

TOPIC 8: THE KEY OF RATIONAL ARGUMENTS

One of the keys to unlock the fitrah is to give the non-Muslim some rationale arguments. At iERA, the best approach that we have found in providing a rational argument to unlock the fitrah is the GORAP method.

GORAP stands for God's Existence, God's Oneness, Revelation and Prophethood. The aim is to articulate rationale proofs for each of these stages. For instance, rational arguments that there is a creator, a rational argument that this creator is one, a rational argument that the Quran is from God and a rational argument that the Prophet Muhammad is a messenger of God.

REFLECTION

What is it about the GORAP method that makes it so effective when conveying the message of Islam? Do you think you could add to it? (answer this second question after you have used it in your dawah a few times).

God's Existence

Among the examples you could give for God's existence is the design argument. Take the example of a mobile phone; it has been designed with certain features, such as buttons, screen, a mic and speaker – each of these elements have a purpose. For instance, the screen allows you to see what your typing. The speaker allows you to hear the other person on the phone.

These designed features indicate a designer. So, if something as simple as a mobile phone has a designer, then what about something as complex, powerful and beautiful as the universe? We as Muslims, believe that God is the Creator and Designer.

Another way to argue this is through the Qur'an for existence of creation. Allah says: *Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain. (52:35-36)*. In this verse, we can extract four options for the universe: did the universe come from nothing? Did it create itself? Was it created from something also created? Or was it created from something uncreated?

Oneness of God:

After discussing the proofs that there is a creator, Allah gives us a rational intuitive reason for why The Creator can only be one: "Allah has not taken any son, nor has there ever been with Him any deity. [If there had been], then each deity would have taken what it created, and some of them would have sought to overcome others. Exalted is Allah above what they describe [concerning Him]." (23:91).

Revelation

Firstly, when it comes to revelation, it is good to first discuss the need for revelation. A good starting point is to think about how, when we design a piece of technology, like a mobile phone, we also prepare a manual or some sort of instructions to help the user. In addition, you can say that human beings are the only living creatures that ask the question "why?" We need answers to fundamental questions. Animals just navigate through life using their instincts. Revelation provides answers to our questions.

After this, we give proof for why the Quran is from God. So, to claim that a book is from the Divine, there must be some criteria. Here are some examples:

1. **It must be consistent with the rational and intuitive conclusion on God.** For example, if a book says God is a mouse with 40 legs, you could safely assume that this book is not from God, as God must be external to the universe and independent. A mouse, regardless of form, is a dependent being. It has limited physical qualities such a size, shape and colour. All things with limited physical qualities are dependent because there are external factors that gave rise to their limitations. God is not "physical" and is independent. Therefore, nothing with limited physical qualities can be God.
 2. **It must be internally and externally consistent.** In other words, if it says on p20 that God is one and then on p340 its says God is three, that would be an internal inconsistency. Additionally, if the book says that the universe is only 6,000 years old, then that would be an external inconsistency, as reality affirms the universe is older than that.
 3. **It must have signposts to the transcendent.** The revelation must contain something that indicates it is from the Divine and that it cannot be adequately explained naturalistically. In simple terms, it must have evidence to show that it is from God. For example: **Preservation:** "Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian." (15:9)
Literary miracle: "And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a Surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah , if you should be truthful." (2:23) "Or do they say, "He invented it"? Say, "Then bring ten Surahs like it that have been invented and call upon [for assistance] whomever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful." (11:13)
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Prophethood:

The last stage for a rational argument, is to prove the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is truly a messenger of God. Now, the easy way to do this is, if you have proven the Quran is true, then automatically the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad is true, because the Quran says “Say, [O Muhammad], "O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all (7:158).

Another way to prove this is, you can say that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) made a claim to Prophethood, and looking into the authentic historical narratives concerning his life, the claim can be assessed in the following way: The possible conclusions are that he was lying, deluded, or speaking the truth.

- **Was he a liar?** No, because he was known as “Truthful and Trustworthy”, even by his enemies. Also, liars often lie for worldly gain, yet the Prophet (peace be upon him) rejected worldly aspirations for the Hereafter.
- **Was he deluded?** A deluded person is one who speaks falsehood while believing it to be true. However, the Prophet was not deluded because, during his lifetime he foretold many prophecies that actually came true. For example, the beduoin Arabs building tall buildings. How is this possible unless he was given knowledge by the All-Knowledgeable? Moreover, his teachings are not those of a deluded man.
- **Conclusion: He spoke the Truth!**

Further reading

For God’s Existence

Making sense of God (iERA): <https://iera.org/shop/making-sense-of-god/>

Do we need evidence for God? (iERA): www.onereason.org/do-we-need-evidence-for-god

Kalam Cosmological Arguments (Mohammad Hijab): <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Kalam-Cosmological-Arguments-Mohammed-Hijab/dp/1098544021>

For God’s Oneness

Know God, Know Good (iERA): <https://iera.org/shop/know-god-know-good-free-e-book-download/>

For Revelation

The Eternal Challenge (iERA): <https://iera.org/shop/the-eternal-challenge/>

For Prophethood

The Forbidden Prophecies (iERA): <https://iera.org/shop/the-forbidden-prophecies/>

The Last Messenger (iERA): <https://iera.org/shop/the-last-messenger/>

Liar, Deluded or Truthful? (iERA) <http://www.onereason.org/liar-deluded-or-truthful>

For General GORAP

The Man in the Red Underpants (AbdurRaheem Green): <https://iera.org/shop/the-man-in-the-red-underpants-free-e-book-download/>

The Divine Reality: God, Islam and the Mirage of Atheism (Hamza Tzortzis):

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Divine-Reality-Islam-Mirage-Atheism/dp/0996545387>