I. MAIMONIDES’ THE GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED
   A. Overall point
      1. Three propositions concerning God
         a. What these propositions are
            (1) That he exists
            (2) That he is one
            (3) That he is incorporeal
         b. Their importance
            (1) They are commanded to be believed by the ten commandments
               (a) #1: I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other Gods but me.
               (b) #2: Against graven images.
            (2) Since the only part of the soul that survives is the acquired intellect, survival after death is dependent on these beliefs (?)
         c. Problems which arise concerning them
            (1) A literal reading of Scripture seems to contradict the second and third
            (2) The Mutakallimun, followed by some Rabbis, argue for these propositions in an unsound way.
            (3) The philosophers, who argue for them soundly, have erred on some lesser, but still important points, such as the eternity of the world and the scope of divine providence.
   B. Part One
      1. Summary: For the most part devoted to semantic points concerning language used in the Bible about God and that which should be used concerning him.
      2. Kinds of multiple meaning in language
         a. Homonymy-single descriptive word used with multiple significations--example: "zelem" meaning both essence and physical shape. We are made in God's image only in the former sense of zelem (because we have intellect), and thus that we are made in his image does not imply that he is corporeal.
         b. Figure
            (1) Simile or metaphor--the details of the figure have no significance independent
of that of the whole. Example: figure of the prostitute in Proverbs VII, 6-26 (p. 7)

(2) Allegory--parts do have independent significance.
   (a) Examples
      i) Jacob's ladder
      ii) Account of Creation
      iii) Account of the Divine Chariot
   (b) [Note: Maimonides thinks all three of these passages secretly signify important aspects of Aristotelian cosmology.]

c. "Hybrid terms" [I have found it difficult to understand what M. means by this.]

3. Two main thrusts of Part One (before exposition of Kalam)
   a. The Bible does not imply divine corporeality.
   b. The Bible does not imply that the Divine attributes are distinct from the Divine essence
      (1) Verbally, the Bible predicates these attributes affirmatively of God:
         (a) Existence
         (b) Life
         (c) Power
         (d) Wisdom
         (e) Unity
         (f) Eternity
         (g) Will
      (2) These terms are homonymous. In us they imply attributes distinct from our essence, but not in God.
      (3) The thirteen attributes revealed to Moses all signify God's actions (which are part of the created order). [Exodus 33,13 and 34,7.]
      (4) In God existence and essence are identical. (p. 80)
      (5) The divine attributes are more properly interpreted as negations (pp. 81-82)
      (6) The Divine Intellect is identical with the Divine Essence, since the Divine intellect is always in act, and whenever an intellect is in act then the
knowledge, the act of knowing, and the thing known are all identical (pp. 100-102)

(7) The names and epithets applied to God in the Bible are consistent with this view
(a) Examples
   i) The Tetragrammaton--signifies the essence of God
   ii) "He who rides upon the firmament"--signifies his rule over the celestial intelligences

4. Kalam
   a. The universe possesses an orderly nature which can be seen by making explicit the analogy between it and man. The Kalam denies this order. (M. ascribes miracles to hidden causes and says that many passages ascribing direct agency to God are figurative, signifying only his role as First Cause.)
   b. Propositions of the Kalam (pp. 120ff.)
      (1) All things are composed of atoms. These atoms are without magnitude in themselves, but when joined together form bodies. Generation and destruction are composition and division of atoms. Unlike the atoms of the Greek atomists, these are not eternal, by rather can be destroyed by God. [Note that there are two nascent logical contradictions here, as the theory is being presented by M.]
      (2) There is a vacuum. There must be, in order for the atoms to move. [Note: Aristotle denied the possibility of a vacuum.]
      (3) Time is composed of time-atoms. Minute=1/60 hour, second=1/60 minute, we can again divide by sixty. After 10 or more such divisions, we get the length of a time-atom. [Note 1 second times 1/(60 to the tenth power) = 1.6538172 E-18, or 1.7 billionths of a nanosecond.] The Mutakallimun accepted the proof of Aristotle that matter, time, and space must all have similar structure if motion
is to be explained.

(a) Absurdities of this view

i) Different velocities are to be explained by more or less time-atoms of rest interspersed among those of motion. E. g., the rotating mill wheel, of which the circumference moves with a higher velocity than an interior point. Must be fluid so that the outer parts can pause while the inner parts are catching up, even though after it has stopped it cannot be broken even with a hammer.

ii) The side and diagonal of a square are of equal length. (Space in three dimensions must consist of some sort of lattice of space-atoms, so that the laws of geometry will not hold if we think of length as the number of atoms a line contains.)

iii) In general, none of the propositions of Euclid concerning incommensurables, etc. will hold.

(4) Substance cannot exist without numerous accidents. [Thus far this is Aristotelian and OK with Maimonides.] Every substance must possess color, taste, motion or rest, combination or separation, life or death, and if it possesses life, it must likewise possess wisdom or folly, freewill or the opposite, power or weakness, perception or the opposites, i. e., blindness, etc. [The problem with this seems to be a confusion of negation and privation--e. g., of not seeing with being blind -- this is entailed by their overall theory in the following way: if things do not have intrinsic natures, then it is not possible to make the distinction between negation and
privation, since a privation, such as blindness, is something which belongs to a thing by nature, but which is lacking to it.]

(5)
c. Fallacious Proofs in Kalam of
   (1) Beginning of the universe from nothing
   (2) Existence of God
   (3) Unity of God
   (4) Incorporeality of God
d. Discussion of Kalam proofs

II. Maimonides and Aquinas' Proofs for the Existence of God
A. Their approaches are very similar--some of their proofs are virtually identical
   1. Both accept a Neoplatonic-Aristotelian framework (Aristotle's physics supplemented by the theory of emanation from the "Book of Causes," a work which was to the medievals anonymous, but which consists of excerpts from the writings of Proclus)
   2. Both rejected Aristotle's thesis of the eternity of the world (which forms the basis of Aristotle's proof of the unmoved mover in the Physics).
B. Differences in their approaches
   1. Aquinas takes pains definitely to refute Anselm's argument (which was probably unknown to Maimonides) (Question II, Article 1).
   2. Maimonides explicitly frames his proof in terms of the following constructive dilemma:
      a. Either the world is eternal or not. [Logical truth]
      b. If so, then Aristotle's argument for the unmoved mover proves that there is one (single and simple) incorporeal First Cause.
      c. If not, then there must have been a cause for the world's beginning. By Aristotelian arguments (this cause cannot be composite--therefore it cannot be corporeal either), this First Cause is, as above, single, simple, and incorporeal.
   3. Some of Aquinas' arguments seem interpretable only within this framework, but Aquinas does not explicitly state it.
D. Proofs discussed by summary name
   4. Proof from the eternity of the world and motion
      a. Roughly same as Aristotle's.
      b. High points
1. The universe and motion have always been
   (basically, no motion is conceivable as
   the absolutely first)
2. Everything which is moved is moved by
   another
3. In every series of movers there must be a
   first (logically, not temporally)
4. The eternal motion must be the motion of
   the "fixed stars."
5. The primary mover of the fixed stars
   cannot be movable in any way (otherwise
   its act would not have inevitability).
6. The primary mover of the fixed stars is
   incorporeal ("without magnitude")

5. Proof from the separability of mover and thing
   moved
   a. Whenever a compound is composed of two types
      of components, and one of the types is also
      found existing apart from the compound, then
      the other must also exist apart from the
      compound. Example: we find honey-vinegar, and
      honey existing apart. Therefore, vinegar must
      also exist apart.
   b. We find objects that are both mover and thing
      moved. But we also find objects that are only
      moved, not mover.
   c. Hence, there must exist an unmoved mover.

6. Proof from efficient cause
   a. There is an order of efficient causes
   b. Each thing must have a primary efficient
      cause, since there can be no infinite regress
      of efficient causes.
   c. The primary efficient cause of each thing is
      God.
   d. [This proof comes from Metaphysics II, which
      is not considered to be authentic.]

7. Proof from the persistence of things
   a. "Contingent": having a nature such as to be
      generated and destroyed
   b. There exist contingent things
   c. If everything were contingent, it would be
      possible for the universe of things to fail to
      exist as a whole.
   d. What is possible for a species is necessary
      (i.e., there is no distinction of modalities
for propositions true of a species)
e. So, if it were possible that the universe go out of existence, it would already have done so.
f. Since it hasn't, not everything is contingent.
g. Each necessary thing is either necessary through itself or through another.
h. There can't be an infinite series of things necessary through others.
i. Thus, there is something necessary through itself--God.

SIXTEEN. Notes on Aquinas' Summa Theologica
(properly, Summa Theologiae)

We should observe (although Aquinas doesn't say this) that the truths of reason in his system provide a context for the truths of faith.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (Q.2)

The existence of God is not known to us per se, although it is known per se in itself. This defeats Anselm's argument.

(Of the five ways, most use in the subsequent portions of the - 6 - Summa seems to be made of the first, second, and fourth.)

First:

There are things which are moved.

Whatever is moved is moved by another. (Because something can be brought to act only by something in act.)

There cannot be an infinite regress in movers and things moved.

Thus there is a first mover, which is unmoved.

"...this everyone understands to be God."

Second:

There exists in the world of sensible things an order of efficient causes.
But there cannot be an infinite regress.

Hence there is a first efficient cause (God).

Fourth:

Among things some are more or less noble, true, etc.
These things are predicated according to proximity to a maximum.
Thus there is something truest.
This is most in being.
The maximum in any genus is the cause of the other things in that genus.
Hence there is something which is cause to all things of being, goodness, perfection, etc.

THE SIMPLICITY OF GOD (Q. 3)

Article 1--Incorporeality

Act is prior to potentiality, absolutely speaking.
Therefore, the first being cannot contain potentiality.
Therefore, the first being cannot be a body, since a body is infinitely divisible, and therefore always has potentiality (to be divided).

Article 2--No Composition of Matter and Form

First:
God is not a body.
What is composed of matter and form is a body.

Therefore, God is not composed of matter and form.

Second:
God is per se act.
Act proceeds from form.

Therefore, God is per se form, and contains no matter.

Article 3--No Composition of Essence and Subject

Essence differs from subject--i.e., that by which something is what it is differs from the thing itself--in and only in material things.

God is not a material thing.

Therefore, God's essence does not differ from God -- God is his essence.

Article 4 -- No Composition of Being and Essence

Whatever in a thing is distinct from its essence must either be caused by the essence or by something outside the thing.

If being is distinct from essence in a thing, it cannot be caused by the essence (since being is prior to essence).

Thus, if being and essence are distinct in a thing, then being must be caused by something outside the thing.

Nothing in God can be caused from outside, because God is first being.

Therefore, in God being and essence are not distinct.

(In subsequent passages of the Summa, this is interpreted to mean that God is "ipsum esse subsistens", "being itself subsisting", although curiously that phraseology doesn't occur here.)

Article 7 -- God's Absolute Simplicity

First:

An exhaustive survey above (we've only reproduced part of it) has shown that God is not composite in any of the ways a thing can be composite).

Second:
Every composite is posterior to its components, but God is posterior to nothing.

Third:

In composites there is potentiality, but there is none in God.

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THE PERFECTION OF GOD (Q. 4)

Article 2 -- The perfections of all things are in God.

Things pre-exist in their matter in a less perfect, but in their agent in a more perfect way.

An agent can be either univocal (synonymous) or equivocal (homonymous) with its effect.

In a synonymous agent, the thing pre-exists according to the same form. (Example--human parent.)

In a homonymous agent, the thing pre-exists according to a more eminent mode.

Example -- there is in the sun the likeness of what is generated by its power.

GOODNESS IN GENERAL (Q. 5)

Goodness and being are the same in reality, but distinct in idea.

Distinctness in idea: the idea of goodness includes the idea of desireability, whereas the idea of being does not.

Sameness in reality: desireability iff perfection iff actuality iff being.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD (Q. 6)

What is to the highest degree agent has the highest perfection -- but this is God.

GOD'S INFINITY (Q. 7)

Article 1 -- God's Infinity
Matter and form are each made finite by the other.

The infinitude of matter is an imperfection (a lack of determination).

God, being the most formal of all things, possesses the infinitude of form (which is lack of distinction?)

THE UNITY OF GOD (Q. 11)

Article 1 -- Whether "one" adds anything to "being"

One and being are the same in reality but distinct in idea.

Distinctness in idea: the idea of one contains the idea of negation of division, not found in the idea of being.

Sameness in being: Either a being is simple or composite. If simple, it is one. If composite, it is unified and therefore one.

Article 3 -- God's oneness.

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First:

If Socrates were one through human nature, then there could not be any men.

But God is one through the divine nature, since there is no distinction between essence and subject in God.

Therefore, there cannot be many Gods.

Second:

If there were two distinct Gods, there must be something, either a privation or a perfection, by which they differ.

But God has all perfections.

Therefore, if there were two Gods, one would lack the totality of perfection, and thus not be God.

Thus, there cannot be two Gods.

HOW GOD IS KNOWN BY US (Q. 12)
Article 1 -- Can any created intellect see the essence of God?

(God is supremely intelligible in himself, but the power of a given intellect may fall short of seeing him, as does the eye of the bat with respect to the sun.)

Our intellects must be able to see God, because the vision of God is our ultimate fulfillment, and the fulfillment of anything must be in its highest power (in the case of the rational creature, the intellect).

Article 4 -- Can any created intellect see the essence of God by its natural powers?

Knowledge is according to the mode of the knower. (A thing knows other things which have a similar mode of existence to itself.)

Our minds exist joined to matter and know the forms of things which are material.

Angels exist apart from matter and are able to know forms which exist apart from matter.

God is being itself subsisting and is able to know himself.

Thus a created intellect cannot see God's essence unless God by his grace unites himself to the created intellect.

Article 11 -- Can anyone in this life see God's essence?

No, because the intellect's union with the body prevents it from knowing separate forms.

Article 12 -- Can God be known in this life by reason?

We know God through his effects. We cannot in this way know God's essence, because his effects fall short of his power. But we can know his existence and whatever belongs to him as first cause.

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE (Q. 14)

Article 1 -- Is there knowledge in God?

Yes, because things know insofar as they are immaterial.
Article 2 -- Does God understand himself?

Yes, because an intellect in act is identical with its object, and God is pure act.

Article 4 -- Is the act of God's intellect his substance?

Knowledge is a perfection which remains in the knower, so that if God's knowledge were something other than his substance, it would perfect that substance, and there would be potentiality in God.

Article 5 -- Does God know things other than himself?

In the perfection of his self-understanding, he knows all things to which his power extends -- he knows things, not in themselves, but as they are in him.

Article 6 -- Does God know things other than himself by a proper knowledge?

Yes, because the distinction of things is part of their perfection.

Article 6 -- Is God's knowledge the cause of things?

Yes, just as the knowledge of a craftsman is the cause of his effects.

GOD'S WILL (Q. 19)

Article 1 -- Is there will in God?

Yes, because will follows on intellect, as the natural tendency to attain or rest in the good as understood.

Article 2 -- Does God will things other than himself?

Yes, because every agent insofar as it is perfect and in act produces its like.

God wills to communicate his goodness to others as much as possible.

He wills both himself and others -- himself as end, others as participants in his goodness.
Article 3 -- Does God will what he wills necessarily?

Every intellect wills its own good necessarily.

Thus God wills himself necessarily, but other things he wills non-necessarily as participating in his goodness.

Article 4 -- Is the will of God the cause of things?

Three arguments that God is a voluntary, not natural agent:

First:

Natural agents are subordinate to intellectual, in order to direct them to their ends.

Second:

In a natural agent, its determinate effects are co-ordinated to its determinate nature.

God's effects are determinate, but his nature is not.

Therefore, God must be a voluntary, not natural, agent.

Third:

Since God is intellectual, he is an intellectual agent.

THE PROCESSION OF CREATURES FROM GOD (Q. 44)

Article 1 -- Is it necessary that every being be created by God?

Whatever has a thing by participation is caused to have it by something which has it essentially (Socrates in the Phaedo!)

But only God has being essentially.

THE MODE OF EMANATION OF THINGS FROM THE FIRST PRINCIPLE (Q. 45)

Article 1 -- Does it belong to God alone to create?

More universal effects have more universal causes.
But being is the most universal effect.

Therefore, it must have the most universal cause.

(Note: it's interesting that he quotes Proclus here.)

Reply to those, such as Avicenna, but also Peter Lombard, who have claimed that something can be a subordinate cause of being:

To be a subordinate cause, one must perform an operation proper to oneself that leads to the superordinate cause's proper effect. But there is nothing the creature can do that leads to being. Rather, all the creature's operations presuppose being.

THE BEGINNING OF CREATURES

Article 1 -- Did the universe of creatures always exist?

Since the universe depends on God's will, its necessity would have to be derived from the necessity of his will. But of necessity God wills only himself.

Therefore, the world does not share in the necessity of God's being.

Aristotle's arguments for the eternity of the world are not demonstrations.

Article 2 -- Is it an article of faith that the world began?

Yes, because the newness of the world cannot be demonstrated from the world itself. Note: the same position as Maimonides.