

Reading Questions Week 7 Completed On April 10, 202

Aquinas. "The Five Proofs of God" – pp. 348-351 (the first three arguments are all versions of the "Cosmological Argument" in favor of God's existence)

1) The Cosmological Argument for God's existence is based on the principle that all things have a cause. It states that since everything in the universe has a cause, there must be a first cause, which is God. The argument is most commonly expressed in terms of motion, as: 1. Everything in the universe is in a state of motion. 2. Nothing can cause its own motion. 3. Therefore, there must be an Unmoved Mover who has set everything in motion. Similarly, the Cosmological Argument can be seen in terms of cause and effect: 1. Everything in the universe has a cause. 2. Nothing can be the cause of itself. 3. Therefore, there must be an Uncaused Cause who has caused everything else. In both versions, the argument states that since everything in the universe must have a cause, there must be a first cause, which is God. The Unmoved Mover or Uncaused Cause is seen as an explanation for the origin of the universe and all of its contents.

2) An infinite regress is an attempt to illustrate a phenomenon by referring to an earlier case, which in turn requires an explanation of its own. This creates a never-ending cycle of causes and effects. This is central to the Cosmological Argument because it is used to demonstrate that something must have been the cause of the universe and all its components, and that cause is God.

3) The third of the five ways is about the contingent existence of everything in the universe. Aquinas argues that because they compose the universe of contingent and dependent beings, there must be a being that is not contingent and dependent, and that is God. He claims that there must be a cause that is not itself caused, and that this cause is God.

Anselm, "The Existence of God", pp. 345-347 (this is the "Ontological Argument" for God's existence)

1) Anselm's definition of a being "that we can conceive than which nothing greater" is a being that is the highest imaginable form of existence. It is an entity that is perfect in every way and surpasses all other forms of being.

2) Anselm's argument for why this greatest possible being must exist in reality is that it cannot simply exist in one's imagination or as an idea. He argues that if it is the greatest possible being, then it must exist in reality in order for it to be truly great. He states that if the being does not exist in reality, then a greater being could conceive of, which would contradict the definition of the being. Therefore, he concludes that the greatest possible being must exist in reality in order for it to be truly great.

Hume, "The Argument from Design", pp. 365-370 (this is Hume's criticism of the "Teleological Argument" for God's existence...)

1) The Teleological Argument as presented on pages 365-366 states that since the universe appears to intricately ordered and complex, it must have been the result of the design and purpose of an intelligent Creator. This is because, according to the Argument, the universe is analogous to a complex machine, and, like a complex machine, it must have been designed and constructed for a specific purpose, which is the purpose of its Creator.

2). Hume, through Phil, states that for all we know, "matter may contain the source or spring of order originally within itself, as well as mind does". This statement is part of a larger paragraph which explains that arguments from design do not necessarily prove the existence of a creator, as it is possible that the source of order in the universe may have arisen from the laws of nature, rather than from an intelligent designer. In this sense, Hume is arguing that it is possible that the universe may have self-organized itself, rather than having been designed by an intelligent being. Hume presents several problems concerning the comparison of the universe to a machine and the assumption that it must be designed. Firstly, he argues that the universe may be too complicated and vast for us to draw any meaningful comparison to a machine. Moreover, he points

out that the characteristics of a machine imply the presence of a designer and a purpose, yet the universe may not have been designed by an intelligent being, nor may it have a purpose. Additionally, Hume questions whether we can even trust our senses and faculties to make such a comparison and draw such a conclusion. He argues that our senses may be limited and that we may be incapable of fully comprehending the universe and its complexity.

3) Some of the problems Hume presents concerning the comparison of the universe to a machine and the assumption that it must also be designed are as follows: Firstly, the universe is not a perfect machine, as it contains flaws and imperfections. Secondly, even if the universe were a perfect machine, that does not necessarily mean that it was designed and created for a specific purpose, as even a perfect machine might have arisen by chance. Thirdly, the universe contains elements that are actually detrimental to life and its inhabitants, such as diseases and natural disasters, which would not be expected from a benevolent Creator. Finally, even if the universe was designed and constructed for a specific purpose, that does not necessarily mean that it was created by a God, as it is possible that the designer could have been some other form of advanced intelligence.