

Metaphysics Exercise 10

Phil. 100B, Winter 2011. Due Thurs., Feb. 17.

Note this is to be done on-line via Question Cloud if possible. However, if this proves impossible for some reason, please hand this in as a hard copy or e-mail your answers to your TA.

1. According to Spinoza, God produces imperfect things because:
 - a. God does the best he can, but material things are not fully capable of receiving perfection.
 - b. God is no different than the world and so is just as imperfect as the world is.
 - c. God produces everything conceivable.
 - d. Although no finite derivation will every produce a finite consequence from an infinite cause, God is the cause of an infinite series of consequences.
 - e. All of the above.
 - f. (c) and (d).

2. About which of the following would Spinoza and Descartes disagree:
 - a. God has the power to produce anything conceivable.
 - b. A body cannot move itself.
 - c. Will is a mode of thought.
 - d. If two things are distinct, God has the power to produce one without the other.
 - e. All of the above.
 - f. (b) and (d).

3. The Bible appears to say that God created the world as we know it in seven days, around four or five thousand years ago. 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 exactly what finite causes made the biblical author fall into such absurdity.
 - b. This is one of the things in the Bible that surpasses human reason: we must interpret the Bible literally wherever possible, and so this story, however absurd it may seem, must be literally true.
 - c. Since we know the world is much older than this, we should think of each so-called "day" as lasting for millions or billions of years.
 - d. Since we know the world has always existed, we should think of this story as symbolizing a logical, rather than a temporal, succession.
 - e. Since God produces all conceivable things, he must also have produced this history in some attribute or other.
 - f. None of the above.