

**THE FIRST AND SECOND PROOFS FOR THE WORLD'S PRE-
ETERNITY IN AL-GHAZALI'S *TAHAFUT AL-FALASAFAH***

by

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submitted in part-fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS – WITH SPECIALISATION IN ANCIENT
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES**

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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SUBMITTED: AUGUST 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page.....	Page 1
Declaration.....	Page 3
Dedication.....	Page 3
Acknowledgements.....	Page 3
Introduction.....	Page 4
Summary.....	Page 8
Key Terms	Page 9
Chapter One	Page 10
Chapter Two	Page 38
Chapter Three	Page 49
Bibliography.....	Page 51
Appendix	Page 52

DECLARATION

I declare that *The First And Second Proofs For The World's Pre-Eternity In Al-Ghazali's Tahafut al-Falasafah* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Mr. Z. D. Mall

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my parents, who made enormous sacrifices to the cause of the Arabic Language (“the language of Heaven”) in South Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following individuals are hereby acknowledged for having rendered academic and moral support in this present endeavour:

- Professor Yusuf Dadoo, Department of Religious Studies and Arabic, UNISA
- Mr. Iqbal Jazbhai, Department of Religious Studies and Arabic, UNISA
- Professor Emma Ruttkamp, Department of Philosophy, RAU

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

This is an attempt at translating the refutations of the **First and Second Proofs for the world's pre-eternity** of al-Ghazali's *Tahafut al-Falasafah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), page 13 till page 39, Article 6 to article 107 as presented in the edition of the same by Marmura¹. The selection of this specific work for a Master's dissertation was motivated by the following criteria:

- Al-Ghazali is arguably the greatest Islamic thinker after the period of the Prophet (saw).
- The *Tahafut* has been composed in clear, classical Arabic prose.
- The enormous impact the *Tahafut* has had on the subsequent development of Islamic thought.
- The fascinating infusion of logical argument into a domain widely regarded as being proper only to religion, and hence affirming the contention of the Prophet (saw) that logic was the foundation of his religion.
- The indispensable role al-Ghazali has played in defending the fundamental doctrines of Islam via the logical weapons of the philosophers themselves, thereby being moved to charge none other than ibn Rusd and ibn Sina with *Kufr* for their heretical views.

Al-Ghazali's style is to present the arguments of the Philosophers first and then counter them with his own. He then anticipates a possible objection to his arguments, presents it and then proceeds to refute it with another rebuttal of his own. In this way al-Ghazali proceeds methodically and step by step to prove his fundamental assertions.

Some of the arguments presented are complex and subtle, and often the context and premises are left unstated. Where necessary therefore, proofs and refutations have been prefixed by explanatory notes given within curly brackets, so as to provide an orientation for the ensuing line of argument. Within the translations into Arabic my own interpolations are enclosed in

¹ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, edited and translated by Michael E. Marmura, Provo, Utah, Brigham Young University Press, 1997.

square brackets so as to facilitate continuity and to make explicit hidden relations and references among terms. Rarely, some minor passages not central to the current theme have been omitted from this translation, lest the reader be diverted from the main thread of the proof at hand. While recourse has been made to extant translations for guidance, an attempt has been made here to keep closer to the original text, and to improve upon the errors and omissions of others. Much as I admire and respect al-Ghazali, I was quite proud to have detected and pointed out an error in his text. Meticulous care has been taken to keep to the numbering system of the Arabic text adopted by Marmura². The portion of the *Tahafut* selected for translation has been reproduced at the end of this thesis, with the pages numbered in Roman numerals for easy reference. My own attempt at translation stands closer to that of Marmura rather than to the older translation by Sheik [12].

Fundamentally, al-Ghazali's reply is that *Allah* decreed in the eternal past that the world should be born at a specific, fixed time in the future. There is nothing absurd about a cause having a delayed effect, and if the Philosophers opt to disclaim such a possibility simply because it appears irrational to them, this is insufficient, for to other minds this explanation seems quite rational.

The Philosophers argue that since all instances of time are identical, how could it have been possible for Allah to single out a single point in time for the birth of the world? Al-Ghazali's reply is that it is the function of the free will, even that of *Allah*'s, to choose and differentiate between two identical alternatives.

The Philosophers admit to the absurdity of presupposing an unending chain of causes for a given phenomena in the world. This is because no single link in the chain can provide the quality of unconditional necessity for that phenomena. By this is meant that every link in the chain provides only a partial justification for the appearance of the phenomena, and any link is itself justified by what precedes it in the chain. Hence the chain as a whole must lead to an ultimate First Cause, which is necessary "in itself" and requires no further justification as a cause. So if the Philosophers are prepared to concede such an ultimate cause as the cause for individual phenomena in the world, what prevents them from conceding that Allah could generate the entire world at a specific, appointed instance in time?

The Philosophers believe that any movement, even that of *Allah*, can only be caused by the movement of another mover, and Allah, who is ever constant, cannot logically produce such a movement or change in Himself.

² Ibid

They contend that localized, momentary changes in the world are caused by the eternal, ceaseless revolutions of the outermost celestial sphere. Its revolutions are constant and elliptical, but subject to minor, local variations which explain the occurrence of individual phenomena and changes in the world. Accidents in the world are thereby attributed to the perpetual orbital motions of the spheres and their aberrations, and not to the direct intervention of *Allah*.

Al-Ghazali refutes the Philosophers by asking how a temporal movement can proceed from an eternal movement. Either both would be eternal, or both temporal. And if the temporal movement is due to aberrations in the eternal celestial revolutions, what is the cause of such variations in such orbital motion?

In their Second Proof the Philosophers argue that time is the measure of motion. So if they can prove that time is eternal, it would follow that that which moves, i.e. the world, is likewise eternal. Al-Ghazali accepts the premise that time is the measure of motion. Nonetheless he contends that there is no compelling reason to believe that the material world is not finite. Hence, time must also be finite. It is only the perverse influence of the imagination that leads one to believe that time exists beyond the realm of the physical world. Continuing in this vein, al-Ghazali argues that space is finite, because it is simply an attribute of mass or body, which is something finite.

The relative merits of the translations by Kamali and Marmura have been discussed above, yet it ought also be mentioned that the latter includes a critical introduction, placing *The Tahafut* in its historical and intellectual context. Craig [4] in his book *The Kalam Cosmological Argument* affords a technical discourse on the logical problems of the infinite. Providing logical and cosmological arguments, his conclusions stand approximate to those of *The Tahafut*.

Goodman [6] in his article “Ghazali’s Argument from Creation” critically analyses al – Ghazali’s so called “contingency argument” which occurs time and again in the latter’s writings. The foundation of this argument is that *Allah* is the only self-subsistent being, and that all other beings are dependent on Him for existence i.e. the world is contingent. Hourani [7] discusses the debate between al- Ghazali and ibn Rushd. He provides a critical commentary on two of the major proofs of the Philosopher’s that had been contested by al – Ghazali. In the first proof the debate on the world’s pre-eternity and the nature of the Divine Will feature, while in the second proof, the question about time being eternal or finite is handled.

Marmura [9] in the extract “the Logical Role of the Argument from Time in the *Tahafut*’s Second Proof for the World’s Pre- Eternity” points out in much depth that the structure of the argument of the Philosophers is that of a hypothesized, truly disjunctive syllogism, and that the argument is a sound one. The Philosophers successfully prove the impossibility of *Allah*’s temporal priority to time. Marmura [10] in his article on “al – Ghazali’s attitude to the Secular Sciences” explicitly states al- Ghazali’s postulates underlying his refutations of the Philosophers, and the important role the Theologian assigned to Logic and Mathematics within Theology. Sheik [12] handles the *Tahafut* in Chapter 9 of his book. He affords a clear, simplified exposition of the underlying tenets of the arguments of the Philosophers. Finally, Watt [13] in his book deals with Theological rather than Philosophical issues which had concerned al – Ghazali’, but does provide useful biographical material.

SUMMARY

The Philosophers such as ibn-Sina had maintained that time and space were co-eternal with *Allah*, emanating by necessity from His Attributes, and not being the results of a deliberate act of creation. This must be the case, for otherwise nothing would have been present to induce Him to create the world after a period of non-existence.

Al-Ghazali's refutation of this is that *Allah* had decreed in pre-eternity that the world would materialize at a future, predetermined date, selecting an instance for its birth from a myriad like-instances by exercising His Free Will and manifesting therewith a cause with a delayed effect. The Philosophers' explanation of local phenomena as resulting from the perpetual motion of the spheres is flawed, since perpetual celestial motions would result in perpetual, not transient phenomena.

Time, the measure of motion, does not extend beyond the physical realm. Time, and hence motion, is finite

KEY TERMS APPEARING IN THIS THESIS

- *Allah*
- **Philosophers**
- **Argument**
- **Birth of the world**
- **Eternal**
- **Attribute**
- **Matter**
- **Space**
- **Time**
- **Logical**

THE TRANSLATION

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST PROOF

Articles 6&7 [p1]

{The Philosophers deny the possibility of the world having been created in time by an Eternal Being. For the world to have been created at some instant in time and not have co-existed with *Allah*, a giver of preponderance or creator of conditions) would have to have given it birth. But where was the giver of preponderance before that, and why did it act precisely when it did, and not earlier? *Allah*'s states of being are eternal and therefore unchanging; having initially decided not to create the world, He could not suddenly have changed His mind and willed its creation}.

[The Philosophers] maintain that it is impossible for a temporal event to issue from an Eternal Being. [The reason being that] if we assume the [presence of] The Eternal with the world not yet having issued from Him, then it would indeed not [ever] have issued from Him, for the world would not have had that which would have given it preponderance. Instead the existence of the world would have been possible, but [simply] as pure possibility.

[But] if [on the other hand] it transpired [i.e. the issuance of the world from *Allah*] then [by implication] either a giver of preponderance would have emerged or it would not have emerged. If no giver of preponderance had arisen, then the world would have remained as pure possibility [only] as was the prior situation. But if a giver of preponderance did arise, then who was the giver of preponderance, and why did [that giver] occur [precisely] then and not earlier? So the question about the occurrence of the giver of preponderance remains [unanswered]. In short, if the states of the Eternal are similar, [i.e. unchanging] then either nothing whatsoever exists with

Him at all, or else it exists with him eternally. But as for the state of refrainment [i.e. non-action] differentiating itself [in *Allah*] from the state of action [in *Allah*], this is [simply] absurd.³

Article 8 [p1]

The precise statement of the question of the Philosopher's [lies in it] being asked why the world did not occur before its actual occurrence. It is [of course] not possible that *Allah* be removed from a state of impotency at originating [the world], nor is it possible for the world [ever to have been] impossible to create. For that would lead [to the conclusion that] The Eternal switched from impotency to ability and the world from [the state of] impossibility to possibility, whereas [it is well known] that both options are unthinkable.

Nor is there a possibility for it to be said that before the creation of the world there was no purpose [for its creation, however] thereafter a purpose was originated. Nor [can there be] a possibility of a state [being attained] by a loss of an instrument [for creating but] thereafter [being replaced by the state of] the instrument being found. Rather, the closest imaginable thing to say is that He did not want the existence [of the world] before that [i.e. the time of its actual creation]. From this it must of necessity be said that its existence transpired because He became aspirant for its existence after [the period when] He was not aspirant [for it]. In this case an aspiration for creation would have [found] occurrence. But the occurrence [of an aspiration] in Himself is absurd, since he is not a locus of events and the appearance of an aspiration outside himself would not [ipso facto] make him an Aspirer.

Article 9 [p2]

Let us abandon inquiry into the location of the occurrence of the aspiration [to create the world]. The forms of the [present] argument is based upon the source of [the aspiration] for creation, from where the aspiration originated, and why it

³ The premise here is that *Allah*'s states are not receptive to variation

occurred now and not earlier. Did it come into existence from now from a source other than *Allah*? If an event is permitted [to have occurred] without pre-supposing a cause, then let [us suppose rather] the world [as a whole] to be an event without a maker. And if this is not admitted [as a solution], then [one may well ask] what the difference is between the one event and the other. For if the world came into being through an action of *Allah*, then why was it born now and not earlier. Was the [prior non-existence of the world] due to the lack of an [appropriate] instrument, or capability, or purpose or [adequate] nature [of the creator]. But when that [absence of the world] was exchanged for existence, the world came into being. [But here] the format of the argument above recurs.⁴ Or is [the world's prior non-existence] due to the absence of a will [to create it]? [Now if we assume that a will suddenly occurred of itself], then that will would have required another will [to create it], and in this manner the first will would be conjoined to another *ad infinitum*.

Article 10 [p2]

Therefore, without reservations, [lit. with the unrestricted word], it has been verified that the emergence of an event from The Eternal, [assuming] no change in the [internal] states of The Eternal as regards capacity, tools or [sufficient] time or purpose or [inherent] nature, is [something] unthinkable. The assumption of a change [in the internal states of The Eternal] is untenable, because the argument for such change in The First Mover is no different from arguments for other [changes in the internal states of] The First Mover, and all of [these proposed changes] are impermissible. So long as the world was present and its occurrence [as an event in time] impossible, its infinite pre-existence remains not inconceivable.

Article 11[p2]

{ This article has been omitted from translation as its contents are peripheral to the central theme of the argument }

⁴ This question being, of course: "What gave rise to the formerly absent instrument, capability, purpose or nature?"

Article 12 [p2]

{ Al-Ghazali now begins his rebuttal of the arguments of the Philosophers }

The counter- argument [to that of the Philosophers] derives from two aspects.

THE FIRST OBJECTIONArticle 13 [p3]

One of these aspects is in it being asked of [the Philosophers] with what proof they would deny [the argument] of one who says that the world actualized through an eternal will that made its existence necessary at [precisely] the time that it [in fact] materialized. [Further], that the [preceding] absence [of the world] lasted until that limit towards which it had proceeded, and that existence began precisely when [it had been willed] to begin and that existence before that had not been willed. [Hence] for [simply] that reason [the world] did not arise [previously]. [Rather] at the [specific] time at which it did arise, it had been [so] desired by The Eternal Will, and therefore materialized. Now, what is the obstruction to this conviction, and who is the assignor of the impedance [to such a] belief?

Articles 14 & 15 [p3]

{ Here al-Ghazali anticipates a possible counter-argument from the Philosophers, which he states and later refutes }.

Suppose it is said [by the Philosophers] that this is absurd, and its absurdity has been manifested by the [principle that] an event is [something] necessitated and caused. And just as it is impossible for an event [to occur] without a cause and that which makes [its occurrence] unavoidable , it is likewise not possible to find an impelling cause , replete with all the conditions for optimizing [the effect], and [replete as well] with

the [knowledge of] the principles [governing] the effect and replete with the [knowledge of] its causes to the extent that absolutely nothing remains awaited, [but] yet the effect [to be] necessitated is delayed. More likely, the presence of the necessitated effect at the realization of the impelling cause replete with the conditions [for producing] the effect is a necessary [consequence]. [Indeed], a delay in the appearance of the effect is unthinkable on the grounds of the impossibility of the simultaneous presence of a necessitated effect with the absence of the [corresponding] impelling cause.⁵

Article 16 [p3]

For before the existence of the world, the Aspirer existed as well as the aspiration, as its nexus. Neither was the object of the aspiration, nor the Aspirer renewed. Not even a new nexus [between the two], which was not already there, was created. This [had to be the case], because all of that [would have signified] change [in the Aspirer]. This then [being the case], how was the object of aspiration [nevertheless] created, and what [was it that] prevented it from having been created before that [actual time of creation]. [Indeed], the condition of creation did not [even] distinguish itself from the previous condition in any thing from [all possible] things, nor in any affair from [all possible] affairs, nor in any state from [all possible] states, nor [for that matter] in any relation from [all possible] relations. More likely, the situation was exactly as it [ever] previously was, following which there would not have [possibly] been existent the object of aspiration, [the state of affairs, therefore] remaining identical to what it was [previously]. But [then suddenly] the object of aspiration is present! What is this then other than the utmost impossible limit [of absurdity].

Article 17[p3]

{ The Philosophers try to lend plausibility to their standpoint via an illustration from everyday life }.

⁵ There is clearly confusion here in the argument. Correctly the argument should be stated as: “the simultaneous presence of an impelling cause with the absence of a corresponding necessitated effect is impossible”

But this type of absurdity is not [only] restricted [to matters] as regards the compelling and the compelled, the necessary and the essential. Indeed [it is also illustrated] by the customary and the conventional.

[For example, we see that] if a man were to pronounce divorce to his wife, yet [in so doing] does not achieve immediate separation, it is hardly imaginable he would achieve it after that. This [stems from] his making the pronouncement a pretext for [legal] intervention, in accordance with convention and agreed practice. Delay of the effect would therefore not be a reasonable [outcome], unless the divorce-pronouncement were to be annexed to [the condition of taking effect only] the following day, or with [the condition of] the entry [the husband] into the house. [Obviously only] in such a case [the divorce] does not take effect immediately, but instead with the arrival of the morrow and with entry [of the husband] into the house. This arises from his [the man's] having made it [the pronouncement] a cause connected to an awaited thing. But since [the awaited event] is not present at this time, being [as stated] the morrow and [the man's] entry, the attainment of the necessitated [effect] has tarried upon arrival of what is not now present. And [to be sure], the necessitated effect would not have been achieved except [on the condition that] something [else] be already realized, that being the entry [of the man] into the house and the arrival of the morrow. And even if he [the man] had wanted to delay the necessitated effect [normally] arising from a pronouncement not made contingent upon the attainment of that which is not yet realizable, it [the delay] would have been unthinkable, despite his being the stipulator [of the terms of the pronouncement], and the arbitrator [lit. selector] of the details of the arrangement. Hence if it is not possible for us to stipulate this [type of delay simply] by our own desires nor conceive of it [occurring], how can we [at all] comprehend [it occurring in the realm of] assertions [that are] essential, rational and necessary.

Article 18 [p4]

{Omitted from translation as the argument is vague and only peripheral to the central theme}

Article 19 [p4]

{Once again an argument by the philosophers is produced, eschewing the possibility of any time-lapse between willing and that which is willed}.

Now The Eternal Will is subjected to the same rules as our [own] resolve. Hence a delay [in the attainment] of the objective is unthinkable, except if there is a [stipulated] impediment. Nor [for that matter] can the [temporal] priority of the objective [to willing] be imagined.⁶ Hence it is inconceivable that an objective [to be arrived at] today should materialize [only] tomorrow, unless [as we have seen], this had been [prearranged] by virtue of intent. And if The Eternal Will were to be subjected to the same laws as our [own] resolve, that [i.e. a simple pre-arrangement] would not be sufficient for the realization of the [objective of] the resolution [after the pre-arranged delay]. Rather, there would [in such a case] have to be a resurrection of the [original] intention at the [instance of] generation [of the intended act]. But this is [nothing other than] an assertion of a change in The Eternal. Hereafter there [still] remains the identical form [of the previous argument] concerning that goal, or aspiration or whatever you wish to be its name. [This is]: “Why did it occur now and not previously?” So [the end effect is] that either there remains with us an event without a cause, or the causes conjoin [regressively] ad infinitum.

Article 20 [p5]

{This article has been omitted from translation as it is essentially a repetition of the argument given in article 16}

⁶ For the Philosophers , Allah’s intention and that which He intends necessarily arise simultaneously.

Articles 21&22 [p5]

The reply [to the above contention] lies in it being said: [With respect to the statement]: “The impossibility of The Eternal Will being related to the occurrence of something whatever it might be [is confirmed]”- do you know this impossibility through the necessary inherent laws of the intellect or through [one of] its theories? And [while] according to you, language is the domain of logic do you [then] know the connection between these two terms by virtue of a middle term or by the absence of a middle term? Now if you assert [the presence of] a middle term in accordance with the theoretical method, then there is no escape from producing it. But if, [on the other hand], you claim to know that [connection between the two terms] through the impelling [laws of] the intellect i.e., then how is it that your detractors do not share with you in this knowledge, [especially] as the party convinced of the birth of the world [in time] by [the agency of] an Eternal Will may not be contained in a [single] land [alone], nor can any number enumerate it. Nor is there any doubt that they [i.e. the detractors of the Philosophers] do not stubbornly contradict the intellect when they [happen to] possess the knowledge of something. It is therefore imperative to construct a proof satisfying the rules of logic that demonstrates the impossibility of that. [This] all the more so, for in everything you have mentioned [thus far] there is nothing [more] but the disqualification of contrary arguments and the comparison of The Eternal Will with [our own] resolve and aspiration. But this comparison is false, for The Eternal Will does not correspond with temporally confined intentions. As for the simple disqualification [of opposing arguments], this is inadequate [as a rebuttal] without a [supporting] proof.

Articles 23 & 24 [p5]

{These two articles have been omitted from translation as they deal with Allah’s knowledge of universals, which is a digression from our present theme of causality.}

Articles 25 & 26 [p6]

{Here al-Ghazali refutes the Philosophers' notion that the world has been existing contemporaneously with Allah for an infinite time. He proceeds by invoking the logical paradoxes that consistently plague the concept of infinity.}

In fact, we would not be overstepping the unavoidable consequences of this inquiry when we ask with what means would you [Philosophers] refute your opponents if they said: "The eternity of the past is [in itself] an absurdity because it induces one to assert an infinite number of revolutions of the heavens with no restraint to their units. Nevertheless, [paradoxically] they [i.e. the number of revolutions] have fractions of a sixth, a fourth and a half. In fact, the orbit of the sun revolves [once] in a year, and the orbit of Saturn revolves [once] in thirty years so that the [annual] revolution of Saturn is a third of a tenth of the [annual] revolution of the sun [in arc length]. Further, the [annual] revolution of Jupiter is a half of a sixth of the [annual] revolution of the sun [in arc length], for it revolves [only once] in twelve years. Again [following from the tenets of the Philosophers], just as the number of revolutions of Saturn are unlimited, the number of revolutions of the sun are [also] without limit. Yet, [paradoxically], the number of revolutions [of the Sun] are a third of a tenth of those of [Saturn]. Indeed, there is no end to the number of revolutions of the orbits of the stars, which revolve once in 76,000 years. Likewise, there is no limit to the eastward motion of the sun, [occurring] once in a [period of] a day and night. And so if someone were to say to the Philosophers: "This is from among the things whose absurdity is known by necessity", then with what means would you [Philosophers] dissociate yourselves from his words? Moreover, if the speaker were to say: "Is the number of revolutions even or odd; or even and odd at the same time, or neither even nor odd" and [in reply] you were to say [it is] both even and odd simultaneously, or [it is] neither even nor odd, then [in this case] the answer's invalidity would be known by [logical] necessity. [But] if [on the other hand] you replied "even", then the even number would become

odd by [simply the addition of] a single [extra] revolution. So how can something with no limit to it lack one [unit]. But if you were to say [instead] “odd”, then [of course] we know that the odd [number] becomes even with the [mere addition of] a [single] unit. Again, how can that [infinite number] lack one unit by virtue of which it would become even [were it to be added on].⁷ Again [equally paradoxical, we ask] how can that [infinite number] lack one unit by virtue of which it will become even. Thus you [Philosophers] are compelled to say that the number of revolutions [of the heavenly orbits] is neither even nor odd, [an untenable conclusion].

Articles 27& 28 [p7]

{Here al-Ghazali anticipates and refutes a possible attempt by the Philosophers to evade the issue by their declaring any question of odd and even numbers as inadmissible}

[Now] if is said by them that indeed it is only finitude [of number] that is described as being [either] even or odd, whereas that [number] which never ends may not be thus described. [In reply], we would say that the invalidity of an aggregate made up of units, and possessing the fractions of a sixth and a tenth as has been [already] mentioned, yet [at the same time] cannot be described as even or odd is known by the necessity of [logical truth], without [needing] contemplation. So by what means would you find a way out from [this dilemma]. But if it is now said [by the Philosophers], that the location of error lies in your saying that it [i.e. the aggregate of orbital revolutions] is a quantity composed of units. Yet [we all know] that these revolutions have vanished. As concerns the past, it is extinct, and as concerns the future, it is not yet present. [But] the word ‘aggregate’ signifies entities [actually] present, [whereas] here there is nothing present. [To this], we [Theologians] say:

⁷ In modern parlance we would affirm al-Ghazali’s point by the statement: $\text{infinity} + 1 = \text{infinity}$. It is definitely not true that $\text{infinity} + 1 = \text{an even number}$.

Article 29 [p7]

[Any finite] number may be classified as either even or odd, and it cannot possibly escape this [classification]. [This] is equally true if what is being counted presently remains or has [since] passed away. Hence, if we assume a [certain] number of horses, we are compelled to believe that the number does not become devoid of being either even or odd, regardless of whether we consider the [horses] existing or non-existing. Hence, even if they were to vanish after having been present, this situation does not differ [as regards their number].

Article 30 [p7]

{ The premise here of the Philosophers, is that the souls of departed beings are infinite in number, the world being eternal in time. This affords al-Ghazali an example of an infinite number whose discrete units are invisible, yet existent. The question of whether this number is even or odd remains absurd }

According to your own sources, it is not unthinkable for [there to be] entities present, [discrete] units varying in description yet infinite [in number]. These are [none other than] the souls of human beings that have departed from their bodies. Now these are real existent entities [whose number] cannot be described as even or odd. So how would you refute one who says that the invalidity [of this categorization] is known by [logical] necessity, just as you have claimed that the invalidity of the relatedness of The Eternal Will to [the willing of] temporal events [follows] by [logical] necessity. The opinion on souls [used here as a premise] is the one selected by [none other than] ibn Sina, and [stems originally] perhaps from the school of Aristotle.

Articles 31&32 [p7&p8]

{ These have been omitted from translation as they probe deeper into the Aristotelian theory of souls, and digress from the principal line of thought. }

Article 33 [p8]

The point of all this is to make manifest that they have not rendered their opponents incapable of their belief in the bond between The Eternal Will and temporal events except by the claim of necessity. Nor are they able to successfully distance themselves from those who [in their turn] claim the [logical] necessity [of their conclusions] against them [i.e. the Philosophers] in these matters that contradict their conclusions. And from this [result] there is no way out.

Article 34 [p8]

{Time, according to the Philosophers, is uncreated and co-existent with Allah. Here al-Ghazali denies this notion by arguing that time, like matter, is created by Allah and that it is meaningless to talk of time before the world's creation.}

And if it is said [by the Philosophers] that this argument rebounds against you [Theologians in that] before He created the world Allah remained in a state of being able to create for a year or two, thereby there being no limit to his capacity. It is as if He were patient, did not create, then created. Nor was the period of disengagement [in creating] unlimited. Now if you [Philosophers] assert that the period of [non-creativity] was limited, it follows [logically] that the existence of The Creator is bounded as to His beginning.⁸ But if you said that the period [of non-creativity] by Allah was unbounded, then it follows [that] a period had elapsed [until actual creation] wherein the possibilities [of changes in *Allah's* states] would have been uncountable.

Article 35& 36 [p8]

{Here al-Ghazali explicitly states the fundamental axiom upon which his refutations are based.}

⁸ This conclusion follows only if we adopt the Philosophers' tenet that Allah and the world exist as entities within an infinite, all-embracing time.

As far as we are concerned, periods [of time] and time [itself] are created entities and we will manifest the truth of our reply to this [issue] by distancing ourselves from their second proof [of the world's pre-eternity].

Articles 37& 38 [p9]

{Al- Ghazali makes a distinction between the concepts of the possible, the impossible, and the necessary:

Before the generation of the world, its creation hinged upon one of three modalities, viz. the possible, the impossible and the necessary. Now it could not have been impossible, for the world does indeed exist. Not could it have been necessary, for nonexistence of that which is necessary is impossible to be conceived of, and cannot apply to the birth of the world. Hence the only remaining plausible alternative is that the world's creation must always have been possible, otherwise it would not have been born when it did.

But this last modality presupposes a substrate which is in the process of becoming actual in form. Possibility cannot subsist in nothingness, but presupposes matter as a substratum which is susceptible to possibility . Nor for that matter can possibility be posited in *Allah*, for *Allah* exists by necessity. Hence matter could not have originated in time, for then the possibility for its existence would have preceded its existence, which ex hypothesi has to be excluded.

In Kantian fashion, al - Ghazali maintains that possibility, like impossibility, is merely conceptual, to which nothing need correspond in actuality. If possibility demands a substratum wherein it persists, then so would its logical counterpart, termed impossibility. But it is clear that impossibility cannot demand a substratum wherein it may persist. Finally, there is a huge gulf between the possibility of something's existence, and its actual existence. An illustration would be the ontological fallacy committed when one concludes from the statement : "Mermaids swim" that mermaids do exist.}

Now suppose the Philosophers were to ask with what means would you refute one who relinquished the claim of necessity [for their statements], but point to their truth via another aspect. This is that the [various points in time] stand at the same level as regards receptivity of attachment of The Eternal Will to

them.⁹ So what was it that distinguished a specific point in time from [another point in time] before it and after it, while it was not inconceivable for the earlier or later times to have been chosen for this purpose.

In fact, as regards whiteness, blackness, motion and rest, they [the Theologians] say that whiteness [of an object] results from The Eternal Will. The very same spot that is receptive of blackness is [equally] receptive of whiteness. So the question as to why the Eternal Will bonded with whiteness without bonding to blackness remains. And what was it that distinguished one of the two possibilities from the other [with respect to] the bonding of The Eternal Will with it? [At the same time] we know by [logical] necessity that a thing may not distinguish itself from what resembles it except through being designated [as such].

And if that [principle] is admissible [here], then the occurrence of the world is certainly acceptable, for it [the world] is capable of existence and equally [capable] of non-existence. It may be possibly deemed for the aspect of existence, just as it may be possibly deemed for the aspect of non-existence, without [prior] designation. And if you [Theologians] said that it is The Eternal Will that [eventually] designated it [for existence], then [the question arises] about the designation of things by The Eternal Will and why it designated [in the manner it did]. But if you [Philosophers] now said that ‘why’ is not asked of The Eternal, then certainly the world must be assumed as being eternal. Thus no one ought to demand a constructor or reason [for the world], for [in matters of] the Eternal ‘why’ is not asked.¹⁰

Article 39 [p9]

{This article has been omitted, for the analogy herein is vague, and better ones are offered later in the text}

⁹ A misspelling in the Arabic word for ‘will’ occurs here.

¹⁰ The Philosophers argue here that since the viewpoint of the Theologians leads to an inadmissible ‘why’, their position in this matter must be false.

Article 40 & 41 [p9 & p10]

[In reply], we would say that, on the contrary, the world was created when it was, with the peculiarities with which it was created, and in the location where it was created by virtue of the will. Now one of the pertinent properties of the will is the distinguishing of something from that which is [very] similar to it. And if that property were not relevant to the will, then sufficiency [for the conditions of creation] would lie [in simply] having the power [to do so]. But for the [very] reason that the relation of this power to the two opposing [positions] is the same, there is no avoiding [the positing of] a designator who sets aside something from that which is [very] similar to it. Moreover, it is said [by the Theologians] that The Eternal has besides this capacity [another] property which among others is concerned with earmarking one thing from that which is similar to it. Hence the question [previously asked] as to why The Eternal Will earmarked one from two similar things is similar to the question of the speaker who asks: “Why does knowledge [of something] necessarily demand that that thing be encompassed [by the knower] regarding those [properties] pertaining to it. [The answer to this lies] in saying: “Because the word ‘knowledge’ is an expression for a quality [of the knower], and this is its [definitive] function.” Nay, the essence of this quality [i.e. the will] is the distinguishing of something from its likeness.

Articles 42&43 [p10]

And suppose [the Philosophers] were to say that [the attempt at the] demonstration of [the presence] of a quality whose function is the distinguishing of a thing from its likeness is irrational, in fact it is a contradiction. For if the constitution of a thing is [very close] similarity [to another thing], this means that they cannot be distinguished [from each other], while if its constitution is distinction [from anything else], this means that it is not similar [to anything at all].

For example it is not necessary to think that two black things in two different places are identical in every respect. This is because this one is in a [particular] place, and that one is in

another place. And this [difference] makes distinction obligatory. [In the same way] it is not the case that the two [similar] black [objects] in the same spot at two different times are absolutely identical. This follows from [the fact that] this one distinguished itself from that one [with respect to] time. Therefore, how can this [black object] be similar to that [one] in every respect? When we say that two black [objects] are similar, we mean by this expression that they are [similar only] in blackness [and thus] connected in a special, not absolute way. And if this were not the case, [it would imply] that the location and the time [of each object] had become one, there not remaining [any] distinguishing features, making [discussion of] two black objects, [nay, even] of duality, fundamentally irrational.

This [result] is further realized by the expression ‘The [Eternal] Will’ is borrowed from [the concept of] [our own, common] will. And nor is it imagined by us to distinguish a thing from its likeness by employing [our common] will. Indeed, were there before a thirsty man two glasses of water identical in every respect to each other, even as regards [the man’s] intention, it would not be possible for him to take [any] one of the two [at first]. Yet, in fact, he would [at last] choose that which he sees as better, or lighter, or nearer to his right hand, assuming it is his custom to move his right hand. Or [failing this], any cause from this [category of] causes, be it unknown or obvious, [could motivate his choice]. And if this is not the case, [then] distinguishing something from its likeness in any situation is [simply] unthinkable.

Articles 44 & 45 [p11]

The objection [to the thesis of the Philosophers] derives from two aspects:

The first aspect concerns your statement that this [distinguishing of a thing from its likeness] is unthinkable. Do you [Philosophers] know this thesis through the necessity [of logic], or through theoretical speculation [lit. construction]? In fact, claiming any one of these [positions] is impossible. Your analogy of The Eternal Will [compared] with our [common] will is a false comparison, resembling the comparison between

[The Eternal Knowledge and our common] knowledge. The knowledge possessed by *Allah* is distinct from our [common] knowledge, in matters we have earlier reported on [in the text]. So why should the difference between [that which is] eternal and [that which is] common [in matters of] the will be improbable. Indeed, maintaining this improbability is analogous to one who says: “An essence present neither without nor within the world, [and] neither attached nor detached [from the world] is unthinkable, because we do not conceive it [existing] in our reality. Further it is said by the Philosophers: “This position of yours is the work of your imagination [only]. As concerns the truth of the intellect [for our thesis], well, the intellectuals have [already] uttered the confirmation of that [thesis].”

{Now al-Ghazali proceeds to refute the Philosophers}

Then with what means would you [Philosophers] refute one who says [instead] that the intellect has put forth the confirmation of an attribute of *Allah*, The Exalted, one of whose functions is the distinguishing of a thing from its likeness. And if the name ‘will’ does not suit [this attribute], then it should be named with another name, for there ought to be no niggardliness about names. Nevertheless, we have applied this name in accordance with the law. [Had this] not been the case [we would have refrained from applying it for we know that] the word ‘will’ is laid down in the language to specify that which has a temporary object of desire. Clearly, there is no temporary object of desire with respect to *Allah*. However, what is intended [here] is the meaning [of words], not their articulation.

Article 46 [p11]

[And further], against [the thesis of the Philosophers], we do not accept that that attribute [discussed above] is unthinkable, [even] as regards ourselves. Hence, let us assume that there exist two dates identical to each other [lying] before someone looking [longingly] at them, but incapable of having both of them at once.

It is [certainly] not inconceivable that he would [still] take one of them by virtue of an attribute whose concern is the setting aside of something from that which resembles it. And [with] all that you [Philosophers] have mentioned about [lit. from] the distinguishing features of goodness or nearness or facility of taking we assume [simultaneously] the premise of their being absent. Yet, [despite this] there remains the possibility of [his] taking [a date].

[In short], you [stand] between two matters: Either you may say that equivalence with respect to the purpose of the man [having to choose one of the two dates] is completely unthinkable, this judgement [being mere] stupidity, since the premise [of equivalence between the two dates] is [certainly] possible, or [on the other hand] you might say that if equivalence [of the two dates] has been decreed [permissible], the yearning man would forever remain in a state of selecting. [He would be in a state of] observing the dates, but never taking either of them by virtue of [the instrument of] his will or his preference, [this being the consequence of] their having been cut off from [any proposed] purpose. But this [option] is also absurd, its invalidity being known by [logical] necessity. There is no avoiding by any investigator, present or absent, of the establishing of the voluntary act, of the confirmation of the existence of a quality [associated with such an act], whose concern is the distinguishing of something from its likeness.

Articles 47 & 48 [p12]

The second aspect¹¹ of the refutation of the thesis of the Philosophers consists in us saying [to the Philosophers] that within your own adopted procedure, you have not avoided distinguishing something from its [close] likeness. For [according to you], the world arose as a result of a cause, making its [i.e. the world's] existence necessary and according to special geometrical forms [closely] resembling their counterparts [in form]. So [one may well ask] does [the world] possess some of these configurations only, when the impossibility [here] of distinguishing something from its

¹¹ The first aspect had been introduced in Article 12.

likeness in the matter of voluntary or necessitated action does not differ by nature [of the matter involved], nor by [logical] necessity?

Article 49 & 50 [p12]

Suppose [to this you Philosophers] said that it is not possible for the overall order of the world to be [based] upon a design other than that upon which it was founded. [And further], had the world been smaller or bigger than it is now, the [present] order would not have been complete. A similar assessment applies to the number of orbits and to the number of stars. You assert that something big differs from something small, and that things that are many differ from things that are few in number with respect to what is required to be fulfilled by them). These [categories] are not alike, but differ [from each other], except that human capacity is frail as regards attainment [of understanding] of the design of the wisdom [of the existence] of [different] quantities [of things], and of their [functional] details. But still it [i.e. human capacity] perceives the wisdom in some of its [i.e. the world's] designs, as the wisdom in the inclination of the orbit of the zodiac from the average [orbit of the sun] for a day. [It perceives] wisdom as well in [the position] of the apogee and in the orbit that deviates from the centre.¹²

The majority does not understand the secret [of the wisdom in] quantities and details, but it does know differences [among quantities and details]. And it is unavoidable that something should distinguish itself from what is dissimilar to it by virtue of its specific relation to the system of decree.¹³ But concerning [different points in] time, they are utterly alike as regards possibility [of creation], and the system [of decree]. Therefore it is not possible to maintain that had [the world] been born after [the points] in [time] at which it was actually created, or before the points [in time] of its creation, by a single moment, the [present] system [of decrees] would have been unthinkable.

¹² By this is meant elliptical orbits

¹³ That is, natural laws and regulations

Surely, the [prevailing] equivalence of the states [of creation] is known by [logical] necessity.

Articles 51 & 52 [p12 & p13]

We [Theologians] say in reply that we could supposedly be capable [of challenging] your contention with a matching [argument] in the matter of states, as, [for example] in the case of speakers saying : “Allah created [the world] at a time which was the most suitable for creation”. [Nevertheless], we will not limit ourselves to this rebuttal, , but rather insist upon [applying] your [own] premises, especially to two cases in which it is impossible to assess any disparity. One of these two cases is the difference in the direction of the motion [of the world], while the other is the specification of the poles¹⁴ [of the orbit] in the [earth’s] motion around the [celestial] sphere.

Article 53 [p13]

As concerns [the position of] the pole its explanation lies in saying that the [orbit of] heaven is spherical, and moves around two poles, as if the poles were fixed [points]. The sphere of the heaven consists of identical sectors, for it [i.e. the heaven] is uncomplicated in structure. [This is true] especially for the highest celestial plane, which is the ninth, for it has basically no stars. The two celestial spheres [the northern and southern hemispheres] rotate around the northern and southern poles. Hence we are led to say: There is among the locations [of the heavens] no [single] pair of opposite points, these [pairs] being infinite in number, except that they could be imagined [as comprising] the poles. [In the face of this], why have [what is termed] the northern and southern points been singled-out for polarity and fixation, and why does the [radial] line of the orbit not move [together] with the two [polar] points¹⁵, such that the poles revert [alternatingly] to the two opposing points upon the sphere?¹⁶ Thus if we suppose [that there is] wisdom in the scale

¹⁴ In modern mathematical terminology these are referred to as ‘foci’.

¹⁵ Dual rendering preferred here, because reference is being made to what we nowadays term the two foci of an ellipse

¹⁶ With our present knowledge , we know that the heavenly orbits are elliptical

of the expanse and shape of the heavens, what was it that determined the location of the poles from any other [possible location], to the extent that they were specified to become [in reality] the poles to the exclusion of the rest of the sectors and points [of the celestial sphere]? Yet [we know that] all the points of the sphere are similar to each other, and all the sectors of the sphere are equivalent to each other. [Hence] there is no escape [for the Philosophers] from this [problem].

Articles 54 & 55 [p13]

[But now] suppose the Philosophers were to say that perchance the location at which lie the points of the poles distinguishes itself from other [possible] points by a quality that makes its essence appropriate as a position for the pole as a stationary [co-ordinate]. [Its essence] is as if it would not abandon its place, and realm and location or whatever from the [possible] names determined [so as to] be applied to its position. [Meanwhile], the remainder of the locations of the celestial plane exchange their position with respect to the earth and the other celestial planes during revolution, whereas the pole itself is fixed as to its location. So perhaps [we might say] that the position [of the pole] was superior [in suitability] to being fixed in position [as compared] to other positions.

Articles 56 & 57 [p14]

[In opposition to this] we [Theologians] say that in this argument [of the Philosophers] there is [an implicit] statement of the disparity in nature of sectors of the primary sphere, and that equivalence of sectors [of the sphere] does not apply [here]. Now this is in contradiction to your [own] premise, as one of the tenets upon which you have proceeded [in argument] for the necessity of [the cosmos] being spherical in shape, is that the [cosmos] is simple in nature and that its equivalent sectors are not in disharmony. And [it is known that] the sphere is the simplest of shapes. Indeed, the square and the hexagon and other shapes besides these two, demand the appearance of angles and their inequality [in measure]. Now that cannot come about except by an additional requirement upon simple nature.

But even if this [present] argument contradicts your own basic principles, it does not [by itself] repel that which it is obliged to do, for the [earlier] question about that quality still [stands unanswered]. This is, precisely [stated]: were the rest of the sectors [of the sphere] receptive of this quality [of being the repositories of the poles at the time of creation] or not? Should one say ‘yes’, then [the question is] why this quality devoted itself exclusively to only some among equivalent [locations, and not others]? And should they [in reply] say that that quality [to which you have referred] does not belong [anywhere else] except in that location, while the rest of the sectors cannot receive it, then we [Theologians] would say [the following in reply]: “The rest of the sectors by virtue of their constituting a body receptive of the [possible] shapes of things, are equivalent [in this respect] by necessity. And that [present] position [of the poles] does not have a claim to that special quality [of being the repository of the poles] merely by being a body or merely by being a celestial plane. This [is a consequence of] this connotation [of ‘location’] being shared by all the sectors of the celestial sphere. Hence the inescapable conclusion is that the location’s distinction [in that it possesses the poles] is a result of [arbitrary] decree, or [even better, a result of the action] of a quality whose concern is [none other than] the distinguishing of something from its likeness. And if [this argument does not suffice], then just as it is correct for them to say that the [different] states of the world are equivalent as regards [disposition for] instantiation of the world in them, it is [equally] correct for their antagonists [to say] that the [various] sectors of the cosmos are equivalent as regards reception of the intention by virtue of which fixity of the location [of the poles] became more seeming [to them] than [continual] alternation of location. And there is no evading this conclusion.

Article 58 [p14]

The second necessary conclusion pertains to [the question of] some of the orbital motions being from the east to the west, but some [others] being in the opposite [direction] whereas [we know] that the directions [in relation to the complete configuration of the heaven] are equivalent.¹⁷ So what is the cause of this [difference in rotational direction] when equivalence of direction like equivalence of times are without [noticeable] discrepancies?

Articles 59 & 60 [p14 & p15]

And [what if] they [the Philosophers now] should say [in defense] that if all [the celestial spheres] were to revolve in one direction [only], then their [respective] positions would not have been evident, and the correlation of the stars with respect to triangularity and hexagonality and [such] relations, and other [geometrical aspects] would not occur. Rather, the whole system would [always] be in one [single] state that would not ever diverge. On the other hand, these [geometrical] relationships are the foundations of the phenomena of the world.

Articles 61 & 62 [p15]

We [Theologians] say [in reply to the above] that we are not obliged [to accept] the absence of divergence in the direction of motion [as you maintain]. On the contrary, we say that the highest celestial sphere [vertically speaking] , revolves from East to West, and the one [immediately] below it in the opposite direction. [But], at the same time, every [objective] that could possibly be attained by [this configuration], could possibly be attained by a contrary [configuration], namely, by the highest orbit revolving from West to East. That which is immediately under it, would [now] move in the opposite [direction] to it, thereby attaining [the required] differentiation

¹⁷ In other words, what significance is there in, for example, one planet revolving around the sun anti-clockwise, and another revolving clockwise?

[in geometrical relations]. Now, conceding the motion as being circular and [mutually] opposite in direction, the directions of motion are equivalent [to each other with respect to the overall spatial arrangement.] Hence the question [remains], why was the one direction favoured in relation to its equivalent [opposite] direction?

Articles 63 & 64 [p15]

[But] suppose that they [now] said that the two directions mentioned by [the Philosophers] are mutually opposite and contradictory, so how could they be [at the same time] equivalent? [Our reply would be that they ask this question], yet claiming to know equivalence in time with respect to the possibility of the birth of the world and with respect to every relevant event whose necessity must be imagined for the birth [and burgeoning of the world]. In similar fashion, equivalence with respect to receptivity of motion, of ranges of [motion], of situations, of locations, of directions and every other relevant matter connected [with the like] are known [and accepted by the Philosophers despite the occurrence of oppositeness in directions]. So if the claim of [inadmissible] differences [in configuration] is permitted to them despite all these [resemblances] disparity [in analogous] situations and configurations ought to be permitted to their antagonists.

THE SECOND OBJECTION

{The First Objection had been initiated in article 23}

The second [fundamental method] of counterargument against the foundation of their [i.e. the Philosophers] proof lies in it being said that you [Philosophers] regard as far-fetched the emergence of [a temporal] event from an eternal [cause], whereas, [in fact], you are obliged to recognize its possibility. Indeed, in the world there are events for which there are causes. For if [worldly] events are based upon [previous worldly] events without [ever] reaching a limit, this would be [something] unthinkable, for this is not the doctrine of an

intelligent man. For were that a possibility, you would certainly have dispensed with recognizing the The Maker, and dispensed [with] the conviction of a necessary, existent Being who is the cause of [all] possibilities. Assuming [now] that [the chain of] all occurrences [in the world] has a limit, then the chain [of events] would end with that limit. That limit is [none other than] The Maker. Therefore, based upon their own tenets, there is no way out from sanctioning the emergence of an event from an eternal [cause].

Articles 67 & 68 [p16]

What if [the Philosophers should] then say that they do not hold unlikely that an event [in time] can issue forth from an eternal cause, whatever that event may be? Rather [they continue, our precise objection is that] we consider remote the issuing forth of the [very] first event from The Eternal. This [position] is true because as regards the preponderance tending toward existence [of the world], the actual state of the [very] first event did not differ from [the state] that preceded it. [This statement] applies equally with respect to the arrival of [an appointed] time, [the availability of] an instrument, [the fulfillment of] a requirement, [the presence of] a natural order, of a purpose or cause among [possible] causes. Now in the case where indeed we are [not dealing with] the [very] first event, it is permitted [logically speaking] for [any] event to issue forth [simultaneously] with some condition [or other] from The Eternal. [These could possibly be] from among [conditions such as] preparedness of the place of reception [for the event], the arrival of the appropriate time, or whatever [else might be required] to set in motion this [specific] chain [of events].

Articles 69 & 70 [p16]

To this [argument] we [Theologians] would say, that the question about the attainment of preparedness, the arrival of the [right] time, and everything [else] that was revitalized [for the purpose at hand] still remains: Either [the events] form a series

without a limit, or they terminate at an eternal cause from which issued the [very] first event.

Articles 71 & 72 [p16]

Suppose that the [Philosophers] said [now] that matter that is receptive of forms, accidents and states are not things from which events proceed. [Rather], the conditions for an event [occurring] are orbital motions [of celestial bodies.] [By this] is meant the circular motion and what is generated by it [in terms of qualities] from among all [possible] additional qualities [of things]. [These may be, for example, from the qualities of] triangularity, hexagonality and rectangularity. These are [simply] interrelations among some sectors of the heavens and stars. Some of these are relations [established] with the earth. Some of these relations are attained with the ascent [of the sun] at sunrise, [others] with sunset, others are established by the decline [of the sun] from the utmost limit in altitude and distance from the earth when the stars are at their apogee. [Another] relation is obtained by the sun being at its perigee, and its inclination being away from some countries [lying] in the northern or southern [hemispheres]. And this supplementation [in geometrical relations] is necessarily [a compulsory one], for it is coerced by the circular motion itself. As concerns the events that are contained in the curve of the orbit of the moon, [the word ‘events’ here referring to what] are the [essential] ingredients of that which occurs within it concerning [matters such as] birth and decay, union and separation, and transition from one quality to another [of the celestial bodies]: all of these are events linked to each other in complex [lit. lengthy] detail and at the end [of it all], the root of their causes ends with the circular celestial movement, the relative [positions] of the stars to each other, and their relative [positions] with respect to the earth.

Article 73 [p17]

From all that was [just mentioned], it results [in the conclusion that] the eternal, perpetual, circular motion is the cause of all the events [in the world]. And the spirits of the heavens, are the

dynamo of the circular motion of the heavens. [Certainly] these spirits live, descending, [to the spheres even] as our [once heavenly] spirits descend in relation to our bodies to the rank of our [present] souls. The spirits of the heavens are eternal. Surely [therefore], the circular eternal motions which are a necessary [effect] of the [heavenly] spirits are likewise eternal. And because the states of the souls are equivalent [to each other], owing to their being eternal, the states of the [circular motions] are equivalent; in other words, they [i.e. the motions] were always circular.

Article 74 [p17]

It is therefore unthinkable that an event would issue forth from an eternal cause, except via an eternal, circular motion that in one aspect is similar to The Eternal, as He [Himself] is eternal and perpetual, but in [another] aspect resembles any [other] event, because every [constituent] facet presumed of it is itself a [realized] event after [the period when] it had not [yet] been manifested. Hence, from the aspect that the [circular movement] is an event as regards its constituent parts, [including any] qualities complementary [to it], it is a fundament to [all ensuing] events, and from [the other] eternal aspect [which is comprised of] equivalent, [unchanging] states, [it is deemed to] issue forth from an eternal spirit. Hence if there are events [occurring] in the world, there must [necessarily] also be circular motion [in the sense referred to earlier]. But [as we know] there are events [occurring] in the world. Therefore, the [existence] of the eternal, circular motion is confirmed.¹⁸

Articles 75 & 76 [p17]

In reply we [Theologians] say that this long-windedness does not become you [at all]. [For we may well ask] whether the circular movement [of the spheres] which [as you claim] is the fundament of [all worldly events] is itself an event or

¹⁸ The falsity of this argument of the Philosophers is apparent: If A implies B, it does not necessarily follow that B implies A.

something) eternal. Hence, assuming it is eternal, how did it become a starting point for the [very] first worldly event? But if, [on the other hand], it were itself [merely] a worldly event, it would have needed another event [as a cause for its appearance, thus] forming a chain [without end].

[We turn now to your] assertion that it [the eternal circular motion] is in one aspect similar to The Eternal, while in another aspect it is like any [other] temporal event. This follows [according to you] from it being something constantly renewed, i.e. it is unchanging in its renewal, a created thing of constancy. [To this] we [Theologians] ask if [the circular motion] is a starting point for temporal events by virtue of it being constant, or [in contrast], by virtue of it being something renewed? [Now if it were a starting point] from the aspect of it being constant, then how did something [existing] at times but not at other times emerge from something unchanging and similar in its states? But if [the circular motion is a starting point] by virtue of it being [something] renewed, then what is the intrinsic cause of its renewal? [The proposed cause] would require another cause, forming an [infinite] chain. The [chain] would be the end result of repetition [of what are now induced] compulsory [causes].

Article 77 [p18]

{ This has been omitted because it deals largely with peripheral remarks }.

CHAPTER TWO

A second type of proof that they [i.e. the Philosophers] have for this question [presently being debated].

First discussion. Second proof.

Articles 78 & 79 [p18]

They [i.e. the Philosophers] maintain that a speaker [who says] that the world is posterior to *Allah* and that *Allah* is prior to the world is not alone [in his standpoint]. For he [i.e. the speaker] may [well] intend [by this] that *Allah* is prior [to the world] by nature, not temporally [prior], just as [by analogy], one is prior to two, which is in accordance with nature. Nonetheless, [the number] one may possibly accompany [the number] two in [terms of] existence and time. [In a] similar [sense] is the priority of cause to effect, and the priority of the motion of a person and the motion of his shadow that follows him, understood. [Analogous as well] is the [case of] the priority of motion of the hand to that of the ring [on one of its fingers], and the priority of the motion of the hand in water to that of the [motion of] the water. [For all] these [events] are equal to each other as regards time¹⁹, [even] though some of them are causes and some of them are effects. Therefore, it is said that the shadow moved because of the movement of the person, and the water moved because of the movement of the hand in the water. Conversely, it is not said that the person moved by virtue of the movement of the shadow, nor that the hand moved by the instrument of the movement of the water, even though [the members of each related couple] are equivalent [to each other] in time [of occurrence]. Thus, if by the precedence of the Creator with respect to the world, this [connotation of the term] is intended, the necessary conclusion is that both [*Allah* and the world] are temporal events or both are eternal. Furthermore, it is not possible for one of them to be eternal in time, while the other is an event restricted in time.

¹⁹ i.e. they occur simultaneously

Article 80 [p19]

But if it is meant [by the term under discussion] that The Maker is precedent to the world not intrinsically by His [very] essence, but [simply] with respect to time, then it follows that before the birth of the world and of time [as we understand it] there was a primeval time during which the world was not in existence. [This conclusion] proceeds from [the fact that] non-existence antecedes existence. Moreover [we conclude that] Allah would have preceded [the world] in time by a [very] extended interval. This interval would have had a boundary in the sense of its ending, but no boundary in the sense of its beginning. [The final] conclusion would be that before [common] time there was an [extraordinary] time which had no end to it. But this conclusion is incompatible [with what went before]. By virtue of this contradiction, speaking of time as a created event is unthinkable. Hence, if the eternity of time is a necessary conclusion, the eternity of motion is [likewise] a necessary conclusion, for time is an expression of the extent of motion.²⁰ Moreover, the existence of the generator of motion is also made necessary, as it is that which, by the continuity of its motion, perpetuates time.

Articles 81 till 89 [p19 - p21]

{These have been omitted from translation for al - Ghazali simply elaborates on the foregoing by citing more examples}

Article 90[p22]

But as concerns [on the one hand] the non-existence that preceded the world, and [on the other hand] the primary boundary of essential existence, [these two limits] would not be conceived of being interchanged so that [the first part] becomes the last. Nor can the non-existence surmised at the final annihilation of the world, which [logically] is a non-existence that follows, be conceived as becoming the preceding non-existence. These two extremities [represent] the limits of the

²⁰ This is a fundamental tenet of the Philosophers

existence of the world, the one being first and the other being second. [These two extremities] are essential and established, and interchanging them via a change in relationship [to us] is definitely unthinkable. Now this [situation] is different from the [case of] “above” and “below”. We therefore can possibly say that the world has neither an “above” nor a “below”, but we cannot say regarding the coming into being of the world that there is neither a “prior” [time] nor a “posterior” [time]. Nor is it possible for you [Theologians] to say that the world’s coming into existence has neither a “prior” [time] nor a “posterior” [time]. So the “prior” [time] and the “posterior” [time, relating to the world’s existence] have been [duly] confirmed; and there is no [further] meaning to time intervals except that which is [normally] expressed by [the terms] “prior” and “posterior”.

Articles 91 & 92 [p22 & p23]

In reply, we [Theologians] say that this [argument] makes no difference [to the truth of our position]. [We say] this because for there is [in reality] no [definite] object of intention in the intimation [associated with] the expressions ‘above’ and ‘below’. Nevertheless, [we will] deviate [from our original intentions] and [adopt the use of] the expressions ‘beyond’ and ‘outside’. We say that the world has ‘within’ and a ‘beyond’. Hence [we ask] whether beyond the world there is something which is either filled or empty. [The Philosophers] would say [in reply] that there is nothing which is empty or full. But if you intend by [the term] ‘beyond’ the uppermost surface [of the celestial sphere], then the term ‘beyond’ may be applied to it. But if you intended anything else [in using this term], then [we submit] that there is no [realm] beyond the world. In like fashion, if the question of whether the birth of the world has a period prior [to it] is posed to us, we would reply [as follows]: “what is intended by this question is [in fact] whether the birth of the world has a beginning that [may be designated as] an outermost point whence it had its inception? Should [this be the case], then [we admit] that in this respect the world has a ‘prior’ [time]. [For] this is analogous to the world having a yonder [region]. [Our conception is founded] upon the

interpretation that this region is roofless, remote and external [to the world].

But if, [on the other hand, by the term] ‘prior’ [time] you mean something else, then [know that] there is no prior time in relation to the world. [For] this is analogous to intending [by the term] ‘beyond the world’ something other than its [enveloping] surface. [In this event] it would [be said] that there is nothing exterior to the world. Now if you Philosophers should say that a beginning [instant] of birth with [absolutely] no [time-interval] prior to it is an irrational [proposition], it would be said in rebuttal that the [physical] boundedness of the presence of a body with no exterior to it is [equally] absurd. And [finally] if you [Philosophers] were to say that the exterior of such a [bounded] body is its [outermost] surface, which is simply a discontinuation [of that body] and nothing more, we would say [in reply] that the prior time-period [of the world] was the inception of its coming into being, this being its outermost [temporal] boundary, nothing more.”

Article 93 & 94 [p23]

It remains for us [Theologians] to say that *Allah* has [a type of] existence which is not [shared] by the world. And this [most elevated] rank [of existence] does not entail establishing [the existence] of anything else. And that which indicates that [i.e. the truth of the assertion of another existence besides Allah] is [none other than] the activity of the imagination which is specially [related] to [matters of] time and space.

And certainly the opposition, even if they were to be convinced of the eternity of body, [yet] their imagination succumbs to surmising that it [i.e. that body] came into being [as an event in time]. [On the hand] though we [Theologians] might believe in its birth [as an event], our imagination would perhaps succumb to surmising that it were eternal – this [observation applies] with respect to body.

But if we were to return to the [question of] time, the opposition is incapable of hypothesizing the birth of a time-span which is [not itself] preceded by some [previous] time-span. Now [we submit] it is possible to pose [an idea] as a hypothesis within the imagination [that is] contrary to one’s belief. However, this

idea [about the birth of time] is among those [ideas] that cannot be posed within the imagination, and the same applies to the [idea of] space. Indeed, [both] one who affirms the boundedness of body, and one who doubts it, are incapable of surmising [the existence of] a body beyond which there is neither empty space nor occupied space . Their imaginations [simply] will not yield to accepting this idea.

Nevertheless, it is said that if a clear mind does not reject the existence of a bounded body, this [position being adopted] on the strength of proof, then one should not incline towards [the prodding] of the imagination. In like manner, a clear mind does not reject [the idea of] the inception of an existence [of something which had been] preceded by absolute nothingness. And should the imagination fall short [in conceiving] this, do not [simply for this reason] incline towards [its urgings and thereby ignore the voice of reason]. [After all], this [inadequacy of the imagination is a consequence of] the imagination not as yet having acquaintance itself with a bounded body except that besides it is [always either] another body or air conceived as empty space. [It is] for [this reason] that it [i.e. the imagination] is unable in abstentia to conceive of that [sort of birth]. In like manner, the imagination is not conversant with an event, except that it [i.e. the event] has followed something else. Hence, it shies away from hypothesizing about an occurrence having [no prior time-interval preceding it], and [in particular when] this occurrence [results in] an existing thing that has been completed.

Article 95 [p24]

This then is the cause of the error[in the argument of the Philosophers]. All resistance [to them] crystallizes with this objection.

Their [i.e. The Philosophers] second form [of proof] for the necessity of time's eternity.

Articles 96 & 97 [p24]

They [the Theologians] say that there is no doubt therein [i.e. in the belief] that according to us, Allah was capable of creating the world before He [actually] created it. [The] scale of this time [could well be] a year, a hundred years, or [even] a thousand years. Indeed, these estimates are [quite] different [from each other, both] in scale and magnitude. Therefore, there is no avoiding confirmation [of the presence] of something before the coming into being of the world. [This something] was extended and has been assessed [as to its size]. Some parts of this something are estimated to be more expansive and longer than other parts. And if you [Theologians] then should say to us that it is not possible to apply the expression 'years' except after the birth of the heavens and their [attendant] revolutions, we [Philosophers] will quit [using] the expression 'years', and [instead] furnish a different wording and say the following: "Assuming that the heavens of the world since its initial coming into being have already revolved , for example, a thousand revolutions [till now], would Allah have been capable of creating before [this present] world a second one like it? [As an additional condition, this hypothesized second world ought to have been] such that it would have terminated [its revolutions having arrived] at the present time with a thousand one hundred revolutions.

Should you [Theologians] say 'no' [to this proposition], it would be as if The Eternal had reverted from [a state of] incapacity to [a state of] potency, or [alternatively it would be as if] the [second , hypothesized] world had reverted from being impossible [to create] to being possible [to create]. But should you [Theologians] say 'yes' [to this proposition], and this is unavoidable, then [we ask], was Allah capable of creating a third world such that it terminates [in its revolutions, having completed] at the present time a [total of] a thousand two hundred revolutions?

Again, there is no way out but to say ‘yes’. Hence, we would [then] ask whether the world which, according to the system of our postulates we would call ‘the third [world]’, despite it being the most recent, could possibly have been created [simultaneously] with the world we have [already] named ‘the second world’? This [‘third world’] would then [eventually] have reached us,²¹ terminating with a thousand one hundred revolutions. [In so doing], both [‘second’ and ‘third’] worlds would be equivalent with respect to the [orbital] distance [covered, even] with respect to motion and velocity. But [should] you [Theologians] say ‘yes’ to this [conclusion], then this [answer] would be absurd. [This] is indeed [so], as it is impossible for two motions to be equal in rapidity and slowness, and [even though] the number of their revolutions differ, yet [they] arrive at termination [of their revolutions] at the same time. And [in defense] you might say that the ‘third world’ which terminates [in its revolutions] at our present time with [a total of] a thousand two hundred revolutions, could not [possibly] have been created [simultaneously] with the ‘second world’ which terminates [in its revolutions] at our [present] time with a [total of] a thousand one hundred revolutions. You [Theologians] might say [in addition] that instead it is unavoidable that *Allah* created it before the ‘first world’ by an extent [in time] that equals the extent [in time] whereby the ‘second world’ preceded the ‘first world’.

We have called this [world] ‘The first [world]’ because of [its quality of] being more in affinity with our imagination. It is the ‘first world’s’ [beginning] that we project back from our present time in our hypothesis. Hence we conclude the time-span of our present world to be double [in extent] to the time-span of [any] other possible-world. Thus it is unavoidable [that we conclude] that one possible-world’s time be double that of all [other possible-worlds taken together.] Now these virtual, measured possible time-spans, some of which are longer than others by a knowable amount, could have no reality except that of [actual] periods of time.”

²¹ i.e. our present epoch

Article 98 [p25]

“But these [temporal] quantities [used in our hypothesis] are not attributes of the essence of The Creator, exalted be He above our speculation. Nor are these [quantities] attributes of the non-existence of the world. Indeed, non-existence is not something to be determined by different scales [of measurement]. Nonetheless, quantity is an attribute, and [as such], it necessitates a possessor [of the attribute of] quantity. And that [something] is nothing except motion while quantity [in the sense used here is nothing] but time. [Time, in turn] is [simply] the measure of the extent) of motion.²² Therefore, by your [i.e. the Theologians] own [postulates], there was prior to the [actual] world something which possessed differing quantities, and this is time. Hence by your own [axioms], before the [birth of the world] there existed an [actual] time-span.

Articles 99 & 100 [p25]

The rebuttal to this argument of the Philosophers is [to say] that all this is the work of the imagination. The shortest method to repel it is [to undertake] the comparison of time with space. Indeed, we [Theologians] ask whether it was within the capacity of *Allah* to create the roof of the uppermost heaven thicker than the one he [actually] did by a cubit. Should [the Philosophers] reply with ‘no’, this [implies] incapacity [on His part]. Should they reply with ‘yes’, then this [implies that He could have created the roof thicker] by two cubits, or three cubits, [thereby] proceeding in like fashion without end. In this process, there is the [implicit] confirmation of a dimension beyond the world. This dimension has both extent and quantity. Indeed, that which is greater in thickness [than the celestial roof] by two cubits would not fill-up spatially [that very same volume] which something greater in thickness by [only] one cubit would fill-up. By this criterion, beyond [the confines] of the world there is [the attribute of] quantity, and [this attribute] calls for that which possesses quantity. These entities are [none other than] body and space. Therefore, [we have shown that]

²² al-Ghazali does not contest this fundamental tenet of the Philosophers.

beyond the world there is either empty [space] or filled [space], so what is the reply [of the Philosophers] to this conclusion? In like fashion, we may ask if *Allah* is capable of creating the sphere of the Earth smaller than that which He actually created? [And if so], could this [reduction] have been [of the order of] a cubit, or even two [cubits]? In addition, [considering both paradigms], is there not between these two scenarios,²³ a difference in that [dimension] which recedes in [extent of] fullness and occupancy [of space.]? In fact, the [extent of] fullness that recedes by the reduction [in thickness of the celestial roof] of two cubits is greater than that [corresponding extent] which recedes with a reduction [in thickness of the celestial roof] of [only] a cubit. [This] result [indicates] that space is [an entity capable of being] measured. But, [as we have seen before], nothingness is not a [substantial thing], so how could it be a measured [quantity]?²⁴

Our answer [therefore] to the flights of the imagination wherein [it] proposes the [existential] possibilities of time-spans before the birth of the world is akin to your [i.e. Philosophers'] answer to the flights of the imagination wherein [it] proposes the [existential] possibilities of [actual space] beyond [the confines] of the world. There is no difference [between the two answers].²⁵

Articles 101 & 102 [p26]

But the Philosophers might say that they do not claim that which is not possible is [nevertheless] decreed by [*Allah*]. And the world's being bigger [in size] than it [actually] is, and not smaller than that [hypothesized, inflated size] is [logically] not possible. Hence, [it is for this reason], that it was not decreed²⁶.

²³ The first scenario appears in the paragraph immediately preceding this one.

²⁴ The quite different concepts of 'the void' or 'empty space' and 'absolute nothingness' must be carefully distinguished at this point

²⁵ Space exists only as the possibility of the extension of matter. So where no matter can possibly exist as, for example, beyond the limits of the world, no space can be present. This tenet underpins al-Ghazali's rebuttal.

²⁶ A fundamental postulate of al – Ghazali is that what is not logical is not ever decreed by Allah.

Article 103 [p26]

This explanation²⁷ is false in three aspects.

Article 104 [p27]

One of these [aspects] is that it is [a reflection of] stubbornness of mind. For indeed the mind, to the proposition of the world being larger or smaller than it [actually is] by a cubit, does not react as [it does] to the [proposition of] the unity of black and white; or [to the proposition of] the unity of existence and non-existence. That which is [completely] forbidden [by the mind] is unifying the negation [of something] with its affirmation. All absurdities have their origins in this [error]. This explanation [of the Philosophers] is therefore arbitrary, weak and false.

Article 105 [p26]

The second aspect [of the falsity of their explanation] is that if the [magnitude] of the world cannot possibly be greater or smaller it than [actually] is, then its present magnitude is [something] necessary [and] not something [merely] possible. But that which is necessary is independent of [any] cause.[In that case], [you should rather] say what the atheists say as regards denial of The Maker and denial of The Cause that is the cause of all causes. But [as is known], this is not your tenet.

Article 106 [p27]

The third aspect [of the falsity of their explanation] is that the [aspiring] repudiator of this false explanation is not incapable of opposing it with a similar [argument]. Therefore, we [of the opposition] may say [in like fashion] that the world could not possibly have come into being before it actually did, but [rather] that its birth coincided with [the moment of] possibility [of its birth]. This explanation [of ours requires] no further classification of details. But you [Philosophers] may say [in rebuttal] that The Eternal [in this case] reverted from capability

²⁷ Lit. 'excuse'

to incapacity.²⁸ In reply, we would say ‘no’, for the existence [of the world] had not been [previously] possible, and therefore had not been decreed [for existence]. [Moreover], abstention [on His part], from realizing that which is not possible does not imply incapacity [in Him]. And if you [Philosophers] should ask how the [birth of the world] could have been [at first] forbidden, but then became possible, we would ask [in reply] why [its birth] could not be forbidden under [certain] circumstances, and possible [in other circumstances]. The [Philosophers] may say that the circumstances [were always] the same, but [to this the following] would be said [in reply]; “Extent [in all directions of space] is the same, so how could a [specific] measured [distance] be possible while a distance greater or smaller than it by the scale of a fingernail is prohibited. So if [by your own admission] that [latter scenario] is not impossible, it is [likewise] not impossible [for the birth of the world to have been once prohibited, but then later possible].²⁹ This then is the method of countering [the explanation of the Philosophers].

Article 107[p27]

In replying [to the Philosophers], that which has to be confirmed is that whatever was mentioned in their proposed possibilities [as regards the world’s creation]³⁰ is meaningless. What is [in fact] indisputable is that Allah, The Exalted, is Eternal and Capable of anything [He wills]. If He wills something, no action [whatsoever] is ever impossible for Him. In this [counter-] proposal [of His unrestricted will] there is nothing that essentially requires the affirmation of an [infinitely] prolonged time-span. [And this requirement would not materialize] unless the imagination adds something else [to befuddle our perceptions] through its deceptive [influence].

²⁸ A logical error appears here in the Arabic original. The correct rendering should be: “from incapability to capacity”.

²⁹ Space and time being isotropic, al-Ghazali applies those premises and results about space and time accepted by the Philosophers to prove his thesis of the possibility of the temporal creation of the world.

³⁰ Or non-creation

CHAPTER THREE

Epilogue

In support of al-Ghazali's refutation of the theses of the Philosophers are the modern findings of Physics. Scientists are unanimous that the entire universe began with a single 'Big Bang', and have even been able to calculate when this cosmic explosion occurred. "... the universe began about 18 billion years ago in a primordial, cataclysmic event".³¹ The 'Big-Bang' Theory, founded upon empirical observation of a constantly expanding universe, requires the creation of the universe from a condition of infinite density (of matter), which may logically be regarded as nothing at all. Simply put, the 'Big- Bang' Theory proclaims creation of the world ex nihilo! The 'Big-Bang', if true, affirms that space is an entity created in time. But what about time itself? According to the Theory of Relativity, space and time form a single, complex matrix referred to as 'space-time' which is inseparable. Hence, according to Physicists, if space was created, then so was time! Another confirmation of the truth of al-Ghazali's position vis-a-vis the Philosophers is afforded by the so called Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law claims that the entire universe and its processes will 'run down' and reach a state of equilibrium. In other words, all of the energy contained within it will become completely evenly distributed, resulting in the world's death. But if, as the Philosophers claim, the universe is eternal, why has it not yet reached its state of maximum entropy and died? After all, it had all eternity to do so!

In subsequent chapters of the *Tahafut*, al-Ghazali continues to challenge the doctrine of the Philosophers on the world's pre-eternity from the aspect of causality.³² Their doctrines may also be refuted by purely logical investigations into the nature of infinity. To have pursued these themes here, however, would have exceeded the bounds of this thesis.

We affirm with al-Ghazali our belief in "a Creator of the universe who exists changelessly and independently prior to

³¹ William Lane Craig, *The Kalam Cosmological Argument*. London: the Macmillan Press, Ltd, 1999), 116

³² a good treatment of this is provided by Fakhry

creation”³³ and Who continues in existence subsequent to creation of the world and time.

We conclude by saying: *Al- hamdu lillahi, rabbil ‘alamin.*

END

³³ Ibid

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APPENDIX

الأول

(٦) قولهم يستحيل صدور حادث من قديم مطلقاً؛ لأننا اذا فرضنا القديم ولم يصدر منه العالم مثلاً، فانما لم يصدر لانه لم يكن للوجود مرجح بل كان وجود العالم ممكناً إمكاناً صرفاً، فاذا حدث بعد ذلك لم يخل، اما ان تجدد مرجح او لم يتجدد، فان لم يتجدد مرجح، بقى العالم على الامكان الصرف كما قبل ذلك؛ وان تجدد مرجح، فن يحدث ذلك المرجح، ولم يحدث الآن ولم يحدث من قبل؟ والسؤال في حدوث المرجح قائم.

(٧) وبالجمله، فأحوال القديم اذا كانت متشابهة، فإنما أن لا يوجد عنه شئ، قط، وإنما أن يوجد على الدوام. فانما ان يميز حال الترك عن حال الشروع فهو محال. ١٥

(٨) وتحقيقه أن يقال، لم لم يحدث العالم قبل حدوثه؟ لا يمكن ان يحال على مجزئه عن الاحداث، ولا على استحالة الحدوث. فان ذلك يؤدى الى ان ينقلب القديم من العجز الى القدرة والعالم من الاستحالة الى الامكان، وكلاهما

محالان. ولا امكن ان يقال لم يكن قبله غرض ثم تجدد غرض ولا امكن ان يحال على فقد آله ثم على وجودها؛ بل اقرب ما يتخيل ان يقال، لم يرد وجوده قبل ذلك فيلزم ان يقال حصل وجوده لانه صار مريداً لوجوده بعد أن لم يكن مريداً، [فتكون]^١ قد حدثت الارادة. [وحدوثها]^٢ في ذاته محال لانه ليس محل الحوادث [وحدوثها]^٣ لا في ذاته لا يجعله مريداً.

(٩) ولنترك النظر في محل [حدوثها]^٤، أليس الاشكال قائماً في أصل [حدوثها]^٥، وانه من أين حدث، ولم حدث الآن ولم يحدث قبله؟ أحدث الآن لا من جهة الله؟ فان جاز حادث من غير محدث، فليكن العالم حادثاً لا صانع له، والا فأي فرق بين حادث وحادث؟ وان حدث باحداث الله، فلم حدث الآن ولم يحدث قبل؟ أليعدم آله أو قدرة أو غرض أو طبيعة، فلما ان تبدل ذلك بالوجود حدث؟ عاد الاشكال بعينه، أو لعدم الارادة؟ فتفتقر الارادة الى ارادة وكذا الارادة الاولى ويتسلسل الى غير نهاية.

(١٠) فاذن قد تحقق بالقول المطلق ان صدور الحادث من القديم من غير تغير أمر من القديم في قدرة أو آله أو وقت أو غرض أو طبع محال، وتقدير تغير حال محال، لان الكلام في ذلك التغير الحادث كالكلام في غيره والكل محال ومهما كان العالم موجوداً واستحال حدوثه ثبت قدمه لا محالة.

(١١) فهذا [أخيل]^٦ أدلتهم وبالجمل كلامهم في سائر مسائل الالهيات أرك من كلامهم في هذه المسألة، اذ يقدرون هاهنا على فنون من التخيل لا يتمكنون منه في غيرها. فلذلك قدمنا هذه المسئلة وقدمنا أقوى أدلتهم.

(١٢) الاعتراض من وجهين؛

(١٣) أحدهما ان يقال: هم تنكرون على من يقول ان العالم حدث بارادة قديمة اقتضت وجوده في الوقت الذي وجد فيه، وان يستمر العدم الى الغاية التي استمر اليها، وان يبتدئ الوجود من حيث ابتداء، وان الوجود قبله لم يكن مراداً فلم يحدث لذلك، وانه في وقته الذي حدث فيه مراد بالارادة القديمة، فحدث لذلك؟ فما المانع لهذا الاعتقاد، وما الخيل له؟ ٥

(١٤) فان قيل:

(١٥) هذا محال بين الاحالة، لان الحادث موجب ومسبب، وكما يستحيل حادث بغير سبب وموجب، يستحيل وجود موجب قد تم بشرائط ايجابه وأركانه واسبابه، حتى لم يبق شيء منتظر البتة، ثم يتأخر الموجب، بل وجود الموجب عند تحقق الموجب بتمام شروطه ضروري وتأخره محال حسب استحالة وجود الحادث الموجب بلا موجب. ١٠

(١٦) فقبل وجود العالم كان المريد موجودا والارادة موجودة ونسبتها الى المراد موجودة، ولم يتجدد مريد ولم [تتجدد] ارادة، ولا تجدد للارادة نسبة لم تكن، فان كل ذلك تغير، فكيف تجدد المراد، وما المانع من التجدد قبل ذلك؟ وحال التجدد لم يتميز عن الحال السابق في شيء من الاشياء وأمر من الامور ١٥ وحال من الاحوال ونسبة من النسب؛ بل الامور كما كانت بعينها لم لم يكن يوجد المراد وبقيت بعينها كما كانت، فوجد المراد، ما هذا الا غاية الاحالة.

(١٧) وليس استحالة هذا الجنس في الموجب والموجب الضروري الذاتي، بل وفي العرفي والوضعي؛ فان الرجل لو تلفظ بطلاق زوجته ولم تحصل البيونة في الحالة لم يتصور ان تحصل بعده، لانه جعل اللفظ علة للحكم بالوضع ٢٠

والاصطلاح، فلم يعقل تأخر المعلول إلا ان يعلّق الطلاق بحجىء الغد او بدخول الدار فلا يقع في الحال ولكن يقع عند مجىء الغد وعند دخول الدار؛ فانه جعله علة بالاضافة الى شيء منتظر، فلما لم يكن حاضرا في الوقت، وهو الغد والدخول، توقف حصول الموجب على حضور ما ليس بحاضر؛ فما حصل الموجب الا وقد تجدد أمر وهو الدخول وحضور الغد، حتى لو اراد ان يؤخر الموجب عن اللفظ غير منوط بحصول ما ليس بحاصل، لم يعقل، مع انه الواضح وانه المختار في تفصيل الوضع. فاذا لم يمكننا وضع هذا بشهوتنا ولم نعقله، فكيف نعقله في الايجابات الذاتية العقلية الضرورية؟

(١٨) وأما في العادات فما يحصل بقصدنا لا يتأخر عن القصد مع وجود القصد اليه الا بمانع. فان تحقق القصد والقدرة وارتفعت الموانع لم يعقل تأخر المقصود. وانما يتصور ذلك في العزم، لان العزم غير كاف في وجود الفعل، بل العزم على الكتابة لا يوقع الكتابة ما لم يتجدد قصد هو انبعاث في الانسان متجدد حال الفعل.

(١٩) فان كانت الارادة القديمة في حكم قصدنا الى الفعل، فلا يتصور تأخر المقصود الا بمانع ولا يتصور تقدم القصد فلا يعقل قصد في اليوم الى قيام في الغد الا بطريق العزم. وان كانت الارادة القديمة في حكم عزمنا، فليس ذلك كافيا في وقوع المعزوم عليه؛ بل لا بد من تجدد انبعاث قصدى عند الایجاد، وفيه قول بتغير القدم. ثم يبقى عين الاشكال في ان ذلك الانبعاث أو القصد أو الارادة أو ما شئت سمّيه، لم يحدث الآن ولم يحدث قبل ذلك؟ فإما ان يبقى حادث بلا سبب أو يتسلسل الى غير نهاية.

(٢٠) ورجع حاصل الكلام الى انه وجد الموجب بتمام شروطه ولم يبق أمر منتظر. ومع ذلك تأخر الموجب ولم يوجد في مدة لا يرتقى الوهم الى أولها، بل آلاف سنين لا تنقص شيئا منها. ثم انقلب الموجب بغنة من غير أمر تجدد وشرط تحقق؛ وهو محال في نفسه.

٥ (٢١) والجواب ان يقال:

(٢٢) استحالة ارادة قديمة متعلقة باحداث شيء أئى شيء كان، تعرفونه بضرورة العقل أو نظره؟ وعلى لغتكم في المنطق، تعرفون الالتقاء بين هذين الحدين بمحد أوسط أو من غير حد أوسط؟ فان ادعيتم حداً أوسط، وهو الطريق النظري، فلا بد من الظهاره؛ وان ادعيتم معرفة ذلك ضرورة، فكيف لم يشارككم في معرفته مخالفوكم، والفرقة المعتقدة [بحدوث] العالم بارادة قديمة لا ١٠ يحصرها بلد ولا يحصنها عدد؟ ولا شك في انهم لا يكابرون العقول عناداً مع المعرفة. فلا بد من اقامة برهان على شرط المنطق يدل على استحالة ذلك، اذ ليس في جميع ما ذكرتموه الا الاستبعاد والتثليل بعزمنا وارادتنا؛ وهو فاسد، فلا تضاهي الارادة القديمة القصور الحادثة. وأما الاستبعاد المجرد، فلا يكفي من غير ١٥ برهان.

(٢٣) فان قيل: نحن بضرورة العقل نعلم انه لا يتصور موجب بتمام شروطه من غير موجب ومجوز ذلك مكابر لضرورة العقل، قلنا:

(٢٤) وما الفصل بينكم وبين خصومكم اذا قالوا لكم، انا بالضرورة نعلم احوالة قول من يقول ان ذاتا واحدا عالم بجميع الكليات من غير ان يوجب ٢٠ ذلك كثرة ومن غير ان يكون العلم زيادة على الذات ومن غير ان يعتمد العلم

مع تعدد المعلوم؟ وهذا مذهبكم في حق الله وهو بالنسبة إلينا وإلى علومنا في غاية الإحالة؟ ولكن تقولون: لا يقاس العلم القديم بالحادث. وطائفة منكم استشعروا إحالة هذا، فقالوا: إن الله لا يعلم إلا نفسه، فهو العاقل وهو العقل وهو المعقول، والكل واحد. فلو قال قائل أن اتحاد العقل والعاقل والمعقول معلوم الاستحالة بالضرورة، إذ تقدير صانع للعالم لا يعلم صنعه محال بالضرورة. ٥
والقديم إذا لم يعلم إلا نفسه، تعالى عن قولكم وعن قول جميع الزائغين علواً كبيراً لم يكن يعلم صنعه البتة.

(٢٥) بل لا نتجاوز إلزامات هذه المسئلة فنقول:

(٢٦) ثم تنكرون على خصوصكم إذ قالوا قدم العالم محال لأنه يؤدي إلى ١٠
اثبات دورات للفلك لا نهاية لأعدادها ولا حصر لأحاديثها مع أن لها سداً ورعاً ونصفاً؟ فإن فلک الشمس يدور في سنة، وفلك زحل في ثلاثين سنة، فتكون ادوار زحل ثلث عشر ادوار الشمس، وادوار المشتري نصف سدس ادوار الشمس، فإنه يدور في اثني عشر سنة؛ ثم كما أنه لا نهاية لأعداد دورات زحل، لا نهاية لأعداد دورات الشمس، مع أنه ثلث عشره؛ بل لا نهاية لادوار ١٥
فلك الكواكب الذي يدور في سنة وثلاثين ألف سنة مرة واحدة، كما لا نهاية للحركة المشرقية التي للشمس في اليوم والليلة مرة. فلو قال قائل، هذا مما يعلم استحالة ضروره، فهاذا تنفصلون عن قوله؟ بل لو قال قائل: اعداد هذه الدورات شفع أو وتر، أو شفع ووتر جميعاً، أو لا شفع ولا وتر؟ فإن قلتم شفع ووتر جميعاً أو لا شفع ولا وتر، فيعلم بطلانه ضروره، وإن قلتم شفع، فالشفع ٢٠
يصير وترًا بواحد، فكيف أعوز ما لا نهاية له واحد؟ وإن قلتم وتر، فالوتر يصير

بواحد شفعا، فكيف أعوز ذلك الواحد الذى به يصير شفعا؟ فيلزمكم القول بأنه ليس بشفع ولا وتر.

(٢٧) فإن قيل: إنما يوصف بالشفع والوتر المتناهي وما لا يتناهي لا يوصف به، قلنا:

٥ (٢٨) جملة مركبة من آحاد لها شذس وعشر كما سبق، ثم لا توصف بشفع ولا وتر، يعلم بطلانه ضرورة من غير نظر. فهاذا تتفصلون عن هذا؟ فإن قيل، محل الغلط في قولكم أنه جملة مركبة من آحاد، فإن هذه الدورات معدومة، أما الماضي فقد انقرض وأما المستقبل فلم يوجد، والجملة إشارة إلى موجودات حاضرة ولا موجود هاهنا، قلنا:

١٠ (٢٩) العدد ينقسم إلى الشفع والوتر ويستحيل أن يخرج عنه، سواء كان المعدود موجودا باقيا أو فانيا؛ فإذا فرضنا عددا من الأفراس لزمنا أن نعتقد أنه لا يخلوا من كونه شفعا أو وترا، سواء قدرناها موجودة أو معدومة؛ فإن انعدمت بعد الوجود لم تتغير هذه القضية. على أنا نقول لهم:

(٣٠) لا يستحيل على أصلكم موجودات حاضرة هي آحاد متغايرة ١٥ بالوصف ولا نهاية لها، وهي نفوس الأدميين المفارقة للأبدان بالموت، فهي موجودات لا توصف بالشفع والوتر. فهم تنكرون على من يقول: بطلان هذا يعرف ضرورة كما ادعيتم بطلان تعلق الإرادة القديمة بالأحداث ضرورة؟ وهذا الرأي في النفوس هو الذى اختاره ابن سينا، ولعله مذهب رسطاليس.

(٣١) فإن قيل: فالصحيح رأى أفلاطن وهو أن النفس قديمة وهي واحدة ٢٠ وإنما تنقسم في الأبدان فإذا فارقتها عادت إلى أصلها واتحدت، قلنا:

(٣٢) فهذا أفصح وأشنع وأولى بأن يُعتقد مخالفاً لضرورة العقل. فإنا نقول:

نفس زيد عين نفس عمرو أو غيره؟ فإن كان عينه، فهو باطل بالضرورة. فإن كل واحد يشعر بنفسه ويعلم أنه ليس هو نفس غيره. ولو كان هو عينه لتساويا في العلوم التي هي صفات ذاتية للنفوس داخلة مع النفوس في كل إضافة. وإن قلتم: أنه غيره، وإنما انقسم بالتعلق بالابدان، قلنا: وانقسام الواحد الذي ليس له عظم في الحجم وكية مقدارية محال بضرورة العقل، فكيف يصير الواحد اثنين بل الفأ ثم يعود وبصير واحداً؟ بل هذا يعقل فيها له عظم وكية كما البحر ينقسم بالجدول والانهار ثم يعود الى البحر فإنا ما لا كية له فكيف ينقسم؟

(٣٣) والمقصود من هذا كله أن نبين أنهم لم يعجزوا خصومهم عن معتقدهم في تعلق الارادة القديمة بالاحداث الا بدعوى الضرورة، وأنهم لا ينفصلون عن يدعى الضرورة عليهم في هذه الامور على خلاف معتقدهم، وهذا لا يخرج عنه.

(٣٤) فإن قيل: هذا ينقلب عليكم في أن الله قبل خلق العالم كان قادراً على الخلق بقدر سنة أو سنين، ولا نهاية لقدرته. فكأنه صبر ولم يخلق ثم خلق، ومدة الترك متناه أو غير متناه؟ فإن قلتم متناه، صار وجود البارئ متناهي الاول. وإن قلتم غير متناه، فقد انقضت مدة فيها امكانات لا نهاية لاعدادها. (٣٥) قلنا:

(٣٦) المدة والزمان مخلوق عندنا وسيتبين حقيقة الجواب عن هذا في الانفصال عن دليلهم الثاني.

(٣٧) فإن قيل:

(٣٨) فمَن تنكرون على من يترك دعوى الضرورة ويدلّ عليه من وجه

آخر، وهو أن الاوقات متساوية في جواز تعلّق الارادة بها؟ فإلّا الذي ميّز وقتنا

مقينا عمّا قبله وعمّا بعده وليس محالاً أن يكون التقدّم والتأخر مراداً؟ بل في

البياض والسواد والحركة والسكون، فأنكم تقولون: يحدث البياض بالارادة ٥

القديمة، والمحلّ قابل للسواد قبوله للبياض. فلم تعلقت الارادة القديمة بالبياض

دون السواد، وما الذي ميّز أحد الممكنين عن الآخر في تعلّق الارادة به؟ ونحن

بالضرورة نعلم أن الشيء لا يميّز عن مثله الا بمخصّص، ولو جاز ذاك لجاز أن

يحدث العالم، وهو ممكن الوجود كما أنه ممكن العدم، ويتخصّص جانب الوجود

المماثل لجانب العدم في الامكان بغير مخصّص. وإن قلتم ان الارادة خصّصت، ١٠

فالسؤال عن اختصاص الارادة وانها لم تختصت. فإن قلتم القديم لا يقال له لم،

فليكن العالم قديماً ولا يطلب صانعه وسببه لأنّ القديم لا يقال فيه لم.

(٣٩) فإن جاز تخصّص القديم بالاتفاق بأحد الممكنين فغاية المستبعد أن

يقال العالم مخصّص بهيئات مخصوصة كان يجوز أن يكون على هيئات أخرى

بدلاً منها، فيقال وقع كذلك اتفاقاً، كما قلتم اختصت الارادة بوقت دون وقت ١٥

وهيئة دون هيئة اتفاقاً. وإن قلتم ان هذا السؤال غير لازم لانه وارد على كل

ما يريد، وعائد على كلّ ما يقدره، فنقول لا بل هذا السؤال لازم لانه عائد في

كل وقت وملازم لمن خالفنا على كلّ تقدير.

(٤٠) قلنا:

(٤١) انما وجد العالم حيث وجد وعلى الوصف الذى وجد، وفي المكان الذى

وجد، بالارادة؛ والارادة صفة من شأنها تمييز الشيء عن مثله. ولولا ان هذا

شأنها، لوقع الاكتفاء بالقدرة. ولكن لما [تساوت] نسبة القدرة الى الضدين، ولم

يكن بذ من مخصص يختص الشيء عن مثله، فقليل؛ للقدم وراء القدرة صفة

من شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. فقول القائل، لم يختصت الارادة بأحد

المثلين، كقول القائل، لم اقتضى العلم الاحاطة بالمعلوم على ما هو به؟ فيقال:

لأن العلم عبارة عن صفة هذا شأنها؛ فكذى الارادة عبارة عن صفة هذا شأنها،

بل ذاتها تمييز الشيء عن مثله.

(٤٢) فان قيل:

(٤٣) اثبات صفة شأنها تمييز الشيء عن مثله غير معقول، بل هو

متناقض. فان كونه مثلاً معناه انه لا يتميز له وكونه مميزاً معناه انه ليس مثلاً.

ولا ينبغي ان يظن ان السوادين في محلين متماثلان من كل وجه. لان هذا في

محل وذلك في محل آخر، وهذا يوجب التميز؛ ولا السوادان في وقتين في محل

واحد متماثلان مطلقاً؛ لان هذا فارق ذلك في الوقت، فكيف يساويه من كل

وجه؟ واذا قلنا السوادان مثلاً، عنيانا به في السوادية مضافاً [اليها] على

الخصوص لا على الاطلاق، والا فلو اتحد المحل والزمان ولم يبق تغاير، لم يعقل

سوادان، ولا عقلت الاثينية اصلاً. يحقق هذا ان لفظ الارادة مستعار من

ارادتنا، ولا يتصور مثلاً ان نميز بالارادة الشيء عن مثله. بل لو كان بين يدي

العطشان قدحان من الماء يتساويان من كل وجه بالاضافة الى غرضه، لم يمكن

ان يأخذ أحدهما. بل انما يأخذ ما يراه أحسن أو أخف أو أقرب الى جانب

يمينه، ان كان عادته تحريك الجمين، أو سبب من هذه الأسباب، انما خفي وأما
جلن. والأ فلا يتصور تمييز الشيء عن مثله بحال.

(٤٤) والاعتراض من وجهين:

(٤٥) الأول، ان قولكم ان هذا لا يتصور، عرفتموه ضرورة أو نظراً؟ ولا

يمكن دعوى واحد منهما. وتمثيلكم بإرادتنا مقايضة فاسدة تضاهي المقايضة في
العلم. وعلم الله يفارق علمنا في امور قررناها. فلم تبعد المفارقة في الإرادة؟ بل
هو كقول القائل: ذات موجودة لا خارج العالم ولا داخله ولا منفصلاً ولا
منفصلاً، لا يعقل لانا لا نعقله في حقا، قيل: هذا عمل توهمك؛ وانما دليل
العقل فقد ساق العقلاء الى التصديق بذلك. فم تنكرون على من يقول دليل
العقل ساق الى اثبات صفة لله تعالى من شأنها تمييز الشيء عن مثله؟ فان لم
يطابقها اسم الإرادة، فلتسم باسم آخر؛ فلا مشاخة في الأسماء، وانما أطلقناها
نحن باذن الشرع. والأ فالإرادة موضوعة في اللغة لتعيين ما فيه غرض، ولا
غرض في حق الله. وانما المقصود المعنى دون اللفظ.

(٤٦) على أنه في حقا لا نسلم ان ذلك غير متصور. فاننا نفرض تمرتين

متساويتين بين يدي المنشوف اليهما العاجز عن تناولهما جميعاً، فإنه يأخذ
احدهما لا محالة بصفة شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. وكل ما ذكرتموه من
الخصائص من الحسن أو القرب أو تيسر الاخذ، فاننا نقدر على فرض انتفائه،
ويبقى امكان الاخذ، فانتم بين أمرين: إما ان قلتم أنه لا يتصور التساوى بالاضافة
الى اغراضه فقط، وهو حماقة وفرضه ممكن؛ وإما ان قلتم التساوى اذا فرض بقى
الرجل المنشوف أبدا متحيراً ينظر اليهما فلا يأخذ احدهما بمجرد

الارادة والاختيار المنفك عن الغرض وهو ايضا محال، يعلم بطلانه ضرورة.
فان لا بد لكل ناظر شاهدا أو غائبا في تحقيق الفعل الاختياري من اثبات
صفة شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله.

(٤٧) الوجه الثاني في الاعتراض هو انا نقول:

٥ (٤٨) أنتم في مذهبكم ما استغنيتم عن تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. فإن العالم
وجد من سببه الموجب له على هيئات مخصوصة تماثل نقائضها. فلم يختص
بعض الوجوه، واستحالة [تميز] الشيء عن مثله في الفعل أو في اللزوم بالطبع
أو بالضرورة لا تختلف؟

(٤٩) فإن قلتم:

١٠ (٥٠) ان النظام الكلي للعالم لا يمكن ألا على الوجه الذي وجد، وإن العالم
لو كان أصغر أو أكبر مما هو الآن عليه، لكان لا يتم هذا النظام؛ وكذا القول في
عدد الافلاك وعدد الكواكب، وزعم ان الكبير يخالف الصغير والكثير يفارق
القليل في ما يراد منه. فليست متائلة، بل هي مختلفة ألا ان القوة البشرية
تضعف عن درك وجوه الحكمة في مقاديرها وتفاصيلها. وانما تدرك الحكمة في
١٥ بعضها كالحكمة في ميل فلك البروج عن معذل النهار، والحكمة في الاوج والفلك
الخارج > عن < المركز، والاكثر لا يدرك السرفيها ولكن يعرف اختلافها، ولا
بعد في أن يتميز الشيء عن خلافه لتعلق نظام الامر به. وانما الاوقات فتشابه
قطعا بالنسبة الى الامكان والى النظام، ولا يمكن ان يدعى انه لو خلق بعد ما
خلق أو قبله بلحظة لما تصوّر النظام. فإن تماثل الاحوال يعلم بالضرورة.

٢٠ (٥١) فنقول:

(٥٢) نحن وإن كنا نقدر على معارضتكم بمثله في الاحوال اذ قال قائلون، خلقه في الوقت الذي كان الاصلح الخلق فيه؛ لكننا لا نفتصر على هذه المقابلة، بل نفرض على أصلكم تخصصا في موضعين لا يمكن ان يقدر فيه اختلاف. احدهما اختلاف جهة الحركة؛ والآخر تعيين موضع القطب في الحركة عن المنطقة. ٥

(٥٣) اما القطب، فيبانه ان السماء كرة متحركة على قطبين كأنهما ثابتان، وكرة السماء متشابهة الاجزاء. فائها بسيطة، لا سما الفلك الأعلى الذي هو التاسع، فائه غير مكوكب اصلا، وهما متحركان على قطبين شائ وجنوبي. فنقول: ما من نقطتين متقابلتين من النقط التي لا نهاية لها عندهم الا ويتصور ان يكون هو القطب. فلم تعينت نقطتا الشمال والجنوب للقطبية والثبات؟ ولم لم يكن خط المنطقة مازا بالنقطتين حتى يعود القطب الى نقطتين متقابلتين على المنطقة؟ فان كان في مقدار كبر السماء وشكله حكمة، لما الذي ميز محل القطب عن غيره حتى تعين لكونه قطبا دون سائر الاجزاء والنقط، وجميع النقط متاثلة وجميع اجزاء الكرة متساوية؟ وهذا لا مخرج عنه.

(٥٤) فان قيل: ١٥

(٥٥) لعل الموضع الذي عليه نقطة القطب يفارق غيره بخاصية تناسب كونه محلا للقطب حتى يثبت، فكأنه لا يفارق مكانه وحيزه ووضعه أو ما يفرض اطلاقه عليه من الاسامي، وسائر مواضع الفلك يتبدل بالدور وضعها من الارض ومن الافلاك، والقطب ثابت الموضع. فلعل ذلك الموضع كان أولى بان يكون ثابت الموضع من غيره. ٢٠

(٥٦) قلنا:

(٥٧) ففي هذا تصرّح بتفاوت اجزاء الكرة الاولى في الطبيعة وانها ليست متشابهة الاجزاء. وهو على خلاف أصلكم، اذ أحد ما استدللتم به على لزوم كون السماء كرتي الشكل أنه بسيط الطبيعة متشابه لا يتفاوت. وبسط الاشكال الكرة. فان التربع والتسديس وغيرها يقتضي خروج زوايا وتفاوتها، وذلك لا يكون الا بأمر زائد على الطبع البسيط. ولكنه وإن خالف مذهبكم، فليس يندفع الالتزام به. فان السؤال في تلك الخاصية قائم اذ سائر الاجزاء هل كان قابلاً لتلك الخاصية أم لا؟ فان قالوا: نعم، فلم اختصاص الخاصية من بين التشابهات ببعضها؟ وإن قالوا: لم يكن ذلك الا في ذلك الموضع وسائر الاجزاء لا تقبلها، فنقول: سائر الاجزاء من حيث انها جسم قابل للصور متشابه بالضرورة؛ وتلك الخاصية لا يستحقها ذلك الموضع بمجرد كونه جسماً ولا بمجرد كونه سماء. فان هذا المعنى يشاركه فيه سائر اجزاء السماء. فلا بد وأن يكون تخصيصه به بتحكم أو بصفة من شأنها تخصيص الشيء عن مثله. وألا فكما يستقيم لهم قولهم ان الاحوال في قبول وقوع العالم فيها متساوية، يستقيم لخصومهم ان اجزاء السماء في قبول المعنى الذي لاجله صار ثبوت الوضع أولى به من تبذل الوضع متساوية. وهذا لا يخرج منه.

(٥٨) الالتزام الثاني تعيين جهة حركة الافلاك بعضها من المشرق الى المغرب وبعضها بالعكس مع تساوى الجهات، ما سببها وتساوى الجهات كتساوى الأوقات من غير فرق؟

(٥٩) فان قيل:

(٦٠) لو كان الكل يدور من جهة واحدة، لما تباينت أوضاعها، ولم تحدث مناسبات الكواكب بالتثليث والتسديس والمقارنة وغيرها؛ ولكن الكل على وضع واحد لا يختلف قط، وهذه المناسبات مبدأ الحوادث في العالم.

(٦١) قلنا:

٥ (٦٢) لستنا نلزم [عدم]^{١٣} اختلاف جهة الحركة، بل نقول: الفلك الاعلى يتحرك من المشرق الى المغرب والذي تحته بالعكس؛ وكل ما يمكن تحصيله بهذا، يمكن تحصيله بعكسه، وهو ان يتحرك الاعلى من المغرب الى المشرق وما تحته في مقابلته فيحصل التفاوت؛ وجهات الحركة بعد كونها دورية وبعد كونها متقابلة متساوية، فلم تميزت جهة عن جهة تماثلها؟

١٠ (٦٣) فان قالوا: الجهتان متقابلتان متضادتان فكيف يتساويان؟ قلنا:

(٦٤) هذا كقول القائل التقدم والتأخر في وجود العالم يتضادا فكيف يدعى تشابها؟ ولكن زعموا انه يعلم تشابه الاوقات بالنسبة الى امكان الوجود والى كل مصلحة يتصور [فرضها]^{١٤} في الوجود، فكذلك يعلم تساوى الاحياز والاضاع والاماكن والجهات بالنسبة الى قبول الحركة وكل مصلحة تتعلق بها. ١٥ فان ساغ لهم دعوى الاختلاف مع هذا التشابه، كان لخصومهم دعوى الاختلاف في الاحوال والهيئات أيضاً.

(٦٥) الاعتراض الثانى على أصل دليلهم ان يقال:

(٦٦) استبعدتم حدوث حادث من قديم، ولا بد لكم من الاعتراف به، فان في العالم حوادث ولها أسباب، فان استندت الحوادث الى الحوادث الى غير ٢٠ نهاية، فهو محال، وليس ذلك معتقد عاقل. ولو كان ذلك ممكنا، لاستغنيتم عن

الاعتراف بالصانع واثبات واجب وجود هو مستند الممكنات. وإذا كانت
الحوادث لها طرف ينتهي اليه تسلسلها، فيكون ذلك الطرف هو القديم؛ فلا
بدّ اذن على أصلهم من تجويز صدور حادث من قديم.

(٦٧) فان قيل:

٥ (٦٨) نحن لا نبعد صدور حادث من قديم، أئى حادث كان، بل نبعد
صدور حادث هو أول الحوادث من القديم؛ اذ لا يفارق حال الحدوث ما قبله
في ترجيح جهة الوجود، لا من حيث حضور وقت ولا آلة ولا شرط ولا طبيعة
ولا غرض ولا سبب من الأسباب. فأما اذا لم يكن هو الحادث الأول، جاز ان
يصدر منه عند حدوث شيء آخر من استعداد المحل القابل وحضور الوقت
١٠ الموافق أو ما يجرى هذا المجرى.

(٦٩) قلنا:

(٧٠) فالسؤال في حصول الاستعداد وحضور الوقت وكل ما يتجدد قائم.
فإننا ان يتسلسل الى غير نهاية، أو ينتهي الى قديم يكون أول حادث منه.

(٧١) فان قيل:

١٥ (٧٢) المواد القابلة للصور والاعراض والكيفيات ليس شيء منها حادثا.
والكيفيات الحادثة هي حركة الافلاك، اعني الحركة الدورية وما يتجدد من
الاصناف الاضافية لها من التثليث والتسديس والتربيع، وهي نسبة بعض
أجزاء الفلك والكواكب الى بعض، وبعضها نسبة الى الارض، كما يحصل من
الطلوع والشروق والزوال عن منتهى الارتفاع والبعد عن الارض يكون
٢٠ الكوكب في الاوج، والقرب بكونه في الحضيض، والميل عن بعض الاقطار

بكونه في الشمال والجنوب. وهذه الاضافة لازمة للحركة الدورية بالضرورة؛ فوجبها الحركة الدورية. وأما الحوادث فيما يحويه مقعر فلك القمر [وهي]^{١٥} العناصر بما يعرض فيها من كون وفساد وامتزاج وافتراق واستحالة من صفة الى صفة، فكل ذلك حوادث مستند بعضها الى بعض في تفصيل طويل. وبالأخرة تنتهي مبادئ اسبابها الى الحركة السماوية الدورية ونسب الكواكب بعضها الى بعض أو نسبتها الى الارض.

(٧٣) فيخرج من مجموع ذلك ان الحركة الدورية الدائمة الأبدية مستند الحوادث كلها. وتحرك السماء حركتها الدورية، نفوس السموات، فانها حية، نازلة منزلة نفوسنا بالنسبة الى أبداننا، ونفوسها قديمة؛ فلا جرم [ان]^{١٦} الحركة الدورية التي هي موجبتها أيضا قديمة. ولما [تشابهت]^{١٧} احوال النفس لكونها قديمة، [تشابهت]^{١٨} أحوال الحركات، أي كانت دائرة ابداء.

(٧٤) فاذن لا يتصور ان يصدر الحادث من قديم الا بواسطة حركة دورية أبدية تشبه القديم من وجه، فانه دائم ابداء، وتشبه الحادث من وجه؛ فان كل جزء يفرض منه كان حادثا بعد ان لم يكن. فهو من حيث انه حادث بأجزائه وإضافاته مبدأ الحوادث، ومن حيث انه أبدئ متشابه الاحوال، صادر عن نفس أزلية. فان كان في العالم حوادث، فلا بد من حركة دورية؛ وفي العالم حوادث، فالحركة الدورية الأبدية ثابتة.

(٧٥) قلنا:

(٧٦) هذا التطويل لا ينبغيكم. فان الحركة الدورية التي هي المستند [حادثة

٢٠ ام قديمة]^{١٩} فان [كانت قديمة]^{٢٠}، فكيف صار مبدأ لاول الحوادث؟ وإن كان

حادثا، افتقر الى حادث آخر وتسلسل. وقولكم انه من وجه يشبه القديم ومن وجه يشبه الحادث، فانه ثابت متجدد، أي هو ثابت التجدد، متجدد الثبوت، فنقول: أهو مبدأ الحوادث من حيث انه ثابت، أو من حيث انه متجدد؟ ان كان من حيث انه ثابت، فكيف صدر من ثابت متشابه الاحوال شيء في بعض الاوقات دون بعض؟ وان كان من حيث انه متجدد، فما سبب تجدده في نفسه؟ فيحتاج الى سبب آخر ويتسلسل. فهذا غاية تقرير الالزام.

(٧٧) ولهم في الخروج عن هذا الالزام نوع احتيال سنورده في بعض المسائل بعد هذه كيلا يطول كلام هذه المسئلة بانشعاب شجون الكلام وفنونه. على انا سنبين ان الحركة الدورية لا تصلح ان تكون مبدأ الحوادث وأن جميع الحوادث مخترعة لله ابتداء، وبطل ما قالوه من كون السماء حيوانا متحركا بالاختيار حركة نفسية كحركاتنا.

دليل ثان لهم في المسئلة

(٧٨) زعموا ان القائل بان العالم متأخر عن الله والله متقدم عليه ليس يخلوا:

(٧٩) اما ان يريد به انه متقدم بالذات لا بالزمان، كتقدم الواحد على الاثنين، فانه بالطبع، مع انه يجوز ان يكون معه في الوجود الزماني، وكتقدم العلة على المعلول، مثل تقدم حركة الشخص على حركة الظل التابع له وحركة اليد مع حركة الحاتم وحركة اليد في الماء مع حركة الماء، فانها متساوية في الزمان وبعضها علة وبعضها معلول، اذ يقال تحرك الظل لحركة الشخص وتحرك

الماء لحركة اليد في الماء، ولا يقال تحرك الشخص لحركة الظل وتحرك اليد لحركة الماء وإن كانت متساوية؛ فإن أريد بتقدم الباري على العالم هذا، لزم أن يكونا حادثين أو قديمين، واستحال أن يكون أحدهما قديما والآخر حادثا.

(٨٠) وإن أريد به أن الباري متقدم على العالم والزمان، لا بالذات بل بالزمان فاذن قبل وجود العالم والزمان زمان كان العالم فيه معدوما، إذ كان العدم سابقا على الوجود، وكان الله سابقا بمدة مدينة لها طرف من جهة الآخر ولا طرف لها من جهة الأول؛ فاذن قبل الزمان زمان لا نهاية له، وهو متناقض، ولأجله يستحيل القول بحدوث الزمان. وإذا وجب قدم الزمان، وهو عبارة عن قدر الحركة، وجب قدم الحركة، ووجب قدم المتحرك الذي يدوم الزمان بدوام حركته. ١٠

(٨١) الاعتراض هو إن يقال:

(٨٢) الزمان حادث ومخلوق وليس قبله زمان أصلا، ونعني بقولنا إن الله متقدم على العالم والزمان أنه كان ولا عالم ثم كان ومعه عالم. ومفهوم قولنا كان ولا عالم، وجود ذات الباري وعدم ذات العالم فقط؛ ومفهوم قولنا كان ومعه عالم، وجود الذاتين فقط. فنعني بالتقدم انفراده بالوجود فقط، والعالم كشخص واحد. ولو قلنا، كان الله ولا عيسى مثلا ثم كان وعيسى معه، لم يتضمن اللفظ الوجود ذات وعدم ذات ثم وجود ذاتين. وليس من ضرورة ذلك تقدير شيء ثالث، وإن كان الوهم لا يسكن عن تقدير ثالث. فلا التفات إلى أغاليط الاوهام.

(٨٣) فان قيل:

(٨٤) لقولنا كان الله ولا عالم مفهوم ثالث سوى وجود الذات وعدم العالم،
بدليل انا لو قدرنا عدم العالم في المستقبل، كان وجود ذات وعدم ذات حاصلًا،
ولم يصح ان نقول كان الله ولا عالم، بل الصحيح ان نقول يكون الله ولا عالم
ونقول للماضي كان الله ولا عالم. فبين قولنا كان ويكون فرق اذ ليس ينوب
أحدهما مناب الآخر، فلنبحث عن ما يرجع اليه الفرق. ولا شك في انها لا
يفترقان في وجود الذات ولا في عدم العالم، بل في معنى ثالث. فانا اذا قلنا لعدم
العالم في المستقبل، كان الله ولا عالم، قيل لنا، هذا خطأ فان كان انما يقال على
ماضي، فدل ان تحت لفظ كان مفهوماً ثالثاً وهو الماضي. والماضي بذاته هو
الزمان والماضي بغيره هو الحركة، فاتها تمضي بمعنى الزمان؛ فباضرورة يلزم أن
يكون قبل العالم زمان قد انقضى حتى انتهى الى وجود العالم.

(٨٥) قلنا:

(٨٦) المفهوم الاصل من اللفظين وجود ذات وعدم ذات. والامر الثالث
الذي فيه افتراق اللفظين نسبة لازمة بالاضافة اليها بدليل انا لو قدرنا عدم
العالم في المستقبل ثم قدرنا لنا بعد ذلك وجوداً ثانياً لكنا عند ذلك نقول، كان
الله ولا عالم، ويصح قولنا سواء اردنا به عدم الاول أو عدم الثاني الذي هو
بعد الوجود. وآية ان هذه نسبة، ان المستقبل بعينه يجوز أن يصير ماضياً فيعبر
عنه بلفظ الماضي. وهذا كله لعجز الوهم عن فهم وجود مبتدأ إلا مع تقدير قبل
له، وذلك القبل الذي لا ينفك الوهم عنه، يظن أنه شيء، محقق موجود هو
الزمان. وهو كمعجز الوهم عن أن يقدر تناهي الجسم في جانب الرأس مثلاً إلا

على سطح له فوق، فينتوهم أن وراء العالم مكانا، إما ملاء وإما خلاء. وإذا قيل، ليس فوق سطح العالم فوق ولا بعد أبعد منه، كاع الوهم عن الازدعان لقبوله، كما إذا قيل، ليس قبل وجود العالم قبل هو وجود محقق، نفر عن قبوله.

(٨٧) وكما جاز أن يكذب الوهم في تقديره فوق العالم خلاء هو بعد لانهاية

٥ له بأن يقال له، الخلاء ليس مفهوما في نفسه، وأما البعد فهو تابع للجسم الذي تتباعد أقطاره، فإذا كان الجسم متناهيًا كان البعد الذي هو تابع له متناهيًا وانقطع الملاء، والخلاء غير مفهوم، فثبت أنه ليس وراء العالم لا خلاء ولا ملاء، وإن كان الوهم لا يدعن لقبوله، فكذلك يقال، كما أن البعد المكاني تابع للجسم، فالبعد الزماني تابع للحركة؛ فانه امتداد الحركة كما أن ذلك امتداد أقطار الجسم. وكما أن قيام الدليل على تنافي أقطار الجسم يمنع من إثبات بعد مكاني وراءه، فقيام الدليل على تنافي الحركة من طرفيه يمنع من تقدير بعد زماني وراءه، وإن كان الوهم متشبثًا بخياله وتقديره ولا يرعوى عنه. ولا فرق بين البعد الزماني الذي تنقسم العبارة عنه عند الإضافة إلى قبل وبعد وبين البعد المكاني الذي تنقسم العبارة عنه عند الإضافة إلى فوق وتحت. فإن جاز إثبات فوق لا فوق فوقه، جاز إثبات قبل ليس قبله قبل محقق ألا خيال وهمي كما في الفوق. وهذا لازم. فليتأمل. فانهم اتفقوا على أنه ليس وراء العالم لا خلاء ولا ملاء.

(٨٨) فإن قيل:

(٨٩) هذه الموازنة معوجة لأن العالم ليس له فوق ولا تحت بل هو كرتي

٢٠ وليس للكرة فوق وتحت؛ بل إن سميت جهة فوقًا من حيث أنه يلي رأسك

والآخر تحتاً من حيث انه يلى رجلك، فهو اسم تجدد له بالاضافة اليك، والجهة التي هي تحت بالاضافة اليك فوق بالاضافة الى غيرك، اذا قدرت على الجانب الآخر من كرة الارض وافقا يحاذي أخمص قدمه أخمص قدمك، بل الجهة التي تقدرها فوقك من أجزاء السماء نهاراً هو بعينه تحت الارض ليلاً. وما هو تحت الارض يعود الى فوق الارض في الدور. وأما الاول لوجود العالم، لا يتصور ان ينقلب آخراً. وهو كما لو قفنا خشبة أحد طرفيها غليظ والآخر دقيق واصطلحنا على أن نسمي الجهة التي تلى الدقيق فوقاً الى حيث ينتهي، والجانب الآخر تحتاً، لم يظهر بهذا اختلاف ذاتي في أجزاء العالم. بل هي أسامي مختلفة قيامها بيئة هذه الخشبة، حتى لو عكس وضعها انعكس الاسم، والعالم لم يتبدل. فالفوق والتحت نسبة محضة اليك لا تختلف أجزاء العالم وسطوحه فيه.

(٩٠) وأما العدم المتقدم على العالم والنهاية الاولى لوجوده ذاتي لا يتصور أن يتبدل فيصير آخراً. ولا العدم المقدر عند افناء العالم الذي هو عدم لاحق يتصور ان يصير سابقاً. فطرفاً نهاية وجود العالم الذي أحدهما أول والثاني آخر طرفان ذاتيان ثابتان لا يتصور التبدل فيه بتبدل الاضافات البتة، بخلاف الفوق والتحت. فاذن امكننا ان نقول ليس للعالم فوق ولا تحت، ولا يمكنكم أن تقولوا ليس لوجود العالم قبل ولا بعد. واذا ثبت القيل والبعد فلا معنى للزمان سوى ما يعبر عنه بالقيل والبعد.

(٩١) قلنا:

(٩٢) لا فرق؛ فانه لا غرض في تعيين لفظ فوق والتحت، بل نعدل الى لفظ وراء والخارج ونقول: للعالم داخل وخارج، فهل خارج العالم شيء من ملاء او خلأ؟ فيقولون: ليس وراء العالم لا خلأ ولا ملاء؛ وان عنيتم بالخارج سطحه الاعلى، فله خارج، وان عنيتم غيره، فلا خارج له. فكذلك اذا قيل لنا، هل لوجود العالم قبل؟ قلنا: إن عني به، هل لوجود العالم بداية أى طرف منه ابتداء، فله قبل على هذا، كما للعالم خارج على تأويل أنه الطرف المكشوف والمنقطع السطحي، وان عنيتم بقبل شيئاً آخر، فلا قبل للعالم، كما انه اذا عني بخارج العالم شيء سوى السطح، قيل لا خارج للعالم. فان قلتم لا يعقل مبتدأ وجود لا قبل له فيقال، ولا يعقل متناهي وجود من الجسم لا خارج له. فان قلتم^١ "خارجه [سطحه]" الذى هو منقطعه لا غير، قلنا: قبله بداية وجوده الذى هو طرفه لا غير.

(٩٣) بقی انا نقول:

(٩٤) لله وجود ولا عالم معه، وهذا القدر ايضاً لا يوجب اثبات شيء آخر. والذى يدل على ان هذا عمل الوهم انه مخصوص بالزمان والمكان، فان الخصم وان اعتقد قدم الجسم، يزعم وهمه لتقدير حدوثه؛ ونحن، وان اعتقدنا حدوثه، ربما اذعن وهماً لتقدير قدمه، هذا في الجسم. فاذا رجعنا الى الزمان، لم يقدر الخصم على تقدير حدوث زمان لا قبل له. وخلاف المعتقد يمكن وضعه في الوهم تقديراً وفرضاً، وهذا مما لا يمكن وضعه في الوهم كما في المكان فان من يعتقد تناهي الجسم ومن لا يعتقد، كل واحد يعجز عن تقدير جسم ليس وراءه لا خلأ ولا ملاء، بل لا يزعم وهمه لقبول ذلك. ولكن قيل، صريح العقل اذا

لم يمنع وجود جسم متناهٍ بحكم الدليل لا يلتفت الى الوهم، فكذلك صريح العقل لا يمنع وجوداً مفتوحاً ليس قبله شيء وان قصر الوهم عنه فلا يلتفت اليه؛ لأن الوهم لما لم يآلف جسماً متناهياً ألا وبجنبه جسم آخر أو هواء تخيله خلافاً لم يتمكن من ذلك في الغائب. فكذلك لم يآلف الوهم حادثاً إلا بعد شيء آخر،
٥ فكأن عن تقدير حادث ليس له قبل هو شيء موجود قد انقضى.
(٩٥) فهذا هو سبب الغلط والمقاومة حاصلة بهذه المعارضة.

صيغة ثانية لهم في الزمان قدم الزمان

(٩٦) قالوا:

(٩٧) لا شك في ان الله عندهم كان قادراً على ان يخلق العالم قبل أن يخلقه
يقدر سنة ومائة سنة وألف سنة وان هذه التقديرات متفاوتة في المقدار
١٠ والكيفية، فلا بد من اثبات شيء قبل وجود العالم ممتد مقدراً، بعضه أمد وأطول
من البعض. وان قلتم، لا يمكن اطلاق لفظ سنين إلا بعد حدوث الفلك
ودوره، فلنترك لفظ سنين ولنورد صيغة أخرى فنقول: اذا قدرنا ان العالم من
اول وجوده قد دار فلكه الى الآن بألف دورة مثلاً، فهل كان الله قادراً على أن
يخلق قبله عالماً ثانياً مثله بحيث ينتهي الى زماننا هذا بألف ومائة دورة؟ فان
١٥ قلتم، لا، فكأنه انقلب القديم من العجز الى القدرة او العالم من الاستحالة الى
الامكان، وان قلتم، نعم، ولا بد منه، فهل كان يقدر على أن يخلق عالماً ثالثاً
بحيث ينتهي الى زماننا بألف ومائتي دورة؟ ولا بد من نعم. فنقول: هذا
العالم الذي سميناه بحسب ترتيبنا في التقدير ثالثاً، وان كان هو الأسبق، فهل

امكن خلقه مع العالم الذى سميناه ثانيا وكان ينتهى اليها بالف ومائتى دورة
والآخر بالف ومائة دورة وهما متساويان فى مسافة الحركة وسرعتها؟ فان قلتم،
نعم، فهو محال، اذ يستحيل أن يتساوى حركتان فى السرعة والبطء ثم تنتهيان
الى وقت واحد والاعداد متفاوتة. وان قلتم ان العالم الثالث الذى ينتهى اليها
بالف ومائتى دورة لا يمكن ان يخلق مع العالم الثانى الذى ينتهى اليها بالف
ومائة دورة بل، لا بد وان يخلقه قبله بمقدار يساوى المقدار الذى تقدم العالم
الثانى على العالم الاول، وسميتا الاول ما هو اقرب الى وهما [اذ] ٣٣ ارتقينا من
وقتنا اليه بالتقدير، فيكون قدر امكان هو ضعف امكان آخر ولا بد من امكان
آخر هو ضعف الكل؛ فهذا الامكان المقدر المكتم الذى بعضه أطول من البعض
١٠ بمقدار معلوم، لا حقيقة له الا الزمان.

(٩٨) فليست هذه الكميات المقدرة صفة ذات البارى، تعالى عن التقدير،
ولا صفة عدم العالم، اذ العدم ليس شيئا حتى يتقدر بمقادير مختلفة. والكمية
صفة، فتستدعى ذاتية. وليس ذلك الا الحركة، والكمية الا الزمان الذى هو
قدر الحركة. فان قيل العالم عندكم شيء ذو كمية متفاوتة وهو الزمان، فقبل
١٥ العالم عندكم زمان.

(٩٩) الاعتراض:

(١٠٠) ان كل هذا من عمل الوهم، وأقرب طريق في دفعه المقابلة للزمان
بالمكان. فانا نقول: هل كان فى قدرة الله أن يخلق الفلك الاعلى فى سمكه أكبر
مما خلقه بذراع؟ فان قالوا، لا، فهو تعجيز، وان قالوا، نعم، فبذراعين وثلاثة
٢٠ أذرع وكذلك يرتقى الى غير نهاية. ونقول، فى هذا اثبات بعد وراء العالم له

مقدار وكية، اذ الاكبر بذراعين ما كان يشغل ما يشغله الاكبر بذراع. فوراء العالم بحكم هذا كية، فتستدعى ذا كم. وهو الجسم أو الخلاء، فوراء العالم خلاء أو ملاء. فما الجواب عنه؟ وكذلك هل كان الله قادرا على أن يخلق كرة العالم أصغر مما خلقه بذراع ثم بذراعين وهل بين التقديرين تفاوت فيها ينتفى من الملاء والشغل للاحياز؟ اذ للملاء المنتفى عند نقصان ذراعين أكثر مما ينتفى عند نقصان ذراع، فيكون الخلاء مقدرا، والخلاء ليس بشيء، فكيف يكون مقدرا؟ وجوابنا في تخييل الوهم تقدير الامكانات الزمانية قبل وجود العالم كجوابكم في تخييل الوهم تقدير الامكانات المكانية وراء وجود العالم، ولا فرق.

(١٠١) فان قيل:

١٠ (١٠٢) نحن لا نقول ان ما ليس بممكن فهو مقدور، وكون العالم أكبر مما هو عليه ولا أصغر منه ليس بممكن، فلا يكون مقدورا.

(١٠٣) وهذا العذر باطل من ثلاثة أوجه:

(١٠٤) احدها، ان هذا مكاررة العقل، فان العقل في تقدير العالم أكبر أو أصغر مما هو عليه بذراع ليس هو كتقديره الجمع بين السواد والبياض والوجود والعدم، والممتنع هو الجمع بين النفي والاثبات، واليه ترجع المحالات كلها، فهو تحكم بارد فاسد.

٢٠ (١٠٥) الثاني: انه اذا كان العالم على ما هو عليه لا يمكن أن يكون أكبر منه ولا أصغر، فوجوده على ما هو عليه واجب لا ممكن. والواجب مستغن عن علة. فقولوا بما قاله الدهريون من نفي الصانع ونفي سبب هو مسبب الاسباب، وليس هذا مذهبكم.

(١٠٦) الثالث هو أن هذا الفاسد لا يعجز الخصم عن مقابلته بمثله، فنقول: أنه لم يكن وجود العالم قبل وجوده ممكنا بل وافق الوجود الامكان من غير زيادة ولا نقصان. فان قلم قد انتقل القديم من القدرة الى العجز، قلنا، لا، لان الوجود لم يكن ممكنا فلم يكن مقدورا، وامتناع حصول ما ليس بممكن لا يدل على العجز. وان قلم أنه كيف كان ممتعا فصار ممكنا؟ قلنا: ولم يستحيل ان يكون ممتعا في حال ممكنا في حال؟ فان قلم، الاحوال متساوية، قبل لكم، والمقادير متساوية، فكيف يكون مقدار ممكنا وأكبر منه أو أصغر بمقدار ظفر ممتعا؟ فان لم يستحل ذلك، لم يستحل هذا. [فهذه]^{٥٤} طريقة المقاومة.

(١٠٧) فالتحقيق في الجواب ان ما ذكروه من [تقدير]^{٥٥} الامكانات لا معنى [له]^{٥٦} وانما المسلم ان الله تعالى^{٥٧} قدس قدر، لا يمتنع عليه الفعل أبدا لو أراد؛ وليس في هذا القدر ما يوجب اثبات زمان ممتد، الا أن يضيف الوهم بتليسه اليه شيئا آخر.