

Moral Obligation as a Governor to Skeptical Theism's Relativism

Authors : Peter J. Morgan

Abstract : In response to evidential arguments from evil, Stephen Wykstra presents CORNEA (Condition of Reasonable Epistemic Access) as a foundational principle for Skeptical Theism which urges one to think in terms of what can be expected in a given situation. The use of CORNEA results in skepticism regarding the ability of human ken to know divine levels of knowledge in instances of intense evil. However, William Rowe presents a critique of Skeptical Theism that questions its ability to argue successfully for theism. Rowe contends that siding with Skeptical Theism is akin to boarding a trolley car that does not stop. Contra Wykstra, Rowe observes that, for all that can be known, there could be greater amounts of evils than goods, and the goods that are seen may not be the best possible goods. This amounts to a mortally challenging critique of Skeptical Theism. However, there is a brake on Rowe's Trolley. This paper makes the argument that the ubiquitous presence of Moral Obligation (MO) serves as a braking system for Rowe's Trolley. When the rider begins to feel lost in an epistemic stalemate of good and evil it is MO that turns the tide: MO serves as evidence towards the good on a basic human level, and it is a reminder that God's character will result in actions towards the good.

Keywords : CORNEA, moral obligation, problem of evil, skeptical theism

Conference Title : ICATRS 2018 : International Conference on Academic Theology and Religious Studies

Conference Location : Dublin, Ireland

Conference Dates : July 23-24, 2018