OCR H573 | INDEPENDENT REVISION

A* Model Essay

Nature of God

Philosophy of Religion

Are the classical attributes of God coherent when combined?

1,504 response words | Complete annotated PDF | Individual topic edition

What is included

A complete original response, an argument plan, paragraph-level AO1/AO2 annotations and source works for further reading.

A* describes the intended style of this teaching model. This is independently written, not an OCR-marked script or a guaranteed grade.

Use this model to study argument and evaluation, then write your own answer. Do not submit it as your own assessed work.

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Argument plan

Are the classical attributes of God coherent when combined?

Thesis: The classical attributes are not straightforwardly contradictory when power is defined through genuine possibility and divine knowledge is distinguished from causal determination. However, combining timeless perfection with responsive personal love creates a serious explanatory burden. Classical theism can defend logical coherence more successfully than it can show that its carefully qualified model fully captures the personal God of religious practice.

1. Omnipotence need not include contradictions or defects inconsistent with divine perfection.

Counter-argument: Qualifications must explain the unity of power and goodness rather than immunise God from criticism.

Interim judgement: A logically disciplined account of power is coherent and need not diminish genuine ability.

2. Boethius's timeless knowledge need not cause the choices it knows.

Counter-argument: Infallibility still raises a problem about alternative possibilities, while timelessness complicates response.

Interim judgement: The distinction answers a crude fatalism but requires further explanation of freedom and personality.

3. Unchanging love and voluntary restraint can reconcile perfection with temporal effects.

Counter-argument: Suffering tests the moral adequacy of that account, and more relational alternatives revise classical claims.

Interim judgement: Coherence is defensible, but explanatory and religious adequacy remain contested.