

Your name: _____

Your section day/time: _____

Metaphysics Exercise 10

Phil. 100B, Winter 2010. Due Thurs., Feb. 18.

1. According to Spinoza, God is perfect in the sense that:
 - a. God's essence implies every conceivable perfection.
 - b. God always wills what is good.
 - c. God is inconceivable and beyond comprehension by any power of thought.
 - d. God has a perfectly free will: even eternal truths depend on his decrees.
 - e. Spinoza doesn't actually believe that God is perfect, although he speaks that way to mollify certain readers.
 - f. (a), (c) and (d).

2. About which of the following would Spinoza and Descartes disagree:
 - a. A finite being can be conceived only as a limitation of God's infinite essence.
 - b. Only God is free in the strictest sense of the word.
 - c. Only God is a substance in the strictest sense of the word.
 - d. The imperfection of finite things is possible, in part, because the universe as a whole is more perfect for containing such imperfection.
 - e. All of the above.
 - f. None of the above.

3. The Bible appears to say that God destroyed (almost) all living things in a flood because he was angry. How might Spinoza explain this?
 - a. This is one of the things in the Bible that surpasses human reason: to understand it completely, we would need to know what specifically makes God angry; but the divine attribute of justice is infinite and so surpasses our finite intellect.
 - b. This is one of the things in the Bible that surpasses human reason: to understand it completely, we would need to know exactly what finite causes made the biblical author fall into such absurdity.
 - c. There may at some time, in some region, actually have been a huge flood, which struck the survivors as extraordinary, and which they therefore considered miraculous.
 - d. The biblical author doesn't intend us to take this literally. It is meant only as a symbol of universal moral truths.
 - e. (b) and (c).
 - f. (c) and (d).