Phil Religion: Theism

Theism. God exists.

Puzzle 1

1. Suppose God doesn’t exist.
2. Then God is something that doesn’t exist.
3. So God is something.
4. So God exists.
   • Meinong’s solution
   • Russell’s solution

Classical Theism. There is an all-powerful, all-knowing, and perfectly good being which is the source of all being.

Omnipotence?

Puzzle 2

1. Suppose there is an all-powerful being, G.
2. If G is all-powerful, G can make it the case that \( 1 \neq 1 \).
3. If G can make it the case that \( 1 \neq 1 \), then it’s possible for it to be the case that \( 1 \neq 1 \).
4. It is impossible for it to be the case that \( 1 \neq 1 \).
5. So there is no all-powerful being.

Puzzle 3

1. Suppose there is an all-powerful being, G.
2. If G is all-powerful, G can make it the case that in the actual world, pigs fly.
3. If G can make it the case that ..., then it’s possible for it to be the case that ....
4. If it’s possible for it to be the case that in the actual world, pigs fly, then pigs fly.
5. Pigs don’t fly.
6. So there is no all-powerful being.

Omniscience?

Puzzle 4

1. Suppose there is an all-knowing being, G.
2. If G is all-knowing, then G knows everything.
3. If G knows everything, then G knows that pigs fly.
4. If anyone knows that snow isn’t white, then pigs fly.
5. Pigs don’t fly.
6. So there is no all-knowing being.
Puzzle 5

1. Suppose there is an all-knowing being, G.
2. Then G knows the proposition I express by “I’m not all-knowing”.
3. Anyone who knows the proposition I express by “I’m not all-knowing” is not all-knowing.
4. So G is not all-knowing.
5. So there is no all-knowing being.

Puzzle 6

1. Suppose there is an all-knowing being, G.
2. If G knows P, then part of what explains the fact that G knows P is the fact that P.
3. If G is all-knowing, then for each truth P part of what explains the fact that G is all-knowing is the fact that G knows P.
4. If G is all-knowing, then G knows that G is all-knowing.
   Let K be the fact that G is all-knowing. Let KK be the fact that G knows G is all-knowing.
5. So K is part of what explains KK. (By 2)
6. Also, KK is part of what explains K. (By 3.)
7. No two facts partly explain each other.
8. So there is no all-knowing being.

Omnibenevolence?

Puzzle 7

1. Suppose there is a perfectly good being G.
2. If G is perfectly good, then G is perfectly good in every respect.
3. If G is perfectly good in every respect, then G is perfectly good at never giving up.
4. If G is perfectly good in every respect, then G is perfectly good at giving up gracefully.
5. No one is perfectly good at never giving up and at giving up gracefully.
6. So there is no perfectly good being.

Source of Being?

- First cause
- Ultimate explanation
- Necessary being