

RSR Episode #13

Design Arguments

Part 1 of 4

Design Arguments infer God's existence from the fact that the universe is orderly, lawful, and seemingly purposeful. God is the cause of that order: he is the designer of the universe. The two classic versions are Aquinas' Teleological Argument and Paley's Analogical Argument. —DMH



The Fifth Way

By Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*. Selection from Part 1, Question 2, Article 3. (<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1002.htm>)

The Aristotelian Catholic philosopher Thomas Aquinas (1225-1275) presented this Design Argument in his magnum opus *Summa Theologica* as one of five empirical arguments for the existence of God. This argument claims that all aspects of existence show evidence of purpose, not merely living organisms.

The existence of God can be proved in five ways... The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that not fortuitously, but designedly, do they achieve their end. Now whatever lacks intelligence cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

