



“College Life Class”

The Attributes of God: Aseity & Necessity

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God's Aseity and Necessity

Aseity and ***necessity*** are closely related: both are incommunicable or non-transferable attributes of God.

Both refer to God's unique kind of Being.

Aseity has to do with God's existence.

Necessity has to do with the impossibility of His non-existence.

God's Aseity

Aseity means literally “of oneself”

Used of God, aseity denotes that He exists in and of himself, independent of anything else. He is ***self-existent***.

Being self-existent is not the same as being self-caused. It is impossible to cause one's own existence.

A self-existent Being (a Being with aseity) is not a ***self-caused*** being; rather, a self-existent Being is an ***uncaused*** Being. It simply has no cause, since only beings who can't possibly not be need a cause.

Hence, a Being who cannot possibly ***not be*** must be an uncaused (necessary) Being.



The biblical basis for God's aseity

1. God existed prior to and independent of creation.
2. God brought into and sustains in existence everything else that is.

Genesis 1: 1 “In the beginning God...”

Psalm 90:2 “*Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God*”

John 1: 1, 3 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... *through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made*”

Acts 17:25 “He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything, because He Himself gives all men life and breath and everything else”



The biblical basis for God's aseity (cont.)

Romans 11: 36 “From Him and through Him and to Him are all things”

Colossians 1: 17 “He is before all things”

Hebrews 1: 2 “He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe”

Hebrews 2: 10 “God, for whom and through whom everything exists...”

Revelation 4: 11 “By your will they were created and have their being”



Objections to God's Aseity

Objection: From the idea of Causality, "Everything needs a cause."

Response: Correctly stated, "Everything that is finite, contingent, or has a beginning needs a cause."

Objection: A self-existent Being is a self-caused Being.

Response: God is not a *self*-caused Being (which is impossible), but an *un*-caused Being (which is possible). God exists *in* Himself, but not *of* Himself; that is, a self-existent Being is not the cause of Himself because He needs no cause of Himself.

God is the uncaused Cause of all that exists.



God's Necessity

A necessary Being is one whose nonexistence is impossible; that is, if a necessary Being exists, then He must exist necessarily. His existence is essential.

A necessary Being is one who is not contingent, and a contingent being is one who is not necessary.

A contingent being is one who *can* not exist

A Necessary Being is one who *cannot* not exist.



The biblical basis for God's necessity

Same as above for aseity.





The theological basis for God's necessity

Necessity follows from Uncausality

- The necessity of God's Being follows from the fact that He is an uncaused Being.
- What is uncaused exists independently, and what exists independently is a necessary existence.
- Consequently, God is a necessary existence.

Necessity follows from Aseity

- That God is a necessary being also follows from the fact that He has self-existence or aseity.
- God as a self-existent being is an independent being, and what has independent existence is a necessary existence.



Historical Basis

Irenaeus (c. 125 – c. 202)

“How can there be any other Fullness, or Principle, or Power, or God, above Him, since it is a matter of necessity that God, the *Pleroma* (Fullness) of all these, should contain all things in His immensity, and should be contained by no one?”



Objections to God's Necessity

Objection: Since all meaningful statements must have some reference to experience, it seems to follow that the concept of a necessary being makes no sense.

Response:

- If an uncaused God is meaningless, then so is an uncaused universe, which many atheist claim.
- Since nothing cannot produce something, then ultimately something must be uncaused--either the universe or its Cause.
- The universe cannot be eternal, since it is running down.
- Hence, the ultimate Cause of the universe must be uncaused.

THE BIG BANG THEORY

TIME BEGINS

ONE SECOND

PRESENT DAY

Time	10^{-43} sec.	10^{-32} sec.	10^{-6} sec.	3 min.	300,000 yrs.	1 billion yrs.	15 billion yrs.
Temperature		10^{27} °C	10^{13} °C	10^8 °C	$10,000$ °C	-200°°C	-270°°C

1 The cosmos goes through a superfast "inflation," expanding from the size of an atom to that of a grapefruit in a tiny fraction of a second.

2 Post-inflation, the universe is a seething, hot soup of electrons, quarks and other particles.

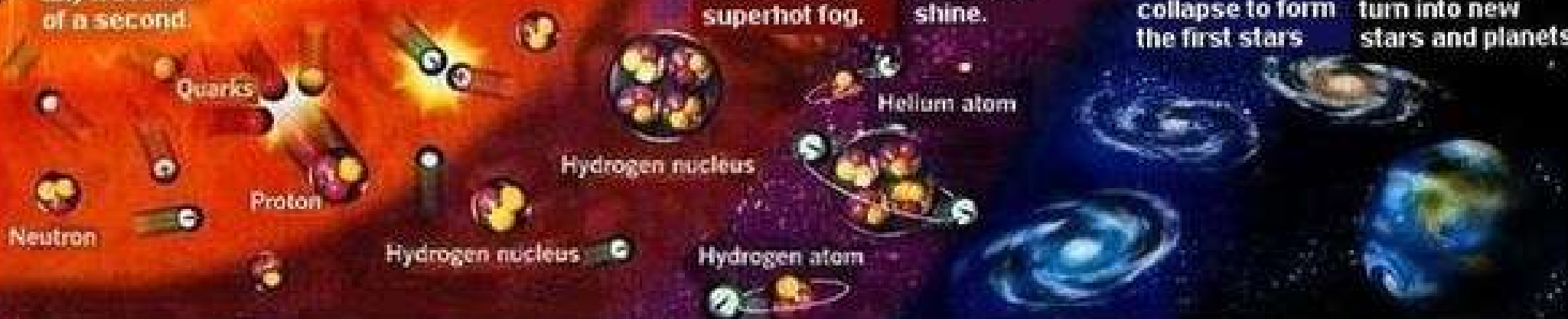
3 A rapidly cooling cosmos permits quarks to clump into protons and neutrons.


4 Still too hot to form into atoms, charged electrons and protons prevent light from shining: the universe is a superhot fog.

5 Electrons combine with protons and neutrons to form atoms, mostly hydrogen and helium. Light can finally shine.

6 Gravity makes hydrogen and helium gas coalesce to form the giant clouds that will become galaxies; smaller clumps of gas collapse to form the first stars.

7 As galaxies cluster together under gravity, the first stars die and spew heavy elements into space; those will eventually turn into new stars and planets.





Summary:

- God has both ***aseity*** and ***necessity***; His existence is inherent and necessary.
- He exists in Himself, and He cannot not exist.
- Unlike creatures, whose existence is derived from another and is contingent, God's existence is both uncaused and independent.

***God's independence (aseity) is defined as follows:
God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything,
yet we and the rest of creation can glorify him and bring him
joy.***

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology, An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 1994, p160



Objection:

Some have thought that God created human beings because He was lonely and needed fellowship with other persons.

- John 17: 5 “Father, glorify Me in your own presence ***with the glory which I had with you before the world was.***”
- Only God exists by virtue of His very nature, and He was never created and never came into being. He always was.
- God's existence and character are determined by Himself alone and are not dependent on anyone or anything else. [comforting??]
- God exists in a fundamentally different order of being. It is not just that we exist and God has always existed; it is also that God necessarily exists in an infinitely better, stronger, more excellent way.



The balancing consideration with respect to this doctrine is the fact that we and the rest of creation can glorify God and bring him joy.

- God speaks of his sons and daughters “whom I created ***for my glory***, whom I formed and made”(Isaiah 43: 7).
- Although God did not have to create us, He chose to do so in a totally free choice.
“Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.” Rev. 4:11
- We are able to bring joy and delight to God.
“You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God... *for the LORD delights in you... as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*” Isa. 62:3-5
The Lord... “will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.” Zephaniah 3:17



Does God **want** our worship?

Is it arrogant for God to want this kind of worship?

- Not at all. Arrogance involves having an inflated sense of self. A perfect God cannot have an inflated sense of self.
- He has an accurate understanding of his immeasurable worth.
- God wants us to worship because He knows we will be fulfilled by it. We were created to be in relationship with Him, so worshipping--responding to God with all that we are--realizes our very purpose.
- “Worship is a natural response to an appropriate understanding of who God is, not an act of reluctant humility before and attention-seeking Creator.”

Keeping Your Kids on God's Side, Natasha Crain, 2016, p43f



Created
to Worship



References:

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