



Qur'ānic Proof for God's Existence

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Abstract

In this paper, the argumentation regarding the existence of God within the Qur'ān will be discussed, and whether or not there are actually any clear cut verses in the Qur'ān which mentions any proof. The paper will discuss the following questions: did Allah assume that his existence in the Universe was self-evident, thus avoiding any need to include such proof of His existence in the Qur'ān, and rather emphasising on proving Monotheism only? Or is the existence of Allah something which, far from being self-evident, is something which is mentioned and proven by the Qur'ānic text itself, as some commentators have argued? Ṭabarsi (1073-1153) argues that there is absolutely no proof within the Qur'ān to establish the premise of Allah's existence, and that the arguments in the Holy Qur'ān merely prove monotheism, and already assumes the premise of an existent God.¹

Ṭabāṭabā'ī (1892-1981) has also adopted the position that Allah is not concerned with establishing His existence in the Holy Qur'ān, and that Allah has only sent down verses regarding Monotheism.²

In contrast to these two opinions, Zamakhshari (1070-1143) and Fakhr al-Dīn Ṭabarsi (1149-1209) held the belief that Allah has not only mentioned the proof of monotheism in the Qur'ān, but in fact has also established the proof for His own existence.

Rarely do philosophical (*falsafī*) and theological (*kalāmi*) books begin discussing theology without initially opening the section with "proving the existence of the creator of the world". In revealed scriptures, however, there is no such topic or problem. In such books, seldom do we come across any discussion directly related to the issue of proving God's existence in detail.

In his book *Reason and Revelation in Islam* (1957) A. J. Arberry (1905-1969), says, "Greece, at the time

1. Majma' al-Bayān, Vol. 8, Page 36; Vol. 9, Page 60, 86.

2. Tafsīr al-Mīzān, Vol. 16, Page 155, Vol. 18, Page 89, 135.



of Plato, was the centre of statements pertaining to the existence of God along with their proof and arguments. This was the first time in the West that men sought to enquire about their God. None of the authors of the Old Testament ever dealt with God's existence as a complex problem about which there could be any doubt for the Semite Spirit found God in revelation itself. Moreover, what has just been said about the Old Testament is, with only minor differences, applicable to the New Testament as well."³

An insight into that part of the Avesta which is available to us shows that taking for granted the existence of God is not peculiar to Semite people and their religious books. In the Aryan religious text, the existence of God is also taken for granted, not requiring proof or logical demonstration.

In the Upanishads, which is among the Hindu holy books, we sometimes come across statements which seem to put the existence of God and that of the 'first cause' under question. Statements such as:

What is the cause? What is Brahma? Where have we come from? How do we live, and what is the base of our existence? In joy or sickness whose will are we under?⁴

According to many verses of the Holy Qur'ān, the environment into which the Holy Qur'ān was revealed, the existence of God was accepted and even idol worshipers did not deny the existence of the creator of the universe.⁵

It is clear that the belief of the polytheists in the intermediary role of the idols between themselves and God is signifying their belief in the existence of God the Creator.

Keywords: Qur'ānic Proof, God's Existence, self-evident, Aristotle's Philosophy, Necessity and Contingency, Ibn Sīna, MullaṢadra, Fitrah.

3. Arberry, A. J., *Reason and revelation*, p. 9

4. Upanishad p. 419 quoted from God in the Quran

5. 29:61 , 29:63, 43:9-12 , 10:18



Is it possible to establish any proofs for the existence of God?

The scholars are split in their opinion with regards to the necessity of proving the existence of God. One group of scholars felt that the existence of God was so apparent and self-evident that it required absolutely no proof, just like a basic mathematical formula like $2 + 2 = 4$. However, another group of scholars felt that the existence of God was something which required elaborate proof in order for His existence to be known by the people.

Zamakhshari (1070-1143), in line with his Mu'tazilite beliefs, believed that the existence of God was something which required proof.⁶ He bases his argument on the following verses of the Qur'an:

"Say, Is there anyone among your partners who originates the creation and then brings it back?" Say, Allah originates the creation, then He will bring it back." Then where do you stray?" (10:34)

"Say, Is there anyone among your partners who may guide to the truth?" Say, Allah guides to the truth. Is He who guides to the truth

worthier to be followed, or he who guides not unless he is himself guided? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?" (10:35)

"Look! To Allah indeed belongs whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth. And what do they pursue who invoke partners besides Allah? They merely follow conjectures and they just make surmises." (10:66)

"So do not let yourself be distracted from it by those who do not believe in it and who follow their desires, lest you should perish." (20:16)

"Why should you not have faith in Allah while the Apostle invites you to have faith in your Lord, and He has certainly made a covenant with you, should you be faithful?" (57:08)

"What thing is greatest as witness?" Say, Allah! He is witness between me and you, and this Qur'an has been revealed to me that I may warn thereby you and whomever it may reach. Do you indeed bear witness that there are other gods besides Allah? Say: I do not bear witness to any such thing. Say: Indeed He is the One God, and I indeed disown what you associate] with Him." (06:19)

6. Al-Kashshāf, Vol. 1, Page 158; Vol. 3, Page 514; Vol. 4, Page

472, Page 182.



He states that Allah has encouraged people to question everything and has forbidden blind imitation without establishing proof.⁷

Similarly, the Ash'arite exegete Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzi (1149-1209) has argued that the existence of God is something which requires evidence, and that establishing proof for the existence of God is actually one of the requirements of the intellect.⁸ Rāzi used verses of the Holy Qur'ān in order to justify his claim:

“Indeed in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for those who possess intellects.” (3:190)

He also uses verses 20:128, 23:17, as well as 24:44 to continue in this line of argumentation, by stating that our knowledge of Allah is far from being obvious or self-evident. As Ṭabarsi argues, it is inconceivable for humans to have an obvious comprehension of Allah, and further states that the highest position is the position of the Siddīqīn, i.e those who contemplate in the existence of God, as opposed to those who

merely blindly follow others in this regard.⁹ In order to support this line of reasoning, Ṭabarsi uses several Qur'ānic verses which appear to be in condemnation of blind imitation, such as:

“That is the good news Allah gives to His servants who have faith and do righteous deeds! Say, " I do not ask you any reward for it except love of my relatives." Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance for him its goodness. Indeed Allah is all-forgiving, all-appreciative.” (42:23)

“They said," Rather we found our fathers acting likewise.” (26:74)

“When they are told," Follow what Allah has sent down," they say, " We will rather follow what we found our fathers following." What! Even if Satan be calling them to the punishment of the Blaze?” (31:21)

Ṭabarsi goes on to state that even if Allah had not sent the Prophets and Divine Proof, then man would have still brought argumentation for the existence of a creator as this is a requirement of our intellects.¹⁰

7. Ibid, Vol. 3, Page 58.

8. Tafṣīr Kabīr, Vol. 2, Page 79, 89; Vol. 23, Page 77; Vol. 3, Page 13.

Page | 49

www.academicpress.org

9. Ibid, Vol. 9, Page 112; Vol. 23, Page 77; Vol. 2, Page 87.

10. Ibid, Vol. 1, Page 158.



God is self-evident

Numerous scholars, such as 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Ṭabarsi, held the opinion that the existence of God is so self-evident and such an obvious matter that it requires absolute no evidence, and that without any form of argumentation or reasoning, it remains an obvious reality by its very nature, due to the fact that the fitra (natural disposition) of mankind testifies to God's existence. Therefore, there is no need for any type of proof for the existence of God, and all verses in this field refer to Tawḥīd (monotheism), which does need proof.

The Qur'ānic Argumentation towards proving the existence of God

Amongst the scholars who hold the opinion that the Qur'ān does contain argumentation for the proof of God's existence, there are two distinct schools of argumentation, which can be divided into those who take a philosophical approach and those who favour a theological one. For instance, Zamakhshari is more inclined towards a theological approach whereas

scholars such as Rāzī (1149-1209), Khwāja Naṣr al-Dīn Tūsī (1201-1274), Jawādī Āmulī (1933) and Miṣbāḥ Yazdī (1935) are more inclined to taking a philosophical approach. However they are not unanimous in their line of reasoning nor in their approach in this regard.

Some of the philosophically inclined scholars prefer *Burhān-limmī* rather than *Burhān-innī* and are more focused upon the reasoning of *Burhān-limmī*, and many go as far as to argue that we do not have any present evidence or reasoning through *Burhān-innī* in the Qur'ān.¹¹ However, contrary to this approach, some scholars state that there are two types of argumentations¹², one of which is the argumentation of Fiṭrah (Divine disposition):

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا
لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“So set your heart on the religion as a people of pure faith, the origination of Allah according to which He originated mankind. There is no altering Allah's creation; that is the upright religion, but most people do not know.” (30:30)

According to this verse, man was created in

11. Tafsīr Kabīr, Vol. 1, Page 90, 149.

12. Ma'ārifiaz Qur'ān, Vol. 1.



a pure original state of monotheism¹³. In this type of argumentation, we don't need any intermediate knowledge or imagination for knowing God, rather we can understand Him through intuitive knowledge. In SūrahFātiḥa, it has been mentioned that the affairs of the universe have been divided into two categories, Khayr(good) and Sharr (bad), and whoever thinks for himself will realise that his state of mind is never constant, is prone to emotions and subsequently is always in different moods, and this is argued to be a sign pointing towards the existence of God who brings everything that is other than Him from non-existence, proving the fact that there is a creator (ḥudūthba'd al-'adam).¹⁴

In Surah 14, Verse 10, Allah says:

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ
يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيُبَغِّرَ أَجَلَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُخَوِّعَكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ قَالُوا
إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا
فَأَنزَلْنَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

Their apostles said," Is there any doubt about Allah, the originator of the heavens and the

earth?! He calls you to forgive you a part of your sins, and grants you respite until a specified time." They said," You are nothing but humans like us who desire to bar us from what our fathers used to worship. So bring us a manifest authority."(14:10)

This verse also indicates an argumentation for the *Fiṭrah* (Divine disposition), as whoever sees something without knowing its existence previously should realize that there must be a cause for that thing to come into existence.

Secondly, using the *Burhānḥudūth al-ajsām* or the argumentation of the “contingency of corporeal beings”, and referring to the verse 6:75, Zamakhshari states that the line of argumentation that things are created, and everything which is created requires a cause, is used to reason with the people.¹⁵ With regards to the verse 6:79, Zamakhshari follows up with the same line of argumentation.¹⁶ And regarding verse 71:17, he states that the term “*anbata*” that is used, indicates *ḥudūth* (contingency), or creation.¹⁷

13. Al-Kashshāf, Vol. 3, Page 484.

14. TafsīrKabīr, Vol. 1, Page 153.

15. Al-Kashshāf, Vol. 2, Page 38.

16. Ibid, Vol. 2, Page 39.

17. Ibid, Vol. 4, Page 620.



Different types of argumentations

Different types of argumentations are mentioned by scholars for proving the existence of God according to the verses of the Holy Qur'ān. Here we are going to mention some of these arguments and quote the opinions of scholars in this regard.

The Proof of God's Existence in Aristotle's Philosophy

In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle repeatedly emphasizes the point that his aim is to discover the fundamental cause of things and the principle of nature through the use of a method as befits a philosopher, a man of thought and investigation, and a free thinker. In other words, he is looking for the original cause or the first cause, and he is not going to take the path of those who have faith in some dogmas which lack logical background. For example, in his book *Beta* he says:

"...But those who think like Epicurus and all others who have spoken of divine objects; they have contented themselves with convincing

themselves and have never aimed to convince us. They did not bother to do this because they considered the primary causes to be the gods themselves".

"...It is therefore not necessary to carefully examine the view of those individuals whose philosophy is more like decorative ideas and phrases. What is appropriate for us to discuss and argue is the idea of those individuals whose statements are based on logic..."¹⁸

Aristotle's quest for the ultimate origin of things is based on the general law of causation, that is, "the need of every effect for a cause". In his view, if everything in the world was a natural object and possessed movement then the existence of a thing which would serve as the originator of nature and movement would be unnecessary since there would be nothing in the universe except nature and moving substance. In such a world, our knowledge would have been limited to the natural sciences and we would have no such thing as "metaphysics": "...If there should be no other substance except natural substances, physics (natural science) would be the First philosophy..."¹⁹

18. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, p. 247

19. *Ibid*, p. 713



However, in his search for an understanding of the real nature of things and the universe, Aristotle reaches the conclusion that the world is not limited to moving natural substances; thus in another part of his *Metaphysics* he speaks of 'mortal' and 'immortal' substances and attempts to discover their origins by asking, "do mortal and immortal things have the same origin or is it that each group has particular origin of its own²⁰?" Aristotle continues his investigations and finally reaches the conclusion that all things emanate from the same Self-Existing substance which is Alive, Knowledgeable and Powerful. A thing which, although unmoving, is the cause of all movement.²¹

Argumentation of God's Existence through Reflection upon His Signs

In many of its verses the Holy Qur'ān invites the wise²², the thoughtful²³, and the vigilant²⁴ to meditate deeply upon the world and its wonders and even upon the normal natural events and their causes, in order to gain

knowledge of the All-powerful, All-knowing, Wise and Merciful Creator. These verses are mostly intended to awaken man and draw his attention to the issues that arise after proving the existence of the Creator, such as: infinite Knowledge and Power, Sagacity, Kindness, and other attributes, especially the Power to resurrect man after his death, giving him an eternal life during which he would be either rewarded or punished in accordance with the kind of life he led on the earth.

In all these Qur'ānic verses, however, in order to realize the metaphysical realities, man is asked to pay close attention to the different things in the world and to draw conclusions about these signs through the application of intuitive inner perceptions and judgments, thus attaining useful and reliable knowledge about the world beyond the senses.

With reference to the foregoing discussion, this question may arise: if the whole universe and every single part of it, from atom to galaxy and from mineral to man, are clear signs

20. Ibid, p.1000

21. Allah fi al-Qur'ān, p.57

22. اولوالالباب

23. قوم يتفكرون

24. قوم يتذكرون



pointing to the Wisdom, Power, Will, Unity, Compassion, and other attributes of the Creator of the universe, would it not follow that the same universe is in itself a clear and undisputable proof of the existence of the Creator Himself?

If the answer to the above mentioned question is affirmative, we must conclude that although the Qur'ān, according to some commentators like Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Ṭabarsi, did not set forth straightforward arguments to prove the existence of God due to the intellectual level of the people at that time, it used a method which could be equally fruitful in proving the existence of God and gaining clear and certain knowledge about the fundamental issue of His existence. What these Qur'ānic arguments rely on is that every created thing that we find in the world needs, ultimately, a self-sufficient Creator who has the wisdom and the capacity to have created the myriads of different beings. It could be then said that whilst discussing the attributes of God, the Qur'ān sets forth an approach and a method which could also be used in dealing with the question of God's very existence.

Argumentation of accidental creation (A'rād)

Allah has encouraged people to ponder and reflect over His different and unique signs, such as the beauty and uniqueness of the heavens and skies and through such signs, their Lord can be recognized or at least be comprehended. In the Qur'ān, Allah says:

“What is the matter with you that you do not look upon Allah with veneration. Though He has created you in various stages. Have you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in layers. And has made therein the moon for a light, and the sun for a lamp?” (71:13-16)

“How can you be unfaithful to Allah,] seeing that [you were lifeless and He gave you life, then He will make you die, and then He shall bring you to life, and then you will be brought back to Him?” (2:28)

Allah has shown that He wished to be known or comprehended through His different signs, such as natural objects like mountains, the sun, etc.²⁵

25. Ibid, Vol. 1, Page 24, 152; Vol. 4, Page 620. Tafsīr Kabīr, Vol.

2, Page 89-90; Vol. 19, Page 177; Vol. 14, Page 81; Vol. 17,



Argument of Necessity and Contingency

For proving the existence of God, the philosophers and theologians have depended upon this argument and they have brought evidence for this from SūrahFāṭir in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

O mankind! You are the ones who stand in need of Allah, and Allah He is the All-sufficient, the All-laudable (35:15)

In this regard they have three types of explanation. Firstly, every existence is either necessary or possible in its very nature, and the only necessary existence is that of Allah, who is an independent existence. Subsequently, that which is other than Allah is merely a possible existence which needs a cause, primarily for its existence, then for its continuation.²⁶ The second explanation revolves around whether every existence requires a cause or not. So if an existence does require a cause, then it is dependant and needy, and every needy existence must therefore originate at a point which by definition must be self-sufficient, otherwise it would result in an

endless regression, which is impossible.²⁷

The third explanation is concerning the division of existence. It has been said that every existence through intellectual perception is either a necessary existence or a possible existence. Intellectually, no existent lies outside these two assumptions, and every single existent cannot be considered to be a possible existent, because a possible existent always needs a cause (*illah*). If all the causes were possible existents, each one of them in turn requiring a cause, no existent would ever come into being, because an infinite chain (*tasalsul*) of causes is impossible (*muḥāl*). Therefore, an infinite chain (backwards) of causes is bound to terminate with an existent (*mawjūd*) which is not caused (*ma'lūl*) by any other existent, i.e. it would be the necessary existent.²⁸

Argumentation of the possibility of essence

According to the philosophers, the universe is a possible existence as opposed to a necessary existence, and the reason the universe requires a cause is that it is a possible existence. Certain verses

Page 9.

26. Tafsīr Kabīr, Vol. 1, Page 46, 186; Vol. 4, Page 7; Vol. 9, Page 40; Vol. 14, Page 98; Vol 20, Page 42; Ma'ārifiaz Qur'ān,

Page | 55

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Vol. 1.

27. Durūs fi al-'Aqīdah, Vol. 1

28. Ma'ārefiaz Qur'ān Vol. 1 P. 128



of the Qur'ān may refer to this line of argumentation:

هَا أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَنِ نَفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ

“Ah! There you are, being invited to spend in the way of Allah; yet among you there are those who are stingy; and whoever is stingy is stingy only to himself. Allah is the All-sufficient, and you are all-needy, and if you turn away He will replace you with another people, and they will not be like you.” (47:38)

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ

“And that the terminus is toward your Lord” (53:42)

فَقَرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لِيَأْتِيَهُمْ لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

“Say, “So flee toward Allah. Indeed I am a manifest warner to you from Him”. (51:50)

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who have faith, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Look! The hearts find rest in Allah's remembrance! (13:28)

Argumentation of the Ṣiddīqīn (Burhān al-

Ṣiddīqīn)

The argumentation of Ṣiddīqīn has a different explanation, method and approach discussed by philosophers and theologians (mutakallimīn). This argument is based on the Holy Quran in the following verse:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

Soon we shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in their own souls until it becomes clear to them that He is the Real. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to all things? (41:53)

Ibn Sīna's Proof for the Existence of God

Ibn Sīna (980-1037) in his explanation of the above verse in chapter 9 of *Ishārāt* mentions his proof for the existence of God.

According to him and other philosophers such as MullaṢadra (1572-1640), this argument is the best argument by which the existence of God can be proven independently and without any premises.

In explanation of this argument Ibn Sīna says:

Every existent, if you look at it in itself



(*minḥaythudhātihī*), not looking at anything else, is either such that existence is necessary for it in itself (*fī nafsihi*), or it is not.

If [its existence] is necessary then it is God (*al-Ḥaq*) Himself, the Necessarily Existent itself, namely 'the Self-Subsistent' (*al-Qayyūm*).

If it is not necessary, then it cannot be said that it is impossible for it to exist in itself, after it has been presupposed to exist. Rather, if a condition were attached in respect to its essence, such as the absence of its cause, it would become impossible; or [if a condition were attached with respect to its essence] such as the condition of the existence of its cause, it would become necessary.

If a condition is not attached to it, neither the occurrence of a cause nor its absence, then a third thing is left over for it in respect to its essence, and that is contingency (*imkān*). And it is, in respect to its essence, a thing which is neither necessary nor impossible.

Thus every existent is either necessarily existent in itself or contingently existent in itself.²⁹

Ibn Sīna in chapter 29 supports his argument using verses of the Holy Qur'ān and he tries to bring out the superiority of his approach to metaphysics in the *Namatas* a whole quoting the following words from the Qur'ān:

“Soon we shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in their own souls until it becomes clear to them that He is the Real. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to all things?”(41:53)

As Ṭūsī explains, this inductive procedure is typified by the scriptural theologians (*mutakallimūn*) and also the natural philosophers (*al-hukamā' al-tabi'iyūn*), as exemplified by Aristotle's own kinematic proof.³⁰

It is the words at the end of the above verse, which are next quoted in characterization of the quite different procedure of Ibn Sīna and the lovers of truth (*al-siddīqūn*), or as Ṭūsī says, the true metaphysicians (*al-ilāhiyyūn*):

“Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to all things?” (41:53)

Thus, the *siddīqūn* aim to prove everything

29. *Al-Ishārātwa al-Tanbīhātma 'aSharḥNaṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī*, vol 3 p 447

30. *Ishārāt* vol 3 p. 482



through God Himself, or as Ibn Sīna explains, “they adduce evidence through Him (*yastash-hidūnabihi*), not towards Him (*lā 'alayhi*).”³¹

Ibn Sīna says (in what was just quoted above) that this method is better than the earlier one for it is both stronger and more worthy. This is so because the best argument that can lead man to certainty is the one in which we discover the effect through the cause, whereas the reverse case, that is, to use the effect as the proof for the cause, does not lead one to absolute certainty in some cases. This is so, for example, in cases where the only way to know the cause is through the effect: this was made clear in the section on argumentation. From Allah’s words in verse 41:53, Ibn Sīna has taken two aspects and related them to the two aforementioned methods.

These two aspects are:

1. Considering the signs existing in the world and within man as proofs for the existence of God.
2. Taking God as the evidence for the

existence of everything else.

Moreover, since he favours the second method, he has called it the method of “*Siddīqīn*” because a “*Siddīq*” is one who always searches for the truth.³²

Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī’s Proof for God’s Existence

According to Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (1201-1274), this argument is for the truthfals (*Siddīqīn*) who consider God to be the proof of other things, not other things to be an evidence for God.³³

Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī in explaining his opinion says³⁴:

“Theologians consider the coming into existence of objects and their qualities as proof for the existence of the Creator, and through examining and observing creatures it is possible to gain knowledge of the Attributes of God.”

Natural philosophers consider the existence of movement to be a proof for the existence of a mover, and believe that since the chain of such movers could not stretch back infinitely, we must finally reach a mover which itself does not move. Thus, they discover the first cause.

31. *Ishārāt* vol 3 p. 483

32. *Tajrīd al-’itiqād* p.172

33. *Sharḥ al-ishārātwa al-Tanbīhāt* p. 109

34. *Ibid*



The metaphysicians however, by examining 'existence' itself, and the fact that 'existence' must be either contingent or necessary, prove the existence of a necessary existent. Then, by examining the logical implications of contingency and necessity, they discover the attributes of the necessary existent. And through a contemplation of these attributes, they discover the process by which all creatures come into existence, emanating from the necessary existent.

‘AllāmahHilli’s Proof of God’s Existence

Nasīr al-DīnTūsī in his book *Tajrīd* referred to this argument saying, "The third point concerns the proof of the existence of God, His Attributes and effects which consist of the following chapters. Chapter one deals with the existence of God. A thing is either a necessary existent which in this case does not require proof, or a contingent existent which should depend on a necessary existent: otherwise we would be face with a vicious circle or infinite chain of causation both of which are impossible."³⁵

‘AllāmahHilli in his book *Kashful-Murād-*

fī-SharḥTajrīd al-I’tiqād, in explaining the above text, says:

"The proof for the existence of a necessary being is as follows: Undoubtedly we discover that there is a reality. This reality, upon which we cannot doubt, is either a Necessary being, in which case there is no need for further discussion, or it is not a Necessary being, which means that it is contingent, i.e. it needs a cause that would be the source of its existence. Now this cause is itself either Necessary, which would mean again that there is no need for further discussion, or it is contingent, therefore needing a cause; and we will end up with either a vicious circle or an infinite chain of causation which we have already said that both are impossible".³⁶

MullaSadra’s Proof for God’s Existence

In his *Asfār*, Ṣadr al-Muta’allihīn holds that the argument of the *ṣiddīqīn*(truthful ones) “is the best argument to prove God's existence”, but he sets it forth in such a manner that, as he himself says, would not involve vicious circles or infinite chains of causation.

35. *Tajrīd al-I’tiqād* p.172

36. *Kashf al-Murād* p.172



Şadr al-Mut'allihīn's approach would be a turning point in the inquiry into the original cause of things. He says:

Know that there are numerous ways to gain knowledge of God, because He has numerous aspects and virtues which allow every individual to follow his own particular path towards Him.

Nevertheless, it is also true that some of these approaches are worthier, stronger, and clearer than others. The best argument and proof is the one in which the middle term is actually nothing other than Necessary being itself. In other words, it is to know Him in the way of the *Şiddīqīn* (truthful ones), who take God Himself as the proof and witness to His own existence. Then, after proving His Essence, they move to the knowledge of His Attributes; and from knowledge of His Attributes to the knowledge of His Actions.

Others, such as theologians and naturalists, try to gain knowledge of God and His Attributes by studying other things such as the possibility of quiddity, emergence of creatures, and the movement of physical objects. These are proofs for the existence of God and His Attributes; but the first method is stronger and more worthy.

The following verse of the Qur'ān refers to all of these paths:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ
أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

Soon We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in their own souls until it becomes clear to them that He is the Real. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to all things? (41:53)

The gnostic philosophers reflect upon existence itself and come to know that reality is nothing but God, and He is the essence of everything. Then, by carefully examining existence, conclude that existence is automatically a Necessary being since existence is automatically Necessarily Existent.

Following his elaborate explanation of the argument of the truthful (*Şiddīqīn*), that is, gaining knowledge about God through perfect knowledge of existence, Şadrul-Muta'allihīn opens a new chapter in which he discusses the other arguments set forth by philosophy and theology to prove God's existence. More than any other argument, he discusses the argument of "necessity and contingency" which he sets forth along the same lines used by Ibn Sīna, Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī and



‘AllāmahḤilli. He says, "... this approach is the one closest to that of the truthful ones (*Ṣiddīqīn*) but it is not identical with the argument of *Ṣiddīqīn*, in which the reality of existence is what is paid attention to, while in this path it is the concept of existence."³⁷

Ṣadrī-Muta’alīhīn sets forth two fundamental advantages for his version of the truthful argument (*burhaneṢiddīqīn*) and the gaining of knowledge about the Creator through full comprehension of existence:

1. He has relied on actual existence itself and our immediate knowledge of it, and not on the concept of existence.

2. In this approach there is no room for a circle and an infinite chain of causation.

Argument of Fiṭrah

Allah says in Sūrah Rūm:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So set your heart on the religion as a people of pure faith, the origination of Allah according to which He originated mankind. There is no altering Allah's creation; that is the upright religion, but most people do not know. (30:30)

The Almighty Allah draws full attention to religion, then alludesto the fact that this is in complete accordance with the Divine disposition which Allah, the Exalted, has put into man, and which is unalterable. Then the verse says that it is the upright religion, and finally, that the majority of people are ignorant of this fact.

If the “Divine disposition” means that very intuitive knowledge, it will coincide with the ḥadīth narrated by Al-Kulayni³⁸ which regards the context of this verse to be identical to that of Āyatul-Mīthāq (the ‘verse of the covenant’).

Another commentary on this verse is that, the general ideological thoughts and laws, such as monotheism, worshipping Allah, caring for the deprived, establishing equity and justice in the society and other basic Islamic questions, coincide with man's innate nature, and are in harmony with his human needs, insight and tendencies. According to this commentary, knowing Allah and worshipping Him are natural. Another explanation, which is close to the above one, is that the actual meaning of religion is nothing but submission and obedience to Allah,

37. Asfārvol, p. 26

38. Al-Kāfi vol.2 P.12



the Exalted, shown in diverse forms of worship, and carrying out His instructions and laws. This is understood from the very word "Islam".

"Indeed, with Allah religion is Islam, and those who were given the Book did not differ except after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. And whoever defies Allah's signs should know that Allah is swift at reckoning"(3:19)

By saying that religion is natural we mean that having an inclination to worship Allah and to submit to the Lord is an inclination deeply-rooted in the natural disposition of man. Everybody wants, by nature, to get nearer to the Absolute Perfect.

According to this commentary, the verse does not directly refer to knowing Allah, but it can be said that the inherent inclination to worship God necessitates the existence of some sort of inherent knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, as man should have knowledge of Allah in order to worship Him. In this respect, there is in *al-Kāfi* a narration quoted from the Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.), commenting on the said verse, which says: "He had made them to know

Him."³⁹

According to another explanation and commentary of this verse, one of the innate qualities in human nature is the love and yearning for perfection. It is something which is infused in all generations of human beings, and not a single individual in the entire human species can be found without it. No custom or tradition, religious or legal institution can transform or obstruct this tendency. The natural inclination to seek perfection is so universal that if all the eras of human existence are probed and each human individual, no matter to what group or nation they may belong to, is questioned, a love for perfection will be found to be part of his nature and his heart will be found to be pulled towards it. Obviously the most perfect being in the whole world is Allah, whose perfection is infinite, therefore it can be said that everybody wants to know Him and get closer to Him.

The verse of the oath (Āyatul-Mīthāq) says:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ
عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

When your Lord took from the Children of

39. Al-Kāfi Vol.2 P.13



Adam, from their loins, their descendants and made them bear witness over themselves, He said to them, "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes indeed! We bear witness." This, lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, Indeed we were unaware of this. (7:172)

This verse is one of the most difficult to interpret and requires extensive discussions on diverse grounds. But to handle them all would take us away from our intended objective. According to this verse, everybody has a kind of knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, which can be explained to have occurred like this: Allah asked them: "Am I not your Lord? They replied: "Yes, we bear witness". This conversation is carried out in such a way that they are deprived of any excuse of committing mistakes in practice. Consequently, on the Day of Resurrection, no one would have the excuse to say that he had no knowledge of His Divine Lordship, or that they had only followed their fathers and ancestors in worshipping other deities besides Allah, as a pretext for their deviation and polytheism.

It seems that such an intuitive conversation

that removes all excuses, even formoral vices, cannot take place except by way of intuitive knowledge and vision. This is supported by many narrations that refer to perceivingand seeing. A narrative of this kind, quoted from the Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.), says: "...He made them to know Him and showed Himself to them, as otherwise one could not have known one's Lord."⁴⁰

Also in the expression of 'Ali al-Qummi, quoting Ibn Maskan, it is said that he had asked Imam al-Şādiq (A.S.): "Was it real?" He said: "Yes"⁴¹.

In "Al-Mahāsīn" by al-Barqī (d. 274), Imam al-Şādiq is quoted to have said: "...otherwise no one would have known who his Creator and Sustainer is."⁴² Therefore the verse refers to a personal knowledge, not to a general one which ensues through abstractive mental concepts. Personal knowledge of Allah cannot be except through intuitive and visionary knowledge. Had it meant a general knowledge acquired by means of mental inference, it should have been expressed like this: "...otherwise no one could

40. Ibid

41. Al-Mizān Vol.8 P. 340

42. Ibid P. 345



have known that he had a creator”, not “who his creator is”. So this verse makes us realize that knowing Allah by nature, means that intuitive and visionary knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, is accessible to everybody.

We arrived at the conclusion that intuitive knowledge of Allah could be understood from

the verses of al-Fitrah and al-Mīthāq. As well as these, the content of Ayatul-Mīthāq confirmed that Allah, the Exalted had made all the children of Ādam witnesses against themselves, and they did so and confessed that their Lord is "Allah".⁴³

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