



Objectivism. See RAND, AYN .

O'Callahan, Jose. Jose O'Callahan (b. 1922) is a Spanish Jesuit paleographer who made the astounding identification of nine fragments among Qumran's Dead Sea Scrolls as coming from multiple books of the New Testament.

The Fragments. Beginning with his first announcement in 1972, O'Callahan eventually identified the nine fragments from Cave 7 as Mark 4:28 ; 6:48 ; 6:52 , 53 ; 12:17 ; Acts 27:38 ; Romans 5:11–12 , 1 Timothy 3:16 ; 4:1–3 ; 2 Peter 1:15 ; and James 1:23–24 . The fragments were dated: Mark, 50; Acts, 60; and Romans, 1 Timothy, 2 Peter, and James approximately 70. Fragments from Cave 7 had previously been dated between 50 B.C . and A.D . 50. For a more extensive discussion of these fragments, see the articles DEAD SEA SCROLLS ; NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS ; NEW TESTAMENT, DATING OF , and NEW TESTAMENT, HISTORICITY OF .

Implications of the Identification. If valid, O'Callahan's conclusions are correct they totally invalidate many New Testament theories. The *New York Times* reported: "If Father O'Callahan's theory is accepted it would prove that at least one of the gospels—that of St. Mark—was written only a few years after the death of Jesus." *United Press International* noted that his conclusions indicated that "the people closest to the events—Jesus' original followers—found Mark's report accurate and trustworthy, not myth but true history" (Estrada, 137). *Time* quoted one scholar who claimed that if correct, "they can make a bonfire of 70 tons of indigestible German scholarship" (ibid., 136).

Dating the Evidence. The early dates (listed above) are supported by the evidence that these pieces were not dated by O'Callahan but by other scholars prior to his identification of them; the dates have never been seriously questioned and fit with the dates determined for other manuscripts found in the same Qumran area. Archaeologists who discovered Cave 7 attested that it showed no signs of being opened since it was sealed in A.D . 70 and that its contents date from no later. The style of writing (in Greek uncials) has been identified as early first century (see NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS).

O'Callahan is a reputable paleographer who has made many successful identifications of ancient texts. His identifications of these texts fit perfectly with the passages. No viable

alternatives have been found. In fact, two scholars calculated the odds that these letter sequences represent some other text as about 1 in 2.25 x 1065.

Not surprisingly, objections to O'Callahan's identification have been raised. Some have charged that O'Callahan never worked with the original mss. This is false. Others point out that the pieces are small fragments. However, other ancient texts have been identified with equal or less evidence. Some have contended that the Mark 5 manuscript is too dim or indistinct to be truly readable. Very clear photographs are now available, however.

The identification of certain letters has been disputed. If identifications are revised, the identity of the manuscript could change. But O'Callahan has mostly used the letters proposed by the original editors. Where he did not, the editors have concurred that his identification could be correct. Of the crucial Mark 5 text he used all nine whole letters and six of the ten partial letters. Where he differed, his judgment was a possible alternative based on the actual manuscript.

A few critics have offered possible non-New Testament alternatives. In order to be successful, they have had to change the number of letters on a line of ancient text from the twenties to the sixties in some cases. This many letters to a line would be highly unusual. One confirming evidence of O'Callahan's thesis is that no one has found any other non-New Testament text for these manuscripts. Using normal rules, O'Callahan has provided probable New Testament identifications.

Apologetic Relevance. If the identification of even some of these fragments as New Testament is valid, implications for Christian apologetics are enormous. The Gospel of Mark was written within the life time of the apostles and contemporaries of the events (see NEW TESTAMENT, DATING OF ; NEW TESTAMENT, HISTORICITY OF). This early date (before 50) leaves no time for mythological embellishment of the records (see MYTHOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT). They must be accepted as historical. Mark is shown to be one of the early Gospels. The chance of there being a Q or series of Q gospel manuscripts is more remote (see Q DOCUMENT). Since these manuscripts are not originals but copies, the New Testament was copied and disseminated quickly. The existence of a New Testament canon from the beginning is hinted at by this selection of books, representing Gospels, Acts, Pauline, and General Epistles—every major section of the New Testament. Sixth, the fragment of 2 Peter would argue for the authenticity of this often disputed Epistle. The absence of fragments of John's writings could indicate that they were written later (80–90), in accordance with the traditional dates.

Sources

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Ockham, William. See WILLIAM OF OCKHAM .

Ockham's Razor. *Ockham's Razor* is the popular name for a principle laid down by William of Ockham (1285–1349). It is also called the Principle of Parsimony. In its popular form it states that the simplest explanation is the best explanation. This is often taken to mean "the fewer, the truer," and by logical extension "the fewest, the truest." However, this is not what Ockham had in mind.

In the original form given by Ockham the principle merely affirms that "causes should not be multiplied without necessity." That is, one should not posit more causes or reasons than are necessary to explain the data. The true explanation could involve many causes, and having fewer would be incorrect. But unnecessarily complicating the problem also makes reasoning incorrect.

Old Testament Manuscripts. The manuscripts of the Old Testament are not as crucial to Christian apologetics as are those of the New Testament (see NEW TESTAMENT, HISTORICITY OF ; NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS). However, their reliability in general is important, and the manuscripts play a crucial role in establishing the Old Testament's reliability. They also help establish the date of Old Testament prophecies (see PROPHECY AS PROOF OF THE BIBLE) which play a supporting role in defending Christianity (see APOLOGETICS, ARGUMENT OF). Like the New Testament, the original manuscripts (*autographs*) of the Old Testament are not available, but the Hebrew text is amply represented by both pre- and post-Christian manuscripts (see Geisler, "Bible Manuscripts," 1:248–52). As a result, the reliability of the Hebrew text can be determined from available manuscript evidence. But over 2000 years of copying the text (500 B.C . to A.D . 1500) Jewish scholars performed an unbelievable preservation of the textual traditions.

History of the Old Testament Text. In Judaism a succession of scholars were charged with standardizing and preserving the biblical text:

- The *Sopherim* (from Hebrew meaning "scribes") were Jewish scholars and custodians of the text between the fifth and the third centuries B.C .
- The *Zugoth* ("pairs" of textual scholars) were assigned to this task in the second and first centuries B.C .
- The *Tannaim* ("repeaters" or "teachers") were active to 200. The work of Tannaim can be found in the *Midrash* ("textual interpretation"), *Tosefta* ("addition"), and *Talmud* ("instruction"), the latter of which is divided into *Mishnah* ("repetitions") and *Gemara* ("the matter to be learned"). The Talmud gradually was written between 100 and 500.

- Between 500 and 950 the Masoretes added the vowel pointings and pronunciation marks to the consonantal Hebrew text received from the Sopherim, on the basis of the *Masora* ("tradition") that had been handed down to them. The Masoretes were scribes who codified and wrote down the oral criticisms and remarks on the Hebrew text. There were two major schools or centers of Masoretic activity, each largely independent of the other, the Babylonian and the Palestinian. The most famous Masoretes were the Jewish scholars living in Tiberias in Galilee, Moses ben Asher (with his son Aaron), and Moses ben Naphtali, in the late ninth and tenth centuries. The ben Asher text is the standard text for the Hebrew Bible today as best represented by Codex Leningradensis B19A (L) and Aleppo Codex.

At issue today is the standard "Masoretic" Hebrew text—the one used in Bible translation. Frederic Kenyon posed the all-important question when he asked whether the Masoretic Text represents the Hebrew text originally written by the authors. The standard edition of the Masoretic Text was first published under the editorship of a Hebrew Christian, Jacob Ben Chayyim (ca. 1525). It was essentially a recension of the text of the Masorete Ben Asher (ca. 920) (see Geisler, *General Introduction to the Bible*, chap. 25). The answer to Kenyon's question arises from a careful examination of the number and nature of Hebrew manuscripts.

The Number of Manuscripts. The first collection of Hebrew manuscripts, made by Benjamin Kennicott (1776–1780) and published by Oxford, listed 615 manuscripts of the Old Testament. Later Giovanni de Rossi (1784–1788) published a list of 731 manuscripts. The most important manuscript discoveries in modern times are those of the Cairo Geniza (1890s) and the Dead Sea Scrolls (1947 and following years). In the Cairo synagogue attic geniza or storehouse for old manuscripts alone were discovered 200,000 manuscripts and fragments (Kahle, 13, and Würthwein, 25) some 10,000 of which are biblical (Goshen-Gottstein, 35). According to J. T. Milik, fragments of about 600 manuscripts are known from the Dead Sea Scrolls, not all biblical. Moshe Goshen-Gottstein estimates that the total number of Old Testament Hebrew manuscript fragments throughout the world runs into the tens of thousands (ibid., 31).

Major Collections. About one-half of the 200,000 Cairo Geniza manuscript fragments are housed at Cambridge University. The rest are scattered throughout the world. Cairo Geniza authority Paul Kahle has identified more than 120 rare manuscripts prepared by the "Babylonian group" of Masoretic scribes.

The largest collection of Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts in the world is the Second Firkowitch Collection in Leningrad. It contains 1582 items of the Bible and Masora on parchment (725 on paper), plus 1200 additional Hebrew manuscript fragments in the Antonin Collection (Würthwein, 23). Kahle contends also that these Antonin Collection manuscripts and fragments are all from the Cairo Geniza (Kahle, 7). In the Firkowitch Collection are found fourteen Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts from between 929 and 1121 that originated in the Cairo Geniza.

Cairo Geniza manuscripts are scattered over the world. Some of the better ones in the United States are in the Enelow Memorial Collection at the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York (Goshen-Gottstein, 44f.).

The British Museum catalog lists 161 Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts. At Oxford University, the Bodleian Library catalog lists 146 Old Testament manuscripts, each containing a large number of fragments (Kahle, 5). Goshen-Gottstein estimates that in the United States alone there are tens of thousands of Semitic manuscript fragments, about 5 percent of which are biblical—more than 500 manuscripts (Goshen-Gottstein, 30).

Hebrew Manuscripts. The most significant Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts date from between the third century B.C. and the fourteenth century A.D. Of these the most remarkable manuscripts are those of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which date from the third century B.C. to the first century A.D. They include one complete Old Testament book (Isaiah) and thousands of fragments, which together represent every Old Testament book except Esther.

Dead Sea Scroll Discoveries. Cave 1 was discovered by the Arab shepherd boy. From it he took seven more-or-less complete scrolls and some fragments:

Isaiah A (IQIsa). St. Mark's Monastery Isaiah Scroll is a popular copy with numerous corrections above the line or in the margin. It is the earliest known copy of any complete book of the Bible.

Isaiah B (IQIsb). The Hebrew University Isaiah is incomplete but its text agrees more closely with the Masoretic text than does Isaiah A.

Other Cave 1 Fragments. This cave also yielded fragments of Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Judges, Samuel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, and some nonbiblical works, including Enoch, Sayings of Moses (previously unknown), Book of Jubilee, Book of Noah, Testament of Levi, Tobit, and the Wisdom of Solomon. An interesting fragment of Daniel, containing 2:4 (where the language changes from Hebrew to Aramaic), also comes from this cave. Fragmentary commentaries on Psalms, Micah, and Zephaniah were also found in Cave 1.

Cave 2. Cave 2 was first discovered and pilfered by the Bedouins. It was excavated in 1952. Fragments of about a hundred manuscripts, including two of Exodus, one of Leviticus, four of Numbers, two or three of Deuteronomy, one of Jeremiah, Job, Psalms, and two of Ruth, were found.

Cave 3. Cave 3 was found by the archaeologists and searched on March 14, 1952. It disclosed two halves of a copper scroll with directions to sixty or sixty-four sites containing hidden treasures. These sites were mostly in and around the Jerusalem area, ranging from north of Jericho to the Vale of Achor. Thus far, search for the treasures has been unfruitful. Various views have emerged to explain this scroll. It has been suggested that it is the work of a crank, or part of the people's folklore, or possibly a record of the deposits of the tithe money and sacred vessels dedicated to the temple service (see Allegra).

Cave 4. Partridge Cave or Cave 4, after being ransacked by Bedouins, was searched in September 1952, and it proved to be the most productive cave of all. Literally thousands of fragments were recovered by purchase from the Bedouin or by the archaeologists' sifting the dust on the floor of the cave. These scraps represent hundreds of manuscripts, nearly 400 of

which have been identified. They include 100 copies of Bible books, all the Old Testament except Esther.

A fragment of Samuel from Cave 4 (4qSam^b) is thought to be the oldest known piece of biblical Hebrew. It dates from the third century B.C. Also found were a few fragments of commentaries of the Psalms, Isaiah, and Nahum. The entire collection of Cave 4 is believed to represent the scope of the Qumran library, and judging from the relative number of books found, their favorite books seemed to be Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Psalms, the Minor Prophets, and Jeremiah, in that order. In one fragment containing some of Daniel 7:28, 8:1, the language changes from Aramaic to Hebrew.

Caves 5 and 6. Caves 5 and 6 were excavated in September 1952. Fragments of Tobit and some biblical books, all in an advanced stage of deterioration, were found in Cave 5. Cave 6 produced mostly papyrus, instead of leather fragments. Papyrus pieces of Daniel, 1 Kings, and 2 Kings were among the finds.

Caves 7–10. Caves 7–10, examined in 1955, produced no significant Old Testament manuscripts. Cave 7 did, however, yield some disputed mss. fragments that have been identified by Jose O'Callahan as New Testament portions. If so, they would be the oldest New Testament mss. dating from as early as A.D. 50 or 60.

Cave 11. Cave 11 was excavated in early 1956. It produced a well-preserved copy of thirty-six Psalms, plus the apocryphal Psalm 151, which was previously known only in Greek texts. A very fine scroll of part of Leviticus, some large pieces of an Apocalypse of the New Jerusalem, and an Aramaic targum (paraphrase) of Job were discovered.

Several recent studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls provide detailed descriptions and inventories. Gleason L. Archer, Jr. has a good summary in an appendix to his *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*.

Murabba'at Discoveries. Prompted by the profitable finds at Qumran, the Bedouins pursued their search and found caves southeast of Bethlehem that produced self-dated manuscripts and documents from the Second Jewish Revolt (132–135). Systematic exploration and excavation of these caves began in January 1952. The later, dated manuscripts helped establish the antiquity of the Dead Sea Scrolls. From these caves came another scroll of the Minor Prophets, the last half of Joel through Haggai, which closely supports the Masoretic Text. The oldest known Semitic papyrus (a palimpsest), inscribed the second time in the ancient Hebrew script (dating from the seventh–eighth centuries B.C.), was found here (see Barthelemy).

Another site known as Khirbet Mird has produced manuscript materials. On April 3, 1960, a parchment fragment (first century A.D.) of Psalm 15 and part of Psalm 16 was discovered at Wadi Murabba'at (see Cass, 164).

Samaritan Pentateuch. The Samaritans separated from the Jews probably during the fifth or fourth century B.C. after a long, bitter religious and cultural struggle. At the time of the schism one would suspect that the Samaritans took with them the Scriptures as they then existed, and

they prepared their own, revised text of the Pentateuch. The Samaritan Pentateuch is not a version in the strict sense, but rather a manuscript portion of the Hebrew text itself. It contains the five books of Moses and is written in an ancient style of Hebrew script. Some of the older biblical manuscripts from Qumran use this script, since it was revived in the second century B.C. during the Maccabean revolt against the Greeks. Textual critic Frank M. Cross, Jr., believes that the Samaritan Pentateuch probably comes from about the Maccabean period.

A form of the Samaritan Pentateuch text seems to have been known to church Fathers Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 265–339) and Jerome (ca. 345–ca. 419). It was not available to modern Western scholars until 1616, when Pietro della Valle discovered a manuscript of the Samaritan Pentateuch in Damascus. A great wave of excitement arose among biblical scholars. The text was regarded as superior to the Masoretic Text (MT); until Wilhelm Gesenius in 1815 judged it to be practically worthless for textual criticism. More recently the value of the Samaritan Pentateuch has been reasserted by such scholars as A. Geiger, Kahle, and Kenyon.

No extant manuscript of the Samaritan Pentateuch has been dated before the eleventh century. The Samaritan community claims that one roll was written by Abisha, the great-grandson of Moses, in the thirteenth year after the conquest of Canaan, but the authority is so spurious that the claim may be safely dismissed. The oldest codex of the Samaritan Pentateuch bears a note about its sale in 1149–50, but the manuscript itself is much older. One manuscript was copied in 1204. Another dated 1211–1212 is now in the John Rylands Library at Manchester. Another, dated ca. 1232, is in the New York Public Library.

The standard printed edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch is in five volumes by A. von Gall, *Der Hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner* (1914–1918). It provides an eclectic text based on eighty late medieval manuscripts and fragments. Although von Gall's text is in Hebrew characters, the Samaritans wrote in an alphabet quite different from the square Hebrew. Nevertheless, their script, like the Hebrew, descended from old Paleo-Hebrew characters.

There are about 6000 deviations of the Samaritan Pentateuch from the Masoretic Text, most trivial. In about 1900 instances the Samaritan text agrees with the Septuagint against the Masoretic Text. Some of the deviations were deliberately introduced by the Samaritans to preserve their own religious traditions and dialectic. The Masoretic Text perpetuates Judean dialect and traditions.

In the early Christian era a translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch was made into the Aramaic dialect of the Samaritans. This Samaritan Targum was also translated into Greek, called the *Samaritikon*, which was occasionally cited by Origen. After the eleventh century several translations of the Samaritan Pentateuch were made in Arabic (Kahle, 51–57).

Other Important Discoveries. Nash Papyri. Among the earliest Old Testament Hebrew manuscripts, there is extant one damaged copy of the *Shema* (from Deut. 6:4–9) and two fragments of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:2–17.; Deut. 5:6–21). The Nash Papyri are dated between the second century B.C. and the first century A.D.

Orientalis 4445. *Orientalis 4445*, a British Museum manuscript is dated by Christian D. Ginsburg at between 820 and 850, with notes added a century later. But Paul E. Kahle (see Würthwein, 18) argues that both consonantal Hebrew texts and pointing (the added vowel points or marks) are from the tenth century. Because the Hebrew alphabet consists only of consonants, Hebrew writing normally shows only those letters, with a few letters used to represent some of the vocalic sounds. Vowel marks or “points” were a medieval development. This manuscript contains Genesis 39:20 — Deuteronomy 1:33, less Numbers 7:47–73 and 9:12–10:18.

Codex Cairensis. A codex is a manuscript in book form with pages. According to a colophon, or inscription at the end of the book, *Codex Cairensis* (C) was written and vowel-pointed in 895 by Moses ben Asher in Tiberias in Palestine (ibid., 25). It contains the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings) and the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets). It is symbolized by a C in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and is regarded as the most authoritative Hebrew text based on the Masoretic Text tradition.

Aleppo Codex. *Aleppo Codex* was written by Shelomo ben Baya'a (Kenyon, 84), but according to a colophon note it was pointed (i.e., the vowel marks were added) by Moses ben Asher (ca. 930). It is a model codex, although it was not permitted to be copied for a long time and was even reported to have been destroyed (Würthwein, 25). It was smuggled from Syria to Israel. It has now been photographed and is the basis of the *New Hebrew Bible* published by Hebrew University (Goshen-Gottstein, 13). It is a sound authority for the ben Asher text.

Codex Leningradensis. According to a colophon note, *Codex Leningradensis* (L) was copied in Old Cairo by Samuel ben Jacob in 1008 from a manuscript (now lost) written by Aaron ben Moses ben Asher ca. 1000 (Kahle, 110). It represents one of the oldest manuscripts of the complete Hebrew Bible. Kittel adopted it as the basis for the third edition of his *Biblia Hebraica*, and it continues to be used as such in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, where it is represented under the symbol L.

Babylonian Codex of the Latter Prophets. The Babylonian Codex (V (ar)P) is sometimes called the Leningrad Codex of the Prophets (Kenyon, 85) or the [St.] Petersburg Codex (Würthwein, 26). It contains Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Twelve. It is dated 916, but its chief significance is that, through it, punctuation added by the Babylonian school of Masoretic scribes was rediscovered. It is symbolized as V (ar)P in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*.

Reuchlin Codex of the Prophets. Dated 1105, *Reuchlin Codex* is now at Karlsruhe. Like the British Museum manuscript (ca. 1150), it contains a recension of Ben Naphtali, a Tiberian Masorete. These have been of great value in establishing the fidelity of the Ben Asher text (Kenyon, 36).

Erfurt Codices. The Erfurt Codices (E 1, E2, E3) are listed in the University Library in Tübingen. They represent more or less (more in E3) the text and markings of the Ben Naphtali tradition. E1 is a fourteenth-century manuscript. E2 is probably from the thirteenth century. E3, the oldest, is dated before 1100 (Würthwein, 26).

Lost Codices. There are a number of significant but now lost codices whose peculiar readings are preserved and referred to in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Codex Severi is a medieval list of thirty-two variants of the Pentateuch, supposedly based on a manuscript brought to Rome in 70 that Emperor Severus (222–35) later gave to a synagogue he had built. Codex Hillel was supposedly written ca. 600 by Rabbi Hillel ben Moses ben Hillel. It is said to have been accurate and was used to revise other manuscripts. Readings from that manuscript are cited by medieval Masoretes and are noted in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (ibid., 27).

Nature of Manuscripts. Types of Manuscript Errors. Although the official text of the Old Testament was transmitted with great care, it was inevitable that certain copyist errors would creep into the texts over the hundreds of years of transmission into thousands of manuscripts. There are several kinds of copyist errors that produce textual variants (Archer, 55–57).

- *Haplography* is the writing of a word, letter, or syllable only once when it should have been written more than once.
- *Dittography* is writing twice what should have been written only once.
- *Metathesis* is reversing the proper position of letters or words.
- *Fusion* is the combining of two separate words into one.
- *Fission* is the dividing of a single word into two words.
- *Homophony* is the substitution of a word for another that is produced like it (e.g., “two” for “to”), or the misreading of similarly shaped letters.
- *Homoeoteleuton* is the omission of an intervening passage because the scribe’s eye skipped from one line to a similar ending on another line.
- *Accidental omissions* occur where no repetition is involved (as “Saul was . . . year(s) old,” 1 Sam. 13:1, RSV), or vowel letters are misread for consonants.

Rules for Textual Criticism. Scholars have developed certain criteria for determining which reading is correct or original. Seven rules may be suggested (ibid., 51–53).

1. An older reading is to be preferred, because it is closer to the original.
2. The more difficult reading is to be preferred, because scribes were more apt to smooth out difficult readings.
3. The shorter reading is to be preferred, because copyists were more apt to insert new material than omit part of the sacred text.

4. The reading that best explains the other variants is to be preferred.
5. The reading with the widest geographical support is to be preferred, because such manuscripts or versions are less likely to have influenced each other.
6. The reading that is most like the author’s usual style is to be preferred.
7. The reading that does not reflect a doctrinal bias is to be preferred. (Würthwein, 80–81).

Quality of Manuscripts. Several reasons have been suggested for the relative scarcity of early Hebrew manuscripts. The first and most obvious reason is a combination of antiquity and destructibility; 2000 to 3000 years is a long time to expect ancient documents to last. Nonetheless, several lines of evidence support the conclusion that their quality is very good.

Variant Readings. There are very few variants in the texts available because the Masoretes systematically destroyed old manuscripts once they were carefully copied. Kenyon illustrates the paucity of variations in the Masoretic Text by contrasting the Leningrad Codex of the Prophets, from the Babylonian or Eastern tradition, with the standard Palestinian text (Western) of Ezekiel. In the Western text the Masoretic Text is sometimes corrupt. Yet there are only sixteen real conflicts between the two texts (Kenyon, 45, 70–72).

Jewish Reverence for the Bible. With respect to the Jewish Scriptures, however, it was not scribal accuracy alone that guaranteed their product. Rather, it was their almost superstitious reverence for the Bible. According to the *Talmud*, there were specifications not only for the kind of skins to be used and the size of the columns, but there was even a religious ritual necessary for the scribe to perform before writing the name of God. Rules governed the kind of ink used, dictated the spacing of words, and prohibited writing anything from memory. The lines, and even the letters, were counted methodically. If a manuscript was found to contain even one mistake, it was discarded and destroyed. This scribal formalism was responsible, at least in part, for the extreme care exercised in copying the Scriptures. It was also the reason there were only a few manuscripts (as the rules demanded the destruction of defective copies).

Comparison of Duplicate Passages. Another line of evidence for the quality of the Old Testament manuscripts is found in the comparison of the duplicate passages of the Masoretic Text itself. Several psalms occur twice (for example, 14 and 53); much of Isaiah 36–39 is also found in 2 Kings 18–20; Isaiah 2:2–4 is almost exactly parallel to Micah 4:1–3; Jeremiah 52 is a repeat of 2 Kings 25; and large portions of Chronicles are found in Samuel and Kings. An examination of those passages shows not only a substantial textual agreement but, in some cases, almost word-for-word identity. Therefore it may be concluded that the Old Testament texts have not undergone radical revisions, even if it were assumed that these parallel passages had identical sources.

Support from Archaeology. A substantial proof for the accuracy of the Old Testament text has come from archaeology. Numerous discoveries have confirmed the historical accuracy of the biblical documents, even down to the occasional use of obsolete names of foreign kings. These

archaeological confirmations of the accuracy of Scripture have been recorded in numerous books (see ARCHAEOLOGY, NEW TESTAMENT ; ARCHAEOLOGY, OLD TESTAMENT). Archaeologist Nelson Glueck asserts, "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible" (Glueck, 31).

The Septuagint and Masoretic Text. The *Septuagint* was the Bible of Jesus and the apostles. Most New Testament quotations are taken from it directly, even when it differs from the Masoretic Text. On the whole the *Septuagint* closely parallels the Masoretic Text and is a confirmation of the fidelity of the tenth-century Hebrew text.

If no other evidence were available, the case for the fidelity of the Masoretic Text could be brought to rest with confidence upon textual comparisons and understanding of the extraordinary Jewish scribal system. But with discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, beginning in 1947, there is almost overwhelming substantiation of the received Hebrew text of the Masoretes. Critics of the Masoretic Text charged that the manuscripts were few and late. Through the Dead Sea Scrolls, early manuscript fragments provide a check on nearly the whole Old Testament. Those checks date about a thousand years before the Great Masoretic manuscripts of the tenth century. Before the discoveries in the Cairo Geniza and the Dead Sea caves, the Nash Papyrus (a fragment of the Ten Commandments and Shema, Deut. 6:4-9), dated between 150 and 100 B.C ., was the only known scrap of the Hebrew text dating from before the Christian era.

Agreement with the Samaritan Pentateuch. Despite the many minor variants between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, there is substantial agreement between them. As noted above, the 6000 variants from the Masoretic Text are mostly differences in spelling and cultural word variation. Nineteen hundred variants agree with the Septuagint (for example, in the ages given for the patriarchs in Genesis 5 and 11). Some Samaritan Pentateuch variants are sectarian, such as the command to build the Temple on Mount Gerizim, not at Jerusalem (e.g., after Exod. 20:17). It should be noted, however, that most manuscripts of the Samaritan Pentateuch are late (thirteenth to fourteenth centuries), and none is before the tenth century (Archer, 44). But the Samaritan Pentateuch still confirms the general text from which it had diverged many hundreds of years earlier.

Check Against the Dead Sea Scrolls. With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars have Hebrew manuscripts 1000 years earlier than the great Masoretic Text manuscripts, enabling them to check on the fidelity of the Hebrew text. There is a word-for-word identity in more than 95 percent of the cases, and the 5 percent variation consists mostly of slips of the pen and spelling (ibid., 24). The Isaiah scroll (1QIsa) from Qumran led the Revised Standard Version translators to make only thirteen changes from the Masoretic Text; eight of those were known from ancient versions, and few of them were significant (Burrows, 305ff.). Of the 166 Hebrew words in Isaiah 53 , only seventeen Hebrew letters in the Isaiah B scroll differ from the Masoretic Text. Ten letters are a matter of spelling, four are stylistic changes, and the other three compose the word for "light," (added in verse 11), which does not affect the meaning greatly (Harris, 124). Furthermore that word is also found in that verse in the Septuagint and the Isaiah A scroll.

Conclusion. The thousands of Hebrew manuscripts, with their confirmation by the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the numerous other cross-checks from outside and inside the text provide overwhelming support for the reliability of the Old Testament text. Hence, it is appropriate to conclude with Kenyon's statement, "The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries."

Since the Old Testament text is related in important ways to Christian apologetics, its reliability supports the Christian faith. This is true not only in establishing the dates when supernatural predictions were made of the Messiah, but also in supporting the historicity of the Old Testament that Jesus and New Testament writers affirmed (see BIBLE, EVIDENCE FOR ; BIBLE, JESUS' VIEW OF).

Sources

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Omnipotence of God, Alleged Contradiction of. Some critics have alleged that the theistic (*see* THEISM) view of God is incoherent, since it claims God is omnipotent or all-powerful (*see* GOD, NATURE OF). They argue:

1. An all-powerful Being can do anything.
2. An all-powerful Being can make a stone so heavy that he cannot move it.
3. Hence, an all-powerful Being cannot do everything.
4. But premises 1 and 3 are contradictory.
5. Hence, it is contradictory to hold that God is all-powerful.

No sophisticated theist really believes premise 1 in an unqualified way. What informed theists believe is that:

- 1a. God can do anything that is possible.
- 2a. It is not possible to make a stone so heavy that it cannot be moved.
- 3a. Therefore, it is not possible for God to make a stone so heavy that he cannot move it.

God cannot literally do any task we can imagine. He cannot contradict his own nature. Hebrews 6:18 declares. "It is impossible for God to lie." Neither can God do what is logically impossible, for example, make a square circle. He cannot make two mountains without a valley between. And he cannot deny the law of noncontradiction (*see* FIRST PRINCIPLES).

Further, God cannot do what is actually impossible. For example, he cannot will not to create a world he has willed to create. Of course, he could have willed not to create. But once he willed to create it was impossible for him to will not to create. Neither can God force free creatures (*see* FREE WILL) to believe things against their will. Forcing someone to freely do something is a contradiction in terms (*see* HELL). For if it is free, it is not forced. And if it is forced, then it is not free.

It is actually impossible to make a stone so heavy it cannot be moved. What an omnipotent Being can make, he can move. A finite creature cannot be more powerful in its resistance than the infinite Creator is in his power not to be resisted. If God brought it into existence, he can take it out of existence. Then he could recreate it somewhere else. Therefore, there is no contradiction in believing that God is omnipotent and that he can do anything that is possible to do. The critic has set up a straw-man argument and has not shown any incoherence in God's attribute of omnipotence.

One and Many, Problem of. A classic metaphysical problem asks: Is reality one or many? Or, is it both one and many? If there is an ultimate unity in reality, how is there also real diversity?

Or, if there is real diversity of things, how can there be an ultimate unity? In the final analysis, the problem of the one and many boils down to monism versus pluralism.

The ancient philosopher Parmenides gave the ultimate statement of monism, insisting that there can be only one being, since to assume there is more than one leads to absurdities and antinomies. Two different things would have to differ. And there are only two ways to differ, by being or nonbeing. But to differ by nonbeing or nothing is not to differ at all. However, to differ by being is impossible, because being is the very respect in which all things are identical. And things cannot differ in the very respect in which they are identical. Therefore, there cannot be two or more beings, only one.

Various solutions to the problem of the one and many have been posited (*see* MONISM ; PLURALISM, METAPHYSICAL ; ANALOGY). Atomists suggested that things differ by absolute nonbeing (the void). But to differ by absolutely nothing is not to differ at all. Plato argued that they differ by relative nonbeing, but this too turns out to be no real difference. Nor can they differ as Aristotle said in their simple beings, since simple beings simply cannot differ—they are the same in their beings.

No solution has been successful for a theist (*see* THEISM) except that of Thomas Aquinas. He showed that things can differ in their very being, since they are different kinds of being. An infinite Being differs from a finite being, and a Necessary Being differs from a contingent being. A being of pure Actuality differs from one that has actuality and potentiality. The only kind of being that cannot differ in its being is one of pure Actuality (God). That is, there can be only one such being because it is a one-of-a-kind type Being. It is Being pure and simple. All other beings are complex beings, having a mixture of actuality and potentiality. So, things differ in the kind of being they have, except the One who *is* Being and from whom all other beings *have* their being. This solves the problem of the one and many in the realm of being without going beyond being (to the Unknowable One), as did Plotinus, which leaves one in total ignorance of God (*see* AGNOSTICISM).

Ontological Argument. The ontological argument for the existence or being (Gk. *ontos*) of God proceeds from the mere idea that God is an absolutely perfect or Necessary Being. The ontological argument was first formed by Anselm (1033–1109), although he did not name it. It has been subject to extensive criticism by both defenders of theistic arguments (*see* THOMAS AQUINAS) and opponents (*see* HUME, DAVID ; KANT, IMMANUEL). Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was the first to call it the ontological argument because he believed it made an illicit transition from thought to being (*ontos*).

Anselm's Form(s). The ontological argument might more accurately be called "the proof from prayer," since it came to Anselm as he meditated on the nature of God. It is widely believed that Anselm developed two forms of the ontological argument. The second emerged in his debate with another monk named Gaunilo.

The first form of the ontological argument is based on the idea of God as an absolutely perfect Being. One cannot conceive of a greater being (see Plantinga, *Ontological Argument*, 3–27). In logical form it is:

1. God is, by definition, a Being, greater than which nothing can be conceived.
2. It is greater to exist in reality than to exist only in the mind.
3. Therefore God must exist in reality. If he didn't he wouldn't be the greatest being possible.

The second form of the argument comes from the idea of a Necessary Being:

1. God is, by definition, a Necessary Being.
2. It is logically necessary to affirm what is necessary to the concept of a Necessary Being.
3. Existence is logically necessary to the concept of a Necessary Being.
4. Therefore, a Necessary Being (= God) necessarily exists.

Objections. *Anselm's Debate with Gaunilo.* The objections of Gaunilo the monk and Anselm's responses help explain the argument.

Objection 1: Necessary Existence. Gaunilo contended that the argument is built on the false premise that whatever exists in the mind must also exist in reality outside the mind. Anselm responded that this is not so. Only in the case of an absolutely perfect being, which would have to be a Necessary Being, is it true that, if it is conceivable, then it must exist outside the mind too. All contingent beings could not exist. Only a Necessary Being cannot not exist.

Objection 2: Conceiving and Doubting. Gaunilo further insisted that, if God's nonexistence were really inconceivable, no one could doubt. But people do doubt or deny it; there are skeptics and atheists. But Anselm responded that, while people can *deny* God's existence, they cannot *conceive* of the nonexistence of a Necessary Being. God's nonexistence is affirmable but not conceivable.

Objection 3: Mental Limitations. Gaunilo asserted that we cannot even form the concept of the most perfect Being possible. It is only a series of words, with no empirical reference or meaning. However, Anselm denied that, giving six reasons for his answer: (1) *God* is a common, familiar word. (2) Faith and conscience provide content for it. (3) Not all conceptions are sensible images, since abstract concepts are possible. (4) God can be understood indirectly, the way the sun is understood from its rays. (5) We can form the concept of the most perfect being by working from the less-than-perfect to the most perfect possible. (6) Even those who deny God must have some conception of what they are denying.

Objection 4: Thought and Reality. Gaunilo contended that the mere idea of a perfect Island did not guarantee its existence, nor does the idea of a perfect Being. But Anselm insisted that there is an important difference; the idea of a perfect island may lack existence, but not the idea

of a perfect Being. It is possible for an island—even a perfect one—not to exist. But it is not possible for a perfect (Necessary) Being not to exist.

Objection 5: Conceiving Nonexistence. Gaunilo offered that God's nonexistence is no more inconceivable than one's own nonexistence. Yet one can conceive of personal nonexistence. However, Anselm was quick to point out that the nonexistence of everything except a Necessary Being is conceivable. For if it is possible for a Necessary Being to exist, then it is necessary for it to exist. Its nonexistence alone is inconceivable.

Objection 6: Proof of Existence. God's existence must be proved before we can discuss his essence (for example, that he is a perfect kind of Being). Hence, we cannot use his essence (as an absolutely perfect Being to prove his existence). Anselm responded that we can compare ideal characteristics before we know something is real. We can define it [for example, the mighty winged horse, Pegasus], and then ask whether it exists.

Finally, Anselm charged Gaunilo with misunderstanding his argument and, therefore, attacking a straw man. He insisted that God is not to be defined as "the greatest of all beings" (as Gaunilo thought) but as "the greatest *possible* Being." Although Gaunilo raised some good questions, none of them really refute Anselm's argument, particularly the second form of it.

Aquinas' Objection. The ontological argument did not convince Thomas Aquinas. His objection to Anselm's argument can be seen in his restatement of Anselm's argument:

1. God is, by definition, a Being, greater than which nothing can be conceived.
2. What exists both mentally and actually is greater than that which exists only mentally.
3. Therefore, God must exist actually, for once the sentence "God exists" is understood, it is seen to be a self-evident proposition.

Aquinas offers three objections to this argument: First, not everyone understands the term "God" to mean "that than which nothing greater can be conceived." Second, even if God is understood this way it does not prove that he actually exists, but only that the conception exists mentally. This point gets to the heart of the common objection to the ontological argument. Third, the proposition, "God, a Necessary Being, exists," is self-evident *in itself*, but it is not self-evident *to us*. For we cannot know God's essence directly, but only through his effects (*see COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT*). Hence, we can only arrive at his existence through his effects, *a posteriori* . We cannot know it *a priori* in itself. Only God knows his own essence intuitively. This too is more to the central point of criticism.

Descartes' Form of the Argument. Not much advanced in the dialogue over the ontological argument for centuries. Then the seventeenth-century rationalist René Descartes (1596–1650) set off a series of criticisms by reformulating and defending the argument. His statement followed Anselm's second form:

1. It is logically necessary to affirm of a concept what is essential to its nature (e.g., A triangle must have three sides.).
2. But existence is logically necessary to the nature of a necessary Existent (i.e., Being).
3. Therefore, it is logically necessary to affirm that a necessary Existent does exist.

Dialogue with Caterus. As Anselm, Descartes had his antagonists. Caterus, a priest, insisted that the argument proves only a conceptual existence of God. For the complex of words “existent lion” is conceptually necessary, but this does not prove that a lion exists. Only experience can do that. Thus, the complex “Necessary Being” does not prove that God exists.

Descartes replied that Caterus had refuted another argument, not his. His first restatement of the argument is based on his concept of truth as what is clearly perceived:

1. Whatever we clearly and distinctly perceive is true.
2. We clearly and distinctly perceive that existence must belong to a necessary Existent.
3. So, it is true that a necessary Existent does exist.

Descartes’ second restatement of his argument takes another form:

1. Whatever is of the essence of something must be affirmed of it.
2. Existence is of the essence of a necessary Existent (= God).
3. Hence, existence must be affirmed of God.

The third restatement of the ontological argument takes this form:

1. God’s existence cannot be conceived as only possible but not actual, for then he would not be a necessary *Existent*.
2. We can conceive of God’s existence. It is not contradictory.
3. Therefore, God’s existence must be conceived as more than possible (viz., as actual).

Debate with Gassendi. Pierre Gassendi’s objection to Descartes’ arguments took the following form:

1. God need not exist any more than must a triangle. The essence of either can be thought of apart from its existence.
2. Existence is not a necessary property for God, any more than for triangles.

3. It begs the question to list existence as part of God’s essence.
4. Essence and existence are not identical, or else Plato as well as God would exist necessarily. If they are not identical, neither exists necessarily.
5. We are just as free to think of God not existing as we are of a nonexistent Pegasus.
6. We must prove triangles have three sides (not just assume it). Likewise, we must prove God exists (not merely assume it).
7. Descartes did not really prove that God’s existence is not logically impossible. Hence, he did not prove it is logically necessary.

Descartes’ retort took the following shape:

1. Existence is a property in the sense that it is attributable to a thing.
2. Only God has necessary existence, not Pegasus or anything else.
3. It is not begging the question to include existence among the attributes of a necessary Existent. Indeed, it is necessary to do so.
4. Existence and essence cannot be separate in a Being that is a necessary Existent. Hence, God must exist.

Descartes did not answer objection seven. Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716) attempted to do so by arguing that existence is a perfection and as such is a simple and irreducible quality that cannot conflict with others. Hence, God can have all perfections, including existence.

Other Reactions to Descartes’ Proofs. In another negative view of Descartes’ ontological argument, his view was restated:

1. If it is not contradictory that God exists, then it is certain that he exists.
2. It is not contradictory that God exists.
3. So, it is certain that God exists.

In view of this new form of the argument, critics offered two objections which, if true, would invalidate Descartes’ conclusion. The first is that the minor premise can be doubted or denied. Hence, the argument does not necessarily follow. Second, Descartes admitted that his idea of God was inadequate. But if it is inadequate, then it is unclear. And if it is unclear, then, on Descartes’ own definition of truth as “clear and distinct” ideas, it is untrue.

Descartes replied that God’s existence is noncontradictory in whichever of the two senses one takes it. If noncontradictory means *whatever does not disagree with human thought*, it is

clearly noncontradictory. For we have not attributed to him anything but what human thought necessitates that we attribute to him. If noncontradictory means *what cannot be known by the human mind*, then no one can know anything, let alone God's existence. Such a definition would overthrow all human thought, which is impossible. Even if our concept of God is inadequate, it does not follow that it is contradictory, since all contradiction arises from a lack of clarity, and we clearly see that God must be a Necessary Being. Descartes further implied that what we do not clearly see does not destroy what we do clearly see. Since we do clearly see that there is no contradiction in the concept of a Necessary Being, the argument follows. For this is all that is necessary to support the disputed minor premise of the argument.

Objections of Hume and Kant. *Hume's Critique of the Ontological Argument.* David Hume (1711–1776) set forth what has become a standard objection to the ontological proof, as well as to other “proofs” for God's existence. It was followed by Kant's landmark critique of the central premise of the first form of the argument.

Hume's critique of the ontological argument has this basic logical form:

1. Nothing is rationally demonstrable unless the contrary implies a contradiction, for if it leaves open any other possibility, then this position is not necessarily true.
2. Nothing that is distinctly conceivable implies a contradiction. If it were contradictory, it would not be distinctly conceivable; if it is impossible, it cannot be possible.
3. Whatever we conceive to exist we can also conceive as nonexistent. The existence or nonexistence of things cannot be ruled out conceptually.
4. There is no being, therefore, whose nonexistence implies a contradiction.
5. Consequently, there is no being whose existence is rationally demonstrable.

In essence, Hume reasons that no argument for God is rationally inescapable, because it always contains premises that logically can be denied. The conclusions always lack logical necessity, because the premises always admit of other logical possibilities. According to this, the ontological argument fails to be a rational demonstration in the strict sense.

The Critique of Kant. Kant first named the ontological argument, since he thought it made an illicit transition from the sphere of pure thought to that of reality (from *eidos* to *ontos*). Kant had several objections to the argument which he felt were fatal to the whole theistic cause (ibid., 57–64). First, he objected to the fact that we have no positive concept of a Necessary Being. God is defined only as that which cannot *not* be. Further, necessity does not apply to existence but only to propositions. Necessity is a logical, not an ontological, qualifier. There are no existentially necessary propositions. Whatever is known by experience (which is the only way existential matters are knowable) could be unknown. Next, what is logically possible is not necessarily ontologically possible. There may be no logical contradiction in the necessary existence but it still may be actually impossible. Then, there is no contradiction involved in rejecting both the

idea and the existence of a Necessary Being. Likewise, there is no contradiction in rejecting the triangle along with its three-sidedness. Contradiction results in rejecting one without the other.

Finally, existence is not a predicate, as though it were a perfection or property that could be affirmed of a subject or thing. Existence is not a perfection of an essence but a positing of that perfection. Kant utilized the following argument to support this point:

1. Whatever adds nothing to the conception of an essence is not part of that essence.
2. Existence adds nothing to the conception of an essence. No characteristic is added to an essence by positing that it is real rather than imaginary. A real dollar does not have any characteristics that an imagined one lacks.
3. Therefore, existence is not part of an essence. It is not a perfection that can be predicated of something.

If Kant's third point is solid, it invalidates at least the first form of the ontological argument given by Anselm. In view of Kant, Anselm's argument would really amount to this:

1. All possible perfections must be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.
2. Existence is a possible perfection which may be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.
3. Therefore, existence must be predicated of an absolutely perfect Being.

An Evaluation of Kant's Critique. According to Kant's criticism, the minor premise is wrong. Existence is not a perfection that may be predicated of anything. Essence gives the definition, and existence provides an example of what was defined. The essence is given in the conceptualization of something; existence does not add to this conceptualization but merely makes it concrete. Hence, existence neither adds nor detracts from the concept of an absolutely perfect Being. This has been a standard objection to the ontological argument since Kant. It can be put in this form:

1. Anselm's argument depends on the premise that existence is a predicate—an attribute or perfection.
2. But existence is not a predicate. (a) Anselm follows a platonic concept of being. (b) Existence is not a perfection but only an instance of a perfection.
3. Hence, Anselm's argument is not valid.

The dollar in my mind has same attributes as the dollar in my pocket. The only difference is that with the one in my wallet I have an instance of one. But a concrete example of a perfection adds nothing to the perfection itself.

Modern proponents of Anselm's argument, such as Norman Malcolm and Charles Hartshorne, reply that Kant's criticism applies only to Anselm's first argument. The second form does not depend on the premise that existence is a perfection.

Leibniz's Statement. Although Gottfried Leibniz is better known for his cosmological argument, he did set forth a form of the ontological argument. Sensing that the basic ontological argument was valid but that it was necessary to demonstrate that the concept of God was not contradictory, Leibniz restated the argument thus (ibid., 54–56).

1. If it is possible for an absolutely perfect Being to exist, then it is necessary that it exist, for (a) By definition an absolutely perfect Being cannot lack anything. (b) But if it did not exist, it would be lacking in existence. (c) Hence, an absolutely perfect Being cannot be lacking in existence.
2. It is possible (noncontradictory) for an absolutely perfect Being to exist.
3. Therefore, it is necessary that an absolutely perfect Being exist.

In support of the crucial minor premise Leibniz gave this argument:

1. A perfection is a simple and irreducible quality without any essential limits.
2. Whatever is simple cannot conflict with other simple qualities, since they differ in kind.
3. And whatever differs in kind with another cannot conflict with it, since there is no area of similarity in which they can overlap or conflict.
4. Therefore, it is possible for one Being (God) to possess all possible perfections.

Not even defenders of the ontological arguments think Leibniz really proved the compatibility of all possible attributes in God (ibid., 156ff.). Malcolm saw two problems with the argument. First, it assumes that some qualities are essentially "positive" and others "negative," whereas this may not be the case. Some qualities may be positive in one context and negative in another. Second, Leibniz wrongly assumes that some qualities are intrinsically simple, contrary to Ludwig Wittgenstein, who showed that what is simple in one conceptual system may be complex in another. A third objection may be added. Leibniz makes an unwarranted movement from the conceptual to the actual.

Spinoza's Ontological Proof. Like Descartes, his contemporary, Benedict Spinoza (1632–1677) held that the existence of God was mathematically demonstrable. He wrote, "We cannot be more certain of the existence of anything, than the existence of a being absolutely infinite or perfect—that is, of God." And, like Descartes, Spinoza felt that this certainty was derived from the ontological proof (ibid., 50–53). Spinoza's statement of the argument is:

1. There must be a cause for everything, either for its existence or for its nonexistence.

2. A Necessary Being (God) necessarily exists, unless there is a cause adequate to explain why he does not exist.
3. There is no cause adequate to explain why a Necessary Being does not exist, (a) for that cause would have to be either inside God's nature or outside of it. (b) But no cause outside of a necessary Existent could possibly annul it. (c) And nothing inside a necessary Existent could annul it, for nothing inside a Necessary Being can deny that it is a Necessary Being. (d) Hence, there is no cause adequate to explain why a Necessary Being does not exist.
4. Therefore, a Necessary Being necessarily exists.

The usual objection could be leveled at Spinoza's proof, that he makes being actually necessary, when it is only necessary as a concept. There is at least one other objection. The first premise affirms that "there must be a cause for nothing." Not only is this premise without proof, but it is contradictory. The law of causality demands only that "there must be a cause for something." It is unwarranted to insist on a cause for nothing. Spinoza's defense of the premise is that "the potentiality of nonexistence is a negation of power." But nonexistence is already a negative and a negation of nonexistence would be an affirmation of existence. However, this would leave the traditional basis for the ontological argument and begin with existence. This is precisely what Spinoza does in his second form of the argument:

1. Something necessarily exists. To deny this one would have to affirm that at least one thing exists, namely, himself.
2. This necessary Existence is either finite or infinite.
3. It is possible for this necessary Existence to be infinite.
4. There must be a cause as to why this is not an infinite existence.
5. No finite existence can hinder this being an infinite Existence, and to say that an infinite Existence hinders its own infinite existence is contradictory.
6. Therefore, this must be an infinite Existence (God).

Two important things must be noted about Spinoza's arguments. First, he borrows from the cosmological argument the premise, "Something exists." This leaves a strictly *a priori* proof, as he admits. Second, the conclusion of Spinoza's argument is not the theistic God of Descartes and Leibniz but a pantheistic God. There is no acknowledgment of Necessary Being and contingent beings. This infinite Existence is absolutely one; there are not, in addition to it, finite substances or creatures. What theists (see Theism) call creatures, Spinoza views as merely modes or moments in the one infinite Substance—God.

Findlay's Ontological Disproof. The ontological argument took a radical turn with the attempt of some atheists to turn it into a disproof for God's existence (see GOD, ALLEGED

DISPROOFS OF). The ontological argument is widely rejected in modern times. Some have even turned the tables on it, making it a kind of ontological disproof of God. Such was the intention of J. N. Findlay, who argued (ibid., 111–22) that:

1. God must be thought of as a Necessary Being (i.e., as necessarily existing), for anything short of this kind of being would be unworthy of worship.
2. But existentially necessary propositions cannot be true (as Kant showed), for necessity is merely a logical characteristic of propositions, not of reality.
3. Therefore, God cannot exist.

Findlay's argument can be put in this more simple form:

1. The only way God could exist is if he exists necessarily (any kind of existence less than necessary would make him less than God).
2. But nothing can exist necessarily (for necessity does not apply to existence but only to propositions).
3. Therefore, God cannot exist (for the only way he could exist is the very way he cannot exist).

More properly, however, the argument should be stated this way:

1. The only way a Necessary Being could exist is to exist necessarily.
2. The proposition "God exists necessarily" is an existentially necessary proposition.
3. No existentially necessary proposition can be true.
4. Therefore, the proposition "God exists necessarily" cannot be true.

In the second form, the fallacies of the argument become apparent. We will pass by the objection to premise one from the vantage point of finite godism (that God does not have to be conceived as necessarily existing), since the subject here is whether or not the traditional theistic conception of an absolutely perfect Being is correct. The theist would challenge premises two and three.

Granting for the moment that there are no existentially necessary propositions, a theist could change the proposition "God exists necessarily" to "God exists." The theist could then hold that the proposition "God exists" is a logically necessary proposition to hold (see Hughes, 59). In this way, necessity applies only to the proposition and not to existence, thus invalidating the criticism.

But the theist need not grant that there are no existentially necessary propositions. Indeed, some theists have offered examples of what they consider to be existentially necessary statements. Ian T. Ramsey suggests that "I am I." is an example. Malcolm offers "There are an infinite number of prime numbers." as an example. Some feel that "Square circles do not exist." would be existentially necessary, even though it is negative in form. If there can be negative examples, why not positive examples? Negatives presuppose positives.

Still other theists, taking Anselm and Descartes literally, insist that "God necessarily exists" is a special case. It is the only existentially necessary proposition and it is not only unnecessary but impossible to give any other examples of existentially necessary propositions.

It seems, however, that the most effective way to eliminate Findlay's ontological disproof is to show that his premise is self-defeating. The statement "There are no existentially necessary propositions" is itself an existentially necessary proposition. And if it is such, then there are existentially necessary propositions. At least there is this one, and why not others? If it is not a necessary statement about existence, then it does not really eliminate the possibility that there could be an existentially necessary Existent. So either it does not accomplish its intended task of eliminating the possibility of existentially necessary propositions or else it defeats itself by offering an existentially necessary proposition in order to prove that there are no existentially necessary propositions.

Hartshorne's Restatement. After such a checkered history, this venerable argument for theism has lived to see a new day. One of the most ardent defenders of the ontological argument is the panentheist, Charles Hartshorne. His statement and defense of the argument in full view of all the traditional criticisms is instructive (see Plantinga, 123–35). Hartshorne states the argument:

1. The existence of a necessary being is either (a) impossible, and there is no example of it; (b) possible, but there is no example of it; (c) possible, and there is an example of it.
2. But premise "b" is meaningless, like saying there is a round square, for a Necessary Being cannot be merely a possible being.
3. And premise "a" is not eliminated by the ontological argument as such but the meaningfulness of the term Necessary Being is a justifiable assumption that may be defended on other grounds.

After pinpointing what he felt to be the basic logic of the ontological argument, Hartshorne proceeded to give the fuller elaboration:

1. All thought must refer to something beyond itself which is at least possible: (a) Wherever there is meaning, something must be meant. (b) Only contradictory thoughts are impossible. (c) Meaning must refer to something more than its own content and inner consistency or it is meaningless. (d) The move from thought to reality is based on a prior reverse move from reality to thought. (e) Total illusion is impossible; illusion

presupposes a backdrop of reality. (f) Confusion is possible about specific reality but not about reality in general.

2. The necessary existence of a Necessary Being is “at least possible.” (a) There is nothing contradictory in the concept of a being that cannot not be. (b) The only way to reject this is to plead a special meaning to the possible. In the usual logical sense of the word possible there is no contradiction in the concept of a Necessary Being.
3. With a Necessary Being an “at-least-possible” existence is indistinguishable from a “possible and actual” existence. A Necessary Being cannot have a “merely possible” existence (if a Necessary Being can be, then it must be), for (a) God by definition is an independent Existence and hence cannot be produced by another as “merely possible” beings can be. (c) God is everlasting and so he could not have come into being as “merely possible” beings can come into existence.
4. Therefore, a Necessary Being necessarily has both a possible and an actual existence.

Hartshorne answers objections to his ontological argument:

It is not possible that God’s nonexistence was always logically possible even though he actually always existed. First, this is a special pleading on the meaning of the word *possible*. In all other cases, *possible* refers to beings whose nonexistence is both logically and actually possible. Why should God be made an exception by saying that his nonexistence is actually impossible but logically possible? Further, it is not even logically possible for God to be conceived as having come into being. Indeed, by the very conception of his nature he cannot be even logically conceived as having come into existence. For it is contradictory to even think of God as being produced. By his very definition God is a Necessary Being and a being so defined cannot be merely possible.

One cannot prove a perfect island or a perfect devil on the same premises of the ontological argument. The perfect island is not indestructible, as God is. If it is made indestructible, then it becomes identical with the cosmos as the body of God. (Hartshorne’s view of God is panentheistic—the material universe is viewed as the “body” of God (*see* PANENTHEISM). But there is a transcendent pole to God that is more than his cosmic “body.”) A perfect demon is unequivocal nonsense, for it would be both infinitely responsible and infinitely adverse to all that exists; both infinitely loving and infinitely hateful toward all that is; it would be both intimately united and savagely opposed to all that exists. But such contradictory attitudes are impossible.

The ontological argument proves more than the mere self-consistency of the idea of a Necessary Being. For all meaning has an external referent that is either possible or actual. And God by definition cannot be merely a possible being. Therefore,

1. All meaning implicitly affirms God in reference to either (a) what he has done (called his consequent nature—God’s immanence) or (b) what he can do (called his primordial nature—God’s transcendence).

2. Without God as the universal ground of meaning there would be no meaning for universals. Nothing can have objective meaning unless there is a realm that is objectively meaningful.
3. We can be confused as to whether specific things exist but not as to whether God—who is the content of existence itself—exists.
4. The only way to oppose the ontological argument is to make an absolute disjunction between meaning and reality. But this disjunction is meaningless. Meaning and reality must meet at some point; that point we call God.

If existence is not a predicate, then at least the *mode* of existence is implied in every predicate. That is, when a quality is predicated of something, it is implied that something exists either contingently or necessarily. And a Necessary Being (God) cannot exist contingently.

The ontological argument does not make God an exception to general philosophical principles. That essence implies that existence in God is not an exception to philosophical principles but a result of a consistent application of philosophical principles to different kinds of beings. God’s nature implies existence as does no other nature, because in God alone there is no distinction between the possible and the actual (God is the actualization of all that is possible for him to actualize). “To say a thing might not exist is not to say there might be a thing without existence. It is rather to say that there might be existence without the thing.” Existence must necessarily be; this or that existence need not be.

Mere thought does not produce reality, but necessary thought does. There can be no absolute disjunction between thought and reality. Thinking is a real experience, and we do think of God as possible. Hartshorne concludes:

1. All thoughts are experiences of what is at least possible.
2. We do have thoughts about a Being which must be (a Necessary Being).
3. But a Necessary Being cannot be merely a possible being.
4. Therefore, a Necessary Being must be more than merely possible; it must be actual.

As Hartshorne put it, “We have only to exclude impossibility or meaninglessness to establish actuality.” That is, “Either God is a meaningless term or there exists a divine being.” Or, to restate the argument:

1. Either the existence of a Necessary Being is (a) less than an idea (i.e., contradictory and impossible), (b) merely an idea but not a reality, or (c) more than a mere idea—a reality.
2. It is not less than an idea, for it is a noncontradictory concept.

3. It is not merely an idea, for it is contradictory to speak of a Necessary Being as merely possible. If a Necessary Being exists at all, it must exist necessarily. There is no other way it can exist.
4. Therefore, the existence of a Necessary Being is more than a mere idea; it is a reality.

The ontological argument is not merely hypothetical; it does not assume existence. The ontological argument is *not* saying:

1. If there is a Necessary Being, then it exists necessarily.
2. There is a Necessary Being (thus begging the whole question).
3. Therefore, a Necessary Being exists necessarily.

This criticism contains the self-contradictory assumption that “if a Necessary Being happens to exist as a mere contingent fact, then it exists not as contingent fact but as necessary truth.” This is not the meaning of the major premise. The argument, on the contrary, is not contradictory and should be stated like this:

1. If the phrase *Necessary Being* has any meaning, then what it means must actually exist (outside of the mind).
2. The phrase *Necessary Being* does have a meaning (it is not contradictory).
3. Therefore, a Necessary Being actually exists (outside of the mind).

If does not imply the possibility of nonexistence (for a necessary existence cannot possibly *not* exist). *If* means rather the possibility of meaninglessness. And even the possibility of meaninglessness vanishes, for unless there is a basis for meaning (God), there can be no meaning at all.

Hartshorne rests his case heavily on the ultimate identification of the logical with the ontological, a premise disputed by others. Second, he does not really exclude the possibility that others could show the term *God* to be meaningless. It may be that someone will yet demonstrate a contradiction in the very concept of a Necessary Being. If they do, the ontological arguments fail.

Further, the argument rests on the assumption that there must be an objective basis for meaning in order for there to be *any* meaning. This is precisely what existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus denied. They held to a subjective basis for meaning but did not deny all meaning. Their argument is that there is no meaning “out there” in the universe except the subjective meaning one puts there. Objective absurdity would still be an option unless one considers Hartshorne has given a disproof of objective absurdity.

Finally, there is an implied premise in all of the ontological arguments that, if true, would seem to vindicate the argument in the face of its standard criticism (that it makes an illicit transition from the logical to the ontological, from thought to reality). The premise is this: *The rationally inescapable is the real*. If defensible (see Geisler and Corduan, 289–96), this would prove objective absurdity to be wrong. Indeed, if the rationally inescapable is the real, and it is rationally inescapable to think of God as necessarily existing, then it would seem to follow that it is really so that God necessarily exists. But before we assume that the ontological argument has won the day we must examine another statement of it and one final criticism.

Malcolm’s Restatement. Norman Malcolm is often credited with reviving the ontological argument in a more viable form, although Hartshorne’s work on it said the same thing some twenty years earlier. Malcolm did occasion a popular revival of interest in the argument, at least in the area of analytic philosophy. The first form of Anselm’s argument Malcolm considers invalidated by Kant’s criticism that existence is not a predicate; the second form Malcolm believes is immune from this (or any other) criticism (see Plantinga, 137–59). Malcolm restates Anselm’s second argument:

1. The existence of a Necessary Being must be (a) a necessary or “must-be” existence, (b) an impossible, “cannot-be” existence, or (c) a possible, “may-or-may-not-be” existence.
2. But the existence of a Necessary Being is not an impossible existence. (a) No one has ever shown the concept of a Necessary Being to be contradictory. (b) There is a basis in human experience for “a greater than which cannot be thought” (e.g., the feeling of guilt or the experience of grace). (c) Leibniz’s attempt to prove that there is no contradiction fails, for there may be one. We cannot show that there cannot be one. We merely know that no one has shown that there is a contradiction. And the proof stands unless or until someone shows that there is a contradiction in the very concept of a Necessary Being.
3. And the existence of a Necessary Being cannot be merely a possible existence, for a merely possible but not necessary existence of a Necessary Being (a) is contrary to the very nature of a Necessary Being. A “must-be” Being cannot be a “may-or-may-not-be” kind of being. (b) A possible being would be a dependent being, and this is contrary to a Necessary Being which is an independent Being by nature.
4. Therefore, a Necessary Being necessarily exists.

Malcolm’s argument may also be put in hypothetical form:

1. If it is possible for a Necessary Being to exist, then it is necessary for it to exist, for the only way a Necessary Being can exist is to exist necessarily.
2. It is possible that a Necessary Being can exist. There is nothing contradictory about affirming the existence of a Necessary Being.
3. Therefore, a Necessary Being necessarily exists.

Or, to restate the heart of the argument in categorical form:

1. A Necessary Being by definition is one which cannot *not* be.
2. That which cannot *not* be, must be, for this is the logical obverse.
3. Therefore, a Necessary Being necessarily must be.

It would appear that the critical premise in the argument is the one affirming that the mere possibility of a Necessary Being is contradictory. Let us state again the argument with Malcolm's fuller defense of this premise.

1. The existence of a Necessary Being must be either (a) a necessary existence, (b) a mere possible existence, or (c) an impossible existence.
2. But it cannot be an impossible existence. There is no contradiction.
3. Nor can it be a mere possible existence, for such an existence would be: (a) A dependent existence. A dependent existence cannot, at the same time, be an independent existence, such as is a necessary existence. (b) A fortuitous existence. If God just happened to be, then he could not be a Necessary Being. (c) A temporal existence. If God came to be, then he would be dependent, which is contrary to his independent or Necessary Being.
4. Therefore, the existence of a Necessary Being is a necessary existence; that is, a Necessary Being necessarily exists.

Malcolm admits that there might be a contradiction in the concept of a Necessary Being and that he knows of no way to prove that there is not a contradiction. This admission means that his "proof" is not foolproof. It is logically possible that it is wrong. Hence, the conclusion is not rationally inescapable. Thus, even granting the validity of the rest of the argument, it is not a proof in the strongest sense of the word.

Plantinga's Critique. Plantinga assesses Malcolm's ontological argument in terms of logical schema (ibid., 160–71):

1. If God does not exist, his existence is logically impossible.
2. If God does exist, his existence is logically necessary.
3. Hence, either God's existence is logically impossible or else it is logically necessary.
4. If God's existence is logically impossible, the concept of God is contradictory.
5. The concept of God is not contradictory.

6. Therefore, God's existence is logically necessary.

Plantinga takes issue with the second premise. God could exist without his existence being logically necessary. God's existence could be logically contingent without being ontologically contingent. Or, to put it another way, Malcolm equivocates on the word *possible*. Malcolm assumes that, because it is not *possible ontologically* for God to be contingent, it is not *possible logically* for God to be contingent. Malcolm overlooks that it is logically *possible* that God is a Necessary Being but not logically *necessary*.

On the other hand, Plantinga is right only if the implied premise in the ontological argument is wrong: "The rationally inescapable is the real." If what is rationally inescapable must be ontologically so, then Hartshorne and Malcolm seem to make a good case against this criticism. They argue that it is logically necessary to think of God as real, since it is logically contradictory to conceive of a Necessary Being as not necessarily having being.

Evaluation. This does not mean that the ontological argument is valid. There is one final and possibly fatal criticism. Plantinga observes that it is also logically "possible" that God never existed at all. In fact, it is logically possible that nothing ever existed, including God. But this may be only an apparent omission in the ontological argument. Perhaps the reason that this logical possibility does not present itself as evident to the proponents of the ontological argument is that they are assuming a cosmological premise. For it seems readily apparent to anyone existing that something does exist. And if something exists, it is not true that nothing exists. And if something exists, that makes false the statement that nothing exists. But if something does exist, it is not true to affirm that nothing exists. Hence, Plantinga's criticism, that the ontological argument is unsuccessful simply because it overlooks the possible truth that nothing exists, fails.

All the proponents of the ontological argument need to do to invalidate Plantinga's criticism is to show that something exists. This is easily accomplished by insisting that no one can deny existence without existing to make the denial. For it is actually impossible to affirm that nothing exists, since there must be someone in existence to make that affirmation. In brief, the ontological arguments based merely on predictability and inconceivability are invalid, but a third argument based on undeniability appears to evade these fallacies. This seems so for the simple reason that the only apparent way to invalidate the second form of the ontological argument is on the conceivability (i.e., logical possibility) of the truth that nothing exists, but this truth is not affirmable because something does exist. Hence, it is undeniable that something exists and therefore God must necessarily exist. Therefore, it would seem that a third form of the ontological argument can successfully defend itself against Plantinga's criticism.

In this revised form, it is not really an ontological argument but a cosmological argument. For there is a difference, as Anselm recognized in his reply to Gaunilo, between the logical possibility that nothing, including God, ever existed and the reality of the statement by someone who does exist, "Nothing, including God, ever existed." Of course, it is undeniably true that something exists, but not because it is inconceivable or logically impossible that nothing exists. It is not logically contradictory to assume that there might never have been anything in existence. Nonbeing is a logical possibility. The only way one can invalidate the logical possibility that "nothing ever was, including God" is to affirm, "Something was or is." But once one affirms the

premise “Something is” and argues from that to “God is,” he has left the ontological argument for the cosmological argument. He has left the *a priori* realm of pure reason and entered into the *a posteriori* domain of existence. The so-called third argument from undeniability of existence is not an ontological argument but a cosmological argument. And it needs more elaboration and defense.

Plantinga’s Argument. After years of studying and critiquing the ontological argument, Plantinga has proposed a version of his own, which he considers to be valid. He has provided several formulations, one of which can be summarized in ten steps (Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity*, 214–15):

1. *Something has the property of maximal greatness if it has the property of maximal excellence in every possible world.* The *greatest* thing must be the *best* thing, not just in the world that is, but in all possible worlds. A possible world is any logically conceivable world. Any time we can close our eyes and imagine our actual world to be different in some rational way, we are conceiving a logically possible world. Obviously the actual world is a possible world. But there are many other possible worlds. They “are” in the sense that they are logical possibilities, not that they are actual. If something is not the most excellent in all possible worlds, it could not really be the greatest, for one could conceive of a greater.
2. *Maximal excellence entails omniscience, omnipotence, and moral perfection.* With this premise Plantinga defines what one would mean by saying that something is the best. He structures his argument in such a way that the being whose existence he intends to demonstrate will turn out to be God.
3. *Maximal greatness is possibly exemplified.* There is nothing self-contradictory or logically odd about positing that in a possible world we can encounter this quality. This exemplification is elaborated in premise 4, which posits a world W, and essence E, and the property of maximal greatness.
4. *There is a world (W) in which the essence (E) is such that E is exemplified in W and E entails maximal greatness in W.* In this hypothetical world this hypothetical essence has the property of maximal greatness. We must remember the statement of premise 1. That which is true of an essence would have to be true of an object bearing that essence.
5. *For any object (X), if X exemplifies E , then X exemplifies maximal excellence in every possible world.*
6. *E entails the property of maximal excellence in every possible world.* Plantinga argues that the same relationship that is necessarily true in W would be necessarily true in any possible world. Thus he can make such a general statement concerning this essence and the property that it would entail in any possible world.
7. *If W had been actual, it would have been impossible that E would fail to be exemplified.* This statement is a simple component of modal logic. If something holds for

any possible world, it would certainly also hold if that possible world were the actual world. Thus if the possible world under consideration were actual, then this essence with maximal excellence in every possible world would have to be real. In fact, given the preceding premises, the denial of this reality would be impossible.

8. *What is impossible does not vary from world to world.* Differences among possible worlds are factual. They do not involve logical absurdities. There is no logically possible world in which circles are square or logical deductions do not follow. Logical relationships are constant over all possible worlds. Thus logical necessity or impossibility is the same in every world. Therefore what Plantinga has said about E in W would have to apply to E in every possible world. There also it would be impossible for E not to be exemplified.
9. *There exists a being that has maximal excellence in every world.* So, it follows that
10. *The being that has maximal excellence exists in the actual world.* Thus, using modal logic, Plantinga has demonstrated that God (the Being with omniscience, omnipotence, and moral perfection) exists.

Evaluation. This tight and compelling argument avoids many criticisms traditionally brought against the ontological argument. But it puts into clear focus the critique we have brought against the argument in this context. This approach based on modal logic stipulates from the outset that *something exists*. The concept of possible worlds makes sense only in contrast to an actual world. Only if we, at least for the sake of the argument, allow that there is a reality, can the argument unfold. In short, it assumes something exists. Further, to define a maximally perfect being in theistic terms is gratuitous (premise 2). Why could not perfection be viewed in nonmoral, nonintelligent terms?

But finally, and even more to the point, the argument in premise 4 stipulates the reality of E as an essence. In Plantinga’s philosophy essences are not just mental concepts or words, but they exist in a sense as real. Hence the argument is beginning to bear faint resemblance to Descartes’ argument, in which he stipulates the idea of a Supreme Being and then attempts to give an account thereof (Descartes, 23–34). But that argument has also been characterized as cosmological. And the same thing may be true for Plantinga’s argument. Perhaps the reason it is valid is that it has left the realm of pure ontological arguments.

Conclusion. The ontological argument has taken many forms. Each, however, seems to be invalid. The only feasible way to make it valid (if it can be made valid at all) is to assume or affirm that something exists. And once one argues, “Something exists, therefore God exists,” he has really argued cosmologically. The ontological argument by itself, without borrowing the premise, “Something exists,” cannot possibly prove the existence of God. For it is always logically possible that nothing ever existed and hence it is not logically necessary to affirm that God exists.

Some have suggested that our conclusion is invalid because the very concept of “nothing” is negative, and thus presupposes that something exists. If this is correct, they contend, then our

contention that “it is logically possible that nothing ever existed” is wrong. This objection, however, confuses the concept of nonbeing (which does presuppose the concept of being) and a state of nonbeing that does not presuppose a state of being. We are referring to the logical possibility of the state of nothingness, not to the concept of nothingness.

It would appear that no valid ontological proof has been given that makes it rationally inescapable to conclude that there is a Necessary Being. On the other hand, neither has anyone made a successful ontological disproof of God, making it logically impossible that there is a God. Necessary to a valid theistic argument is the premise that “something exists or existed.” One who argues that “something exists, therefore God exists” has left the purely *a priori* ontological approach and has moved into an *a posteriori* cosmological approach.

If one could somehow validate a theistic argument by importing the undeniable premise that “something exists” and arguing from this that “something necessarily exists,” it still is a long way from this to the simple and absolutely perfect Being of Christian theism. It is interesting to note that three views of God have been concluded from the same kind of ontological argument, and others feel a fourth may be inferred. Descartes and Leibniz concluded a theistic God. Spinoza argued to a pantheistic God. Hartshorne ended with a panentheistic God (*see* PANENTHEISM). It is also suggested that, apart from importing some kind of Platonic premise, the ontological argument yields polytheistic gods (*see* POLYTHEISM). Even many atheists are willing to recognize the universe is somehow necessary, but in no way do they identify it with God. Since the positions are mutually exclusive, it follows that they cannot all be true.

In order to defend theism, one must apparently go beyond the ontological argument. For the ontological argument alone apparently does not designate which kind of God (or gods) is found at the conclusion.

Sources

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Ontology. *Ontology* is the study (*logos*) of being (*ontos*). It is the study of reality. It answers the question “What is *real*?” as ethics answers the question “What is *right*?” as aesthetics answers the question, “What is *beautiful*?” and epistemology answers the question, “What is *true*?”

Ontology and metaphysics are used interchangeably. Both study being as being or the real as real. They are the disciplines that deal with ultimate reality.

Origen. Origen (185–254) was an early church Father and apologist for Christianity. He was heavily influenced by Platonic (*see* PLATO ; PLOTINUS) and Gnostic (*see* GNOSTICISM) thought. As a consequence his defense of the faith tended to sacrifice important teachings. He denied the historicity of crucial sections of Scripture; he taught the preexistence of the soul and universalism (the belief that all will eventually be saved; *see* “HEATHEN,” SALVATION OF THE) and denied that Jesus was raised from the dead in a physical body (*see* RESURRECTION, PHYSICAL NATURE OF). These positions were condemned as heretical by later church councils.

Origen was an early second-century Christian writer from Alexandria, Egypt. He studied eleven years with neoplatonist, Ammonius Saccas where he was a classmate of Plotinus (205–270). Origen headed up a catechetical school in Alexandria (211–232) and later founded a school in Caesarea.

His many works include the *Hexapla*, a six-column comparison of various Greek and Hebrew renditions of the Old Testament. Unfortunately, no copies of this great work survive. He also wrote *Contra Celsus*, an apologetic work answering the philosopher Celsus, and *De Principiis*, a major theological treatise.

The Bible. While Origen claimed that the Bible was divinely inspired, he did not accept the complete historicity of Scripture, nor did he interpret it all literally. Like others in the Alexandrian school of interpretation, he often allegorized crucial sections of Scripture.

Bible Only Partially Historical. Origen insisted: “We have therefore to state in answer, since we are manifestly so of opinion, that the truth of the history may and ought to be preserved in the majority of instances” (*De Principiis*, 4.19). Unfortunately, this did not include crucial sections of the Bible. He asserted that the attentive reader would find numerous passages in the Gospels in which insertions of nonhistoric events had been made. “And if we come to the legislation of Moses, many of the laws manifest the irrationality, and others the impossibility, of their literal observance” (*ibid.*, 4.1.16–17).

Allegorical Interpretation. Accuracy was not such a concern if the message was buried in allegory. Origen sought “to discover in every expression the hidden splendour of the doctrines veiled in common and unattractive phraseology” (*ibid.*, 4.1.7).

The story of Adam and Eve was to be taken figuratively. For “No one, I think, can doubt that the statement that God walked in the afternoon in paradise, and that Adam lay hid under a tree is related figuratively in Scripture, that some mystical meaning may be indicated by it.” And “those who are not altogether blind can collect countless instances of a similar kind recorded as having occurred, but which did not literally take place? Nay, the Gospels themselves are filled with the same kind of narratives; for example, the devil leading Jesus up into a high mountain, in order to show him from thence the kingdoms of the whole world, and the glory of them” (*ibid.*, 4.1.16).

Preexistence of the Soul. Origen's argument for the preexistence and eternity of the soul is heavily dependent on Platonism. He argues that God had made other worlds before this one, and would make more in the future (ibid., 2.5.3). In creation, "we are to suppose that God created so great a number of rational or intellectual creatures (or by whatever name they are to be called), which we have formerly termed understandings, as he foresaw would be sufficient" (ibid., 2.9.1).

To deny the eternity of the soul was to do no less than deny God's omnipotence, he believed. The soul must be preexistent and eternal because, "as no one can be a father without having a son, nor a master without possessing a servant, so even God cannot be called omnipotent unless there exist those over whom he may exercise his power; and therefore, that God may be shown to be almighty, it is necessary that all things should exist." Did he gain more power as he created more people? Rather, "He must always have had those over whom He exercised power, and which were governed by Him either as king or prince" (ibid., 1.2.10).

Finally, Origen argues that "If the soul of a man, which is certainly inferior while it remains the soul of a man, was not formed along with his body, but is proved to have been implanted strictly from without, much more must this be the case with those living beings which are called heavenly." Furthermore, "How could his soul and its images be formed along with his body, who, before he was created in the womb, is said to be known to God, and was sanctified by Him before his birth?" (ibid., 1.7.4)

Universalism . Origen believed that in the end everyone would be saved. His view is explicitly universalistic:

So then, when the end has been restored to the beginning, and the termination of things compared with their commencement, that condition of things will be re-established in which rational nature was placed, when it had no need to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; so that when all feeling of wickedness has been removed, and the individual has been purified and cleansed, He who alone is the one good God becomes to him "all," and that not in the case of a few individuals, or of a considerable number, but He Himself is "all in all." And when death shall no longer anywhere exist, nor the sting of death, nor any evil at all, then verily God will be "all in all." [Origen, *De Principiis*, 3.6.3]

According to Origen, this saving knowledge would come "slowly and gradually, seeing that the process of amendment and correction will take place imperceptibly in the individual instances during the lapse of countless and unmeasured ages, some outstripping others, and tending by a swifter course towards perfection, while others again follow close at hand, and some again a long way behind." Thus, "through the numerous and uncounted orders of progressive beings who are being reconciled to God from a state of enmity, the last enemy is finally reached, who is called death, so that he also may be destroyed, and no longer be an enemy. When, therefore, all rational souls shall have been restored to a condition of this kind, then the nature of this body of ours will undergo a change into the glory of a spiritual body" (ibid., 3.6.6).

The Biblical Texts. Some of Origen's arguments for universalism are based on biblical texts and others on philosophical speculation.

In the context of God's love in Christ, Origen looked to passages that spoke of God conquering and subduing his enemies. He drew on those passages which quoted Psalm 110:1, especially 1 Cor. 15:25: "The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' . . . For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (*De Principiis*, 1.6.1).

The End Like the Beginning. Origen reasoned from the neoplatonic premise that "the end is always like the beginning; and, therefore, as there is one end to all things, so ought we to understand that there was one beginning; and as there is one end to many things, so there spring from one beginning many differences and varieties, which again, through the goodness of God, and by subjection to Christ, and through the unity of the Holy Spirit, are recalled to one end, which is like unto the beginning" (ibid., 1.6.2).

Reformatory Justice. Origen rejected a penal view of justice (see HELL), arguing that "The fury of God's vengeance is profitable for the purgation of souls. That the punishment, also, which is said to be applied by fire, is understood to be applied with the object of healing" (ibid., 2.10.6). He added, "those who have been removed from their primal state of blessedness have not been removed irrecoverably, but have been placed under the rule of those holy and blessed orders which we have described; and by availing themselves of the aid of these, and being remoulded by salutary principles and discipline, they may recover themselves, and be restored to their condition of happiness" (ibid., 1.6.2).

God's Wisdom. Origen insisted that: "God, by the ineffable skill of his wisdom, transforming and restoring all things, in whatever manner they are made, to some useful aim, and to the common advantage of all, recalls those very creatures which differed so much from each other in mental conformation to one agreement of labour and purpose; so that, although they are under the influence of different motives, they nevertheless complete the fulness and perfection of one world, and the very variety of minds tends to one end of perfection." For "it is one power which grasps and holds together all the diversity of the world, and leads the different movements towards one work, lest so immense an undertaking as that of the world should be dissolved by the dissensions of souls." And "for this reason we think that God, the Father of all things, in order to ensure the salvation of all his creatures through the ineffable plan of his word and wisdom, so arranged each of these, that every spirit, whether soul or rational existence, however called, should not be compelled by force, against the liberty of his own will, to any other course than that to which the motives of his own mind led him (lest by so doing the power of exercising free-will should seem to be taken away, which certainly would produce a change in the nature of the being itself)" (ibid., 2.1.2).

God's Omnipotence. "For nothing is impossible to the Omnipotent, nor is anything incapable of restoration to its Creator" (ibid., 3.6.5). This, of course, implies that God desires by his goodness to do so (1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Pet. 3:9). But if God wants to save all, and he can save all (i.e., he is all-powerful), then for Origen it would seem to follow that he will save all.

Spiritualism. Origen also denied the permanent physical nature of the resurrection, for which he was condemned by the bishops of the Fifth Ecumenical Council of the Church when they wrote: “If anyone shall say that after the resurrection the body of the Lord was ethereal, . . . and that such shall be the bodies of all after the resurrection; and that after the Lord himself shall have rejected his true body and after others who rise shall have rejected theirs, the nature of their bodies shall be annihilated: let him be anathema”(Canon 10 cited by Schaff, 14:314–19). Likewise, “If any one shall say that the future judgment signifies the destruction of the body and that the end of the story will be an immaterial nature [*phusis*], and that thereafter there will no longer be any matter, but only spirit [*nous*] : let him be anathema” (ibid., Canon 11).

In about 400, the Council of Toledo declared emphatically: “We believe verily, that there shall be a resurrection of the *flesh* of mankind” (Parker, 24, 26). And the Fourth Council of Toledo (663) added, “By whose death and blood we being made clear have obtained forgiveness of (our sins) and shall be raised up again by him in the last days in the same flesh wherein we now live, (and) in the manner wherein the same (our) Lord did rise again” (ibid., 26).

Christ Inferior to the Father. Although he did not deny the deity of Christ, nonetheless, Origen did believe Jesus has a subordinate status to the Father even to the point that he forfeited his deity while on earth. Origen wrote: “The Son of God, divesting Himself of His equality with the Father, and showing to us the way to the knowledge of Him, is made the express image of His person” (*De Principiis* 1.2.8).

Even Christ’s goodness is derived from the Father: “If this be fully understood, it clearly shows that the existence of the Son is derived from the Father but not in time, nor from any other beginning, except, as we have said, from God Himself” (*De Principiis* 1.2.11).

Origen spoke clearly about Christ’s inferior status to the Father when he said, “Grant that there may be some individuals among the multitudes of believers who are not in entire agreement with us, and who incautiously assert that the Saviour is the Most High God; however, we do not hold with them, but rather believe Him when He says, ‘The Father who sent Me is greater than I.’ We would not therefore make Him whom we call Father inferior—as Celsus accuses us of doing—to the Son of God” (*Contra Celsus* 8.14).

According to Origen, although Christ is eternal, his deity is derived from the Father: “Wherefore we have always held that God is the Father of His only-begotten Son, who was born indeed of Him, and derives from Him what He is, but without any beginning” (*De Principiis* 1.2.2).

In a contorted Platonic logic, Origen even argued that somehow the existence of the Son is dependent on the Father: “For if the Son do, in like manner, all those things which the Father doth, then, in virtue of the Son doing all things like the Father, is the image of the Father formed in the Son, *who is born of Him, like an act of His will proceeding from the mind.* And I am therefore of opinion that the will of the Father ought alone to be sufficient for the existence of that which He wishes to exist. For in the exercise of His will He employs no other way than that which is made known by the counsel of His will. And thus also *the existence of the Son is generated by Him*” (*De Principiis* 1.2.6, emphasis added).

Evaluation. Origen was at best a mixed blessing for Christian apologetics. He did defend the basic inspiration and historicity of the Bible. He stressed the use of reason in defending early Christianity against the attacks of paganism and other false teachings. He was a textual scholar.

However, Origen’s negatives seem to far outweigh the positives. He denied the inerrancy of the Bible, at least in practice (*see* BIBLE, ALLEGED ERRORS IN). He taught universalism contrary to both Scripture and orthodox creeds. He taught the preexistence of the soul in contrast to the orthodox teaching of creation. He engaged in highly allegorical interpretation of Scripture, undermining important literal truths. He held an aberrant view on the nature of Christ, which gave rise to the later Arian heresy (*see* CHRIST, DEITY OF). He denied the tangible, physical nature of the resurrection body (*see* RESURRECTION, EVIDENCE OF ; RESURRECTION, PHYSICAL NATURE OF) in contrast to the clear teaching of Scripture (Luke 24:39 ; Acts 2:31 ; 1 John 4:2) and the creeds (*see* Geisler, *The Battle for the Resurrection*, chap. 5, and *In Defense of the Resurrection*, chap. 9).

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Origins, Science of. The belief that the universe and all forms of life were created by God is not considered true science by some because science deals with theories that can be verified by testing. There is no way to test creation, since it was a unique past singularity. This objection is based in a misunderstanding of two kinds of science: *empirical* and *forensic*. *Operation science* deals with the world as it now exists and *origin science* with the *past* (Geisler, *Origin Science*, chaps. 1, 6, 7). *Operation science* is an *empirical* science that deals with present regularities, but *origin science* is a *forensic* science that considers past singularities—the *origin* of the universe and life forms.

Since there is no direct way to test a theory or model of origin science, it must be judged to be plausible or implausible, based on how consistently and comprehensively it reconstructs the unobserved past in conformity with the available evidence. Operation science is based on principles of *observation and repetition*. The laws of physics and chemistry, for example, are based on the observation of recurring patterns of events. Such observations can be made with the unaided eye or with the aid of sensitive instruments, but observation of some sort is crucial. Likewise, there must be some repetition or recurring pattern. For no scientific analysis can be made on the basis of a singular event. Operation science is based on the repetition of similar patterns of events. For operation science involves not only *present* regularities but *future* ones that can be projected. But no scientific trend or prediction can be made from a singular event.

The operation of the cosmos is studied by the operation science of *cosmology*. But the origin of the cosmos is the field of the science of *cosmogony*. The operational science of *biology* does not properly deal with the beginning of life but with its continuing functioning. How life began is for *biogeny*.

In distinguishing these two areas of investigation, it is important to note substantial differences even in the natural laws and processes they look at. Laws by which something operates today may function quite unlike how they functioned at the beginning. It is difficult to know what factors even existed to interact with one another. A simple and obvious example is that the laws operating during the *running* of a windmill are not sufficient to *produce* that windmill. A windmill functions by purely natural laws of physics—pressure, motion, and inertia. Inertia, however, cannot create the design, weld the metal, assemble the wind-powered generator, or adjust the propeller blades. Someone had to come from outside the windmill system, bringing necessary know-how, plans, and manipulation of materials. Natural laws adequately explain why electricity is generated by a windmill on a continuing basis; they are insufficient to explain the *commencement* of the system.

Only because things operate in a regular way is it possible to make observations and predictions based on them. So a whole different approach and different goals are at work in a forensic science. One normally hears of forensic science in law enforcement, where scientists may attempt to reconstruct what happened to cause an unobserved death, for example. Some elements may be repeatable, but not the essential series of events, since the person at the center of those events is dead. But the lack of empirical science principles does not totally frustrate a scientific analysis of the death. Forensic science has its own rules and principles. Using the evidence that remains (such as weapons, injury patterns, blood splatters, and finger prints), the forensic scientist can make a plausible reconstruction of the original event. In a similar way, the origin scientist attempts to reconstruct the origin of the universe and the origin of life.

Principles of Origin Science. Besides the two obvious principles that every theory or model should be consistent and comprehensive, the most crucial principles of origin science are *causality* and *uniformity* (analogy) (Geisler, *Origin Science*, 131–32).

Causality. Like the forensic scientist, the origin scientist believes that *every event has an adequate cause* (*see* CAUSALITY, PRINCIPLE OF ; FIRST PRINCIPLES). This is true of unobserved as well as observed events. This principle has such universal acceptance that it scarcely needs

justification. It is sufficient to note that Aristotle said, “the wise man seeks causes.” Francis Bacon believed that true knowledge is “knowledge by causes” (Bacon, 2.2.121). Even the skeptic, David Hume agreed (*Letters of David Hume*, 1.187). It is self-evident to most rational beings that *everything that comes to be had a cause*. If this were not so, things would pop into and out of existence willy nilly, but they do not. Indeed, without the principle of causality, no science would be possible.

It is an important aside to note that the principle of causality does *not* claim that *everything* has a cause. With the atheist (*see* ATHEISM) we agree that *if* matter (energy) is eternal and indestructible, then it does not need a cause. Only everything that begins—or is contingent has a cause. If a Being is eternal and independent (whether it is the universe or God), then it does not need a cause. Causality applies to things that *come to be*; whatever just *is*, is uncaused.

Uniformity (Analogy). Generally stated, the scientific principle of uniformity affirms that “the present is the key to the past.” Applied more specifically to the question of past unobserved causes, the principle of uniformity (analogy) asserts that the cause of certain kinds of events now would have produced like effects in the past. Past events have causes similar to the causes of the present events.

The principle of uniformity derives its name from the *uniform* experience on which it is based. Repeated observation reveals that certain kinds of causes regularly produce certain kinds of events. For example, water flowing over small rolling rocks gradually wears the rock’s surface smooth and rounded. Wind on sand (or water) produces waves. Heavy rain on dirt results in erosion, and so on. These are natural, *secondary* causes. Their effects are produced by natural forces whose processes are an observable part of the ongoing *operation* of the physical universe.

However, the principle of *uniformity* should not be confused with *uniformitarianism*. That latter is a naturalistic (*see* NATURALISM) presupposition which wrongly assumes that all causes of events in the world must be natural causes. This both begs the question and is contrary to the best evidence for the origin of the universe (*see* BIG BANG ; EVOLUTION, COSMIC ; THERMODYNAMICS, LAWS OF). There is no reason to accept the premise that everything that happens in nature was caused by nature (*see* NATURALISM ; MIRACLE). After all, the natural world did not cause itself (*see* COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT ; KALAM COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT). Even finite minds can intervene all the time in the natural world. There is no reason an infinite Mind cannot do the same.

In addition to secondary causes, there are primary causes. Intelligence is a primary cause. And the principle of uniformity (based on constant conjunction) informs us that certain kinds of effects come only from intelligible causes: language, projectile points, pottery, portraits, and symphonies. So convinced are we by previous repeated experience that only intelligence produces these kinds of effects that when we see even a single event that resembles one of these kinds of effects we invariably posit an intelligible cause for it. When we come across the words “John loves Mary” scratched into a beach, we never assume that waves did it. The question is whether the origin of the first living organism (which we did not observe) was by a secondary (natural) cause or by a primary intelligent cause. The only scientific way to determine this is by analogy with our experience of what kind of cause regularly produces that kind of effect.

The principle of uniformity is an argument from analogy. It is an attempt to get at the unknown (past) through the known (present). Since we do not have direct access to the past, we can “know” it only by analogies with the present. This is how human history, earth history, and life history are reconstructed. Historical geology, for example, is totally dependent as a science on the principle of uniformity. Unless we can presently observe in nature or the laboratory certain kinds of causes producing certain kinds of events, we cannot validly reconstruct geological history. But since we can observe natural causes producing these kinds of effects today, we can postulate that similar natural causes produced similar effects in the geological record of the past. Archaeology as a science is possible only because we assume the principle of uniformity. Certain kinds of tools, art, or writing consistently say certain things about the intelligent beings who produced them. Even simple projectile points lead us to claim what Indians produced them and when. They can be differentiated from pieces of flint or rock shaped by wind and water. When past remains contain writing, art, poetry, or music, we immediately insist they came from intelligent beings.

So whether the evidence calls for a secondary or primary cause, the principle of uniformity is the basis. Unless we have had a constant conjunction of a certain kind of cause with a certain kind of effect in the present, we have no grounds on which to apply the principle to past events known only from their remains.

The Principle of Consistency. All theories must be consistent. Whatever scientific model one constructs of the past must be consistent or noncontradictory with all other elements of one’s scientific views. Contradictory views must be rejected. One cannot hold that the universe both had a beginning and did not begin. Nor can one consistently affirm that the cosmos was both created and uncreated. The law of noncontradiction applies to all views (*see* LOGIC ; FIRST PRINCIPLES).

The Principle of Comprehensiveness. Further, scientific explanations must be comprehensive. A good model comprehensively explains the known facts. Anomalies will persist, but no indisputable data can be neglected in theory construction. Thus, all other things being equal, the most comprehensive view is judged to be the best.

Various Areas of Origin Science. Now that the basic principles of origin science are set forth, they can be applied to the three main areas of origin: the beginning of the universe, the emergence of first life, and the appearance of human (rational) beings. In each case this yields a distinction between origin and operation science. Names already exist to distinguish them.

	Origin Science	Operation Science
Universe Life	Cosmogony Biogeny	Cosmology Biology
Human Beings	Anthropogeny	Anthropology

The scientific evidence is presented elsewhere for the creationists’ view of cosmogony (*see* EVOLUTION, COSMIC), biogeny (*see* EVOLUTION, CHEMICAL), and anthropogeny (*see* EVOLUTION, BIOLOGICAL). Hence, it remains here simply to ask whether creation is a science.

Creation Science. A creationist view of origins can be just as scientific as an evolutionist view. The belief that there is an intelligent Creator of the universe, first life, and new life forms is just as scientific as the naturalistic views of macroevolutionary theory. Both are origin science, not operation science. Both deal with past singularities. Both take a forensic approach by reconstructing a plausible scenario of the past unobserved event in the light of the evidence that remains in the present. Both use the principles of causality and analogy. Both seek an appropriate explanation of the data. Both sometimes appeal to a primary (intelligent) cause to explain the data. Archaeology posits an intelligent cause for pottery. Anthropologists do the same for ancient tools. Likewise, when creationists see the same kind of specified complexity in a simple one-cell animal, such as the first living thing is supposed to be, they too posit an intelligent cause for it. Their view is as scientific in procedure as the evolutionists when they offer a natural explanation for the first living thing.

Likewise, the creationists’ view of the origin of the cosmos is as scientific as is the evolutionists’ position. Both use scientific evidence in the present. And both use the principle of causality. The creationist points to the evidence for the Second Law of Thermodynamics that the universe is running down as evidence that it had a beginning along with the other evidence for the Big Bang theory. This, combined with the principle of causality, yields the conclusion that:

1. The cosmos had a beginning.
2. Everything that begins had a cause.
3. Therefore, the cosmos had a cause (*see* KALAM COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT).

Objections to Origin Science. Two basic objections to origin science surface repeatedly. The first has to do with the scientific method as such and the second with the origin of a scientific model.

Naturalism in the Scientific Approach. At this point it is often objected by the evolutionists that the creationist approach is not scientific because it appeals to a supernatural cause. Evolutionists only assume natural causes. Hence, the creationists’ view is disqualified, even as an origin science. This objection is a classic case of begging the issue. Who said science can only allow natural causes for phenomena in the natural world. This move is invalid, for it eliminates creation by definition. One could, by the same move, demand that there are only supernatural causes for all events and eliminate all natural causes by definition (*see* MIRACLES, ARGUMENTS AGAINST). It is a form of methodological naturalism . While it may admit the existence of a supernatural realm, it insists that the scientific method must permit only natural causes. While this may be true of operation science, it is not so of origin science.

Eliminating an intelligent cause of the world and life as a scientific explanation is contrary to the origin and early history of science. Most founders of modern science were creationists who believed that the scientific evidence pointed to an intelligent supernatural Creator of the universe and life. To redefine science so as to eliminate the possibility of an intelligent cause is contrary to the very commencement and character of modern science itself.

A scientific approach should go where the evidence leads, even if it leads to a supernatural cause. What is scientific about an approach that refuses to conclude that there exists the kind of cause to which the evidence points? Should an archaeologist refuse to accept anything but a natural cause for art it unearths?

The only adequate cause for the origin of life and the universe is a supernatural one. After all, if—as all the evidence indicates—the whole natural world had a beginning, then the Cause must have been beyond nature (*see* KALAM COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT). That, by definition, means supernatural. By what logic does one cease to draw the logical conclusion simply because one wishes to posit a stipulative definition of “science” so as to exclude that kind of cause from the realm of science.

Even if one stubbornly insists, for whatever reason, to exclude all but natural causes from the word *science*, that does not invalidate supernatural causes or their study. They simply move to another area of intellectual endeavor, be it “philosophy” or whatever. Science is simply impoverished in its own search for truth. There is no valid reason supernatural explanations should be excluded from an academic endeavor interested in finding and teaching the truth about our world.

The Origin of a Scientific Model. Some opponents of origin science insist that the creation model is taken from a religious document, the Bible, and religion has no place in science. While one may object that teaching the Bible in a public school science class is a religious exercise, this objection overlooks a very important distinction: The origin of a scientific theory has no relation to its validity. Some widely accepted scientific findings have had religious sources. Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) got the idea of the alternating current motor from a vision he had while reading the pantheistic poet, Goethe. The model for the benzene molecule was invented by Kekule after seeing a vision of a snake biting its tail. No scientists would reject these scientific findings simply because of their religious source. Likewise, no one should reject the idea of an intelligent Creator of the universe and life simply because it has a religious source. The question is not where the idea came from but whether it adequately explains the facts. And an intelligent Creator does adequately explain the origin of the universe and life.

A “Flat Earth” View. Many who oppose calling creation a scientific view insist that to do so is to open the door for teaching the “flat earth” view as science, too. But this is clearly not the case. Whether the earth is square or spherical is a matter of operation, not origin, science, since the shape of the earth is subject to repeated verification and observation. The ongoing shape of the earth has nothing to do with the question of its origin. There is no need to allow the flat earth view to be taught as science, since it has been scientifically disproven. This can be said of few theories, but the “Square Earth” view is factually false. And there is no reason to allow something that has been falsified to be taught as a legitimate scientific view.

This is not the case with creation, since no one has factually disproven that there could have been an intelligent cause of the universe and life (*see* GOD, ALLEGED DISPROOFS OF). Indeed, there is more plausible evidence for a Creator (*see* COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT) and Designer (*see* TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT ; ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE) of the cosmos than for naturalistic evolution (*see* EVOLUTION, BIOLOGICAL).

Creation and Other Religious Views. If one allows the biblical view of creation into science, it is said, the Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and other religious views must be allowed in as well. But scientific creationism is not a *religious* point of view; it is a *scientific* view which appeals only to scientific evidence to support its conclusions. Simply because the idea for a scientific view comes from a religious book does not mean that the view is religious. As noted above, the *source* of many scientific views was religious, but the *nature* of the view was not. The implication that allowing creation to be taught alongside evolution would allow an endless number of other views of origin is not the case. Basically, there are two explanations of events of origin: Either the universe had an intelligent cause or a non-intelligent cause. Either the cause is natural or supernatural. All views of origin, whether Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, or Judeo-Christian, fall into one of these two broad categories. Whether the Cause of the Universe is “God” or is to be worshiped or how to do so, are religious questions and do not come under the purview of origin science.

Aristotle posited an Unmoved Mover (an Uncaused Cause), but he never considered it an object of religious devotion. It was simply a rational explanation for what he observed in the world.

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Orr, James. James Orr (1844–1913) was a Scottish theologian and apologist. He attended the University of Glasgow and ministered in the United Presbyterian Church in Hawick (1874–91). He taught at the United Presbyterian Theological College (1891–1901) and thereafter at the United Free Church College in Glasgow. Orr was widely read in Europe and North America. His

wide knowledge, prolific pen, and penetrating analysis endeared him to embattled evangelicals during the ascendancy of classic liberalism.

Orr's early work on apologetics was his most enduring. *Christian View of God and the World* (1893) was a standard reference into the 1950s. Orr was one of the earliest British critics of liberal theologian Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889) in his *The Ritschlian Theology and the Evangelical Faith* (1897). He defended essential Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (*see* PENTATEUCH, MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP OF) against the attacks of Julius Wellhausen. Although he was willing to accommodate some facets of biological evolution (*see* EVOLUTION), his work *God's Image* (1905) stressed the need to acknowledge supernatural creation of the human soul. In *God's Image in Man* (1910), he argued that moral evolution undermined the seriousness of human depravity.

Orr's apologetic approach was distinctive. In *The Progress of Dogma* (1901), he countered Adolf Harnack (1851–1930) and his attack on the history of dogma by showing the inner logic of the development of orthodoxy. *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (1907) and *Revelation and Inspiration* (1910) were significant contributions. Another enduring work was Orr's editorship of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (1915). Orr also wrote articles for the twelve-volume defense of conservative theology, *The Fundamentals* (1910–15).

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