

# Key Terms: Existence of God & Revelation



## Arguments for the Existence of God



**Design Argument:** The argument that the complexity and order in the universe suggest an intelligent designer (God).

**Strengths of Design Argument:** Appeals to scientific evidence like the fine-tuning of the universe.

**Weaknesses of Design Argument:** Critics argue that natural processes (e.g., evolution) explain complexity.

**First Cause Argument:** The argument that everything has a cause, and the universe's first cause must be God.

**Strengths of First Cause Argument:** Logical explanation for the universe's existence.

**Weaknesses of First Cause Argument:** Challenges include "Who caused God?" and alternative scientific explanations like the Big Bang.

**Argument from Miracles:** Miracles, as events breaking natural laws, suggest divine intervention.

**Example of a Miracle:** Jesus turning water into wine; Lourdes healings.

**Criticism of Miracles:** Could be coincidences, psychological phenomena, or fabrications.

**Problem of Evil and Suffering:** Questions how a loving, all-powerful God can allow suffering.

**Scientific Arguments Against God:** Science explains phenomena without needing God (e.g., evolution, Big Bang).

## Revelation and the Nature of the Divine

**Special Revelation:** Direct experiences of the divine, such as visions or miracles.

**Example of Special Revelation:** Saul's vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus.

**General Revelation:** Knowledge of God through nature, scripture, and reason.

**Nature as Revelation:** Observing the beauty and complexity of the world as evidence of God's existence.

**Scripture as Revelation:** Sacred texts as a way to understand God's will and character.

**Enlightenment:** Gaining spiritual knowledge or awareness, often seen in Eastern religions.

**Omnipotent:** Belief that God is all-powerful.

**Omniscient:** Belief that God is all-knowing.

**Immanent:** Belief that God is present and active in the world.

**Transcendent:** Belief that God exists beyond and independent of the universe.

**Personal:** The idea of God as relatable and involved in individual lives.

**Impersonal:** The idea of God as a non-relational, abstract force.



## Criticisms of Revelation



**Contradictory Ideas:** Different revelations lead to varying beliefs about God (e.g., personal vs. impersonal).

**Alternative Explanations:** Revelatory experiences might be hallucinations, coincidences, or psychological.

**Fraud or Error:** Possibility that people claiming revelations are lying or mistaken.

**Value of General Revelation:** Accessible to everyone but less direct and open to interpretation.

**Value of Special Revelation:** Direct but subjective and often unverifiable.

## Key Concepts and Contemporary Perspectives



**Vision:** A supernatural appearance providing knowledge about God.

**Miracle:** An event breaking natural laws, attributed to divine action.

**Atheism:** Belief that there is no God.

**Humanism:** A worldview emphasising human values and reason, rejecting the need for God.

**Faith and Reason:** Debate between belief based on evidence and belief based on spiritual trust.

