

# Philosophy & Ethics: Arguments for the Existence of God

## Revelation

God reveals himself to people of in the world.

### Types of Revelation

1. **Natural:** God in nature- northern lights.
2. **Specific:** Mary to Bernadette.
3. **Culmination:** Jesus as Incarnation. **SOWA:** "Word becomes Flesh" (John 1)

## Religious Experiences

Feeling the presence of God.

**Conversion:** Life is changed by God, Famous example of **Saul to Paul**.

**Numinous:** Feeling of a presence greater than you. A state of awe & wonder.

**Miracle:** Something that breaks the law of nature- See miracles box.

**Prayer:** A way of communicating with God. A prayer being answered might lead to belief in God.

### Atheist (non-religious view)

1. Don't believe in God so religious experiences cannot come from God.
2. Explain miracles as existing only in peoples minds.

## Visions

A visual appearance usually of Jesus or Mary.

### Biblical Visions:

1. **Moses & Burning Bush:** God appearing to Moses & telling him to set Israelites free.
2. **Abraham:** God offers Abraham protection & reward for following him. **SOWA:** "Fear not Abram...your reward will be great" (Genesis)
3. **Transfiguration of Jesus:** Moses, Elijah appear to Jesus. **SOWA:** "This is my beloved Son" (Matthew)

### Non-Biblical Visions:

1. Joan of Arc- instructed to force the English from her homeland, she was killed and burnt at the stake as a heretic.

### Lead to belief in God: (Religious view)

1. Powerful personal experiences giving strength & faith.
2. Allows for visions to be interpreted.

### Against belief in God:

#### Atheist (non-religious view)

1. There is often no proof of visions.
2. They could be hallucinations or made up.

## Miracles

A miracle is something that breaks the law of nature.

### Biblical Miracles:

1. Jesus turning water into wine (**John**)
2. Moses parting the red sea (**Exodus**)
3. Jesus heals a blind man, (**Mark**)

### Non-Biblical Visions:

1. Virgin Mary appearing to Bernadette in Lourdes.
2. Virgin Mary appearing to Juan Diego in Mexican City.

### Lead to belief in God: (Religious view)

1. No scientific explanation therefore has to be God.
2. Those who experience it feel they have had a connection with God.

### Against belief in God:

#### Atheist (non-religious view)

1. Coincidence
2. Science could explain it in the future.

## Design Argument

The suggestion that there appears to be design to the world, this must be God.

- Uses the famous watch idea- if a watch is so complex & needs to be designed, the universe is even more complex so must also have a designer- this has to be God.

### **SOWA: "His eternal power...that have been made" (Romans)**

#### Strengths:

- Based on our experience of design.
- Complements Christian understanding of God.

## Problem of Evil & Suffering

Evil can't exist if God is...

1. Omni**P**otent: All Powerful.
  2. Omniscient: All Knowing.
  3. Omniben**EVOL**ent: All Loving.
- If evil exists, God cannot be all of these things.

### Natural Evil: Evil caused be nature.

1. Hurricane
2. Tsunami
3. Earthquake

### Moral Evil: Evil caused by humans.

1. Murder
2. Assault
3. War

### Solutions to the Problem of Evil & Suffering

#### Bible:

1. Job- God allows Job to be tested- gives faith to those who suffer.
2. Psalms- Christians can learn from their suffering.
3. NT- God suffered through Jesus & Christ saved us.

#### Theoretical:

1. Augustine: Have to have evil to know good.
2. Irenaeus: It is how we learn & how we grow.

#### Practical:

1. Charity- Helping others. **SOWA: Parable of the Sheep & Goats.**
2. Prayer: Praying for those in need.

## Cosmological Argument

The suggestion that there is a cause & effect for every scenario.

- There has to be a cause of the universe- this is God, the effect of God is the universe.
- Uses a row of dominos as an explanation.
- **SOWA: "His eternal power...that have been made" (Romans)**

### Strengths:

- It is based on experience.
- It is compatible with science.