



Reviewing Kant's View of God's Existence and Status in Religion

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history, the main and most important subject of metaphysics, namely, God and, consequently, religion, has been at the focus of attention of philosophers and thinkers. In the philosophy of Greece and the Middle Ages, philosophical thinking began from God and led to a discussion of nature and man. But this changed in the Enlightenment era, especially in Kant's philosophy. The distinction between Kant's thinking was that he began from mankind and then began to think of God as one of the concepts of human intellect. Indeed, from the eighteenth century onwards, with the critique of pure reason and practical reason in Kant's philosophy, the concept of God, and consequently religion and religiosity, became subject to fundamental change, and this fashioned the modern approach to the concept of God and its functions. The main purpose of this paper is to examine the concept of God and its place in religion based on Kant's reading. Because in the thought of Kant, the origin of the concept of God is not reason (pure reason) and nor is verifiable by pure reason; therefore, in the critique of practical reason, he proposes and proves the concept of God as the guarantor of ethics, and therefore the above-mentioned concepts in Kant's philosophy differ fundamentally from the conventional point of views. According to the discussed issues, the purpose of this study, which is a descriptive study, is to study Kant's view on the existence and status of God in religion. The present study also aims to explain Kant's religious thought, to explain and prove the existence of God according to pure reason, the principles of the existence of God, and according to religious commonalities.

Key words: Kant, God, religion, justifications of the existence of God, pure reason



1. INTRODUCTION:

Kant's argument concerning the principles of theology is based on the theory that God is the rational basis of the creatures and that his essential existence derives from his condition as the source necessary to everything that is contingent. From the point of view of Kant, the concept of God is natural for human reason and is necessarily implied in the rational reflection on the concept of an individual object in general. Kant tends to establish a rational-scholastic ontology, according to which objects have different degrees of reality or existence; as he considers the category of reality to have degree and intensity in the categories of quality (reality, negation, delimitation). He also resorted to the principle of Leibniz, that each object is intrinsically different in quality from all other objects, and follows Wolfe Webmagartin to present this concept in terms of "the principle of thorough determination": every object given by one and only one member of a pair of predicates is determined mutually contradictory, and the partial concept of a given object is a precise combination of realities and contradictions that it determines. Accordingly, Kant believes that when we try to imagine the conditions for the complete determination of a particular object, it necessarily involves the concept of "an all of reality" and hence we will lead to the conception of a partial object that has the condition of all the reality, that is, the "the most real being". According to Kant's argument, God's conception is the basis of the concept of all other things (Shahbazi, Bemanian, saremi, 2017).

The concept of God is not a concept that its object may be given to us in the intuition, whether pure intuition or sensory intuition, so cognition to God is not possible for us. The closest way to achieve such cognition is to analyze the mere imagination of an infinite being to see what predicates it implies. Kant assumes that since there is no distinction between concept and intuition in this case, there is a temptation to consider the object's givenness (deducting it through verifying its existence) is considered as if it is exactly another determination (perfection or reality) that objectifies its concept. This creates this dialectical illusion that we can recognize the existence of God merely by analyzing the concept of God. Therefore, Kant's critique of ontological argument is an attempt to reveal this illusion and to eliminate it (Bemanian, Shahbazi, 2017).



Although Kant does not make this point explicit at all, it can be argued that this argument commits a dialectical illusion of four terms fallacy. That illusion refers to the concept of "a being that has all of the realities". This concept has been transcendently used in the major premise, although for the purpose of deducing the ideal metaphysics, that concept must be empirically assumed in both in the minor premise and in conclusion. In the major premise, the concept of the most real being is the pure concept of a being that has all of the realities, and this concept is a transcendental concept; because it is abstracted from subjective conditions of sensitivity. But it is evident that the conclusion seeks to prove the reality (that is, the real being) of the infinite real being, and this is done by interpreting the "most real being" in the minor premise as the real object, which has all of the realities; that is, the minor premise assumes that being as the real object that can be attributed the real predicates in a synthetic way (Morgan and Nevirbeck, 2015).

Therefore, considering the importance of the issues discussed, the present study aims to investigate Kant's view on the existence and position of God in religion. Accordingly, other secondary goals are also considered for this research:

- Explaining Kant's Religious Thought
- Explaining and arguing the existence of God according to pure reason
- Explain and arguing the existence of God according to the principles of God's existence
- Explaining and arguing the existence of God with respect to religious commonalities

2. RESEARCH THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Kant's Religious Thought:

Since Kant wanted to provide a definition of religion that is defensible in the area of reason, and also exonerated the superstitions and prejudices of the shallow believers, then, after writing the first and second critiques and proposing the basic principles of this theory in them, in his later works, especially Speech in Ethics books; as well as religion in the domain of reason, only addressed religion in detail. Below are the following points from his critical views on the revelatory religion in these works: Kant distinguishes between "natural" or "rational" religion, and "revelatory" or



“metaphysical” religion, and considers Christianity as a revelatory, irrational, and therefore immoral religion (quoted in Engelhardt, 2011).

✓ Although Kant's critique of revelatory religion is typically focused on formal Christianity, but if we look good, he simultaneously challenges the Jewish law and believes that, as Moses Mendelssohn has also noted, Christianity is dependent on the legal system of Jewish religion, whereas the authenticity of this religion and the book of the Torah is not clear. Christianity therefore requires the invisible church service to become a universal religion in the world, not an organization composed of church head and staff (Kant, 2001; quoted in Engelhardt, 2011). Kant criticizes and investigates the rituals and worships of the religions of Judaism and Christianity, and considers beliefs, and ritualism as an unpardonable and irrational task that overwhelms the inner freedom of thought and has a destructive role in the rationality of religion and causes the tendency of religion toward "superstition", "prejudices" and deviations. He considers such a religion as "ingratiation" and "religious seduction" and calls it "pseudo-service" or false and "mercenary service" to God, and believes that the will of God has been fixed and unchangeable, and cannot be changed with prayer and church rituals. In his view, such acts include fasting, repentance, and atonement and do not have any moral goodness per se, but have merely an expression of dedication and readiness for subjection (Kant, 2001; quoted in Engelhardt, 2011). One of the theoretical foundations of Kant's religious thought was that he saw that epistemologically the use of the understanding categories in the context of the pure reason ideas (especially the idea of God) is equal to being entangled in the trap of endless fallacies of pure reason. This intellectual basis gradually led Kant to practical reason and ethics. But what made Kant turn from the realm of practical reason and ethics to the realm of religion was his failure to find an unconditional foundation for ethics. Hence, we find that there is a definite relationship between religion and ethics in the Kant's intellectual system, and understanding Kant's religious theory requires explaining how it relates to ethics and practical reason. But as mentioned in the previous section, the religion Kant seeks to link to ethics is natural religion, not revelatory religion (Kant, 2001; Engelhardt, 2011). Kant also points out in the determination of the priority of ethics or religion that discussion of religion is beyond ethics, rather than being a sign to it, because moral perfection must be realized and instantiated in (natural) religion. From the point of view



of Kant, ethics and theology (revelatory religion) collectively constitute the natural or rational religion, but without ethics, there cannot be any religiosity, and if so, that religion is based only on culture and tradition. In other words, he believes the only theology that can be the basis of religion, guarantees ethics and moral perfection. For this purpose, he does not see any other means to imagine the Supreme Being, which is a "fair judge" (to punish and reward), "benevolent ruler" and "sacred lawgiver". These are "moral attributes" that must be conceived in an existence called God; and in order for us to have such an image of God, we do not need a "revelatory" or theoretical religion (Muller & Hobbes, 2015).

3. STATUS OF GOD EXISTENCE:

Although Kant, in accordance with the principles of critique of pure reason, cannot recognize and theoretically prove the metaphysical truths such as God, but in the critique of practical reason, he accepts these truths as the forms and principles of practical reason and discusses them. The important point in this critique is the origin of validity of these principles and forms, which indicates the place of these forms in Kant's philosophy. In his opinion, the validity of these forms on the one hand is dependent on the validity of the moral law, and on the other hand, upon the continuity and the connection that links the understanding of the categorical imperative to the postulates. This continuity is closest with the principle of liberty and loosest in relation to the principle of the existence of God (Kant, 2001; quoted by Sires, 2014).

Since Kant considers all the arguments of proving the existence of God misleading, his intention of "there is God" premise as one of the postulates of practical reason is that the moral law objectifies it. The moral proof of the existence of God is made using the notion of the highest good, and requires the existence of moral perfection as well as happiness proportionate to it. Kant returns to the concept of happiness in explaining the existence of God. In ethical law, he does not see a correlation between morality and happiness proportionate to it for humans in a part of the world (Kant, 2001; quoted by Sires, 2014).

Mankind is not the cause of nature, so he will not be able to proclaim nature with the principles of his actions in order to achieve happiness; therefore, nature requires an entity distinct of nature in order to organize, as the Supreme Being, the harmony



between happiness and morality. Thus, the highest good is supposed to be the Supreme Being (Kant, 2001; quoted by Sires, 2014).

In Kant's opinion, reason frees himself from believing in obligation by resorting to his conception of God, whether that obligation is a natural blind necessity within the system of nature itself, without a prior origin or is an obligation in its causality, the original source and in the sense of the causal reason and, consequently, the concept of the great intellect. Therefore, the benefit of transcendental ideas (self, universe, and God) is that they invalidate the rude natural and material and obligatory religions that lead to the loss of reason, and thus, open a place for moral conceptions outside the realm of theoretical knowledge (Will and Christina, 2011).

4. PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD ACCORDING TO PURE REASON:

Kant, by critique of pure reason and based on his own epistemological basis (on the distinction between phenomenon and noumenon), concluded that it is impossible to achieve God's knowledge through reason. Therefore, by putting some propositions next to each other and argumentation with the help of reason one cannot prove the existence of God. As one cannot achieve the knowledge of God through senses or sensory experiences, one cannot be convinced by reason or rational reasoning to the existence of God and other metaphysical beings in a credible manner. From his point of view, we cannot know the object as it truly is (noumenon), but we can come to the object as it appears and emerge in our minds (phenomenon). He does not deny the existence of reality or object in itself, and he has no doubts about such existence, but believes that we have neither access to it not by the senses nor by reason; therefore, the way for knowing it is closed for us. According to Kant's reasoning, God's conception is the basis of the concepts of all other things (Will and Christina, 2011). Kant, in the critique of the pure reason, denies that his argument justifies this dogmatic conclusion that "God exists," but that argument was very important in proving the claim that the imagination of the most real existence was inevitably an attempt to conceive the conditions of possibility of each partial object; i.e. from the complete determination of the concept of that object, which is the exact combination of perfections (or realities) and the absence of them (or negations) that objectify that object. According to this argument, Kant



claims that God's conception is only an ideal of reason; that is, only the idea of an individual object that is fully determined through its mere concept (Wood, 2014). Since, according to the natural rules of reason itself, reason can only conclude a particular from a universal, thus it must suppose the maximum of reality, so that it can begin from it, and according to it, determine the reality of other objects. This object, which warrants the whole reality, is the only complete object; because it is fully defined in terms of all contingent predicates, and for that very reason, this most real existence can be the basis of any other contingent being, because to imagine the possibility of infinite objects, it is only necessary to imagine a great reality that has been limited in infinite ways. This mere concept of understanding, that is, the concept of God as an entity that warrants every reality, exists in every human understanding, but it may appear in different ways (Mandaric and Blanchard, 2015).

5. CRITIQUE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD ACCORDING TO PURE REASON:

The rejection of the ontological argument and the rational word, such as the rejection of rational cosmology and rational psychology, is based on two claims: first, the rational conception (in this case, the image of God) is accompanied by an inevitable illusion, that is the basis of the next attempts to determine that conception through the categories; secondly, this recent effort should be considered an error that can be avoided. Since Kant has succeeded in proving these two claims in his critical philosophy, it can be said that his critique of the ontological argument and, in general, his critique of the rational argument is valid. But this credibility depends on the credibility of critical philosophy and Kant's epistemology; that is, if one accepts Kant's epistemology and admits that knowledge requires that its object is given in sensory intuition, and that the category of being is only for the expression of givenness of the object in the sensory intuition, and also accepts that mankind lacks the rational intuition by which he can recognize the existence of the world per se, and thus accept that the knowledge of man is limited to the phenomenal universe, and that man cannot know the world of sensible things (God, soul, and the world), he has no way but accepting Kant's critique of ontological argument. But if one does not accept Kant's epistemology and, like Descartes, believes that a person has the power of rational intuition, a force that can intuitively witness the



existence of physical and metaphysical beings, then an ontological argument will be valid for him (author).

God in Kant's critical philosophy is considered as the ideal of pure reason which sees it as the most real and the most complete of all creatures. From the point of view of Kant, the meaning of God does not involve any empirical element; therefore, it calls it the "example of pure reason" or "transcendental example". Indeed, since for Kant God is not an existence to be perceived beyond sensitivity, that is, in time and space, he cannot be linked to anything else due to the causality category. The concept of God is merely a concept through which a complete unity of mind can be achieved, that is, God is only a mental form, but if we say that such a concept is true in the outside world, we will be caught up in a fallacy. It is, of course, not concealed that for Kant, with this critical assessment of the power and scope of human reason, it is inevitable to deny the traditional proofs of the existence of God. After examining the reasons for proving the existence of God, he considers them to be exclusive to three ontological, cosmological, and physio-theoretical arguments (the author).

The ontological argument claims that it is possible to deduce the existence of a creature from the contingency of imagining it, and this proposition that a complete being is conceivable concludes the proposition that it exists; but it has the fundamental error that "existence" is not one of the predicaments. Whatever, and as far as our concept is concerned with the object (that is logically necessary for it), we must go outside and beyond it, so that we can attribute the existence to it. Or, in other words, we decide that it is not empty (without evidence) and that the decree is correct. The conception of Supreme Being is in many ways a sensible form of usefulness, but because it is a sensible one, it is not possible to extend our knowledge toward what it is by itself (author). Contrary to the expectation of the proponents of the ontological argument who want to prove God through an analytical proposition by analyzing the concept of the most complete being, it is not possible to prove the existence of God in this way, but it should be necessarily synthetic. But the proof of the existence of God does not make sense through a posteriori synthetic proposition; because sensory experience is not possible with God and should therefore occur through a synthetic proposition prior to experience, and such propositions can be only true in the phenomenal world, and the sensory categories and understanding categories do not apply to things which cannot be



spatial and temporal. The most fundamental objection to the cosmological argument is the assumption that an infinite series (and, in the current case, a series of causes) in the world of experience ends. This assumption is the source of all errors of absolute metaphysics. It should be noted that the cosmological argument itself does not prove the existence of God, and maximally proves the logically necessary existence (the author).

6. ARGUMENTS ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD:

Kant considers the arguments to prove the existence of God only as proofs of the existence of the infinitely perfect being, or the most real being, and assumes that a sufficient proof of such a being must be a priori argument. Kant, divide all the arguments on the existence of God into three types:

- ✓ "Ontological arguments" that derives the necessary existence of the most real being from its conception only
- ✓ "Cosmological arguments" that concludes the necessary existence of the most real being from the contingent existence of the universe in general;
- ✓ "Physio-theoretical arguments" which derive the necessary existence of the most actual being from the possible formation of the universe

He believes that the physio-theoretical argument cannot prove the existence of the most real being unless it relies on the cosmological argument and the cosmological argument cannot prove that the most real being exists necessarily, unless it relies on the ontological argument. In other words, Kant claims that inference of the existence of the most real being from a necessary being in the cosmological argument and from a wise designer of the world in the physio-theoretical argument, requires that we presuppose the ontological argument, because even if we can prove the existence of the necessary being with a cosmological argument, we cannot determine its nature. Only if, with the help of ontological argument we know in advance that the most real being is the necessary being, and assume that no other being can be necessary; we can prove the existence of God as the most real being or the complete being with a cosmological argument. Without doubt, the cosmological argument can be considered valid as far as it proves the existence of a necessary being, and the purpose of Kant is not here that a cosmological argument cannot prove the necessary being without the ontological argument, but his point is that without the help of the ontological argument, we cannot



conceive the necessary being as the most real being, and therefore, we have no reason to describe it as God (Plantiga, 2010).

In order to reject the arguments of the existence of God, it suffices that Kant proves that no ontological argument is contingent for proving the existence of God, and hence, invalidates the other two arguments, the cosmological and the physio-theoretical arguments; therefore, Kant's critique of the arguments of the existence of God, and in general, Kant's critique of rational theory is dependent on his critique of ontological argument (Mitchell, 2015).

The traditional arguments on proving the necessary being has been subject of debate in the history of human thought and one of the most important philosophical and theological issues which has occupied the minds of many Islamic and Western scholars. Hence, the study of Kant's perspective on this subject, for which he has been famous in the history of religious thought, would not be worthless. In this regard, the question is why Kant criticizes the correctness and efficiency of the traditional arguments of the necessary being (ontological, cosmological, natural, and teleological arguments) despite the belief of many scholars and thinkers (Bemanian,oryaninejad, shahbazi,2016).

In addition to the numerous reasons mentioned in religious and philosophical works, it seems that one of the reasons that led him to criticize these arguments was that he saw there is a fundamental difference between the term "knowledge" which is related to theoretical knowledge (or theological errors), and "belief", which is related to practical knowledge (religious errors). Because knowledge and cognition means the possession of a proposition that is both objectively and subjectively sufficient, while belief and faith are not related to the real world and only subjectively sufficient (Plantiga, 2010).

Traditional arguments proving the necessary being, if correct, could be useful as knowledge, but it was not as effective in belief and faith. Hence, he proposed three major objections on Descartes and Anselm's ontological arguments, and concludes in the end that proving the existence of God through ontological argument, which is a priori and analytic, is inaccurate and fundamentally impossible. He also considers the cosmological and teleological arguments based on the ontological argument, and believes that, since the foundation of the first argument is loosened, the other proofs will be further elaborated as loose. In Kant's view, in contrast to the ontological argument, we do not want to reach the concept of God from his conception in cosmological



argument, but we intend to conclude the existence of God as an unconditional being from the "existence of the universe" or the cosmos at the end of the chain of causes. But "causality" only makes sense in the world of experience. In the teleological argument, we usually draw from the order of nature, its endlessness, while the maximum that this argument can do is to prove the existence of an architect for a limited universe, not the proof of the existence of God (Saremi, shahbazi,2016).

In addition, he tries to prove that the existence of God cannot be proved by means of "posteriori synthetic propositions". What remains is "a priori synthetic propositions", which is only applicable about empirical data or phenomena. Of course, it should be noted that he not only considered providing any proof on the necessary being impossible, but also believed that it would be impossible to provide any argument in its rejection (Saltzer and Hernandez, 2016).

7. CRITIQUE OF ARGUMENTS ON GOD'S EXISTENCE:

In order to reject the arguments of the existence of God, it suffices that Kant proves that no ontological argument is contingent for proving the existence of God, and hence, invalidates the other two arguments, the cosmological and the physio-theoretical arguments; therefore, Kant's critique of the arguments of the existence of God, and in general, Kant's critique of rational theory is dependent on his critique of ontological argument. If the ontological argument is assumed to be within the same metaphysical tradition that belongs to it, it is clear that the "most real being" and "the most complete being" are not simply abstract definitions, but they are based on an ontology, the ontology in which the nature of each being consists of a certain combination of realities (or perfections) and negations, and Kant invokes to it in the argument of how the image of God is formed (author).

In this ontology, the notion of a being who possess all of the realities or all of the perfections naturally has a certain place. In fact, in this ontology, the notion of such an entity is essential to any concept of any object. This ontology itself is only meaningful for someone who accepts the idea that all realities or all perfections can be found in one being, and even that the realities must be found in their supreme and most perfect form in that being. If "existence" or "necessary existence" is one of these realities or perfections, then it does not seem reasonable to attribute it to any being, except for the one in whom all perfections are found in its supreme form (author). Kant's claim is that



the concepts of objects are generally constructed of realistic predicaments, namely, realities or perfections are built as understood in traditional ontology. But Kant wants to distinguish between the propositions determined by attributing a reality (or perfection) to a subject, and the propositions which merely determine the object in accordance with that subject matter, without attributing something that can be part of the concept, to that concept. The propositions that are "There is" are of the second type; when we say: "There is God" or "God is there", we do not attribute a new concept to God subject, but we only lay down the subject with all its predicates (author).

In order to better understand Kant's critique of ontological argument, it must be understood not as a rejection of the metaphysical ontology of realities or perfections but as a rejection of rational epistemology that the ontological argument through it (epistemology) holds that metaphysical theory. For Kant, recognition requires that an object is given in intuition and be conceived through concepts. The category of existence is used for objects to express the object's givenness, that is, its relation to a real intuition (through senses). The givenness of object is expressed by the word "there is" or "exists"; a term that deducts a subject matter in which the concepts of various realities may be held. Since intuition is a cognitive function that is distinct from the concept, no concept can express this condition of cognition. Consequently, the existence of an object can never be possible in the concept of it, but it shall always append to that object through intuition in which the object of concept is given. Therefore, Kant's critique of ontological argument is only valid to the extent that his most fundamental theory of epistemology, that is any cognition also requires that the object be given in intuition, and that subject is thought through the concepts is valid (author).

8. FINAL ANALYSIS:

According to Kant's critique of epistemology, the origin of the concept of God in his philosophy is different with his predecessors, because in the thought of Kant, the origin of the concept of God is not reason, since the concept of God is one of the categories that cannot be proved by pure reason. Consequently, Kant in the critique of practical reason proposes the concept of God as the guarantor of ethics. Examining the position of God's concept in the critique of practical reason of Kant's philosophy, in which Kant implies and in some way proves the concept of God, is not to precede all the mere categories of practical reason. Instead, the concept of God and religion are in accord



with morality. Regarding the approach Kant adopts toward the concept of God and how it is proved, the concept of religion and religiosity in his philosophy is fundamentally different from the traditional view (author).

Perhaps the most important subject of the metaphysics is God and, consequently, religion, which has been considered by philosophers and thinkers throughout history. In the philosophy of Greece and the Middle Ages, philosophical thinking began from God and led to the discussion of nature and man. This process continued in the Renaissance and the new era before Kant, as Descartes' philosophy also was somehow enclosed within this framework since it began from God to think about mankind. In the Enlightenment, and especially in Kant's philosophy, this is transformed, Kant starts from human, and then he thinks of God as one of the concepts of human intellect. Indeed, from the eighteenth century, with the critique of pure reason and practical reason in Kant's philosophy, the concept of God, and consequently religion and religiosity undergo fundamental transformation, and this forms the modern approach to the concept of God and its functions (author).

Kant's religious thought owes to the reactions to the rationalism and piety in contrast to Lutheran theology and the empirical views on cognition, yet one should not ignore the influence of his epistemological views on directing his religious thoughts. A combination of these factors, including the incorrect functioning of the church during the past centuries and the entrance of the positivity to the Christ religion, led Kant to a rigorous critique of theological doctrine and instead turned toward a rational theology. Also, his epistemological views, which should be bound to the theoretical foundations of his thinking, consider the traditional arguments in proving the existence of God as infertile and thus refer the proof of God to pure reason and ethics. But he ultimately, in practical reason, places ethics beyond religion, and assumes the existence of God only as a guarantee of ethical rules and principles (author).

Kant's critique of theology has two periods: in the first period, which coincides with the writing of his book *Critique of Pure Reason and Prolegomena*, most influenced by Hume, he distinguishes between religious and secular theology and believes that revelatory theology cannot be a real basis for religion and the maximum that can be done is to create an appropriate context for the understanding of moral theology. In the second period, which is exclusive to the works published after his death, he comes to



moral or rational theology. Kant also divides the gem of religion into two parts: one of the "ceremonial or revelatory" religion, which is usually carried out by the church and is associated with belief in miracles, prayers and ceremonies, and therefore has multiplicity; and the other is "pure ethical religion", which according to him, is united and relies on the rules of reason. The point to be noted here is that, despite Kant's sharp criticisms of religion, his philosophy of religion does not have a completely negative view of religion; because the critique of pure reason is not only opposed to dogmatism, but also is not compatible with skepticism. Not only is it opposed to religious fanaticism, it is opposed to atheism; and according to Kant, and all these things have been for the sake of religion. However, Kant cannot be considered a pure believer, or consider all his criticisms of religion correct (author).

Of course, it should be noted that the relationship between religion and morality is two-sided in Kant's terms, and he does not want to regard religion as the source of morality; on the contrary, it believes that these moral laws backed religion and are used in the knowledge of God. In his view, if religion is preceded by morality, then in order for a man to communicate with God, he must consider God as a servant and master who has no choice except to surrender before him (as we see in the positivist Judicial Law and now the church is following it), and it is then that devious practices, prayers, chants, and other apparent acts (and, in the words of the Kant: superstitions) comes to the fore. On the other hand, Kant points out that although ethics is the foundation of natural religion, nevertheless, the power and beauty and reality of ethics are in religion. Otherwise, ethics will not be anything but ideals, and basically what gives power and reality to ethics is the belief in a transcendental being that we find in natural religion (author). Therefore, based on Kant's point of view, religion is based on ethics rather than ethics based on religion, and he believes the reason is since we do not know anything of the nature of religion, and therefore it is better to base ethics on reason and remove its foundation from religion. In other words, since mankind is incapable of obtaining the happiness that he deserves in this universe, he must assume that an omnipotent moral being exists as the ruler of the world in order to achieve this end. Thus, ethics necessarily lead us to religion (author).

The above description points to Kant's view of the common way humans believe in God's concept and its external entity, which clearly manifests a humane perspective on



how God is known. In the works published after Kant's death, there are statements that, if it is taken into account alone as Kapleston says, may seem that Kant abandoned the idea that there is an independent God, apart from the concept of God. "God is a charter of a rational thing, and in fact the concept of such existence is not the concept of essence, i.e. an existence independent of thought, but it is the notion of the rational category (creation), which consolidates God as the same object of thought. And in accordance with the principles of transcendental philosophy, he creates a priori and perfection propositions that cannot be asked whether there is such an object, because the concept is transcendent (author).

Kant had already stated in the book of the Critique of Pure Reason that the concept of God as a mere creature is an "example or transcendental ideal". This concept is not expressed for God, and the existence of God cannot be deduced from this concept. "We do not have intuitive knowledge of God, we see him as if in the mirror, not into the face" Kant says in his post-death works. Therefore, it is impossible to infer the existence of God from the concept of God. This concept is a product of pure reason, and an example of transcendental perfection (author). Although God is the postulate of Kant's practical reason, his conception, recognition and acknowledgment are based on the perception and acknowledgment of an ethical act, as if we were capable of providing the purpose of moral actions, we did not have to assume God! The only prerequisite for the fulfillment of morality is will to Kant, but this will move towards a goal that, although in its development does not require any objective matter, it needs a continued life in another world (the proof of immortality of the soul) with the presence of an almighty and knowledgeable God for its virtue and happiness. But in justifying this need, Kant thinks that happiness is empirical and based on nature, but ethics is voluntary and within the human being, and there is no link between the two. The moral person, seeking for happiness, must be able to incorporate the laws of nature into ethical laws and regulate nature in such a way that it will always benefit the moral person. But this is not within the human ability and, therefore, we need a being that is the creator and organizer of nature. This being, with its absolute wisdom and knowledge, drives the apparatus of nature towards the moral direction. In this way, this being is the condition of the highest good that is also the creator of the universe and nature. Nevertheless, the assumption of God is necessary from a moral point of view (author). If we look carefully, we find that



by denying the objective and external aspect of God, religion and its structure are also reduced to an inward, personal, and intuitive aspect. Kant, in the book of religion distinguishes between "ecclesiastical religion" and "moral religion," and only considers the latter as the warrant of moral practice and its improvement, and considers the first type pernicious and contrary to moral health. There is no miracle in Kant's religion because, according to him, the miracle works well where there is no reason. In this way, the number of religions will also be eliminated, and only a true religion will remain on the basis of moral safeguards. In such a religion, rituals and religious practices are not needed because, besides that there is not the need for theoretical knowledge and proof of God, the performance of duty is also free from any special rules (author).

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