



PHILOSOPHY OF GOD IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI

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Abstract

Discourse about the existence of God, in the realm of philosophy, included in the circle category metaphysics or also called the first philosophy. In the circle of non-Muslim philosophers, the discourse of the existence of God is elaborated by Thomas Aquinas by presenting five arguments, called cosmological propositions. As for the classical Muslim, scholar Ibn Sina appears to describe the existence of God through the argument of al-jawas or contingency which divides the form into three categories: the necessary existence (wajib al-wujud), the possible form (Mumkin al-wujud) and the impossible being (mumtani ' al-wujud). In the modern context of the twentieth century, Said Nursi elaborated philosophy of the divinity more broadly using cosmological, ontological, teleological, and intuitive arguments. Said Nursi describes all these arguments philosophically by using various illustrations. This article will discuss the philosophy of God in the perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.

Abstrak

Wacana tentang eksistensi Tuhan, dalam ranah filsafat, termasuk dalam kategori lingkaran metafisika atau juga disebut filsafat pertama. Dalam lingkaran filsuf non-Muslim, wacana eksistensi Tuhan diuraikan oleh Thomas Aquinas dengan menghadirkan lima argumen, yang disebut proposisi kosmologis. Adapun Muslim klasik, sarjana Ibnu Sina muncul untuk menggambarkan keberadaan Tuhan melalui argumen al-jawas

atau kontijensi yang membagi bentuk menjadi tiga kategori: eksistensi yang diperlukan (*Wajib al-wujud*), bentuk yang mungkin (*Mumkin al-wujud*) dan makhluk yang tidak mungkin (*mumtani 'al-wujud*). Dalam konteks modern abad ke-20, Said Nursi memaparkan filsafat keilahian secara lebih luas menggunakan argumen kosmologis, ontologis, teleologis, dan intuitif. Said Nursi menjelaskan semua argumen ini secara filosofis dengan menggunakan berbagai ilustrasi. Artikel ini akan membahas filsafat Tuhan dalam perspektif Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.

Keywords: *Philosophy, God, Said Nursi.*

A. Introduction

Discussion of God, in the discourse of philosophy included in the cycle of metaphysics category or also called first philosophy.¹ The first term of philosophy or metaphysics, of which one element deals with God², was first introduced by Aristotle, which in later development is still used, including by Muslim philosophers in describing the existence of God.³

In non-Muslim philosophers, this conversation about the existence of God as the First Mover is elaborated by Thomas Aquinas by presenting five arguments, called cosmological propositions⁴. From the

¹ Metaphysics according to Ibn khaldun includes also being a being, a common matter affecting physical and spiritual things, the part that studies the origin of things, the way things arise from spiritual entities, & studies the state of the soul after its separation from the body. Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Integrasi Ilmu Sebuah Rekonstruksi Holistik* (Bandung: Arasy, 2005), p. 74-75.

² It is still debatable whether Aristotle's metaphysics does mention God. According to Jabiri, the God of Aristotle as the first mover (*al-muharrrik al-awwal*), appears just a scientific assumption to interpret the principle of motion, so that it is nothing more than the demands of logic alone. Abed al-Jabiri, *Takwīn al-'Aql al-'Arabi* (Beirut: Markāz Dirāsāt al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah, 1983), p. 27-28; Russell states that Aristotle discusses the transcendent God, only with a philosophical description that is capable of rational reasoning and completely rational. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London: Unwin University Books, 1955), p. 180-184; Likewise, with Russell, Armstrong saw Aristotle clearly initiate the concept of God, but God who did not glorify him in history, did not create nature, & did not judge on the Day of Judgment. Karen Armstrong, *A History of God* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), p. 171.

³ The earliest Muslim philosopher Al-Kindi gave one of his first titles *firts philosophy*, which describes the knowledge of the First Reality which became the Cause for every reality. Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 70.

⁴ Amsal Bahtiar, *Filsafat Agama* (Jakarta: Logos, 1997), p. 179-182.

Muslim world, Ibn Sina appears to describe the existence of God through the argument of al-jawas or contingency which divides the form into three categories: the necessary existence (*Wajib al-wujud*)⁵, the possible form (Mumkin al-wujud) and the impossible being (*mumtani' al- form*). Ibn Sina's view of this possible argument is often called an ontological proposition, since his approach uses the philosophy of being⁶.

Similarly, Ibn Rushd who initiated the argument inayah (design), namely the existing equipment in nature is created with full harmony for the benefit of humans⁷. Because based on the perspective of the harmony of creation, the concept of God according to Ibn Rushd is often called the teleological argument⁸. Finally, Muslim philosophers complete the divine philosophy using an intuitive method, one of which is Jalaluddin Rumi⁹. In this context, Said Nursi elaborates the existence of God more broadly by using cosmological, ontological, teleological, and intuitive arguments. Said Nursi describes all of these arguments philosophically by using so many rich illustrations. But before it will be described first glimpse of Nusri's view of God.

B. Said Nursi's view of God

In the history of philosophy, the method used to analyze, understand, and know God, generally by the demonstrative method (burhani), is to construct the step-by-step premise rationally, systematically and consistently in order to achieve a solid insight, like a solid pyramid building. Through this philosophical construction, God is identified by several terms commonly used in philosophical literature as Being qua Being, the Absolute Being, Supreme Intellect, the Supreme Truth, Substance Who Shall Be His Being, the Source of All Beings and so on.¹⁰

Although many philosophers are able to describe the existence of God philosophically, not least among those who recognize the limitations of

⁵ Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Menembus Batas Waktu* (Bandung: Mizan, 2005), p. 34.

⁶ Yusuf Musa, *Al-Quran dan Filsafat*, terj. Ahmad Daudy (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1988), p. 43.

⁷ Kartanegara, *Menembus ...*, p. 36-37

⁸ Musa, *Al-Quran...*, p. 43.

⁹ Annemarie Schimmel, *Menyingkap Yang Tersembunyi*, trans. Saini K. M (Bandung: Mizan, 2005), p. 106.

¹⁰ Etienne Gilson, *Tuhan di Mata Para Filosof*, trans. Silvester Goridus Sukur (Bandung: Mizan, 2004), p. 15-16.

philosophical reflection of human reason in constructing Absolute Reality called God. The recognition is not only vowed by some Muslim philosophers (East), but also by non-Muslim (Western) philosophers. Ibn Sina though so skilled in describing the existence of God in a rational demonstration through the theory of emanasinya,¹¹ ultimately, he acknowledged the weakness of reason in constructing God as a whole.¹²

Two Jewish philosophers, Bahya Ibn Pakudah and Rabbi Ibn Maimun, better known as Maimonides's call, express that reason can tell that God exists but is unable to convey anything about God.¹³ Finally two Christian philosophers, Scotus Erigena and Thomas Aquinas, though logically successful in uncovering the mystery of God, both agree that the true nature of God can not be reached by the human mind.¹⁴

The exposition of some philosophers about God, often paradoxical: on the one hand they portray God logically, on the other hand they express the powerlessness of their ratio in capturing the authenticity of God; In one aspect they make God the object of discursive reasoning, on the other hand they claim the limitations of their intellect in understanding God as reason understands other phenomena.

Approaching the view of the philosophers is a perspective built by Said Nursi about God. Nursi has a view of God that is not completely free from paradoxical nuances. He sees God as the Essence which has perfection and majesty which no intellect can ever equal and unfathomable, but His abundance and majesty are incarnate in the face of the universe so that it can become a book that can be read by human ratio.

¹¹ Regarding the theory of emanation developed by Ibn Sina can be seen in Harun Nasution, *Falsafat & Mistisisme dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1995), p. 34-40; also in, *Islam Rasional* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), p. 43-51.

¹² Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Menyibak Tirai Kejahilan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2003), p. 26. In fact, Ibn Sina along with Farabi acknowledged the weakness as well as the power of reason. Intelligence is clearly weak to grasp God's true reality, but through contact with active reason, identified with the angel Gabriel, so that it can construct God more validly than reason sichlm. See in Fazlur Rahman, *Kenabian dalam Islam*, trans. Rahmani Astuti (Bandung: Pustaka, 2003), p. 1-12.

¹³ Karen Armstrong, *A History of God* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), p. 186.

¹⁴ There is a story that tells that when he finished dictating the last sentence of his work *Summa*, Aquinas sadly lay his head on his arm. When the clerk asked what was happening, Aquinas replied that everything he had written seemed uncharacteristic to what he had seen. *Ibid*, p. 205.

According to Nursi, the perfection of God in all its aspects is too great to be understood by the weak human mind, but the perfection of God is manifested in the sheets of the universe through its Attributes, Names and Actions, which is very transparent to be accommodated by the power of reason human.¹⁵ Globally, Nursi's view of God can be best described in three categories.

First, Nursi views God as a very unique and perfectional Essence that can not be compared with anything. God has absolute perfection in all of His attributes, names, and deeds, so that nothing and can not be compared with anything. All of the "perfection" that appears in the universe, possessed by humans, angels, and jinn is just a dim reflection of His essential, incomparable perfection.¹⁶

Why does God have unmatched perfection? According to Nursi, because all the infinite perfection (absolute) is possible only in the circle of Unity and Oneness or the Uniqueness of God, then the shadow of perfection outside the circle of perfection is true is erroneous and not perfection at all.¹⁷ Nevertheless, Nursi acknowledges that there are forms of perfection whose value and significance are relative in the universe of creation both microcosm and macrocosm, but still can not be compared with the ultimate perfection.¹⁸

Second, Nursi's view of God possessing absolute and unbounded power over all of His creations. The so-called natural laws are nothing but images of the realization of His Science, Command, and Will on all species¹⁹. God, the All-Powerful Creator knows everything and has such a comprehensive will, that whatever He wants to happen will happen and

¹⁵The idea of Nursi is closely approximated to the idea of a stretcher by Ibn Arabi which reveals that the universe is the manifestations of Allah (*tajalliyat*), or expressly manifestation of Allah's attributes, names, and actions (*af'al*) Allah. See in Seyyed Hosein Nasr (ed.), *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), p. 58; this Arabi idea was elaborated also by Annemarie Schimmel, *Dimensi Mistik dalam Islam*, trans. Sapardi Djoko Damono et al. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 2003), p. 340-341; compare also in some detail in Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam*, trans. Rahmani Astuti & M.S. Nasrullah (Bandung: Mizan, 2004), p. 47-66.

¹⁶Said Nursi, *The Words*, trans. Sukran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler Nesriyet, 2002), p. 645.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 660.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 647.

¹⁹Said Nursi, *Sinar Yang Mengungkap Sang Cahaya*, trans. Sugeng Hariyanto et al. (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 2003), p. 144.

whatever He does not want will not happen. He is powerful over all things with Absolute Power covering everything necessary for His Divine Essence.²⁰

In Nursi's perspective, if viewed from the standpoint of Divine Power, creating anything, whether large or small, many or few, easy or complicated, all within easy alignment. With His absolute power, He created something universally as easy as creating the particular.²¹ Nursi voiced the workings of God's absolute power in a poetic way:

In relation to the power of the One Who creates beings, Paradises are as easy springs, the springs as easy as gardens, and gardens as easy as flowers.²²

Although the power of God is absolute, according to Nursi, his power is incarnate in the form of two manifestations. The first way is (Wahidiya), the form of an all-encompassing provision, He reveals His Names throughout the universe from behind intermediaries and visible caucas. Secondly (Ahadiya), He focuses His manifestation on one being without an intermediary or a veil. When shown in this second way, their goodness, creation, and glory are clearer, more beautiful and majestic than their first manifestations.²³

Regarding this matter, Nursi made an illustration. For example, a very good king exercises his power directly. He can do so in two ways: with some general provisions or laws he makes and uses officials and governors in their respective offices, or through direct government by being present everywhere at the same time in different forms and without being accompanied officials or employees. This second way is better and more special.²⁴

So for Nursi, although God has absolute power, it does not deny Him the use of intermediaries and causations to show His power in worldly life. This fact is in line with the idea that was initiated by Abdul Qadir al-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p 158.

²¹ Said Nursi, *Letters*, trans. Sukran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler Nesriyat, 2001), p. 298.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 299; Compare with Said Nursi, *Persoalan Tauhid & Tasbih*, trans. Maheram Binti Ahmad (Malaysia: Kuala Terengganu, 1999), p. 75.

²³ Said Nursi, *Dari Cermin ke-Esaan Allah*, trans. Sugeng Hariyanto & Fathor Rashid (Jakarta: SiRaja, 2003), p. 139.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

Jilani, that the world is a country or a place of wisdom (wisdom) that requires the means, infrastructure, and law of causality.²⁵

Third, although God has unparalleled perfection and power that is unreachable to the weak human reason, He still wants to show His perfection and power in every feature of the universe through the manifestation of His names, attributes, and actions. Systematically and coherently, everything in the universe on both the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels reflects the perfection of the work and the Creator itself.²⁶

In this aspect, according to Nursi, God is present transparently on every page of His creation: the heavens, the sun, the earth, the moon, and the stars, and in the world of impure animals and conscious human beings. Nursi's view of God on the third level is the most prominent and often appears in his work: *Risalah al-Nur*. Perhaps because he wanted to counter the doctrine of philosophy of materialism that sounded philosophical, then Nursi also build a philosophical-sounding argument with cosmological, ontological, teleological and intuitive frames with a large portion.²⁷ Four kinds of philosophical argument Said Nursi about the existence of God will be described below.

C. The Existence of God in Perspective Said Nursi

1. The Existence of God in the Frame of Cosmological Argumentation

The central idea embodied in the cosmological argument is the existence of a series of causal laws (causality) to the universe that must end in the first cause called God.²⁸ However, cosmological argument can be described as an argument about the existence of God based on the nature of the universe depended upon and dependent on something other than itself; which is based on the controversy of the universe and its reliance on what is necessary (God).

God moves himself, while the universe has the motion given to it. God is eternal, while the universe has a beginning in time. God is actual to

²⁵ Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, *Faṭḥu al-Rabbāni* (Lebanon: Beirut, 1988), p. 140.

²⁶ Nursi, *The Words ...*, p. 312-313.

²⁷ The philosophical, philosophical argument in discussing God almost always appears in all sections of Nursi's Treatise, as in *The Words, Letters, The Flashes, Sinar Yang Mengungkap Sang Cahaya, The Rays*, and others.

²⁸ Titus, *Persoalan...*, p. 454.

him, whereas the universe is in a potentially life-induced state in time. God can not be changed, while the universe is in a constant change. In other words, cosmology starts from an analysis of the existence of everything to the existence of God and to one of God's attributes or more.²⁹

When deciphering the existence of God through the frame of cosmological argument, Said Nursi departs from the existence of the universe in all its aspects which surely leads to a Supreme Creator, the Absolute, and the Ultimate in all attributes. The discussion of the universe, in Nursi's perspective, is always connected with the oneness of God and often relates it to one of God's actual names or attributes. Nursi's description of the existence of God through cosmological argument can be classified in detail as follows:

- a. The creation of the universe with all its diversity proves the existence of the Almighty Single Creator.³⁰ According to Nursi, power and sovereignty do not allow enemies, allies, or interference. In Nursi's illustration, if a village has two leaders, its order and peace will be broken. An area or territory with two governors will experience confusion. And a country with two kings or governments will always be in turmoil.

If the relative power and sovereignty of the weak man alone reject the fellowship and intervention of others, the true sovereignty, the supreme absolute kingdom and power at the level of God's Power possessed by the Almighty, surely more firmly reject the interference and fellowship of any party. It is an indication of the existence *Dzat Wajibul Wujud (the Necessarily Existent One)*.³¹ In other words, Unity and Unity without allies is an absolute requirement of the Deity and the Power.

- b. The existence of relative perfection shows absolute perfection. All perfection in the universe is a sign of the perfection of the Essence of the Great and the symbol of His beauty. In the analogy of Nursi, a beautifully constructed beautiful palace must indicate a perfect builder. Just as the world, a palace built and perfectly decorated, indicates that the One who built the world is perfect.³² However,

²⁹ Bagus, *Kamus ...*, p. 75.

³⁰ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 715-717.

³¹ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 717.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 648.

Nursi continues to underline that all perfection possessed by every creature is only a relative perfection as a reflection of Absolute Perfection so that all such relative perfection will become a dim reflection when compared to the perfection of the reality of the Supreme Being of the Almighty.³³ "The innocent beauty" face of the universe signifies the inevitability of existence of His Absolute Beauty", writes Nursi.³⁴

- c. All beings are in need and dependence that necessitate a Mandatory Being Venue. According to Nursi, with little attention and effort, man can witness the seal of the Essence of the Places on everything on the face of the earth page (the Eternally Besought One).³⁵ This fact is because absolute power, riches, and life will be seen in weakness, poverty, and things that are completely devoid of life.³⁶ Furthermore, everything in the universe, whether large or small, has an endless need for food and survival. The needs of each thing are met on time and in the exact dose they need for their survival. The fulfillment of these needs indicates the existence of God the All-Giver, the Giver of Reason, the Most Gracious, the Merciful and the Most Merciful.³⁷
- d. The uniqueness of every creation shows God's Comprehensive Knowledge and proves the existence of God Almighty. The Knowledge of the Including God can be seen in His will in determining a form in every creature of His creation that is arranged, artistic, beautiful, and full of meaning according to their own purpose among the possibilities of infinite form.³⁸ Under these provisions, He presents every creature in the uniqueness of their identity and being. In Nursi's study, demonstratively such uniqueness is shown in His most glorious work: Man. Specifically, the uniqueness is visible on every human face. On every little face of the human there are signs that distinguish it from all other faces since the time of Prophet Adam, to this day, even forever, even though their substance is equally

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

³⁴ Nursi, *Sinar ...*, p. 111.

³⁵ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 309.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 694.

³⁷ Nursi, *Sinar ...*, p. 113.

³⁸ Nursi, *Letters ...*, p. 289-291.

human.³⁹ Thus, on every human face is transcendental stamped the oneness of God Almighty.⁴⁰

- e. Every creature of God reflects His Names beautifully, factually, and comprehensively.⁴¹ In other words, everything reflects the traces of the Divine. When looking at beautiful and beautiful faces, beautifully fascinating flower gardens, a panoramic view of the universe, stars, moon, and sun scattered across the magnificent arches of the horizon, there will be *Al-Jamil*, the Most Beautiful God.

When the sunlight shines upon the face of the earth and the rain water soaks up its dry land so that the plants and trees become alive and dense fruits, and the human and animal passionate lives, there will be the name of *Ar-Rahman*, the Merciful. And as through the life of all living beings prove the existence of the Essence of Being the Being, then through their death all witness to the eternity and oneness of the Essence of the Living.⁴² "Like you learn from His Name of Provider through hunger, come to know also His Name of Healer through your illness"⁴³, said Nursi firmly.

Up here, through the above explanation, Nursi actually wants to show that God is the only First Cause for everything: the universe, for the relative perfection of beings, for the needs and dependence of beings, as well as on every manifestation of all his attributes on the face of the universe. The creation of the universe, the existence of the relative perfection, the needs and dependence of the being, and the incarnation of every name, character, and work, all derive from the Essence of the Almighty Being. Because:

The cooperative relationships of each other among all things in the universe and the flawless artistry shown in every way illustrate that those who have painted the stars and the suns at the top of the sky are He Who painted the cells on the pages' bees and ants. With the language of all beings in the universe, the universe bears witness that

³⁹ Said Nursi, *The Flashes*, trans. Sukran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler Nesriyat, 2000), p. 245.

⁴⁰ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 623.

⁴¹ This theme often appears in *Risalah An-Nur*. Nursi describes the divine principle of making Himself known through the manifestations of His Most Beautiful names, such as the majesty of His seven attributes, as the All-Living, All-Knowing, All-Powerful, All-Wise, All-Hearing, All-Seeing, and Speaking. Said Nursi, *The Rays*, trans. Sukran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler Nesriyat, 1998), p. 169.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 708.

⁴³ Nursi, *Flashes ...*, p. 268

God, there is no god but Allah (laa ilaaha illallahu)"⁴⁴, concluded Nursi.

2. The Existence of God in the Ontological Frame of Argumentation

The ontological argument rests on the philosophy of being that man has an idea of a perfect substance and no greater being than it is.⁴⁵ This substance is identified as God. Since man is a finite being that can not produce the idea of God as the Perfect and Infinite, it is by itself God as the Greatest and Greatest Reality that has pinned the idea into the finite mind and soul of man.⁴⁶

With this idea, humans can voice and conceive of a Substance of the Great, the Greatest, and the Infinite not only in the mind alone, but actually having a concrete form in reality. It is with the assumption that if God is only big in the mind of consequence He is not really big because it is not realizing concretely but it is only imaginative.⁴⁷

If the teleological argument for another philosopher usually only revolves around the human soul who has the idea of God's absolute greatness and in fact the absolute greatness is truly present, Nursi goes beyond that general perspective. For him, not only man disposition who recognizes the absolute greatness of God, but also the universe of his creation voicing the greatness of the Creator. All human beings, whether the apostles, prophets, saints, scholars, and enlightened thinkers, testify to His absolute greatness.

Similarly, the universe, the earth and heavenly bodies to the invisible atoms, pledge testimony with their own disposition of the greatness and majesty of Almighty God that this universe is the trace of His power, the scratch of His decree, the mirror of His names, and the appearance of His light.⁴⁸ So every creature is capable of voicing the greatness of its Creator, although not caught by the most human reason.

⁴⁴ Nursi, *Sinar...*, p. 99.

⁴⁵ The idea was popularized by Saint Anselm who wanted to show that God's existence could be proved rationally in the eleventh century. Anselm defines God as: Something unthinkable there is something else beyond his majesty (*aliquid quo nihil matus cogitari possit*). Armstrong, *History...*, p. 202.

⁴⁶ Bagus, *Kamus...*, p. 77.

⁴⁷ Amsal, *Filsafat...*, p. 172-173.

⁴⁸ Nursi, *Sinar...*, p. 167-168; Nursi, *Flashes...*, p. 394.

Nevertheless, that human beings are able to describe the greatness and majesty of God, Nursi underlines that in essence His greatness and majesty will never be fully understood by the mind of every human being and not completely free from all deficiencies and imperfections. "Allahu Akbar: O the Essence of the Great! O Allah, You are the Greatness, and Glory that is not understood by reason"⁴⁹, so Nursi knot.

Furthermore, if following the Muslim⁵⁰ philosopher who initiated the ontological concept that God as the Incorrect Being which is the source of all the existence of the universe, Nursi also elaborates on the concept. Approaching such an ontological argument, Nursi considers everything that comes from the Divine Essence, need not be created out of absolute absence.⁵¹ Rather, creation means giving external material existence to things already existing in God's treasures. It is like developing a form that is reflected in a mirror or outlining meaning in the mind with words.⁵²

In other words, the process of creation is a transformation of the entity in its abstract form into an entity having a form of the self. It is like moving a picture in a mirror to a photo sheet to confirm its outward form very easily. Or like the appearance of a line that had been written with a faint ink through material that could reveal the text.⁵³

In this context, the approach adopted by Nursi is clearly very philosophical, because he initiated the concept of God as the Being of Being who created the universe of his creation without absolute absence. Although Nursi's insight on the ontological argument approached the ontological argument Ibn Sina had built nine centuries ago, Nursi's ontology was not

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 154.

⁵⁰ The teleological argument which is patterned thus carried by the classical philosopher Ibn Sina which later developed by later philosophers both Muslims and non-Muslims, including Saint Anselm. Kartanegara, *Menembus...*, p. 34.

⁵¹ With that argument, Nursi may be categorized as the true philosopher, a *true philosopher*. Because the philosophical approach, according to Karen Armstrong, rejects the concept of creation from nothing. So Al-Kindi, again according to Armstrong, can not be called a philosopher because he initiates creation from nothing (*creation ex nihilo*). Armstrong, *History...*, p. 174.

⁵² Nursi, *Sinar...*, p. 149-150.

⁵³ Nursi, *Flashes...*, p. 383; but elsewhere, Nursi also explained that the process of creating all entities in two ways. First, the creation of no so-called originality and invention. While the second, arising from various elements that exist, then formed, and given the form, called by composing and forming. *Ibid*, p. 417.

hierarchical emanative as Ibn Sina had argued.⁵⁴ Nursi only describes how the process of creation is illustrative as spreading sunlight on everything that can be beaten by the light and a time of light must return to the sun itself.

Elsewhere, Nursi illustrates that the creation process is like a shadow image on a mirror attached to a photographer's paper so that it becomes a concrete image. Similarly, the form and substance of all entities contained in the mirror of the knowledge of God Almighty. Absolute divine power gives it a very concrete form so easily that all entities are visible to the eye after being in the unseen world.⁵⁵

3. The Existence of God in the Frame of Teleological Arguments

Order, in the sense of design and pattern in the universe, indicates a person or something that regulates. The universe as a whole has a purpose which is the struggle of the universe.⁵⁶ The teleological universe is nature set according to a particular purpose. Parts of nature have a close relationship with each other and work together towards achieving that goal.⁵⁷ All of it shows that God is the source of order, and as the creator and keeper of that goal.⁵⁸

As the principle is very much emphasized and often repeated in the *Risalah*, as well as explaining the regularity, mutual cooperation, and purpose of the universe, Nursi always associates it with His Names. The teleological postulate built by Nursi always boils down to the name, nature, or action of God Almighty. In detail, there are several points on this subject:

- a. Mutual cooperation between creatures reflects God Almighty and All-Wise.⁵⁹ According to Nursi, the universe is like a magnificent palace, a well-ordered factory, and a well-planned city. Among the elements and parts there is mutual cooperation and mutual cooperation for a noble cause. If observed it will be seen that some parts help the other parts to meet their needs. How the sun and moon, day and night, summer and winter help plants to encourage them to

⁵⁴ Regarding Ibn Sina's emanative theories that developed the theory of Farabi, seen in Nasution, *Islam Rasional...*, p. 43-51.

⁵⁵ Nursi, *Flashes...*, p. 418.

⁵⁶ Bagus, *Kamus...*, p. 78.

⁵⁷ Amsal, *Filsafat ...*, p. 183.

⁵⁸ Bagus, *Kamus ...*, p. 78.

⁵⁹ Nursi, *Sinar ...*, p. 11-12.

help animals and offer food to animals that they take from the treasures of the Merciful's wealth.

Animals hasten to help humans. Honey bees and silkworms take honey and silk from the treasures of the Essence of the Merciful and bring it to humans. Earth, air, and water particles help fruits and vegetables have their own flavor and nutritional content. Then, vegetables and fruits help the human body cells in perfect order and for noble purposes. Thus, they are clear proofs and clear arguments that they are all servants of the Perfect Living Giver who works on the command and permission of His Power and Wisdom.⁶⁰

- b. The universe in addition has a purpose also has benefits in accordance with their unique character that reflects the existence of the Wise Creator.⁶¹ The wind, in addition to having great and wise benefits and functions, blows to perform its vital tasks. Spring, streams, and rivers do not emerge from the soil and mountains by chance. Rocks, jewels, and minerals have special purposes and benefits and are set to meet the needs of humans and animals. The birds sang amazingly to convey their feelings and express their intentions to the other birds.

Similarly, clouds, rainwater, and thundering lightning, and lightning, are not meaningless; the occurrence of these strange atmospheric events causes the fall of the rain and feeds all living beings on earth in desperate need of them. For Nursi, all these phenomena show that the Wise Ruler has mastered, kept, and caused them to appear out of obedience to His commandments. This shows that the winds, rocks, minerals, rain, and birds of twirling are directed by God the Wise for noble functions and purposes.

- c. Still boils down to Name God the Most-Wise, according to Nursi there is universal wisdom in every creation.⁶² Wisdom appears throughout the universe both in the whole universe and in its parts. This wisdom, which includes purpose, consciousness, will and tendency, shows the necessity of existence of the All-Wise, because it is impossible for an action to take place without the perpetrator and something done or part of it can not be the perpetrator.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 702-703.

⁶² Nursi, *Sinar ...*, p. 109.

The order in the creation and management of beings, recruited every season on earth, exhibit universal wisdom⁶³. Because a trait always shows the quality of something, then that universal wisdom shows the Essence of the Wise⁶⁴. When meditated carefully, the universe with all its aspects until the smallest part, for Nursi will show the universal wisdom that clearly shows the purpose and will of the Essence of the Wise.

Through that exposition, the teleological argument developed by Nursi is nothing so new and not so different from the teleologist designed by Muslim philosopher Ibn Rusyd⁶⁵, English theologian William Paley⁶⁶, or W.R. Matthews. But Nursi composes his teleological postulate with a new, illustrated, and affirmative style of language with the divine attributes, such as the Almighty, the Supreme, the Merciful, the Wise and so on.

4. The Existence of God in the Frame of Intuitive Argumentation

Approaches or arguments about the existence of God, though logical enough and capable of satisfying the ratio of the intelligent,⁶⁷ the faithful usually still try to equip it with an intuitive proposition or also called religious experience. The intuitive argument rests on the conscience or inner conviction that God exists often based on the feeling that believers already have some direct experience of God's existence. The brief verbalistic articulation of the argument is demonstrated by the physicist Russell

⁶³ Elsewhere in the *Ministries*, Nursi portrays this wisdom as the universal Destiny, in the sense that everything in the universe is rooted in exact proportions according to the nature of each creature and for a clear purpose. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶⁴ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 695-696.

⁶⁵ Ibn Rushd calls his teleological argument with the argument inayah. Hanafi, *Pengantar ...*, p. 171.

⁶⁶ William Paley made a famous illustration of the clock and to strengthen the teleological argument. According to him, the universe is like a clock that all its parts work in harmony in an orderly fashion. Anyone who sees and knows the clock will undoubtedly conclude that someone smart has designed and made the clock. Similarly, the universe of the universe with all kompleksitasnya arranged neat, accurate, and have a certain purpose, there must be a designer and intelligent maker who has created it. The only thing that can be understood to describe such a creator is God Almighty and Omniscient. Baggini, *Lima Tema ...*, p. 165.

⁶⁷ According to Abdul Halim Mahmud, all logical arguments about God's being can be sought by his weakness by other human reason. Therefore, one need not applaud the success of reason in proving His form (God), for with reason also the argument can be rejected. That means that the logical argument is not sufficient enough to prove God's form before it is equipped with an intuitive argument. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Quran* (Bandung: Mizan, 1997), p. 15.

Stannar when he acknowledges that he knows God exists because he intuitively senses it.⁶⁸

In Sufi discourse, to prove and recognize the existence of God is developed specific methods in the form of stages (maqamat), such as repentance, patience, zuhud, to end in the love⁶⁹. Although Nursi admits that in order to prove God's existence in addition to using rational arguments also using a spiritual approach (riyadhoh)⁷⁰, intrinsically, for Nursi, conscience has reflected God's existence by itself. Regarding the intuitive argument, Nursi's exposition can be described with the following points:

- a. The heart pledges and proves God's true existence.⁷¹ According to Nursi, one of the windows that deliver men in touch with the unseen world is the heart. Conscience has unique characteristics or natural traits that can not lie. Every human being has the deepest consciousness of the unity of his God and always faces Him. For Nursi, even if reason neglects to work properly and therefore also fails to see the truth, the conscience never forgets the Creator.

Even if the human ego opposes Him, the conscience sees Him, thinks about Him, and confronts Him. The perception of intuition always awakens and inspires light. This is because the love of God always pushes the conscience towards the knowledge of Him. This love which is a feeling that always longs for Him can not be separated from the conscience. His ingrained attachment to the human conscience is due to the existence of a truly enchanting God. At this point, the conscience becomes proof that is pinned into the soul of every person who declares the oneness of God.

- b. Furthermore, the recognition of the existence of the singleness of God is the implication of faith that resides in the human heart.⁷² According to Nursi, there are positive consequences of the confession of faith in the unity of God, as there are negative consequences to the denial of His unity. Man achieves the highest degree of perfection and

⁶⁸ Baggini, *Lima Tema ...*, p. 168.

⁶⁹ In the Sufi world, the stages or maqamat are hierarchically formulated differently between a Sufi figure and another Sufi figure. To know this difference, see Nasution, *Filsafat ...*, p. 62-63.

⁷⁰ Usually true beliefs are emphasized or become the main foundation for Risalah. Salih, *Said Nursi ...*, p. 203-204.

⁷¹ Nursi, *Sinar ...*, p. 585-587.

⁷² Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 322.

worthy of heaven through the light of faith. That is because faith binds man to the Supreme Creator and binds him with strong belief and engagement (relationship). Therefore, by human faith, it is worthy of high value because the divine creation manifests itself, and the carnival of divine name appears on the sheet of its being.⁷³

Conversely, the denial or disbelief of God's existence degrades humanity to the lowest degree so it is worth hell. For disbelief decides relation and relationship to the Creator. The darkness of conscience causes the whole meaning of the carnival of divine names who is full of wisdom can not be manifested, scrutinized, and read by others.⁷⁴ So faith, through substantive attribution to God, demands recognition of the unity of God (tauhid), monotheism leads to resignation, submission to *tawakkal* to Allah, and ultimately *tawakkal* will produce the happiness of the world and the hereafter.⁷⁵

- c. The human heart who predisposes so strongly to the love of immortality⁷⁶ and absolute perfection shows that the Eternal is only One God and Absolute Perfection is His only.⁷⁷ According to Nursi, there is a passion that is very vibrant and so strong in every human heart to love immortality. This desire makes many people dream that all their loved ones are eternal. But when they realize that what they love is only temporary or they see that whatever they love is gone, they will experience a very deep pain. All the pain and sadness that arise from the separation is an expression of disappointment that comes from the love of immortality.

If man had no instinct of immortality, he would not be disappointed with the loss of something he loved. In Nursi's view, the love of eternity reflects the existence of the oneness of God which has always been the mouth of every human desire, although many people do not realize it or are wrong in anchoring it.⁷⁸ Since all other immortals are relatively non-

⁷³ Said Nursi, *Iman Kunci Kesempurnaan*, trans. M. Misbah (Jakarta: Robbani Press, 2004), p. 2.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.

⁷⁵ Nursi, *Words ...*, p. 322.

⁷⁶ Nursi, *Flashes ...*, p. 29-31.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

⁷⁸ Nursi illustrates that the person who looks at the world is eternal like a person who looks at a mirror that reflects the flower garden, the palace, and the land with all its contents, which is only a slight shake (if the mirror is moved) there will be chaos in the mirror image. Thus, it is not worth touching the heart against a temporal world. *Ibid.*, p. 159; this

absolute, the true man simply desires a single absolute absolute, that is, God Almighty.

Similarly, according to Nursi, every human being has the disposition or infinite tendency to love the goodness, beauty, and the ultimate perfection that God deliberately put in man to know Him. Until whenever the instinct will not be satisfied unless the man tether his desire to the face of God Almighty only. But many humans are pursuing pseudo perfection which he regards as true perfection.

For this reason, Nursi suggests that human beings strengthen and sharpen their intuitive sensitivity by orienting love to God alone, emptying the heart of love for all temporal pleasures⁷⁹, acknowledging his helplessness and selfishness before Him, perpetuating dhikr or always remembering Him⁸⁰, and always consistent in fulfilling religious duties.⁸¹

D. Conclusion

God in the perspective of Nursi, is the Essence of the Supreme and the Plenary despite the greatness and perfection of God incarnate on every sheet of the face of the universe. Nursi presents four arguments about the existence of God. First, the cosmological argument, stating that all diversity in the universe, the existence of the relative perfection, the needs and dependence of all beings, and the uniqueness of each creation show the Essence of the Almighty Being.

Second, ontological arguments. Nursi describes that both microcosm and macrocosm, all dispositions voice the greatness and unity of God. Third, teleological argument. In Nursi's view, the universe is by no means teleological, in the sense that there is regularity, interrelation, and harmony as well as the creation of the Most Wise God. Fourth, the argument is intuitive. According to Nursi, the center of this proposition is the conscience of every human being to be the most transparent proof of the existence of God. []

love of immortality is also described by Gulen as an intuitive argument about the existence of God. Fethullah Gulen, *Memadukan Akal & Kalbu dalam Beriman*, trans Tri Wibowo Budi Santoso (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 2002), p. 7.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29-31.

⁸⁰ Nursi, *Letters ...*, p. 536-538.

⁸¹ Regarding the themes of mandatory worship, such as especially prayer, fasting, zakat and others can be seen specifically in Said Nursi, *Mengokohkan Aqidah Menggairahkan Ibadah*, terj. Ibtidain Hamzah Khan (Jakarta: Robbani Press, 2004).

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