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The thesis of Rabia N. Ghadry entitled

KANT'S PROOF FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies in the School for Summer and Continuing Education of Georgetown University has been read and approved.

[Signature]
Mentor(s)

[Signature]
Director, Liberal Studies Program

11/27/95
Date
KANT'S PROOF FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

A Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of
Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies

By

Rabia N. Ghandry

School for Summer and Continuing Education
Georgetown University
Washington, DC
December 1, 1995
ABSTRACT

The subject matter discussed in this thesis is something we have all thought about at some point. Whether we belong to the Christian, Moslem or Jewish faith, at one time or another, we have wondered how we came to be on this earth and who put us here. Despite all the scientific and theological studies made, not one can point to the real cause or give any specifics without creating more mystery around this issue.

Kant challenges the old Greek philosophy that dictates that a First Cause must exist because human beings could not have caused themselves. He also disagrees that the order that surrounds us indicates the existence of an Omnipotent Being. Are we then to conclude that he is an atheist?

Not at all. On the contrary, Kant is a firm believer in God. However his belief stems from different origins and therefore has its own agenda. Morality and the moral law play an essential role in his views. For him, all proof for God’s existence starts and ends with moral consciousness.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Twenty years ago when I first set foot in the United States, my English dictionary consisted of two words: "I see". Armed with this wealth of knowledge, I embarked on a great journey filled with wonder and adventure. My experience with American education began in an E.S.O.L. class in 11th Grade where my teacher, Dr. Wright, opened up a whole new and exciting world. For that, I am and will eternally be grateful to her for allowing me to venture on my own and benefit from my mistakes.

Moving to more recent times and after many years of struggle with the English language, I was fortunate to be accepted in Georgetown University's Liberal Studies Program. Meeting Dean Phyllis O'Callaghan, on that first interview, left me with an eagerness to learn and a hunger to conquer all day-to-day difficulties. I will forever be indebted to her for her wisdom and for the high standards she sets. To Anne Ridder who answered all my questions and returned my many calls, thank you for your help and guidance. To all the professors I have had - especially George O'Brien, Chester Gillis, Thomas McManus and Wilfried Ver Eecke - my sincerest appreciation for your insights.
An exceptional and warm thank you to my mentor, Dr. Jay Reuscher, for exposing me to the wonders of the world of Philosophy and for bringing out the hidden thinker in me. My greatest wish is to one day become as learned as he is.

To my husband and guardian angel who encouraged me to continue my education - thank you for the many sleepless nights you stayed up with me while I studied, and for having faith in me even when I stopped believing in myself. To my loving children, Patrick and Pascal, who sacrificed the most in this 5-year journey - thank you for your understanding.

A special thanks to my parents for giving me the inspiration to be the best person that I can be. To my mother, for the stubborn streak that I have inherited from her that has allowed me to persevere. And to my father for sharing his dream with me on that clear Sunday afternoon, when he stood by the window of his Rosslyn Penthouse overlooking Georgetown University and uttered the following words: "I dream that one day you will attend this university". Thank you mom and dad for your many blessings! But most importantly, thank you God for allowing all this to happen and for enriching my life with so many loving people!
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INTRODUCTION

In today’s society, we are free to think theologically anything we want. For example, some people believe in God’s existence while others don’t. On the surface, we seem to accept each others’ beliefs until confronted with a crisis that exposes these differences and forces us to make a unanimous decision on public issues. Let us take for example, those of us who are “pro life” and those who are “pro choice”. How can we begin to tackle the subject of abortion if we cannot even agree on the most basic of all questions: How did we come to existence? How can we determine who has the right to end a life if we are unable to agree on who gives life?

Like many philosophers before him, Kant finds creation puzzling and attempts to shed some light on this mystery. While his predecessors rely on the concept of the First Cause, he on the other hand uses a new and unique approach based solely on practical reason. The target of the thesis is to present and evaluate Kant’s proof for God’s existence based on the need of practical or moral reason. I will begin by giving a concise noncritical survey of his objections to the classical proofs. Next, I will set the
stage for the main section by giving a brief introduction to his moral theory. And finally, I will present and critically evaluate his moral argument.

Kant clearly objects to the traditional proofs for God's existence based on two key points: First, he argues that neither on empirical experience nor on the basis of mere concepts can we claim that God exists: "Kant attacks the arguments for the existence of God advanced by philosophers before him, seeking to prove that each one is full of inconsistencies and logical fallacies." (Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers, p. 120). He maintains his position by showing that there simply is no indication that matter is incapable of producing the order that we see. So although there is harmony, we cannot assume that a Being is the cause of it. Second, he demonstrates this point by directing our attention to one basic issue, namely human knowledge and its confinements. What limitations do we have in the things that we know? In other words, what can we know? All claims follow this determination and must be based upon that premise. Kant uses space and time to validate his theory. As intelligent beings we have knowledge; however we are only capable to know things that
are measurable in space and time. These are things that we can actually touch and experience. Since God is not a physical entity, Kant comes to the conclusion that the classical proofs are therefore invalid.

 Nonetheless, Kant is firmly convinced that God exists. Instead of relying on the traditional methods, he introduces moral consciousness as proof for a Higher Existence: "... and since such an omnipotent moral being is called God, conscience must be thought of as the subjective principle of being accountable to God for all one’s deeds." (The Metaphysics of Morals, 439). He starts the journey by addressing the question of ethics which is based on rules similar to those applied in the theory of knowledge. Where does ethics come from? For Kant, the key is in the insight that we have to (1) know what it means to be reasonable, and (2) know that it is imperative to be reasonable. The whole issue relies on moral necessity which dictates that we must be reasonable at any cost, and for the simple reason that we ought to, rather than have to, be reasonable. It is an interest-free activity; however like all other human activities, it is meant to have an effect which, in this case, is the highest good. But why should we care about
being moral? Kant says that seeking the highest good is quite involuntary; it also produces happiness: "Thus, happiness and the good life should go together in the world." (Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers, p. 121). By being moral, we are in fact fulfilling a primitive goal without which the whole basis for a moral law would be pointless. This guarantee for happiness is not connected in any way to our nature and is not a birth right that we can claim. So where does it come from? It is granted by a being who has the power and the moral interest to make it happen. Kant’s entire theory of God lies within the confines of the mental structure. It is a contemplation through reason. For him, this is the only ground we have for believing in God’s existence: "For this Idea [of God] proceeds entirely from our own reason and we ourselves make it, whether for the theoretical purpose of explaining to ourselves the purposiveness in the universe ... or also for the purpose of serving as the incentive in our conduct." (The Metaphysics of Morals, 443). The next logical question is: How do we prove something that cannot be visualized? In answer, Kant proposes to relocate reality.
This thesis will be divided therefore into two main sections. The first one will present Kant's objections to the traditional proofs for the existence of a Divine Being. These objections will be two-fold: objections to proofs from experience and objections to proofs from concepts. The second section will concentrate on his alternative solution, namely proof through moral consciousness.
SECTION I
KANT'S OBJECTIONS

Kant stresses that there are three ways in which we can attempt to prove God's existence. The first two arguments, known as the physico-theological and the cosmological proofs deal with experience while the third one, referred to as the ontological proof, uses concepts as basis. In the next two sections, we will study these arguments and then show the reasons why Kant finds them invalid.

A. PROOFS FROM EXPERIENCE

In order to make the claim that we are experiencing something, two things must take place: (1) Something must exist; and (2) we must be able to sense that something. Experience plays an essential role because it lays the basic foundation which enables us to know anything: "It begins not with concepts, but with common experience, and thus bases itself on something actually existing." (Critique of Pure Reason, A584.11). However, the trick lies in the way existing objects are communicated to the mind. The traditional Aristotelian school gives most of the credit to
the senses and rational intuitions. It proclaims that the latter allow us to achieve knowledge because they are the tools with which we feel and comprehend reality. For this theory to work, it is critical to place essence in things. In so doing, Aristotle is in fact claiming that all objects embrace form as well as matter. Or in simpler terms, in addition to the description, an object includes its own explanation. Further, with the help of the senses, he maintains that the mind liberates the meaning from the confinement of matter and in the act of understanding becomes one with that object. Thus the definition of knowledge is the unity between the object that we are seeing and the thing that is seeing it.

Although Kant agrees that knowledge is tied to experience, he is totally opposed to the notion that meanings can be found in objects. For him, things are physical and are communicated to the mind through the senses. Without any hesitation, he asserts that our sensory faculties simply detect the presence of objects and are totally incapable of giving any formal information about them. They are the tools with which we experience reality without understanding it. So how do we know anything at all? For Kant, the answer is quite simple. After the mind
is fed with the data that is transmitted through the senses, it forms judgments. So knowledge is derived from the senses contacting the intellect and providing it with enough information to make judgments. Now that we have explored the possibility of experience, next we will focus on necessity and its origins.

Aristotle believes in the concept of cause and effect. All the things that surround us are in fact effects of something. So necessity becomes a key factor in the search for proof that is based on experience. Although things exist, some, at least, do not have to exist. So if an object does exist, there must be something that accounts for its existence. And that something could not have a reality that does not have to exist. Moreover, he notes that the way things exist is not at random. There is a certain noticeable harmony that accounts for the presence of something which could not have a reality that does not have to exist. For Aristotle, that something is called God.

Kant sees things in a different light. In considering existence, he maintains that there is no dispute that some objects don’t have to exist, yet they do. Although he does not contradict the notion of a cause: “Everywhere we see a chain of effects and causes, of ends and means ... Nothing
has of itself come into the condition in which we find it to exist, but always points to something else as its cause ...” (Critique of Pure Reason, A622.12). Kant argues that we cannot apply it to one determinate thing because there is no indication that any single entity has caused itself to be what it is: "What magnitude are we to ascribe to this supreme cause-admitting that it is supreme in respect of all things in the world? We are not acquainted with the whole content of the word, still less do we know how to estimate its magnitude ...” (Critique of Pure Reason, A622.22). In addition, we cannot claim with any certainty that nature is incapable of producing an order such as we have in the world. But even if we are to agree that one being is the cause of the harmony, it certainly does not prove the existence of a creator. Rather, he believes that it only points to the presence of an “architect” who is responsible for the logical arrangements.

Next, Kant examines the essence of the “cosmological” proof where necessary and contingent objects are key players. The argument follows the logic that since we already know there are contingent objects, then there must be one necessary being who is credited for these elements
since they cannot contain the reason for their own existence: "If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist." (Critique of Pure Reason, A605.20). Kant rejects this argument and adds that the only thing it indicates is that there is a definite need for a necessary being; however it does not prove His existence. Again, we have an idea of "God" and we are trying to dress it up in order to actualize it. What is really happening? We are giving life to a concept in order for us to place it within the realm of experience for the purpose of understanding it. This act does not constitute a proof but points to a healthy and over-active imagination.

Thus far, we have established that there is no evidence of God’s existence based on experience. Our next task is to investigate the proof from concepts which is a little more complicated.
B. PROOFS FROM CONCEPTS

This ontological argument prescribes existence as a predicate: "... Kant disclosed the fatal flaw in it to be its treatment of existence as itself a predicate or attribute, which it is not ..." (Kant as Philosophical Theologian, p. 43) therefore announcing that the theory of a Higher Being necessarily suggests the existence of that Being. Kant strongly disagrees for he does not see any justification for taking a concept and turning it into an actuality. He stresses that "we have supposed ourselves to have justified the conclusion that because existence necessarily belongs to the object of this concept ... we are also of necessity, in accordance with the law of identity, required to posit the existence of its object." (Critique of Pure Reason, A594.8). His main objection has to do with the following logic: the mere thought of a God does not mandate the existence of a God. To illustrate his theory, he uses the example of a triangle. When thinking the word "triangle", we necessarily envision a geometrical shape with three angles. However, this does not mandate the existence of the object itself. In simpler terms, although we know that it is necessary for a triangle to have three angles, we
cannot and should not make the statement that a triangle is necessary. So when presented with the object, we are justified in expecting three angles, yet we cannot account for any necessity to the triangle. Necessity is located in the characteristics rather than in the essence of the object: "... three angles will necessarily be found in it [triangle]" (Critique of Pure Reason, A594.4), yet the triangle itself does not have to be. For Kant, existence cannot be found in the object itself because the former has nothing to do with experience. To obtain evidence, we must go outside of the object and assume its existence without any possibility of justification. The concept of God, in this instance, is an idea that can in no way further our knowledge of His existence. As human beings, we are only capable to know things through experience: "... the understanding cannot know anything but that which is experienced." (Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers, p. 167). God is not known through experience, therefore we cannot prove His existence from an ontological argument: "The attempt to establish the existence of a supreme being by means of a famous ontological argument of Descartes is
therefore merely so much labour and effort lost . . ."
(Critique of Pure Reason, A602.16).

Kant stresses that all three arguments derive from one another; meaning the physico-theological proof is based on the cosmological proof and the latter, in turn, is based on the ontological evidence which he judges as unreliable. He therefore comes to the conclusion that neither through experience nor through concept can we prove that God exists.
SECTION II
KANT'S MORAL PROOF

A. BASIC ELEMENTS OF KANT'S MORAL THEORY

Kant insists that there are two different laws: the type of law that we follow in order to achieve happiness, known as "practical law"; and the "moral law" which is totally concerned with the worthiness of being happy and is therefore a priori: "This latter law can therefore be based on mere ideas of pure reason, and known a priori." (Critique of Pure Reason, A806.23). By that, he means that the moral law does not derive its necessity from an end. In other words we should not follow the moral law because of its rewards. It should be an exercise done solely for the sake of being moral. It is meaningful only when it is genuine and interest-free. But don't we also know that nothing makes sense except in relationship to an end?

Kant agrees without any doubt that morality is ordered to an end. Reason prescribes that end to morality. As Kant best explains: "But this is possible only in the intelligible world, under a wise Author and Ruler ... Hence also everyone regards the moral laws as commands; and this the moral laws
could not be if they did not ... carry with them promises and threats." (Critique of Pure Reason, A811.15). So although we ought to be reasonable out of regard for reasonableness, it is also true that being reasonable is meant to cause an effect: the highest good and ultimate end. This is due to the fact that if morality is without any end result, no matter how admirable it may be, it would serve no purpose. But what is the end result? Kant points to happiness, although he insists that we don't have the capacity to rely on such a man-made happiness. Therefore he claims that there must be a guarantee which is only possible if God exists: "Thus without a God ... the glorious ideas of morality are indeed objects of approval and admiration, but not springs of purpose and action." (Critique of Pure Reason, A813.2). There must be something that guarantees our happiness or else the whole moral mandate does not make any sense. In conclusion, Kant claims that the possibility of a moral world necessarily rests on the existence of God, as we will see in the next section dealing with the moral argument.
B. KANT’S MORAL PROOF

1. Moral argument

Let us begin by giving a quick summary of Kant’s moral argument. First and foremost, he distinguishes between “pure reason” and “practical reason”. The former produces theories without any basis while the latter deals with prerequisites. When conducting experiments, we usually look for an “ultimate ground” or a basis on which to form an opinion. This is done for the purpose of gratifying our judgment and not simply to “give objective reality to the result.” (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 149). So as we look at nature, it is not necessary to examine it carefully in order to prove that it exists; it is quite evident. However, when trying to explain nature, we are forced to presume the presence of a Higher Being as the ultimate “cause”. But how can we be so sure? Kant feels that the answer lies in the fact that this is the only way we can reconcile, in our own mind, all the mystery surrounding our existence. He also adds that we are unable to prove the contrary so there is no reason why we can’t believe in such a Supreme Being.

What does it mean to have “pure practical reason”? For Kant, it indicates that we have set a standard and are on a
journey to reach a certain goal, namely the “highest good”. It also suggests that we have accepted the “conditions, which are God, freedom, and immortality.” (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 150).

Moreover, Kant believes that “moral law” is what keeps everything in check. It is the scale that we use to evaluate and rate our conduct. Then there is such a thing as the highest good and our mission is to promote it with the help of one tool: the “moral law”. Everything is based on the fact that there is a highest good, otherwise none of this would make any sense; even the moral law would become meaningless at that moment.

Although Kant believes in the necessity of the highest good, he does not want to give the impression that we, as a society, are ordered to follow the highest good. He reasons this latter statement as follows: “But faith that is commanded is an absurdity ... this possibility cannot be commanded, and that no practical disposition to grant it can be demanded, but that speculative reason must admit it without being asked ...” (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 151). Is he then saying that since it is not a “command”, we are not obligated to follow it or that we have a choice
in the matter? Absolutely not, Kant maintains that the moral law is a law that is meant to be enforced, and when adhered to, rewards its followers with "happiness perfectly proportionate to that worthiness". (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 152). This is exactly where the concept of freedom comes in. This is the point at which we have a choice and are then compensated for the decisions that we make. But how is it possible to guarantee happiness? And how do we explain the fact that some good people are unhappy and some evil people are quite happy?

Kant introduces to the idea of a Supreme Being by asserting that "... happiness exactly proportionate to moral worth is ... indeed impossible and that therefore the possibility of the highest good from this side cannot be granted except under the presupposition of a moral Author of the world." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 152) and therefore justifies this Highest Existence. In other terms, reason cannot tell us whether such an "Author" exists and Kant cannot see the slightest possibility of a balance between morality and happiness without the presence of a mediator.
Next, Kant moves to the final stage of his argument where he presents "faith of pure practical reason". He argues that we make the decision to believe in God because the "highest good and thus the presupposition of its possibility are objectively necessary ..." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 153). We also have the freedom to think it as "a free interest of pure practical reason is decisive for the assumption [146] of a wise Author of the world ..." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 153). Then, it becomes a "voluntary decision of our judgment to assume that existence and to make it the foundation of further employment of reason, conding to the moral (commanded) purpose ... It rather springs from the moral disposition itself." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 153). Next, let us follow the evolution in Kant's theory by taking a closer look at some specific texts.

2. Primary texts
   a. Critique of Pure Reason

   In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant concentrates on the issue of happiness and maintains that it is a concept that varies from one moment to the next in addition to being different from one person to another. Also because it is a
perception of imagination that reason cannot comprehend, it has no logic and must be based on one principal: that of being worthy of happiness. For Kant, if we in fact deserve happiness, it is not unreasonable for us to expect to be happy. Therefore we can deduce that morality is necessarily connected with happiness: "... such a system, in which happiness is bound up with and proportioned to morality, can be conceived as necessary." (Critique of Pure Reason, A809.17). By deserving happiness, we are in fact giving the latter some kind of structure. Considering the fact that happiness is a component in the ultimate end of all human beings, and that it in itself is not morally sufficient, in addition to being happy, we must also be deserving of happiness. Kant argues that since we are in control of our own moral acts, we must also govern the happiness that follows. "But such a system of self-rewarding morality is only an idea, the carrying out of which rests on the condition that everyone does what he ought ..." (Critique of Pure Reason, A809.23) and we don't have the capacity to rely on self-produced happiness, therefore there must be a guarantee which we identify as God: "Morality, by itself, constitutes a system. Happiness, however, does not do so,
save in so far as it is distributed in exact proportion to morality. But this is possible only in the intelligible world, under a wise Author and Ruler." (Critique of Pure Reason, A811.13). Hence the possibility of a moral world necessarily rests on the existence of God otherwise there couldn't be any moral requirement: "... everyone regards the moral laws as commands; and this the moral laws could not be if they did not ... carry with them promises and threats. But this again they could not do, if they did not reside in a necessary being ..." (Critique of Pure Reason, A811.22).

b. Critique of Practical Reason

In the Critique of Practical Reason, Kant focuses on the highest good and its varied elements. First we must acknowledge that morality is the most significant trait at which point happiness follows. For contrary to the unconditional requirement associated with being reasonable, morality is a human activity that is meant to produce some kind of result, a sort of compensation or reward. Reason prescribes the effect of a moral law as the highest good: "... the possibility of the highest good which reason presents to all rational beings as the goal of all their moral wishes ..." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 121).
If this is not possible, then the moral law becomes one more thought. But how do we achieve happiness?

For Kant, we are happy when "everything goes according to wish and will. It thus rests on the harmony of nature with his whole end and with the essential determining ground of his will." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 131). However, since we are not in control of what goes on in nature, our happiness could not rest on this "harmony" alone. There must be a Being that supports the notion of the highest good and its affiliation with happiness. "Therefore, it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 132). Kant justifies the existence of God by stating that "... since human capacity does not suffice for bringing about happiness in the world proportionate to worthiness to be happy, an omnipotent moral Being must be postulated as rule of the world, under whose care this [balance] occurs." (Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 7) and "... there must be a God who is perfectly wise, good, and powerful to join happiness and goodness." (Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers, p. 121). At this moment, religion becomes essential because it prescribes morality as "... commands of the Supreme Being
because we can hope for the highest good only from a morally perfect and omnipotent will; and, therefore, we can hope to attain it only through harmony with this will." (Critique of Practical Reason, p. 136).

From the Critique of Pure Reason to the Critique of Practical Reason, there is an evident shift that takes place. In the former, we are driven to believe that morality’s necessity is derived from within, however in the latter, Kant proposes an end to morality which he calls happiness. He also adds that God is the only entity that can endorse this sentiment. The next question that arises is quite rational: How is it possible to prove something that is only thinkable? In order to answer this question, Kant believes we must first start with the word proof. What is it exactly that we mean by that word? The answer could be found in the next segment.

c. Critique of Judgment

In the Critique of Judgment, Kant attempts to shed some light on this word by claiming that there are two kinds: the type of proof that "... is in itself, or what it is for us ..." (Critique of Judgment, 463). This approach is quite interesting because it allows for completely
different interpretations and leaves room for other possibilities. It also opens the door for two separate concepts. Similar to Kant's theory on the two dimensions of reality where we are led to believe that things exist in themselves separately from the way they look to us, here we see the same rules being applied to proof when Kant claims that there is proof as it is and there is the way we think of proof: "A proof of the first kind is based on principles sufficient for determinative judgment, a proof of the second kind on principles sufficient merely for reflective judgment." (Critique of Judgment, 463).

Kant also adds that there are four different foundations or bases for proof: (1) proof by demonstration, (2) proof by comparison, (3) proof by opinion, and finally (4) proof by hypothesis. In the first example, we already know that we cannot look for evidence of God's existence in the universe because we cannot know for sure that He exists in nature: "Since it is impossible for us to have an intuition that would correspond to the concept of a being that we must seek beyond nature, the very concept of this being, ... always remains problematic for us." (Critique of Judgment, 463). The only way we can think of Him is in
moral consciousness because to us, He is what moral consciousness is all about. In the second instance, although we can think of cause and effect and the correlation that exists between them, it is not possible to compare a physical being with one that is totally thinkable: "... we can in no way infer by analogy that the same causality that we perceive in man can also be ascribed to the being that is wholly distinct from nature, with nature itself as [its effect]. (Critique of Judgment, 465). In the third case, Kant claims that: "As far as opinion is concerned, it has no place whatever in a priori judgments ..." (Critique of Judgment, 465). This means that although we start with observed data or experience, we cannot form a final opinion about absolutes because they are not based on sensible matter which is the only we can know things without any doubt. Last, we are invited to think of proof as a hypothesis. Again, kant proposes that "we have no material whatever for determining the ideas of the supersensible, since we would have to get this material from things in the world of senses, and yet such material is absolutely inadequate for that [supersensible] object. (Critique of Judgment, 466). Finally, he suggests that just
as we look in nature for all physical evidence, we must look inside ourselves for any moral proofs. He reinforces his thought in the following statement: “*moral teleology does not require an intelligent cause outside us ...*” (*Critique of Judgment*, 447).

Kant believes that the moral consciousness is there for a purpose and that humanity is not a right but a privilege which we need to respect, otherwise we must pay the consequences. So what are the consequences? This is exactly the point where he justifies the existence of a Higher Being who is meant to keep us in check.

Kant attributes necessity to God as well as moral consciousness. His reasoning stems from the fact that creation is dependent upon the Creator, and yet this dependence is also based on moral consciousness. God’s existence is based on the moral evidence rather than an empirical one: “... the concept of an absolutely necessary Being is a concept of pure reason, that is, a mere idea, the object reality of which is by no means proved by the fact that reason requires it.” (*18th Century Philosophy*, p. 286) and “... we are prevented by the very nature of our cognitive faculties from having a scientific knowledge of spiritual
existence.” (Kant as Philosophical Theologian, p. 38). Therefore the act by which we assert God exists is not an act of knowledge but is one of moral faith: "Yet if we seek the final purpose of nature, we seek it in vain if we look for it within nature itself. Hence, just as the idea of that final purpose resides only in reason, so we can and must seek that purpose itself only in rational beings ...” (Critique of Judgment, 454). It is a well-founded judgment, one which we should not take lightly or dismiss because it is based solely on reason and not on science.

Furthermore, Kant maintains that the possibility of a moral world necessarily rests on the existence of God otherwise there is no moral obligation. In this sense, God is essential because although we ought to be reasonable out of regard for reasonableness, it is also true that being reasonable is meant to cause an effect which is the highest good or ultimate end. Kant indicates that "... to the extent that getting ourselves a final purpose is necessary, to that extent it is also necessary that we assume a moral cause of the world: in other words, that there is God.” (Critique of Judgment, 450). He also adds that the whole issue of the moral law would not make any sense if there was no Higher
Being. In fact, Kant makes it quite clear that the latter is the only reason why we have a moral law. How else can we get it? And how can we have a law without an entity to enforce it? Better yet, what is the point of having a moral law if there are no rewards for abiding by it and penalties for breaking it? The moral law must work as any other law in the sense that it must have a judge to ensure its protection.

So if the moral law exists and happiness is the pursuit of our interest, then the idea of morality must include the existence of a moral Being. There must be a Being who guarantees the result of a moral behavior: "In the sight of God, ... it is equivalent to being actually good, or as a theologian would put it, to being accounted righteous before God." *(Kant as a Philosophical Theologian, p. 103)*. Reason declares that moral law is the highest good. This law has to exist and it is only thinkable. God's existence is connected with the moral law, and since we have moral consciousness, we have, without any doubt, proof of God's existence. For Kant, there is no question that not only God exists but that He has an interest in us as human beings. So how does this theory fit in with his concept of a self-
sufficient moral law? The next section will deal with this problem in depth.

d. Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone

In Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, Kant cannot help but recognize the dilemma that he is facing. Is the moral law sufficient by itself or do we need something else to entice us to be moral? How could the moral law be independent and at the same time be connected or associated with the highest good? In other words, how can we assert that we should be reasonable for reasonableness' sake and also believe that there is an ultimate end for being reasonable? These are two contradictory statements that nullify each other.

For this reason, Kant needs to determine whether the moral law by itself is enough or whether the highest good is what truly motivates us. In answer to the first question, he claims that "... the man who finds it needful, when his avowal is lawfully demanded, to look about him for some kind of [ulterior] end, is, by this very fact, already contemptible." (Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 4). But then he also maintains that despite the fact that we should always act in a moral fashion without having
any personal motives, it does not make any sense that there would be no end. Kant affirms his beliefs: "It is true, therefore, that morality requires no end for right conduct; the law, which contains the formal condition of the use of freedom in general, suffices. Yet an end does arise out of morality ..." (Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 4). The next issue that we need to consider is: Does Kant succeed in his attempt to patch up the holes that surface in his theory without taking back some of his prior statements?

Kant indeed accomplishes the task in a very convincing way. He claims that although we must act reasonably and respect the moral laws without expecting compensation, it is in our human nature to look for the effects that certain deeds bring: "It suffices for them that they do their duty ... And yet it is one of the inescapable limitations of man and of his faculty of practical reason ... to have regard, in every action, to the consequence therefore, in order to discover therein what could serve him as an end ..." (Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 6). This does not diminish from the uniqueness or independence of the moral law. It simply demonstrates that as human beings we
are conditioned to anticipate an effect. After all we are beings who deal with substances in addition to having an intellect. Therefore we require material satisfaction as well as a moral one. This does not mean that we should act morally because we know that there will be rewards. On the contrary the initial rules of morality should come first and foremost. There is no substitute or ulterior motive for moral law. However, after taking the initial step and for all the right reasons, what harm is there in receiving a little bonus of happiness to top it all? And since we cannot depend solely on morality to produce happiness, there must be a Higher Being who has the power to secure such a result. Therefore Kant concludes: "... man seeks something that he can love; therefore the law, which merely arouses his respect, even though it does not acknowledge this object of love as a necessity does yet extend itself on its behalf by including the moral goal of reason among its determining grounds." (Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, p. 6).
WORKS CITED


