

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Religion and Monotheism

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DIVINE IDEAS

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-81969-5 — Divine Ideas
Thomas M. Ward
Frontmatter
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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108819695

DOI: 10.1017/9781108876445

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First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-81969-5 Paperback

ISSN 2631-3014 (online)

ISSN 2631-3006 (print)

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Divine Ideas

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DOI: 10.1017/9781108876445
First published online: August 2020

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Abstract: This Element defends a version of the classical theory of divine ideas: the containment exemplarist theory of divine ideas. The classical theory holds that God has ideas of all possible creatures, that these ideas partially explain why God's creation of the world is a rational and free personal action, and that God does not depend on anything external to himself for having the ideas he has. The containment exemplarist version of the classical theory holds that God's own nature is the exemplar of all possible creatures, and therefore that God's ideas of possible creatures are in some sense ideas of himself. Containment exemplarism offers a monotheism fit for metaphysics, insofar as it is coherent, simple, and explanatorily powerful; and offers a metaphysics fit for monotheism, insofar as it leaves God truly worthy of the unconditional worship which Christians, along with Jews and Muslims, aspire to offer to God.

Keywords: God, worship, abstract objects, creation, divine ideas

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ISBNs: 9781108819695 (PB), 9781108876445 (OC)
ISSNs: 2631-3014 (online), 2631-3006 (print)

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