

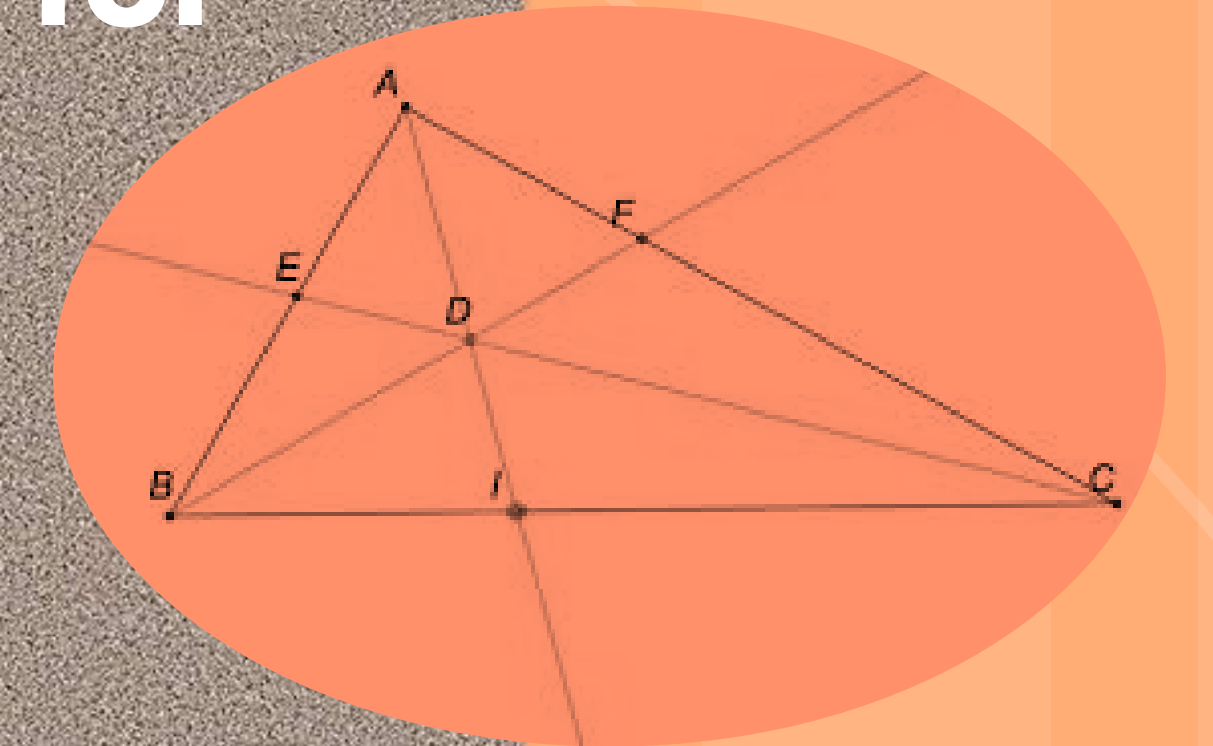
The Cartesian Idea of God's Absolute Omnipotence: Logical Reflection*



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Abstract

What does it mean to be omnipotent? Is there something impossible for God? For example, can He create a triangle with 4 angles? Or do that $2 + 2 = 5$ and at the same time not? I argue that Cartesian answer for that questions seems to have a contradiction between conclusion and ways of grounding that conclusion



It is evident to anyone who takes note of the immensity of God that there can be absolutely nothing that does not depend on him. This is true not merely for everything that subsists, but for all order, every law, and every rational basis for what is true and good.

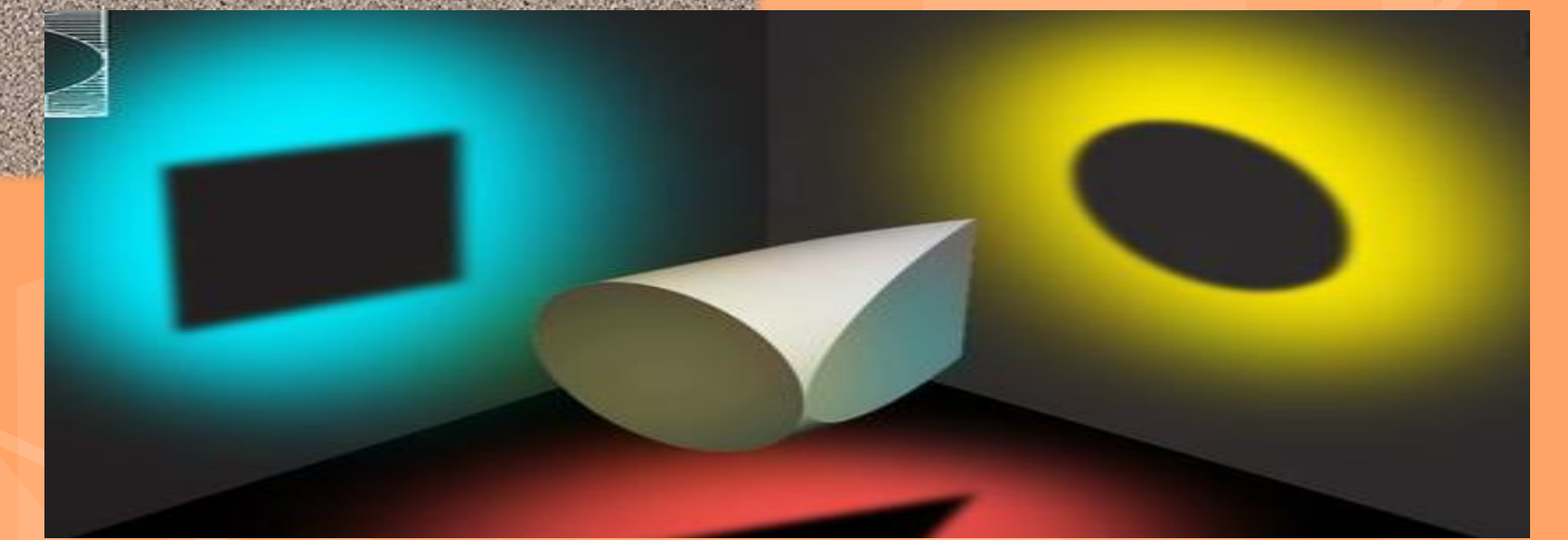
Reply to Sixth set of objections.

... our mind is finite and so created as to be able to conceive as possible things which God could have made possible, but which he had nevertheless wished to make impossible.

Letter to Mesland, 1644

NB: So, we cannot say that anything is impossible for God, because He is the reason for possibility and impossibility. We even have no reason to say that the logical laws are independent from God.

? Can God change something that is considered as eternal and necessary truth?



It will be said that if God had established these truths he could change them as a king changed his laws. To this the answer is: Yes, he can, if his will can change. 'But I understand them to be eternal' – I make the same judgment about God.

NB 2: The answer is based on our clear idea about perfect God. **Without confidence in connection between our ideas about perfectness and real perfectness we cannot** prove, that necessary truth will not be changed, and, consequently, explain, how can we know anything.

Letter to Mersenne, 1630.

I would not dare to say that God cannot... bring it about that 1 and 2 are not 3. I merely say that he has given me such a mind that I cannot conceive... a sum of 1 and 2 which is not 3.

Letter to Arnauld, 1648

? How can we disprove the idea of God's Absolute Omnipotence? Is it possible?
- If He is omnipotent, we can say, that He is over the logical laws. So, even if we have a proof A, that He cannot break logical laws, we can suggest again, that he can, so He still has superiority over A.

? How theodicy is possible in this case?

Let P is the reason for evil (E), and P is so good, that we accept evil. So,
 $P \Rightarrow E$ exists,
is the truth.

But why did God create such truth? Why did not he create just P without implication?

Conclusion

There are 2 visible options:

To follow Descartes. Everything is possible if God decides so, and everything is good if God does so. It means that problem of theodicy doesn't concern us. But it also means our noticeable misunderstanding of God. We cannot even hope, that we can understand Him. (Do not remember NB 2)

Or

To stay with hope that our attitude to perfectness is not nonsensical, but it seems to mean, that we have to concede, that logical laws can be independent from God.

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