A Summary Of The Ontological Argument That There Is The Existence Of God

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Religious belief is a strong faith in the existence of a supernatural being who is in control of one's destiny. To believe that God exists, one needs to have faith. Different people hold onto different reasons as to why they believe in God, some of which include the need for personal control. People understand and believe that power or authority comes from above and thus from God, and one has to seek Him first. Secondly, coping with death increases people's belief in the power of prayer and spirits. They believe there is life after death and thus receive consolation. Having firm faith enables people to wait upon the Lord and for what they cannot see and to have hope that good things will happen after undergoing struggle (Feinberg, Joel & Landau 25). This paper is a summary of the ontological argument for the existence of God and possible objections based on my perspective on whether it is right or wrong.

Anselm's Ontological Argument

The ontological arguments are types of cases that use a priori logical reasoning, fundamental premises, and analytics to conclude that God indeed exists. These arguments are source-derived rather than based on world observation; thus, they arise from thinking alone. The first well-known argument was put forward by St. Anselm of Canterbury in the 11th century C.E. In his Proslogion writings, St. Anselm assumes God's existence to be greater than what one thinks of. He also reasoned that if the very being does not exist, then there is a conception of a being existing in reality which is extraordinary (Feinberg, Joel & Landau 31). The second argument argues that God is in time, eternal, unlimited, and some form of existence, hence a real being. He also explains that if God exists, then he must be an essential being rather than an unforeseen being. A creature that cannot be imagined not to exist must seem to be greater than one which is envisioned to be non-existent. This kind of argument is referred to as 'Reductio ad absurdum.' Anselm employs this method with the aim of reducing the inconsistency of the phenomenon being disproved (God is non-existent). He proposes to show the obvious by using an argument that God's existence is logically essential, but He can't not exist (Feinberg, Joel & Landau 32).

Descartes and Divine Perfection

René Descartes came up with many ontological arguments based on Anselm's original works. Descartes argues and believes at the same time that God is a supremely perfect being. God holds all the perfections, and it is a must that He exists. He also tries to put forward that God is naturally perfect and the geometric idea or the triangular shape is a good illustration of who He is, and His existence cannot be denied at all costs. Analytically, the statement is true. The clauses in the statement say something that is true in almost all instances. Descartes vigorously defended that analytically beinghood belonged to the highest God just as three angles belong to the triangle.

Gaunilo's Island and Aquinas's Objection

With the failure to prove that God exists, the ontological arguments by Anselm face criticisms posed by various philosophers. One of them is Gaunilo. He used an island theory. He urges people to conceive and believe that an island is real and does exist rather than merely imagining it. Anselm counteracts Gaunilo's approach with a reasonable explanation that the only applicable arguments were those of a required existence. The island theory will never reach perfection and can only be enhanced since it is an undetermined object (Feinberg, Joel & Landau 37). Descartes adds that there will be no full conception of God by people, for example, human theists. Thomas Aquinas also suggests that without a good understanding of God and His essence, no one will ever fully conceive Him.

Kant and Hume on Existence and Conception

Kant's major criticism is that existence is not real, as per the theories put forward by both Anselm and Descartes. He states that the sentiment "God exists" can only be analytical because of the meaning the word is granted. David Hume adds criticism to the argument, saying that human beings do not have a significant understanding and experience concerning the existence of God, and no conclusion on God's presence can be made via conceiving (Feinberg, Joel & Landau 41).

Limits of the Argument from an Atheist Perspective

In my own thinking capacity, the ontological argument does not prove God's existence. Atheists reviewing the same argument will encounter difficulty understanding how Anselm and Descartes prove God's existence. It's only based on assumptions, and no atheist will come to terms with this argument. The ontological argument, being a priori, offers no concrete support or evidence. Relying only on logic makes it harder to comprehend how the whole thing can be correct because they know nothing about God, not even through assumptions. Many people propose that the conception of God is impossible, and so is His existence; hence, the ontological argument does not adequately provide

information that anyone, not even an atheist, honestly believes proves God’s presence.

Faith Beyond Philosophical Proof

The ontological argument for God’s existence is both criticized and supported at the same time. The theory has its strengths and weaknesses. In our humanity, no one can prove God’s existence. We only believe that He lives and reigns forever. This situation leaves us helpless to demonstrate this to our atheist brothers. But all in all, every individual has his or her own beliefs about religion and God that propel them to act or do things in a certain way as far as their faith is concerned. Most people believe in God’s significance in such a way that people receive blessings, inherent problem-solving, removal of fear and anxiety, acceptance of the Holy Spirit, and provision of guidance in their daily undertakings by God.

Works Cited

Feinberg, Joel, and Russ Shafer-Landau. *Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy*. , 2017. Print.