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William Lane Craig, THE ONLY WISE GOD: THE COMPATIBILITY OF DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN FREEDOM

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different set of contradictory properties to him. On this account, at one and the same time Christ as omniscient knows that he is unable to sin and as human, having the epistemic possibility of sinning, does not know that he is unable to sin. It seems to me arguable that the reduplicative strategy applied to the traditional account of the two natures of Christ could show that in attributing both omniscience and limited knowledge to Christ we are not attributing contradictory properties to one and the same thing. But if so, then the reduplicative strategy is also sufficient to show that in attributing to Christ both necessary goodness and the ability to sin we aren't predicating contradictory attributes of him either.

My review has concentrated on the parts of Morris's book which are bound to be controversial, but that approach must not be allowed to obscure the substantial achievement of this book. With admirable boldness, Morris has set out to defend one of the Christian doctrines which has always seemed most vulnerable to philosophical attack. He is obviously at home in dealing with both philosophical and theological literature on the subject, and his treatment of the doctrine's detractors is patient and fair. The presentation of his own account is beautifully clear and philosophically sophisticated, and he develops his position with ingenuity and subtlety. While I find problems in Morris's view of Christ as having two minds, the general strategy underlying this view, of compartmentalizing the divine and human attributes of Christ and predicating them of Christ *secundum quid* rather than *simpliciter*, seems to me certainly on the right track. Although there is much to disagree with in the book, then, it is nonetheless a model for the way philosophy of religion should be done. Not everyone will agree with Morris's interpretation and defense of the incarnation, but no one should ignore them.

The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom, by **William Lane Craig**. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987, 157 pp., \$7.95 (paper), ISBN 0-8010-2519-2.

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According to William Lane Craig, "today the Christian seeking after truth will probably learn more about the attributes of God from works of Christian philosophers than from those of Christian theologians" (p. 11). In this volume he presents the results of philosophical work on the doctrine of omniscience, focusing on the compatibility of divine foreknowledge and free will with some attention given also to middle knowledge.

Craig states his belief that "any reader who is willing to take the time and make an effort to evaluate the reasoning presented here will find it simple enough to grasp" (p. 12). He has, in fact, succeeded to a remarkable degree in giving

lucid, non-technical explanations with minimal sacrifice of philosophical accuracy; the book should be useful for students at an introductory level. At the same time, he has included some topics seldom discussed in connection with the foreknowledge issue, so that the book can be a source of new ideas and insights even for philosophers well versed in the topic. Of interest here is a series of chapters on "Rejection of Fatalism in Other Fields," which parallels his rejection of theological fatalism; the "other fields" are backward causation, time travel, precognition, and Newcomb's Paradox. The discussion of these topics does not add anything in a strict logical sense to the discussion of theological fatalism (nor does the author claim otherwise), but the topics are fascinating in their own right and the parallels drawn are illuminating. Also of interest is Craig's discussion, at various points throughout the book, of the contrast between the A-theory and the B-theory of time; he correctly notes that the choice one makes here places constraints on the possible solutions of the foreknowledge problem. Yet another merit of the book is Craig's placement of the issue solidly within a theological context, with attention to the role of divine omniscience in the life of faith. The down side of this is that he may be a bit too ready to take up the theological cudgels and belabor his opponents for unorthodoxy.

But the book has faults as well as merits. One small but important omission is his failure to provide either a formal definition or an explicit discussion of the nature of free will; clearly the notion he has in mind is broadly libertarian, but the details are never spelled out. The notes are adequate, considering the nature of the work, but a large proportion of the works cited are from the 1960s and 1970s, with few from the 1980s, tending to create the (perhaps incorrect) impression that much of the research for the book was done several years ago. The more recent citations seem to follow a pattern in which Craig cites one or two sources that confirm his position, while ignoring those which take an opposing view. For example, on the "necessity of the past" ("hard and soft facts"), he cites what he rightly terms Freddoso's "brilliant study" (p. 81),¹ but he ignores discussions by Fischer and others which have argued that such an analysis does *not* succeed in turning back theological fatalism.² Naturally not every relevant study can be cited in a brief popular work such as this, but the pattern followed by Craig creates a distinctly misleading impression of the current state of the philosophical discussion.

This point connects with what may be an even more serious weakness: throughout the book Craig consistently expresses more confidence (not to say dogmatism) about the evident correctness of his positions than is warranted by his evidence and arguments. In his first two chapters setting out the biblical doctrine of omniscience, Craig reaches standard Arminian conclusions: God foreknows all but does not predestine everything which happens, and human free will is not compromised. But the reader is led to suppose that this is the

only viable way of reading the relevant biblical passages. The view that we have here an ultimate paradox, irresolvable by human reason, is not even mentioned, though I should think this view would be quite difficult to refute on *biblical* grounds. And the Calvinistic view of absolute sovereignty and predestination is introduced only as one of two "Denials of the Biblical Doctrine"! Later chapters are peppered with remarks such as "the argument for theological fatalism is simply fallacious" (p. 74), "It seems that the fatalists' final gambit has failed" (p. 82), and the like. The current state of the discussion of this topic simply does not warrant such smug assurance, and the reader who receives the impression that it does is being misled. Accuracy and due humility alike require that one's own view on this issue (*whatever* that view may be) should be presented as *one* possible (and favored) resolution of the problem, one which however has impressive rivals and is also confronted with difficulties at various points.

In view of space limitations, only one substantive issue can be addressed: *How is it* that God is able to know future free actions? Craig states (rightly, in my opinion), that "The Christian cannot be expected to explain the *actual* way that God foreknows future free events; all the Christian has to do is suggest some *possible* way" (p. 119). I shall discuss the first of the two "possible ways" he considers, namely innate knowledge. (The other way, middle knowledge, raises questions too complex for discussion here.)

Of interest is Craig's reason for rejecting another way that some have thought possible. Some writers hold that God's beliefs about a future event can be retrospectively brought about or caused *by the event itself*.³ But Craig accepts the A-theory of time, according to which temporal becoming is real and events of the future *do not yet exist*—thus, it seems impossible for God's *present* beliefs to be brought about by non-existent future events (see pp. 119-20). The truth may be, rather, that this knowledge of God's is *innate*: "God never learned or acquired his knowledge, but has eternally known an innate store of only and all true statements. Since future-tense statements are either true or false, God in knowing all true statements knows the future" (p. 123). And if we still insist on asking "How is it the case that God has innate knowledge?" that question "appears to be merely an expression of incredulity which requires no answer. God simply is that way, just as he is also omnipotent, necessary, morally perfect, and so forth That is part of what it means to be God, to be omniscient. And to ask how it is that God is omniscient is like asking how it is that vacuums are empty" (p. 123).

But is innate knowledge a "possible way" for God to foreknow *free* actions? We have on the one hand God's beliefs about temporal events, beliefs he has held from all eternity. And on the other hand, we have the unfolding sequence of temporal events themselves. Furthermore, there is (by hypothesis) an *exact correspondence* between the events and the beliefs. Now the question is, What

explains this exact correspondence? How do we account for it? (I do *not* want to be told that "God is just that way." The question is not why God holds true beliefs *in general*, it is why he holds *these particular* beliefs. And since the beliefs in question are contingent, it is also contingent that God holds them; it is *not* "natural" for him to hold *these* beliefs, so some further explanation is indeed called for.) The following alternatives seem to exhaust the possibilities:

- (1) There is no explanation; it just happens for no reason that the beliefs and the events always correspond.
- (2) The beliefs are determined to be as they are by the events.
- (3) The events are determined to be as they are by the beliefs.
- (4) Both the events and the beliefs are determined to be as they are by some other factor.

Of the four (1) seems to be out of the question; it is not just by good luck that God always gets things right. (2) is ruled out for Craig, as we have noted, because non-existent future events cannot cause things in the present. And he doesn't think our actions are caused by God's beliefs, so we are left with (4). What could the "other factor" be? Since the events thus determined include all contingent facts about the world, it would seem that this factor must be internal to God. Since the facts are contingent, the "factor" can't be *essential* to God; most likely, then, it is his decree, or his will, or something of the sort. In any case, it is evident that *both* (3) and (4) are inconsistent with the notion that any of the events known are *free*. So we return to the question: Is innate knowledge a possible way for God to foreknow *free* actions? There may be a good answer to this, but if there is Craig doesn't tell us what it is.

In spite of the reservations noted, *The Only Wise God* is a worthwhile contribution both to the literature and to available teaching materials on this topic. The production and printing of the book by Baker are excellent, especially in view of the modest cost. Each chapter has a list of suggested further reading, and there is a brief but useful index.

NOTES

1. Alfred J. Freddoso, "Accidental Necessity and Logical Determinism," *Journal of Philosophy* 80 (1983), pp. 257-78.

2. See John Martin Fischer, "Freedom and Foreknowledge," *Philosophical Review* 92 (1983), pp. 67-79; cf. also William Hasker, "Foreknowledge and Necessity," *Faith and Philosophy* 2 (1985), pp. 121-57.

3. See George I. Mavrodes, "Is the Past Unpreventable?" *Faith and Philosophy* 1 (1984), pp. 131-46; also Thomas B. Talbott, "On Divine Foreknowledge and Bringing About the Past," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 46 (1986), pp. 455-69.