‘I’m knowing’, this means that I have the accident of knowledge in me.
 - The accident is nonessential quality in something.
 - It is real that has been added to my essence but doesn’t exist in real life.
- Because, Ash’aris say that God is the creator of the universe, they think about God’s attributes like the way they think about the attribute in existent beings (us human).
 - Just like the accident of knowing exist in my once I know a certain thing as something real. God’s knowing has a real entity that subsist in God’s essence as something real.
 - Whereas it is not something that is separate, it is something that is part of the divine essence.
- According to Ibn Sina, the reason that they made this mistake, is because they are using the example of creation to proof how attributes operate in God.
- **Second mistake:**
- Asha’ris assume that because in the world if something exists it has a beginning. (You make something, and it starts to exist). They think that the world itself operate in the same way. (God created it then it must have a beginning).
- According to Ibn Sina this is not the case.
 - Creation is an eternal beginning act by God.
 - i.e., creation is an act on God’s part that He has always done and is always doing.
 - And this is because of God being necessary existent ‘ واجب الوجود’.
 - Everything is from God’s emanation which is creation.
 - This is neoplatonic.
 - And because God always existed, this emanation has always existed.

- And because God is necessary existence, everything about Him is necessary existence as well.
 - If everything about God wasn't necessary existence, the He could be different.
 - God created the world, but He didn't create the world.
 - It is unrealized potential.
 - If we are saying that God is different, then that means that God is changing, which is impossible for something that is eternal.
 - And because God is eternal, so the universe must also be eternal.
- i.e., everything that comes from God has to be necessary, because if it was not necessary then it could be different (then there would be an unrealized potential). And Something that is eternal cannot be different. Because everything about God has to be necessary, even the world coming from God is necessary. And because God is the cause of the universe and because He is eternal, then the universe must also be eternal.
 - If the world wasn't eternal, then the emanation which the world derived from must also be not eternal. So, God must have changed. And God cannot change.
- God is the necessary cause of the universe; this means that He doesn't have a choice in the matter.
 - Because if God could be different then that means that God could change. And change is against the essence of something that is eternal.
 - God is the cause which brings about its effects unwillingly because of God's nature.
 - For Al-Baqillani, and Ash'aris generally, this means that you're denying God's freewill.
 - For Al-Baqillani, the main emphasis is God's freewill.
 - God brings that world into existence after it didn't exist because He has the will to do it.
 - Ibn Sina disagrees with this.
 - According to Ibn Sina, God necessarily brings the world into existence, He didn't choose to do it (it is in God's nature).

18/5/2021

Lecture 29

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Al-Juwayni (d. 478/1085)

- **Three major theological works: *Irshad*, the *Shamil*, and '*Aqida Nizamiyya***
 - In these works, he uses the creativeness of the world to proof the creator.
 - Cosmological argument.
- **Particularization argument**
 - His arguments are generally cosmological, but he uses particularization argument. (We saw this argument with Al-Baqillani mainly)
 - In the *Shamil*, Al-Juwani says that whatever is originated has been particularized to exist at that moment in time. Because its existent is possible not necessary.
 - Because the existence of the world is possible and not necessary, that mean that it could exist, or it might not exist. The two possibilities are equally likely. But we can see that it exists.
 - So, it must have come into existence at a moment in time. (It is at a specific moment because God particularized it to exists in that time).
 - If we think about in what way God is a particularizer, we can say that there are 3 possibilities as to what God could be like:
 - 1. God is the cause, and the world is the effect.
 - Like what Ibn Sina said.
 - Because everything from God has to be necessary.
 - There is no will to God.
 - 2. God's nature determine the effect.
 - Very similar to the 1st one.
 - There is no will to God.

- 3. God is a choosing agent 'فاعل مختار', and He chooses the world to come into existence.
 - God has freewill here.
- Al-Juwayni dismisses the first and second possibilities.
 - He dismisses the 1st one, because the cause of something coexists with its effect.
 - For example, if fire and cotton get together, the cotton will get burned. The fire (cause) exists, and the burning cotton (effect) exists together.
 - The cause could exist with the effect, but it doesn't disappear after its effect.
 - Let us say that the cause is eternal, then the effect 'world' must also be eternal. (There should not be a time delay).
 - We know that this is not true because the Quran tells us that the world is created.
 - And is the effect was originated, then there must be something that is not originated which caused it.
 - The problem with saying this is that it will lead to infinite regress.
 - He dismisses the 2nd one because it's the same as the first argument.
 - If the existence of the world was due to God's nature, then it would also be necessary.
 - The nature cannot be the cause because the effect would be eternal.
- **Particularizer must have intention (*qasd*), will (*irada*) and wishing (*mashi'a*)**
 - If we are saying the God is a choosing agent, then a choosing agent has three qualities:
 - Intention 'قصد'
 - Will 'أراد'
 - Wishing 'مشيئة'

- An agent who is not a cause 'عله'. Because 'عله' has to do things out of necessity.
- If we accept that the world is the object of the particularizer's will, then this means that the world is the 'مراد' something that is willed by the particularizer.
 - It is the object of God's will.
- If the world is the product of God's will, then it is an act because God choose to create it at a time.
 - An act is by definition is done at a particular period of time do it cannot be eternal.

23/5/2021

Lecture 30

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111)

- **Work: *Tahafut al-falasifa*, a refutation of Aristotle's philosophy as presented in the works and commentaries of Al-Farabi (d. 339/950) and Ibn Sina.**
 - He goes through 20 beliefs that Ibn Sina hold:
 - 17 of them could be problematic, but they do not take you outside of the fold of Islam.
 - 3 of them actually take you outside the pale of Islam and makes you a 'mutrad'.
 - Ibn Rushid was against this because he was an Aristotelian, so he came with a book '*Tahafut al-Tahafut*'.
- **Eternality of universe incompatible with existence of God**
 - Al-Ghazali in his book says that "believing that the world is eternal is fundamentally incompatible with the existence of God".
 - The main question that he responded to is "Why God choose that specific moment for the creation of the universe".
 - If the world is created why did God choose that specific moment to create the universe? And if he chooses that specific moment then it means that he was not a willer for the creation of the world then he became the willer, which means he changed, and something that eternal cannot change.
 - Al-Ghazali → just because the world created in time it doesn't mean that it's temporarily decreed.
 - The will of God and its coming into effect in time are not one of the same things.
 - The will of God could be from eternity.

- God could decree in His eternity that he would create the world in a specific moment in time.
- **Philosophers incoherent in terms of terminology and assertion**
 - Al-Ghazali uses the philosophers own tools of logic and the accuracy of term against them. And he says that they violate their own rules. HOW?
 - In chapter 3 he says that according to the philosophers, the world is God's act and his creation 'فعله وصنعه'. So, they are saying that God is the agent and the creator of the world.
 - However, them saying that God is the agent and the creator contradict their own principle.
 - Al-Ghazali → according to the philosophers, God is not a truly an agent and not truly a creator and the universe is not an act of God. HOW?
 - Aristotle → everything has 4 causes:
 - Efficient cause. "Who made it?"
 - The formal cause. "The shape of it?"
 - Material cause. "What is it made of?"
 - Final cause. "What is its purpose?"
 - Al-Ghazali → the definition of an agent 'فاعل' is someone who is willing and choosing and knowing. But the philosophers make God the cause. And the cause by definition does not have a choice in the matter.
 - An agent has a choice, unlike a cause.
 - If you are saying that God is a cause, then you cannot say that He is also an agent. Because the two are not the same thing.
 - He is following Al-Baqillani.
 - The philosophers are mistaken in labeling the world an act of God, because the world cannot be eternal if it was an act of God.
 - Al-Ghazali → an act is an expression of origination.

- And you cannot say that the universe is an act of God and say that the universe is eternal at the same time.
- According to people who follow Aristotle (Ibn Rushid + Ibn Sina) they say that God is the final cause of the universe not the efficient cause.
 - God didn't create the universe like in the normal way we think that a carpenter creates a table.
 - There was no table and then he created the table.
 - God is the final cause → the universe wants to be like God, so it moves. So, there is motion, and when there is motion, you get all the elements mixing and then world comes into existence.
 - According to Al-Ghazali, this is what an act is. It is bringing something into existence after it did not exist. So, something that has always existed cannot be an act.
 - God cannot be the creator of the world, and the world cannot be the His creation. And He cannot be an agent, and the world cannot be His act. If it always existed.
- The philosophers say that the world is eternal because a cause and the effect can exist at the same time.
 - For example, if I'm holding the phone right now. I'm the cause and the phone being held up is the effect. Just because the phone is held up, doesn't mean I stopped existing, they exist at the same time.
 - Al-Ghazali dispute that the agent and the act can exist at the same time.
 - Al-Ghazali dispute that they use the term act 'فعل' and agent 'فاعل' for God and they can say that the act is the cause.
 - However, according to him, the act and the cause are not the same thing.
 - Because an agent has freewill, a cause does not have a freewill.
 - They are not using their terms correctly.

- The philosophers are also incoherent with their assertions that they make.
 - Al-Ghazali → There are 2 logical propositions.
 - 1. Things enter into existence because of an outside cause.
 - This means that they are not caused by a chance and not caused by themselves.
 - The world is the effect and God is the cause.
 - God is the creator and world is His creation.
 - 2. Things do not depend on anything else for their existence.
 - The world is eternal. → does not have an originator.
 - You can either choose the 1st or the 2nd proposition.
 - The philosophers don't choose the 1st or the 2nd, they come up with a 3rd one which is illogical.
 - 3. The world eternal but is still depending on something else for its existence.

25/5/2021

Lecture 31

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- In “*al-eqte9ad fi al-aqteqad*” and “*risala qudsiya*” he presents the cosmological argument for the existence of God as a syllogism ‘قياس منطقي’:
 - A. Every originated thing has a cause.
 - B. The world is originated.
 - C. This means that the world has a cause. That originator is God.
 - This is a cosmological argument; he is proving the existence of God through the existence of the world.
 - The cause could be at the sense Ibn Sina understands it.
 - Ibn Sina → the world is emanation ‘فيض’ from God. Because God is eternal, the world must also be eternal.
 - Al-Ghazali → by the cause we mean nothing other than the preponderator ‘مرجح’.
 - This is to clarify that the cause is not the cause in the sense of what Ibn Sina understands it; in the sense that has no freewill. But in the sense that it has to follow God.
 - He is using Ibn Sina’s own language against him.
 - God is preponderating the world from being non-existence to exists.
 - This is a particularization argument.
- Al-Nasafi uses particularization argument against the anthropomorphists ‘المجسمه’.
 - Anthropomorphisms → Giving God human face.
 - For example, in the Quran it says (يد الله فوق أيديهم), so that means that God actually has a hand like our hand.
 - Al-Nasafi → what the anthropomorphist says leads to ridiculous conclusions:
 - 1. The creator is originated.
 - 2. The world is eternal.

- Because they say that God must have a body, God is living, hearing, seeing, and an agent.
- And every, living, hearing, seeing thing that you see in the seen world has a body, which means that it is impossible for anything in the unseen world to not have a body.
- Al-Nasafi → if God were a body, He would have to be a specific shape. And that means if he was one shape excluding the other, then this because God is particularized to be a certain shape either by a particularizer, or due to Himself.
 - 1. If God was particularized to be a shape and not the other, then that means He is not eternal, He doesn't have an absolute existence; His existence is depending on the particularizer who decided to be that certain shape. And that will lead to infinite regress, which is illogical.
 - 2. God has a body, and he is a certain shape because He particularized Himself to be that certain shape; He is His own particularizer. If this is the case, then this applies everything else as well. If it is true of the unseen, then it is true for the seen. If the earth, for example, didn't need God to particularize itself, then it means that it is eternal. So, you cannot say that God created the world; if God is His own particularizer, why can't the world be its own particularizer.
- **Al-Ghazali against Batiniyya**
 - Ash'aris → essence and existence are one of the same things.
 - Ibn Sina → essence is not the same as existence, except in God.
 - Mu'tazila → nonexistence is also a thing.
 - Nonexistence is actually a positive thing, as appose to saying that nonexistence is just the absence of existence.
 - This allows the possibility for the creator to be nonexistence because it is a positive thing.
 - This is an illogical conclusion.

- Both Ash'aris and Ibn Sina agree that in the case of God, essence is existence.
 - This argument was used by Al-Ghazali against Batiniyya.
 - Batiniyya was a group of Shi'a who believes that the Quran has an inner '*batin*' meaning which overrides the obvious '*thahir*' of the Quran.
 - Al-Ghazali assert that the 'باطن' meaning of the Quran never contradict the 'ظاهر' meaning of the Quran.
 - Whereas Batiniyya in a lot of their interpretation they completely disregard the '*thahir*' of the Quran.
 - Al-Ghazali mainly taking aim at the Ismailiyah because they are Batiniyya. (They go too far).
- The belief of Batiniyya is that God is completely beyond our understanding to the extent that we cannot even say that He exists.
 - Al-Ghazali → God's essence is His existence. And the Batinies assertion that God is so beyond our understating that we cannot even say He exist or not is completely illogical.
 - Because, if you are saying that God created everything that exists. But you are saying that you don't know whether He exist or not.
 - So basically, you are saying that the thing that created the universe you don't know whether it exists or not.
 - This is illogical!!
- Batiniyya response and say that the Quran itself says that (ليس كمثله شيء) 'The is nothing like Him'.
 - They believe that nonexistence is a thing.
 - They say to Ghazali, you yourself admit that there is nothing like Him. But you say that I exist, and God exist, so you are like him.
- Al-Ghazali and Nasafi response → yes God exist, and I exist and everything else exist. But that does not mean that all of our existence is the same.
 - God exists in a completely different way to the way I exist.
 - That is why (ليس كمثله شيء).

- The anthropomorphist makes a final argument: if God does not have a body, then how will we see him in the hereafter.
 - Al-Ghazali → the term ‘how’ implies a comparison with something that is knowing. And what they are asking about is not like anything that we know.
 - So, the whole question is invalid.

27/5/2021

Lecture 32

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198)

- **Work: *Kashf 'an manahij al-adilla***
 - He was a hardcore Aristotelian.
 - He was known as the commentator because he wrote so many comments on Aristotle's works.
 - He was more influential in Judaism and Christianity than Islam.
- **Critique of the Ash'arites**
 - For engaging with *Kalam*.
 - Because he says that this is bad for common people. Because they are stupid.
 - The *kalam* is going to confuse people.
 - The Quran gives you information without actually giving you the true information. Because normal people would not be able to understand it, only philosophers would.
 - So, the Quran gives you knowledge in everyday language that people can understand.
 - However, according to the Quran:
 - (هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ)
 - According to Ibn Rushid, the Quran only does this because creation that is not out of nothing, and creation that's outside of time is something that normal people cannot understand.
 - So, the Quran doesn't reveal how God actually created the universe because people do not understand it.
 - And when the Asha'ris try to explain it, it confuses people.

- Ibn Rushd agrees with Aristotle and Ibn Sina that the world coexists with God, and that it is eternal.
 - Ibn Rushid → the world is neither originated nor eternal.
 - The reason there is all of this confusion is because the philosophers emphasize the eternal part of the world and the resemblance it bears with the God. Whereas the *mutakalimon* they emphasize the created aspect of the world, which also confuses people.
- Ibn Rushd → the world is created in one sense and is eternal in another sense.
 - It is created ‘originated’ in the sense that it is not independent (not self-sufficient). It depends in God.
 - It is eternal in the sense that it has no beginning; it has always existed.
- Ibn Rushd is very critical of traditionalists.
 - Traditionalist (like Atharites) are the people who say that it is revelation ‘Quran’ and not reason that gives us knowledge about God.
 - For Ibn Rushd, these people have not understood the true intention of the Quran, which urges people to use rational proofs.
 - This is the base of all Cosmological and Teleological proofs of the Quran.
 - The intention of the Quran is encouraging us to use rational proofs.
- He criticizes the Sufis in the same way.
 - Sufis → it is not through reason; it is because the nature and knowledge about God is given to us through our soul. And you do not need to think about it.
- **Ibn Rushd singles out two methods to prove existence of God:**
 - Ibn Rush believes that the world coeternal with God, he cannot make use of all the proves that the Mu’tazila give.

- Because all of the proves say that all of the originated things in need of an originator.
- So, he comes up with 2 methods:
 - 1. The proof of design ‘دليل العناية’
 - It has two premises:
 - 1. all the things that exist in the world are beneficial for humans.
 - 2. This benefit necessary comes from an agent who intended it, which is God.
 - This is a Teleological proof.
 - 2. The proof of invention ‘دليل الاختراع’
 - It has two premises:
 - 1. Everything that exists is created.
 - 2. Everything that is created has a creator.
 - This is a Cosmological proof. (Although some say it is teleological as well).
 - Here he is differentiating between creation ‘خلق’ and not origination ‘إحداث’.
- **Ibn Rushd attacks the Ash‘arite notion of occasionalism:**
 - Occasionalism → God is creating the universe in every moment.
 - According to Ibn Rushid, this means that no one has an agency. (I’m not the cause)
 - E.g., when I’m lifting my phone, I’m not lifting it, God is creating my hand lifting the phone.
 - No causality in the world.
 - By denying that anything has a cause in the seen world, that mean you’re denying that there can be a cause in the unseen world.
- **Ibn Rushd attack on Ash‘arite argument of particularization:**
 - Particularization → God is a particularizer, and He particularized the world to exists.

- God giving particularization of just one possibility of me to exists in this way, is saying that God is an agent who is not wise. And that this world is a chance from God.
 - It just happened to be in this way.
- Ibn Rush → it can only be in this way; it is not particularized.

- **Ibn Rushd's argument against the Hashwiyya:**

- Hashwiyya are arch traditionalist → they made the point that reason cannot be made the basis of correct belief.
- They use a verse of the Quran to support their position:
 - The proof of this is that all Arabs accepted the existence of a creator before the Prophet Mohammed presented any rational proofs to them.
 - (لَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ).
 - So, you don't need rational proofs to prove the existence of God.
- Ibn Rushd → This is incorrect; because the Arabs acknowledged that God existed, which is why the verse doesn't bring any proofs. That is not the focus of the verse anyway.
 - However, that is not the same for everything else. Like the existence of the world.

30/5/2021

Lecture 33

The Existence of God in the Muslim Tradition

- **Generally, there are seven what are known as hypostatic attributes ‘صفات معنويه’.**
 - They are attribute of God that underlines the fundamental attributes (the basis of the other attributes).
 - 1. Attribute of Knowledge
 - 2. Attribute of Power
 - 3. Attribute of Will
 - 4. Attribute of Living
 - 5. Attribute of Speech
 - 6. Attribute of Hearing
 - 7. Attribute of Seeing
 - Among these seven, you don’t have God being eternal and God being one.
 - Ash’aries → These seven attributes are something that is in addition of the divine essence.
 - Ibn Rushd → God’s attribute of being one and God’s attribute of being eternal are essential attributes.
 - This is something that is the same as God’s essence.
 - It seems like he has something in common with Ash’arie, but he doesn’t.
 - Because, he says that these seven attributes are different to the essential attributes, but they are also part of God’s essence.
 - How? He says that we don’t need to get into this because in the Quran it conforms, he has these seven attributes.
- **Essence and existence are the same:**
 - According to Ash’aris → the essence and existence of something are the same.
 - They disagree with Ibn Rushd.
 - Ibn Rushd → the essence of something is not the same as its existence.

- The only time the essence of something is the same as its existence is in God.
- Ibn Rushd agrees with Ash'aries, but he says that this means that God's attributes of knowing because it is part of His essence, that means it is the same as His existence.
 - This means that the Ash'aries are wrong to say that there something that's in addition to the essence of God.
 - These are the same as the existence of God.
 - The only thing is that it tells us how God exists.
 - Describe God's mode of existence.
- **Ibn Rushd Criticism of Ibn Sina:**
 - Ibn Sina → the essence of something is separate to its existence, the only exception is God.
 - Ibn Rushd → this means that the existence of something is an attribute in addition to the essence of something.
 - This is a mistake; believing that existence is an attribute is a mistake.
 - Existence is part of the essence of something.
- **Ibn Rushd argument against Al-Ghazali:**
 - Al-Ghazali → one of the 3 beliefs that would take Ibn Sina out of the pale of Islam is that God acted out of necessity; God is the cause and there could only be one effect.
 - For Ghazali, Ibn Sina is eliminating is God's will, and denying His miracle.
 - Ibn Rushd → Al-Ghazali is mistaken when he criticise philosophers when they say that God acts out of necessity.
 - Because God is not like any other agent in the seen world that act voluntary like us.
 - And God is not like anything else in the seen world that acts in necessity.
 - Which mean that the assertion that God acts out of necessity in the same way that thing act out of necessity in the world is incorrect.

- God acts out in necessity but not in the same way; God is different.
- Al-Ghazali → the only kind of true agent is something that acts voluntarily, like us.
 - Ibn Rushd → Ghazali's notion of occasionalism eliminate that there can be a voluntary agent in the seen world.
 - Because, if God is creating everything every moment, and creating every cause and every effect, then I cannot do anything voluntarily (eliminating causality in the world).
 - You are saying that on the one hand, the only kind of agent is a voluntarily agent. On the other hand, you got this idea of occasionalism, which eliminate that there can be a voluntary agent.
 - You're basically making 'voluntary agent' a metaphor.
 - This is the same arguments that Mu'tazila came against the Ash'ari.
- Al-Ghazali → the world is not eternal, and he argues that an eternal act is a contradiction in terms.
 - In order for an action to be an action, it has to start at a moment and ends at a moment.
 - You cannot say that an act is something that you have always done.
- Ibn Rushd → the eternity of the world does not preclude it from being an act of the agent.
 - In fact, it is part of the perfection of God that He is perpetually creating.
 - And this is what it means (كل يوم هو في شأن).
 - He calls the world everlasting origination 'حدوث دائم'.