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ABSTRACT

AN EVALUATION OF THE DEFINITION OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITINGS OF RICHARD RICE

by

Dennis E. Akawobsa

Adviser: Martin F. Hanna

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Thesis

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: AN EVALUATION OF THE DEFINITION OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITINGS OF RICHARD RICE

Name of researcher: Dennis E. Akawobsa

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Martin F. Hanna, Ph.D.

Date completed: November 2017

Problem

This thesis addresses the conflict of interpretation between Richard Rice's model of God's exhaustive knowledge of the future as a realm of possibilities and the generally accepted traditional model of God's exhaustive definite knowledge of the future. In harmony with the traditional perspective, Richard Rice has affirmed God's exhaustive knowledge of the past and the present. However, in contrast to the traditional perspective, he has denied God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. According to Rice, God can know everything there is to know. This implies that, on one hand, the future does not yet exist, so God does not know it. On the other hand, the future that God knows is partly composed of possibilities and partly determined by God. Moreover, Rice cites as evidence several passages of Scripture that describe God as regretting, repenting,

and *changing His mind*. Such passages suggest to Rice that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. The question is: Should God's emotional *regret* (נחם) be interpreted to imply lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge?

Methodology

Chapter 1 introduces the background, problem, purpose, significance, delimitation, and research methodology of the study. Chapter 2 briefly surveys Rice's theological background, education, and professional development, and the theological scope of his writings. Chapter 3 presents a descriptive analysis of Rice's view of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of the future. Chapter 4 evaluates Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge and divine emotions and how these emotions should be interpreted. This involves a study of [Chelent, repent, or regret] in selected biblical texts used by Rice as a means to evaluate his conflict with the traditional interpretation. Chapter 5 summarizes the findings and conclusions of the study.

Conclusion

Rice's interpretation of God's emotional *regretting*, *repenting*, or *changing His mind* (נהם) creates an apparent tension between God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge and human freedom. Rice asks, if God knows the future definitely, why does He seem to be emotionally surprised by free-will decisions? The problem exists because Rice chooses one possible analogical interpretation of biblical statements on God's emotions, correctly avoiding the univocal and equivocal interpretations of divine emotions. However, Rice denies God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices because he aims to affirm the biblical teaching of human freedom. In contrast, this study proposes that within the spectrum of analogical approaches to Edd., there is another way of

understanding exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices that can allow space for human freedom. This alternative, might be a satisfactory biblical response to the apparent tension between divine foreknowledge and human freedom.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

AN EVALUATION OF THE DEFINITION OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITINGS OF RICHARD RICE

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Dennis E. Akawobsa

2017

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AN EVALUATION OF THE DEFINITION OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITINGS OF RICHARD RICE

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts

by

Dennis E. Akawobsa

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:		
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Divine foreknowledge is a fundamental component of God's omniscience, with many implications for all areas of Christian theology. However, theologians are divided concerning the nature of God's foreknowledge of future free choices. On one hand, Rice accepts God's exhaustive knowledge of the past and the present. On the other hand, he has subjected God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices to

¹ Richard Rice, God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1985); Richard Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," in *The* Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge of the Traditional Understanding of God, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994). See Gregory A. Boyd, God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000); Gregory A. Boyd, Satan and the Problem of Evil: Constructing a Trinitarian Warfare Theodicy (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001); Gregory A. Boyd, "The Open View," in Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001); Charles D. Fowler III, "Omniscience and Human Free Will: Implications for Christian Education in the Local Church," Journal of Religious Thought 60-63 (2008): 213-32; Philip L. Quinn, "Divine Foreknowledge and Divine Freedom," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 9, no. 4 (1978): 219-40; Richard Rice, "Does Open Theism Limit God?" Wesleyan Theological Journal 48, no. 2 (2013): 30–43; Raphael van Riel, "Prophets against Ockhamism: Or: Why the Hard Fact/Soft Fact Distinction Is Irrelevant to the Problem of Foreknowledge," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 75, no. 2 (2014): 119– 35; Clement Rogers, "God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will," *Modern Churchman* 34, no. 1-3 (1944): 47-54.

² By *exhaustive definite foreknowledge*, I mean that God knows the future exhaustively, and this includes the free-will choices of the individual, all possibilities, and the certainties of God's own works. See Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 86–93;

criticism, claiming that it is incompatible with human freedom.³ This study explores the problem of exhaustive foreknowledge and human freedom in the writings of Richard Rice.⁴

Gregory A. Boyd, "Two Ancient (and Modern) Motivations for Ascribing Exhaustively Definite Foreknowledge to God: A Historic Overview and Critical Assessment," *Religious Studies* 46 (2009): 41–59; Benjamin H. Arbour, "Future Freedom and the Fixity of Truth: Closing the Road to Limited Foreknowledge Open Theism," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 73, no. 3 (2013): 189–207; David Basinger, "Can an Evangelical Christian Justifiably Deny God's Exhaustive Knowledge of the Future," *Christian Scholar's Review* 25, no. 2 (1995): 133–45; T. Ryan Byerly, "Foreknowledge, Accidental Necessity, and Uncausability," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 75, no. 2 (2014): 137–54; Joseph Corabi and Rebecca Germino, "Prophecy, Foreknowledge, and Middle Knowledge," *Faith and Philosophy* 30, no. 1 (2013): 72–92; William Lane Craig and David P. Hunt, "Perils of the Open Road," *Faith and Philosophy* 30, no. 1 (2013): 49–71; Joseph Diekemper, "Eternity, Knowledge, and Freedom," *Religious Studies* 49, no. 1 (2013): 45–64; John Martin Fischer, "Foreknowledge and Freedom: A Reply to Gale," *Faith and Philosophy* 19, no. 1 (2002): 89–93.

³ David Basinger, "Practical Implications," in *The Openness of God: A Biblical* Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994); Basinger, "Can a Christian Justifiably Deny," 133–45; Gregory A. Boyd, "Hartshorne's Di-Polar Theism Towards a Trinitarian Metaphysics," Theology and Religion 19, no. 7 (1992); Rice, God's Foreknowledge. See also Boyd, God of the Possible; Boyd, Satan and the Problem; Boyd, "The Open View"; Daniel K. Cheung, "A Defense of Compatibilism of Divine Foreknowledge with Human Freedom: A Rebuttal of William Hasker's Incompatibilist Argument Concerning Hard Fact/Soft Fact Distinction, "Jian Dao 14 (2000): 49-66; William Hasker, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," Faith and Philosophy 6, no. 2 (1989): 223–26; Anthony John Patrick Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," in Logical Analysis and Contemporary Theism (New York: Fordham University Press, 1972); Paul R. Raabe, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," Concordia Journal 17, no. 1 (1991): 104-6.

⁴ In his dissertation at the University of Chicago Divinity School, Richard Rice went by the name T. Richard Rice. However, it appears to me that he prefers to be called Richard Rice. So, for the purpose of this thesis, I will call him that in the main text. See

Background

The question of the nature of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge and its relation to human freedom has been a point of disagreement among theologians and philosophers for many centuries. These disagreements usually have historical roots, which influence how Christians understand the Scriptures and the entire sweep of Christian theology and practice. Accordingly, theologians and philosophers have developed different models of foreknowledge and freedom. As a background to this study, I shall explore four different interpretations of God's knowledge of the future and

Richard Rice, "Charles Hartshorne's Concept of Natural Theology" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1974).

⁵ In-Kyu Song, Divine Foreknowledge and Necessity: An Ockhamist Response to the Dilemma of God's Foreknowledge and Human Freedom (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002); Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Michael D. Robinson, Eternity and Freedom: A Critical Analysis of Divine Timelessness as a Solution to the Foreknowledge and Free Will Debate (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1995); Christopher David Schabel, "Philosophy and Theology across Cultures: Gersonides and Auriol on Divine Foreknowledge," Speculum 81, no. 4 (2006): 1092-1117; Jeffrey Joseph Speaks, "Foreknowledge, Evil, and Compatibility Arguments," Faith and Philosophy 28, no. 3 (2011), 269–93; Tina Talsma, "Source Incompatibilism and the Foreknowledge Dilemma," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 73, no. 3 (2013): 209-19; Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, "Prophecy as a Way of Cancelling Prophecy: The Strategic Uses of Foreknowledge," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 117, no. 3 (2005): 329-50; Patrick Todd and John Martin Fischer, "The Truth About Foreknowledge," Faith and Philosophy 30, no. 3 (2013): 286–301; Kris J. Udd, "Prediction and Foreknowledge in Ezekiel's Prophecy against Tyre," Tyndale Bulletin 56, no. 1 (2005): 25–41; Thomas Aquinas, Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Modern Library, 1945); William S. Sailer, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," Evangelical Journal 5, no. 2 (1987): 96–98; Douglas C. Spanner, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," Churchman 103, no. 2 (1989): 185; Michael Tooley, "Freedom and Foreknowledge," Faith and Philosophy 17, no. 2 (2000): 212-24; Ted A. Warfield, "On Freedom and Foreknowledge: A Reply to Two Critics," Faith and Philosophy 17, no. 2 (2000): 255–59.

its relation to human freedom: the Augustinian-Calvinism, Simple Foreknowledge, Middle Knowledge, and Open Theism.

First, the Augustinian⁶-Calvinistic⁷ view proposes that God has complete and absolute sovereignty over His creation. God knows all that shall come to pass, because

⁶ Augustine describes God's foreknowledge as follows: "In one single unchangeable glance God contemplates every being, every truth, every possible or real object. This knowledge is an eternal intuition before which the past and the future are as real as the present, but each for that portion of time in which it really exists. God encompasses all time and therefore can know the future as infallibly as He knows the present." See Augustine, The Confessions of St. Augustine, trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Image Books, 1960); Eugene Portalie, A Guide to the Thought of St. Augustine, trans. Ralph J. Bastian (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1960), 128; Ronald H. Nash, The Concept of God: An Exploration of Contemporary Difficulties with the Attributes of God (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1983), 21; Aquinas, "Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas," ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Modern Library, 1945); Boethius, *Tractates:* The Consolation of Philosophy, trans. S. J. Tester, H. F. Stewart, and E. K. Rand (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, "Eternity," Journal of Philosophy 78 (1981): 429–58; Sharon R. Harvey, Open Theism and Environmental Responsibilities: A Promotion of Environmental Ethics (Gardners Books, 2007); Warren Zev Harvey, "Time Matters: Time, Creation, and Cosmology in Medieval Jewish Philosophy," Jewish Quarterly Review 92, no. 3-4 (2002): 598–601; William Hasker, God, Time, and Knowledge (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989); Frank H. Brabant, Time and Eternity in Christian Thought (London: Longmans, 1937); Brian Leftow, *Time and Eternity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); Brian Leftow, "The Eternal Present," in God and Time: Essays on the Divine Nature, ed. Gregory E. Ganssle and David M. Woodruff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 21–48; Matthew L. Lamb, "Eternity Creates and Redeems Time: A Key to Augustine's Confessions within a Theology of History," in Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought, ed. Michael Treschow, Willemien Otten, and Walter Hannam (Leiden: Brill, 2007): 117–40; Eunsoo Kim, Time, Eternity, and the Trinity: A Trinitarian Analogical Understanding of Time and Eternity (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010); Simo Knuuttila, "Time and Creation in Augustine," in Cambridge Companion to Augustine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kōsuke Koyama, "Creation, Space and Time," Svensk missionstidskrift 90, no. 1 (2002): 63–68.

⁷ John Calvin understands foreknowledge to mean "that all things always were, and perpetually remain, under his eyes, so that to his knowledge there is nothing future or past, but all things are present. And they are present in such a way that he not only conceives them through ideas, as we have before us those things which our minds remember, but he truly looks upon them and discerns them as things placed before him.

He decides and executes everything. Since God is timeless, His will is also timeless and immutable. The divine degrees of God's timeless will determine what happens in creation and history. We are free to do what we want and are morally responsible for the choices we make, but all of our free moral choices fall within the sovereign plan of God, deterministically. Since God's exhaustive foreknowledge depends on His will, God knows because He determines what will happen in the future. This view agrees that the content of reality, and therefore the content of God's infallible knowledge of future free

And this foreknowledge is extended throughout the universe to every creature." John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion, III.XXI*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 2:926; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 16.

⁸ See Paul Helm, *The Providence of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994); Donald A. Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995); Bruce Ware, *God's Greater Glory: The Exalted God of Scripture and the Christian Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004); Jonathan Kvanvig, *The Possibility of an All-Knowing God* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986); Paul Edwards, "Hard and Soft Determinism," in *Determinism and Freedom in the Age of Modern Science*, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1958), 104–13; Anthony Kenny, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," in *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Anthony Kenny (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 63–81; Ted Honderich, *A Theory of Determinism*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Ted Honderich, *How Free Are You? The Determinism Problem* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Derk Pereboom, *Living without Free Will* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁹ Paul Helm, "Augustinian-Calvinist View," in *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views*, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 161–89; Clark Pinnock, "Systematic Theology," in *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 141; Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974); Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Alvin Plantinga, *God, Freedom, and Evil* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1975).

choices, is settled. Hence, God has "always" been as certain about the future as He is about the past.

Second, the Simple Foreknowledge view¹⁰ maintains that God is omniscient and only sees the future, including the free will decisions of humans, based on His foreknowledge. According to this view, before time began humans were free in the libertarian¹¹ sense, but God saw the choices that each man would make. Many Simple

¹⁰ Marilyn McCord Adams, "The Problem of God's Foreknowledge and Free Will in Boetthius and William Ockham" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1967); William P. Alston, "Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions of Human Freedom," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 18, no. 1-2 (1985): 19–32; David Hunt, "Simple-Foreknowledge View," in Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001); Boyd, "Two Ancient (and Modern) Motivations," 41–59; Carl D. Chambers, "God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism," Churchman 115, no. 3 (2001): 260-62; Charles W. Christian. "The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence," Interpretation 53, no. 4 (1999): 435– 36; William Lane Craig, "Temporal Necessity: Hard Facts/Soft Facts," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 20, no. 2-3 (1986): 65–91; William Lane Craig, "Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingency," in *Process Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987); William Lane Craig, "Process Theology Denial of Divine Foreknowledge," Process Studies 16, no. 3 (1987): 198–202; William Hasker, "Why Simple Foreknowledge Is Still Useless (in Spite of David Hunt and Alex Pruss)," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 52, no. 3 (2009): 537–44; William Hasker "Foreknowledge and Necessity," Faith and Philosophy 2, no. 2 (1985): 121–57; Hasker, God, Time, and Knowledge.

Libertarian free will is the concept that humans are free to make their own decisions voluntarily: that is, we could have chosen otherwise than we did choose. In this view, the power to choose freely is genuine freedom, for if our choices are determined, then there is no genuine freedom. See Honderich, *A Theory of Determinism*; Honderich, *How Free Are You?*; Pereboom, *Living without Free Will*; Desmond J. Fitzgerald, "Freedom, Determinism and Moral Responsibility," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 37 (1963): 81–84; M. Almeida and M. Bernstein, "Lucky Libertarianism," *Philosophical Studies* 22, no. 2 (2003): 93–119; Joseph D. Blosser, "Can God or the Market Set People Free?: Libertarian, Egalitarian, and Ethical Freedom," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 41, no. 2 (2013): 233–53; Dennis H. Chan, "Human Beings Possess Libertarian Free Will," *Jian Dao* 42 (2014): 145–70; Randolph K. Clarke, *Libertarian Accounts of Free Will* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Eddy M. Zemach and D. Widerker, "Facts, Freedom and Foreknowledge,"

Foreknowledge proponents believe that God is timeless. That is, God stands outside of time, so that He sees all points within time as simultaneous with Him. According to them, "it is meaningless to speak of God knowing free-will choices of creatures that have not yet existed. It is also meaningless to speak of God knowing what we would do in different situations that don't actually exist. If a situation doesn't actually exist, there is nothing for God to know about it."¹²

Third, the Middle Knowledge view was proposed as a solution to the dilemma of foreknowledge by Luis de Molina. This theory maintains that God's knowledge is

Religious Studies 23, no. 1 (1987): 19–28; Walter M. Dunnett, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 31, no. 2 (1988): 208–9; John Martin Fischer, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: The Coherence of Theism: Omniscience," *Religious Studies* 28, no. 2 (1992): 269–74.

¹² Kevin Jackson, "Attributes of God: An Explanation of Simple Foreknowledge," Wesleyan Arminian, http://wesleyanarminian.wordpress.com/category/attributes-of-god/ (accessed May 11, 2015). See Hunt, "Simple-Foreknowledge View"; David P. Hunt, "Divine Providence and Simple Foreknowledge," Faith and Philosophy 10, no. 3 (1993): 394–414; David P. Hunt, "Providence, Foreknowledge, and Explanatory Loops: A Reply to Robinson," Religious Studies 40, no. 4 (2004): 485–91; David P. Hunt, "Contra Hasker: Why Simple Foreknowledge Is Still Useful," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 52, no. 3 (2009): 545–50; Hasker, "Why Simple Foreknowledge Is Still Useless," 537–44; Hasker, "Foreknowledge and Necessity," 121–57; Helm, "Augustinian-Calvinist View"; David G. Horrell, "Review of 'What Does God Know and When Does He Know It? The Current Controversy over Divine Foreknowledge," Bibliotheca sacra 162, no. 645 (2005): 118-19; John Sanders, "Why Simple Foreknowledge Offers No More Providential Control Than the Openness of God," Faith and Philosophy 14, no. 1 (1997): 26-40; David Basinger, "Simple Foreknowledge and Providential Control: A Response to Hunt," Faith and Philosophy 10, no. 3 (1993): 421– 27.

¹³ Richard Gaskin, "Molina on Divine Foreknowledge and the Principle of Bivalence," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 32, no. 4 (1994): 177–93; Hasker, *God, Time, and Knowledge*, 15-17; William Hasker, "A Philosophical Perspective," in *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger (Downers Grove, IL:

divided into three types: (1) natural knowledge, which comprises God's conceptual knowledge prior to all acts and possibilities of creation; (2) free knowledge, knowledge of everything that will actually happen in the world given God's free choice of which possibilities of creation to actualize; and (3) middle knowledge, God's knowledge between natural knowledge and free knowledge, which is His exhaustive knowledge of what creaturely free choices would be in the context of any creative decision God might make.¹⁴

InterVarsity Press, 1994); William Lane Craig, *Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: The Coherence of Theism: Omniscience* (Leiden: Brill, 1991); William Lane Craig, *God, Time, and Eternity: The Coherence of Theism II: Eternity* (Dordrech: Kluwer Academic, 2001); William Lane Craig, *Time and Eternity: Exploring God's Relationship to Time* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001); John M. Fischer, "Freedom, Foreknowledge, and Frankfurt: A Reply to Vihvelin," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 38, no. 3 (2008): 89–93; John J. Fitzgerald, "Timeless Troubles: The Challenge of Prophecy to the Eternity Solution to the Foreknowledge/Freedom Dilemma," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 82 (2008): 203–15; William Hasker, "How Good/Bad Is Middle Knowledge? A Reply to Basinger," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 33, no. 2 (1993): 111–18; William Hasker, "The Need for a Bigger God," in *God in an Open Universe: Science, Metaphysics, and Open Theism* ed. William Hasker; Thomas Jay Oord; Dean W. Zimmerman (Eugene, Or: Pickwick, 2011).

Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991); Joseph Corabi and Rebecca Germino, "Prophecy, Foreknowledge, and Middle Knowledge," *Faith and Philosophy* 30, no. 1 (2013): 72–92; Craig, "Temporal Necessity," 65–91; Craig, "Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingency," 95–115; William Lane Craig, "God, Foreknowledge, and Freedom," *Religious Studies* 27, no. 2 (1991): 278–80; Scott A. Davison, "Foreknowledge, Middle Knowledge and 'Nearby' World," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 30, no. 1 (1991): 29-44; Paul David Feinberg, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: The Coherence of Theism: Omniscience," *Trinity Journal* 14, no. 1 (1993): 101–4; Paul David Feinberg, "God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 4 (2001): 110–11; Alexander R. Pruss, "Prophecy without Middle Knowledge," *Faith and Philosophy* 24, no. 4 (2007): 72–92.

Of the three kinds, middle knowledge includes all the free choices that would be made in any appropriately specified set of conditions. This view maintains that God knows what every possible creature would freely choose in any possible world. God's middle knowledge does not imply that, when He chooses which world He creates, humans do not have free will. But God knows what they will do in the circumstances He creates, so the future is exhaustively foreknown. Divine foreknowledge is based on God's middle knowledge of what every creature would freely do under any circumstances and on his knowledge of the divine decree to create certain sets of circumstances and to place certain creatures in them.

¹⁵ Craig, *Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom*, 237–40; Hasker, *God*, *Time, and Knowledge*; Hillel Goldberg, "Foreknowledge and Free Will," *Tradition* 34, no. 4 (2000): 33–38; Jeffrey H. Green and Katherine A. Rogers, "Time, Foreknowledge, and Alternative Possibilities," *Religious Studies* 48, no. 2 (2012): 151–64; John S. Hammett, "Divine Foreknowledge and Open Theism," *Faith and Mission* 21, no. 1 (2003): 18–31; Reed Lessing, "What Does God Know and When Does He Know It?: The Current Controversy over Divine Foreknowledge," *Concordia Journal* 31, no. 3 (2005): 319–21; Eugene H. Peters, "Divine Foreknowledge," *Encounter* 40, no. 1 (1979): 31–34.

¹⁶ See Karl W. Giberson, *The Wonder of the Universe: Hints of God in Our Fine-Tuned World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012); Preston E. James and Eileen W. James, *All Possible Worlds: A History of Geographical Ideas* (Indianapolis, IN: Odyssey, 1972); Michael Palmer, ed., *Philosophy of Religion: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2011).

¹⁷ William Lane Craig, "God Directs All Things," in Four Views on Divine Providence, ed. Dennis W. Jowers (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 85. See also William Lane Craig, "Middle Knowledge," in Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001); Luis de Molina, On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the Concordia, trans. Alfred J. Freddoso (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); William Lane Craig, The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1987); William Lane Craig, The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez (New York: Brill, 1988); Craig, Divine

Finally, Open Theists offer another approach to God's foreknowledge and its relation to human freedom. ¹⁸ Open Theism proposes that "God knows everything there is to know. But there are some things that God does not know because they have not yet come into being ¹⁹ and, given the reality of human freedom, they may or may not

Foreknowledge and Human Freedom; Craig, God, Time, and Eternity; Craig, Time and Eternity.

18 Rice, *The Openness of God*; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective"; Richard Rice, "Trinity, Temporality, and Open Theism," *Philosophia* 35, no. 3-4 (2007): 321–28; Richard Rice, "Creatio Ex Nihilo: It's Not All About Nothing," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 47, no. 2 (2012): 110-23; Steven C. Roy, "How Much Does God Foreknow: An Evangelical Assessment of the Doctrine of the Extent of the Foreknowledge of God in Light of the Teaching of Open Theism" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001); Steven C. Roy, "God as Omnicompetent Responder? Questions About the Grounds of Eschatological Confidence in Open Theism," in *Looking into the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001); Tamar Rudavsky, *Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence in Medieval Philosophy*, Synthese Historical Library (Dordrecht, Netherlands: D Reidel, 1985); Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003); Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, *God as Trinity* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2011); Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, *Creation*, *Christ, Salvation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2012).

¹⁹ Epicurus and his followers believed that the physical world was made up of material bodies in motion. According to them, all things were made of atoms in a void, with individual atomic motions strictly controlled by causal laws. Since all material bodies were in motion, there was nothing in the world but material bodies in motion, and there was no freedom, only necessity. These speculations led many to the question of freedom and determinism. See Donald Palmer, *Looking at Philosophy: The Unbearable Heaviness of Philosophy Made Lighter*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010); S. J. Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1963); Graham Robert and Nick Trakakis Oppy, eds., *The History of Western Philosophy*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Henrik Lagerlund and Paul Thom, eds., *A Companion to the Philosophy of Robert Kilwardby* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Garrett DeWeese, *Doing Philosophy as a Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Charles Hartshorne and Creighton Peden, *Whitehead's View of Reality* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1981), 15; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998); Millard J. Erickson, *What Does God Know and When Does He*

eventually occur. These things are not yet 'there' for God or anyone else to know."²⁰ God is omniscient, this view insists, for He perfectly knows all reality, "but the reality God perfectly knows is partly composed of possibilities."²¹ The terms *Open Theism*, *Open View*, and *Openness of God* were coined by Richard Rice.²²

Know It? The Current Controversy over Divine Foreknowledge (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

²⁰ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 45–46; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective." He lists the following representatives of this view: Clark H. Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001); Pinnock, "Systematic Theology"; Boyd, *God of the Possible*; Basinger, "Practical Implications"; John Sanders, *Is Open Theism Christian Theism?* (Town & Country, MO: ACTS), ETS Meetings sound recording; John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Divine Providence*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007); William Hasker, *Providence, Evil, and the Openness of God*, Routledge Studies in the Philosophy of Religion (New York: Routledge, 2004); Boyd, "The Open View"; David Basinger, *The Case for Freewill Theism: A Philosophical Assessment* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996).

²¹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 45–46; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective"; Rice, "Trinity, Temporality, and Open Theism," 321–28; Richard Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View of God: The Crucial Difference," in *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue between Process and Free Will Theists*, ed. John B. Cobb Jr. and Clark H. Pinnock (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 163–200; Boyd, "The Open View," 10.

²² In 1980 Rice published his first book, entitled *The Openness of God*. The title was later changed to *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will*. Rice's book presented the most important aspects of Open Theism, but was not widely received. In 1994 InterVarsity Press published *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger. Since the publication of *The Openness of God*, there has been significant debate about not only the philosophical and theological merits of Open Theism, but also its orthodoxy.

Statement of Problem

More specifically, the problem involves an apparent contradiction between the recent model of God's exhaustive knowledge of the future as a realm of possibilities, presented in the writings of Richard Rice, and the generally accepted traditional understanding of God's exhaustive *definite* knowledge of the future. Rice proposes that future free choices in an open future do not yet exist, and, therefore, God cannot foreknow these choices with infallible certainty. This conclusion is problematic because Rice's model of God's knowledge of the future seems to undermine the generally accepted understanding of God's exhaustive definite omniscience, which includes certainty, rather than merely possible knowledge of all future events.

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to address the apparent contradiction between Rice's model of God's knowledge of future free choices as possibilities and the model of God's exhaustive definite knowledge of the certainty of future free choices. Specifically, this research seeks to evaluate the tension between these two models and to examine the source and cause of the tension. This will be done by examining selected texts used by Rice as a way to help resolve the tension.

Significance

Whether God's exhaustive definite knowledge of the future is compatible with human freedom has been one of the most controversial theological questions in the

history of Christianity.²³ Theologians and philosophers have developed different models in response to this dilemma. However, many scholars question whether any of the models proposed as a solution to this problem has adequately addressed the issue.²⁴ Consequently, this problem is a subject that should not be ignored.

Richard Rice's theological methodology was chosen for this study mainly because he represents a group of theologians who have proposed the model of Open Theism, and because relatively little has been written about his views in comparison to other Open Theists.

Scope and Delimitation

Some limits have been imposed on this study to keep it within a reasonable scope for an MA thesis. The problem of exhaustive definite foreknowledge has aroused the interest of many theologians and philosophers, and has produced abundant literature. However, this study focuses on God's knowledge of future free choices and human freedom in the writings of Richard Rice from 1980 to 2000, with particular attention directed to *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will* and "Biblical Support for a New

²³ Michael D. Robinson, *Eternity and Freedom; Critical Analysis of Divine Timelessness as a Solution to the Foreknowledge/Free Will Debate* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1995); In-Kyu Song, *Divine Foreknowledge and Necessity: An Ockhamist Response to the Dilemma of God's Foreknowledge and Human Freedom* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002); Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will," *Religious Studies* 21, no. 3 (1985).

²⁴ Erickson, *What Does God Know*; Fernando L. Canale, "Evangelical Theology and Open Theism: Toward a Biblical Understanding of the Macro Hermeneutical Principles of Theology?," *Enfoques* 16, no. 1 (2004): 16-34; Craig, *The Only Wise God*; Luis de Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the Concordia*; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective."

Perspective" in *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God.* Also, the thesis will use other writings by Richard Rice that are relevant to clarifying the positions he takes in these two publications.

Research Methodology

The methodology of this study is focused on the way Rice interprets biblical references to God's emotions in relation to God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices. This leads him to reject the traditional view and to propose the non-traditional view. The conflict of interpretation concerning exhaustive foreknowledge and human freedom appears to result in part from Rice's interpretation of divine emotions.

Chapter 1 states the problem that the study addresses and given the historical background of foreknowledge as it has been understood in Christian theology. It also described the purpose, significance, and delimitation of the study and the research methodology that the thesis adopts.

Chapter 2 provides a survey of Rice's theological education and professional development and a general review of the theological scope of his writings. In addition, Rice's transition to the Open View from the traditional understanding of God's exhaustive definite knowledge is considered.

Chapter 3 describes Rice's view of God's exhaustive knowledge of the future and human freedom. The descriptive analysis of Rice's model primarily focuses on the two major books devoted to it that he wrote from 1980 to 2000.

Chapter 4 evaluates God's foreknowledge of future free choices in Rice's writings in two steps: (1) identifying the source and causes of the conflict between his model and the generally accepted Christian model; (2) studying [27] (relent, repent, or regret) in

selected biblical texts used by Rice. Finally, Chapter 5 gives the summary and conclusions of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2

THOMAS RICHARD RICE: THE THEOLOGIAN

Introduction

A major factor that has brought attention to Rice's work is his shift from the traditional view of God's exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices to a non-traditional view of God's knowledge of future free choices as possibilities. Rice argues that his non-traditional view "provides a striking alternative" to the traditional understanding of foreknowledge and free choices. This chapter will survey Rice's educational background as well as his key theological interests and influences during his educational and professional journey. I will focus on Rice's biographical information, which includes his career involvements, and a general review of the theological scope of his writings. This will help me to clarify and understand the nature of Rice's change of views, the significant steps involved, and the influences that may have been responsible for the change. These issues are connected to the goal of this research, which is to evaluate Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge and human freedom.

¹ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 15; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 10.

Education

Richard Rice, a pastor, theologian, and author, describes how he was "born into a fourth or fifth generation" Seventh-day Adventist family in Loma Linda, California, in 1944. Rice believes his theology was influenced by his personal life experiences after his parents were separated and a caring community supported him through these difficult times.²

Rice's academic training earned him a BA in 1966 from La Sierra College (now La Sierra University); a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University (1969); a Master of Arts (1972); and a PhD (1974) from the University of Chicago Divinity School.³

Professional Background

Today, Rice is a Seventh-day Adventist theologian at Loma Linda University in California. He joined the faculty as a professor of theology and philosophy of religion in 1998. Before attending the University of Chicago Divinity School for his terminal degree in 1974, Rice served as associate pastor of the Azure Hills and La Sierra Seventh-day Adventist churches. After his terminal degree in 1974, Rice taught at La Sierra University in Riverside, California, for 24 years, until he moved to Loma Linda University in 1998.

² Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 163–200; Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, *God as Trinity*, 250; Richard Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith* (Riverside, CA: Sierra University Press, 1991).

³ Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith*, iii–xii; Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 163–200.

During his professional journey at La Sierra University, Rice developed his "openness view" into the book *The Openness of God: The Relationship of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will*, which was first published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association in 1980. The Seventh-day Adventist press did not reprint the book. Later on, Clark Pinnock contacted Rice to express his profound gratitude for the book and gave it a positive assessment.⁴ It was republished by Bethany House under the title *God's Foreknowledge & Man's Free Will* in 1985.

Rice has authored many articles in the *Journal of Religious Studies Review*,

Andrews University Seminary Studies, The Journal of Religion, Spectrum, Insight, and

Ministry Magazine, among other journals.⁵

 $^{^4}$ Loma Linda University, "Faculty of Religion Bulletin" (Loma Linda, CA: Loma Linda University, 2000-2002), 52.

⁵ Rice, "Trinity, Temporality, and Open Theism," 321–28; Rice, "Creatio Ex Nihilo: It's Not All About Nothing," Wesleyan Theological Journal 47, no. 2 (2012): 110-23; Rice, "Does Open Theism Limit God?," Wesleyan Theological Journal 48, no. 2 (2013): 30–43; Rice, "Are We Really Free? A Biblically Based Response to Neurophysiological Reductionism," Andrews University Seminary Studies 51, no. 1 (2013): 69–82; Rice, "The Evangelical Faith, Vol 3: The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Eschatology," The Journal of Religion 65, no. 1 (1985): 127–29; Rice, "The Trinitarian Basis of Christian Community," *Ministry: International Journal for Pastors*, February 2009: 13-18; Rice, "The Sinner's Plight in Romans 7," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, May 2008: 17-21; Rice, "Speaking up without Wearing Down," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, November 1997: 14-15, 29; Rice, "Reclaiming the Church: Where the Mainline Church Went Wrong and What to Do About It," Andrews University Seminary Studies 37, no. 2 (1999): 296–99; Rice, "Whatever Happened to the Soul: Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature," Andrews University Seminary Studies 37, no. 2 (1999): 289–91; Rice, "Thinking Theologically: Adventist Christianity and the Interpretation of Faith," Andrews University Seminary Studies 39, no. 2 (2001): 315–21; Rice, "The One, the Many and the Trinity: Joseph A. Bracken and the Challenge of Process Metaphysics," Andrews University Seminary Studies 50, no. 1 (2012): 117-20; Rice, "The Physical Nature of Christian Life: Neuroscience, Psychology, and the Church," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 52, no. 2 (2014): 339–42; Rice, "The Predicament of Belief: Science, Philosophy, Faith," Andrews

Rice has also authored many books⁶ and contributed to several chapters in scholarly books.⁷

The Influence of the Study of Process Theology

From Rice's account, we may date the beginning of his transition away from the traditional view to his studies at the University of Chicago Divinity School. According to Rice, he was drawn to that school because "I wanted to see how first-rate thinkers

University Seminary Studies 52, no. 2 (2014): 342–46; Rice, "Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering," Andrews University Seminary Studies 52, no. 2 (2014): 365–69; Rice, "Sanctification and Perfection: Another Look," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, June 1984; 6-8, 15; Rice, "Reconciling Faith and Reason," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, March 1987; 10-13, 17; Rice, "An Enemy Hath Done This: Cosmic Conflict Theodicy," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, March 2015; 6-9; Rice, "An Enemy Defeated: Death and Resurrection," Ministry: International Journal for Pastors, September 2004; 24-26, 29; Rice, "The Challenge of Spiritual Individualism (and How to Meet It)," Andrews University Seminary Studies 43, no. 1 (2005): 113–31.

⁶ Rice, "Charles Hartshorne's Concept"; Rice, *The Openness of God*; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*; Richard Rice, *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-Day Adventist Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1997); Richard Rice, *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-Day Adventist Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1985); Richard Rice, *When Bad Things Happen to God's People* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1985); Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith*.

⁷ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective"; Richard Rice, "Openness and Process Theism: Respecting the Integrity of the Two Views—in Response to Nancy Howell," in *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue between Process and Free Will Theists*, ed. John B. Cobb Jr. and Clark H. Pinnock (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000): 86-95; Richard Rice, "Confessional Communities and Public Worldviews: A Case Study—in Response to David L. Wheeler," in *Searching for an Adequate God:* 155–62; Richard Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View of God: The Crucial Difference," in *Searching for an Adequate God*; Richard Rice, "Questions on Doctrine and Questions About Christ"; Richard Rice, "The Final Form of Love: The Science of Forgiveness and the Openness of God," in *Creation Made Free: Open Theology Engaging Science*, ed. Thomas Jay Oord (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009).

respond to the most serious challenges confronting Christian faith in the modern world. Graduate school led me to look at a lot of things differently, but on the whole, it turned out to be a faith-confirming experience. I discovered that the claims of Christianity—the central ones, certainly—could measure up to searching rational scrutiny."

At the Divinity School, Rice attended Schubert M. Ogden's and Langdon Gilkey's seminars on Whitehead, 9 and he was particularly attracted to Hartshorne's 10

⁸ Rice, "Openness and Process Theism," 165–66.

⁹ Alfred North Whitehead, the son of an Anglican minister, was educated at Cambridge and was inducted as a fellow of Trinity College in the same year. He began his career as a mathematician but later shifted his attention to philosophy of science, and finally to metaphysics. Towards the end of his retirement, Whitehead relocated to the United States. He is fondly remembered as the "father of modern process thought." Some of his most influential publications include A Treatise on Universal Algebra (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898); "On Mathematical Concepts of the Material World," Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, Series A, 205 (1906): 465-525; An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1919); and The Concept of Nature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920). See George Allan, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 1: 1861-1910," *Process Studies* 26, no. 1-2 (1997), 151-56; George Allan, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 2: 1910-1947," Process Studies 26, no. 1-2 (1997), 151-56; Lewis S. Ford, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 1: 1861-1910," The Journal of Religion 66, no. 2 (1986), 199-202; Lewis S. Ford, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 2: 1910-1947," The Journal of Religion 71, no. 4 (1991), 589-90; Victor Lowe, Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985-1990); A. W. Masters, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 1: 1861-1910," Times Literary Supplement 4575 (1990), 1329-1330; A. W. Masters, "Alfred North Whitehead: The Man and His Work, V 2: 1910-1947," Times Literary Supplement 4575 (1990), 1329-1330.

¹⁰ Charles Hartshorne, a distinguished scholar, was the son of a minister and studied at Harvard University, where he earned BA (1921), MA (1922), and PhD (1923) degrees in four years, an achievement said to be exceptional in the history of Harvard. Hartshorne assisted Alfred Whitehead as a research fellow. He is known for constructing the neoclassical view of God and developed a model to prove the existence of God. Hartshorne is also known for shaping Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy into process theology. See Lewis Edwin Hahn, ed., *The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne*,

philosophical theology. In his autobiography, Rice relates his experience at the

University of Chicago:

Process thought did not occupy the position at Chicago in the 1970s that it had in the 1950s (from what I was told), but you could still get a healthy dose of it. I studied the thought of Whitehead in seminars taught by Schubert M. Ogden and Langdon Gilkey. But it was Hartshorne's philosophical theology that particularly attracted me. There were several reasons for this. On the most basic level, I was impressed that a powerful mind, determined to follow reason to the end in matters of religion, found abundant evidence for God and developed impressive arguments for God's existence. I also felt that Hartshorne's particular conception of natural theology could benefit theologians in some important ways. 11

vol. 20 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 1991); Charles Hartshorne and Roland Faber, "Charles Hartshorne's Handwritten Notes on A.N. Whitehead's Harvard Lectures 1925-1926," Process Studies 30, no. 2 (2001); Mrs. C. Hartshorne, "Published Writings of Charles Hartshorne," in Process and Divinity (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1964); Dorothy C. Hartshorne, "Charles Hartshorne: A Secondary Bibliography," Process Studies 3, no. 3 (1973); Dorothy C. Hartshorne, "Bibliography of the Writings of Charles Hartshorne," in *Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1991); Eugene H. Peters, "Hartshorne on Actuality," *Process Studies* 7, no. 3 (1977). Eugene H. Peters, "Charles Hartshorne and the Ontological Argument," *Process Studies* 14, no. 1 (1984); Douglas Pratt, "Charles Hartshorne and Neoclassical Theism: The Relatedness of God," Colloquium 19, no. 2 (1987); Douglas Pratt, "Charles Hartshorne on Theological Mistakes," Colloquium 26, no. 1 (1994); Roland Faber, "Handbook of Whiteheadian Process Thought," Process Studies 39, no. 1 (2010): 202-205; Bernard Loomer, "Essays in Honor of Charles Hartshorne," Process Studies 6, no. 1 (1976): 5-93; Santiago Sia, "Charles Hartshorne on Describing God," *Modern Theology* 3, no. 2 (1987); Donald Wayne Viney, Charles Hartshorne and the Existence of God (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1984): 207-12.

¹¹ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 163-213. See Erickson, What Does God Know, 152. See Jay Wesley Richards, "Charles Hartshorne's Critique of Christian Classical Theism: Separating the Chaff from the Wheat," in *Metaphysics*, Analysis, and the Grammar of God (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Donald Wayne Viney, "Charles Hartshorne's Global Argument for God's Existence: An Analysis and Assessment" (PhD diss., University of Oklahoma, 1982); Sia, "Charles Hartshorne on Describing God"; Santiago Sia, Charles Hartshorne's Concept of God: Philosophical and Theological Responses, Studies in Philosophy and Religion (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 1990).

According to Rice, it was "Hartshorne's philosophical theology that particularly attracted [him]." This attraction to Hartshorne's natural theology is evident in the fact that Rice wrote a dissertation entitled "Charles Hartshorne's Concept of Natural Theology." In this work, Rice analyzes Charles Hartshorne's work and evaluates the possible implications of his model of natural theology for Christian theology.

After studying the crucial components in Hartshorne's actual structure of natural theology, ¹² Rice analyzes a version of Hartshorne's dipolar theism that he thinks will help Christian theology "formulate a doctrine of God that is superior by every relevant criterion to the God of classical theism." According to Rice, Hartshorne advances his view of God as a fragment of a philosophical idea by making God the epitome of his metaphysics. Hartshorne believes that starting with metaphysics will eventually lead one to construct an all-inclusive ontology of God. ¹⁴ According to Donald Wayne Viney,

¹² The term *natural theology* refers to the method of investigation into nature to prove the existence of God through observation of the natural environment and the use of human reasoning as a means of knowing God. See Bowman Lafayette Clarke, "An Approach to the Problem of Language and Natural Theology" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1961); Tokiyuki Nobuhara, "God and Analogy: In Search of a New Possibility of Natural Theology" (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1981); James F. Sennett and Douglas R. Groothuis, *In Defense of Natural Theology: A Post-Humean Assessment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005); Russell Re Manning, John Hedley Brooke, and Fraser N. Watts, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, 1st ed., Oxford Handbooks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Andrew Robinson, *Darwinism and Natural Theology: Evolving Perspectives* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012).

¹³ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 166.

¹⁴ Ibid., 167; Daniel L. Deegan, "The Concrete God: A New Beginning for Theology—the Thought of Charles Hartshorne," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 37, no. 1 (1969): 109-12; Eef Dekker, "You Know When I Sit Down and When I Rise Up: The Omniscience of God," in *Understanding the Attributes of God*, ed. Gijsbert van den Brink and Marcel Sarot (Peter Lang: Europaischer Verlag der

"Hartshorne wrote a foreword to Richard Rice's dissertation, *Charles Hartshorne's*Concept of Natural Theology, which unfortunately was never published. However, Rice's 1980 book The Openness of God (later retitled: God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will) shows clear evidence of Hartshorne's influence." 15

Undeniably, Hartshorne's natural theology corroborates Rice's understanding that a perfect being can change. According to Rice, "the notion that a perfect being can change is not only conceptually coherent, a point Hartshorne argues at great length but it gives us an idea of God that is more faithful to the biblical portrait than is classical theism¹⁶ and more helpful to us on the level of personal religion as well." As he

Wissenschaften, 1999): 161-78; P. E. Devenish, "Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth," *Perkins Journal* 34, no. 4 (1981): 44-45; Philip E. Devenish, "Charles Hartshorne and the Existence of God," *Theological Studies* 46, no. 3 (1985): 587-88; Philip E. Devenish, "God in Process Thought: A Study in Charles Hartshorne's Concept of God," *Theological Studies* 47, no. 2 (1986): 351-52; Daniel A. Dombrowski, "God in Process Thought: A Study in Charles Hartshorne's Concept of God," *Religious Education* 81, no. 4 (1986): 129-46; Donald Wayne Viney, "Philosophy after Hartshorne," *Process Studies* 30, no. 2 (2001): 211-36.

¹⁵ Viney, "Philosophy after Hartshorne," 211–36; Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, "Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth," *Horizons* 7, no. 1 (1980): 119–20; Lewis S. Ford, "Divine Omniscience and Human Freedom: Thomas Aquinas and Charles Hartshorne," *Encounter* 46, no. 4 (1985): 380-81; Lewis S. Ford, "Charles Hartshorne and the Existence of God," *Zygon* 23, no. 1 (1988): 95-98; Lewis S. Ford, "Two Types of New Theism: Knowledge of God in the Thought of Paul Tillich and Charles Hartshorne," *Encounter* 60, no. 1 (1999): 105-107; Lewis S. Ford, "Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne," in *History of Western Philosophy*, vol. 5, *Twentieth-Century Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009): 53-67.

¹⁶ In this type of classical theism, "God exists totally outside of time; that is, God has neither temporal duration nor temporal location. God does not exist at any particular moment of time and His existence does not occur during any period of time. He is 'outside' of time. For a *timeless* God, His foreknowledge exists in one eternal present; there is no past or future for God." Nash, *The Concept of God*, 21. According to the timeless view, God does not believe in anything before it happens, because to have such

developed "a strong appreciation for Hartshorne's philosophical theism," Rice came to believe that classical theism "also conflicts with the biblical portrait of God in several important ways."¹⁷

Furthermore, Rice acknowledges several points of similarity between Process Theology¹⁸ and Open Theism. According to him, "it is evident, then, that process and

belief before the thing comes to pass means God is a temporal being and therefore subject to time. But God sees every creature within His timeless knowledge. In God's mind all of history, past, present, and future, is seen as if they are eternally present. =So, therefore, God's "foreknowledge" of the future and free-will choices depends on His eternal decision to create what He eternally knows. See Augustine, *Confessions of St. Augustine*; Aquinas, "Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas"; Boethius, *Tractates;* Stump and Kretzmann, "Eternity," 429–58; Harvey, *Open Theism and Environmental Responsibilities;* Harvey, "Time Matters," 598–601; Hasker, *God, Time, and Knowledge;* Frank H. Brabant, *Time and Eternity in Christian Thought* (London: Longmans, 1937).

¹⁷ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 164–67.

¹⁸ Process theology is the philosophical and theological position that God is constantly evolving, as is the universe. Consequently, our knowledge about God should be progressing as we learn about Him. There are no absolute truths, since our knowledge about God is constantly progressing. See H. A. Alexander, "Kaufman on Kaplan and Process Theology—Post-Positivist Perspective," Process Studies 20, no. 4 (1991): 200-203; G. Allan, "Hartshorne, Process Philosophy and Theology - Kane, R, Phillips, Sh," Philosophy East & West 41, no. 4 (1991): 587-89; J. A. Bracken, "Process Philosophy and Trinitarian Theology," Process Studies 8, no. 4 (1978): 217-230; J. A. Bracken, "Process Philosophy and Trinitarian Theology 2," *Process Studies* 11, no. 2 (1981): 83-96; J. A. Bracken, "Process Theology: Appreciation and Renewed Criticism," Theological Studies 62, no. 3 (2001): 628-29; J. A. Bracken, "Process Theology: A Guide for the Perplexed," Theological Studies 73, no. 1 (2012): 224-226; D. Brown-Daniels, "Process Theology—Introductory Exposition—Cobb, Jb, Griffin, Dr," Process Studies 7, no. 1 (1977): 113-16; D. Brown, "Essays in Process Theology-Williams, Dd," Journal of Religion 66, no. 4 (1986): 450-51; J. B. Cobb, "What Is Process Theology—Mellert, Rb," Religious Education 71, no. 1 (1976): 101-2; J. B. Cobb, "Creativity and God—A Challenge to Process Theology—Neville, Rc," *Theology Today* 37, no. 3 (1980): 374-75; J. B. Cobb, "Creativity and God—A Challenge to Process Theology—Neville, Rc," Process Studies 10, no. 3-4 (1980): 97-105; J. B. Cobb, "Process Theology and Environmental-Issues," Journal of Religion 60, no. 4 (1980): 440-58; J. B. Cobb, "Process Theology and the Doctrine of God," Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses 62, no. 1 (1982): 1-21; J. B. Cobb, "Points of Contact between Process

open theists hold views of God that are similar in some important ways. For both, love is the supreme divine attribute, the essential nature of God. For both, God's experience exhibits relationality, temporality, and contingency. Both reject the view that God has absolute definite knowledge of the future. Moreover, for both the world has significance for the inner life of God."¹⁹

At the same time, Rice argues that while Process Theology and Open Theism have some similarities, they also differ greatly. According to him, Process Theology maintains that "without a creaturely world, God would have no actuality and hence no existence. Consequently, God needs the world as much as the world needs God."²⁰ Another significant difference between Process Theology and Open Theism is that, in Process Theology, God acts only by constantly influencing creaturely decisions or choices. Moreover, Process Theology understands God's power to be "persuasive" rather than "coercive." Hartshorne, for instance, differentiates between two types of "all-powerful." First is the power to "determine every detail of what happens in the world" and second is the "power to influence the happenings significantly. This, he insists, is the only kind of authority that makes sense, and the only kind of power worth admiring."²¹ Conversely, the God of Open Theism "manifests sovereign power in bringing the world"

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Theology and Liberation Theology in Matters of Faith and Justice," *Process Studies* 14, no. 2 (1985): 124-41.

¹⁹ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 184; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 29, 33–34; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 18–22.

²⁰ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 185.

²¹ Charles Hartshorne, *Omnipotence and Other Theological Mistakes* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984).

into existence and persuasive power in directing it towards its destiny" ²² and "is superior by every relevant criterion to the God of classical theism." ²³After noting some differences, Rice says, "Such differences notwithstanding, process theologians and open theists have a good deal in common." ²⁴

According to Rice, Open Theism and Process Theology have some similarities in some ways. They both make the love of God a priority; both uphold human libertarian freedom; both agree that the power of God is not coercive. However, they diverge significantly on other issues: in Open Theism, God is sovereign over creation, while in Process Theology, God does not control anything because He never acts alone. Also, in Open Theism, God acts in the world, but in Process Theology, God is nearly passive. Furthermore, in Open Theism, God's relationship with the world is voluntary, but in Process Theology, it is necessary. In Process Theology God's power influences or determines everything in creation, but in Open Theism, God's power of persuation is His unsurpassable love. The next part of the thesis considers Rice's explicit description of his theological methodology.

²² Rice. "Process Theism and the Open View," 191.

²³ Ibid., 166.

²⁴ Rice, *Searching for an Adequate God*, 94–95; Lewis E. Hahn, *The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne*, Library of Living Philosophers (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1991); B. L. Haines, "The Ontological Argument of Charles Hartshorne," *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 4, no. 4 (1980).

Rice's Methodology

This section of the thesis is a descriptive analysis of Rice's theological methodology in connection with his study of God's exhaustive knowledge of future free choices. ²⁵ This descriptive analysis of the core structure of Rice's theological methodology will help us to better understand his view of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices and to appropriately and adequately respond to the

²⁵ Before examining Rice's theological method, it is essential to understand the role method plays in theological methodology. This will help us construct Rice's theological methodology, which may illuminate his view of exhaustive foreknowledge. Theological method is very important in doing theology because having the wrong theological methodology can lead to wrong conclusions, as rightly warned by Aquinas: "A small error at the outset can lead to great errors in the final conclusions." See Thomas Aguinas, On Being and Essence, http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/aguinas-esse.asp (accessed February 8, 2016). Bernard Lonergan sees method as "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results, where there are distinct operations, where each operation is related to the others, where the set of relations forms a pattern, where the pattern is described as the right way of doing the job, where operations in accord with the pattern may be repeated indefinitely, and where the fruits of such repetition are, not repetitious, but cumulative and progressive" (Ibid., 4). Furthermore, Rene Descartes explained that "by method I mean certain and simple rules, such that, if a man observe them accurately, he shall never assume what is false as true, and will never spend his mental efforts to no purpose, but will always gradually increase his knowledge and so arrive at a true understanding of all that does not surpass his powers." Rene Descartes, "Rules for the Direction of the Mind," in Great Books of the Western World, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago, IL: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952). See Gordon D. Kaufman, An Essay on Theological Method, Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995); George A. Lindbeck and Charles Davis, "An Essay on Theological Method," Religious Studies Review 5, no. 4 (1979): 262-67; Bernard J. F. Lonergan, Method in Theology (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972); Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Seabury Press, 1979); John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966); Mark Allen McIntosh, "An Essay on Theological Method," Anglican Theological Review 78, no. 2 (1996): 350-51; Matthew C. Ogilvie, Faith Seeking Understanding: The Functional Specialty, 'Systematics,' in Bernard Lonergan's 'Method in Theology' (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University, 2001); Neil Ormerod, Method, Meaning and Revelation: The Meaning and Function of Revelation in Bernard Lonergan's Method in Theology (New York: University Press of America, 2000).

questions raised in his theological methodology. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to unravel the theoretical formulation of Rice's theological methodology without a thorough analysis of its inner structure. The goal of this section of the thesis, therefore, is to give a descriptive analysis of the core structure of Rice's theological methodology, which will provide an angle from which his view of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices may be evaluated in the subsequent chapters.

Rice's understanding of special and general revelation is the starting point for understanding his theological methodology. This description of Rice's methodology will help us to comprehend its fundamental elements, and thereby, to facilitate a clearer understanding of his commitment to Scripture.

Rice maintains that Scripture supports both general and special revelation.²⁶
According to him, general revelation refers to the disclosure of God in nature that

²⁶ Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 105–8. See José J. Alemany, "General Revelation: Historical Views and Contemporary Issues," Estudios eclesiásticos 60, no. 232-233 (1985): 264-65; G. C. Berkouwer, "General Revelation," Reformed Journal 5, no. 7 (1955): 16; John Byl, "General Revelation and Evangelicalism," Mid-America Journal of Theology 5, no. 1 (1989): 1-13; Jack Cottrell, What the Bible Says About God the Creator (College Press, 1983); Bruce A. Demarest, General Revelation: Historical Views and Contemporary Issues (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982); David W. Diehl, "Evangelicalism and General Revelation: An Unfinished Agenda," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 30, no. 4 (1987): 441-55; Nicolaas H. Gootjes, "General Revelation in Its Relation to Special Revelation," The Westminster Theological Journal 51, no. 2 (1989): 359-68; Daniel Howard, "A Critical Analysis of General Revelation," Criswell Theological Review 8, no. 1 (2010): 53-75; Dennis E. Johnson, "Between Two Worlds: Worldview and Observation in the Use of General Revelation to Interpret Scripture, and Vice Versa," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 41, no. 1 (1998): 69–84; Robert K. Johnston, God's Wider Presence: Reconsidering General Revelation (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014); G. Reed, "General Revelation: Historical Views and Contemporary Issues," Christianity Today 27, no. 12 (1983): 56; Robert L. Thomas, "General Revelation and Biblical Hermeneutics," The Master's Seminary Journal 9, no. 1 (1998): 5-23.

"consists of religious truths which can be developed by reason alone." Rice argues that "God has manifested himself in the structure of reality in the processes of nature and human experience." On the other hand, "revealed theology contains truths of a supernatural nature—truth which we could never know apart from divine revelation." For Rice, this presupposes that "certain elements in the Christian view of God are accessible to all human beings and have the support of publicly accessible evidence." Rice continues to argue that Scripture supports rational reflection upon special revelation or "private evidence," and as such, reason can be applied to "public evidence" or general revelation. The continues to argue that Scripture supports rational reflection upon special revelation or "private evidence," and as such, reason can be applied to "public evidence" or general revelation.

Also, Rice argues that nature, as God's creation supplemented by human thinking, becomes natural theology through human reasoning.³² According to him, "natural

²⁷ Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 171.

²⁸ Ibid., 108.

²⁹ Ibid., 171.

³⁰ Ibid., 108.

³¹ Ibid., 123.

³² William J. Abraham, "Revelation and Natural Theology," in *Alister E*.

McGrath and Evangelical Theology: A Dynamic Engagement (Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2003); Geoffrey William Bromiley, "Natural Revelation," The Evangelical Quarterly 13, no. 3 (1941): 161-76; John Joseph Collins, "The Tension between Revelation and Natural Theology," in *Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Bible and Culture: Essays in Honor of Hans Dieter Betz* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998); Bruce A. Demarest, "General and Special Revelation: Epistemological Foundations of Religious Pluralism," in *One God, One Lord in a World of Religious Pluralism* (Cambridge, England: Tyndale House, 1991); William D. Dennison, "Natural and Special Revelation: A Reassessment," Kerux 21, no. 2 (2006): 13-34; Addison H. Leitch, "General Revelation and Special Revelation," Christianity Today 5, no. 8 (1961): 18-19; Stephen Mizell, "The Integration of General and Special Revelation in Applied Hermeneutics," Faith and Mission 22, no. 3 (2005): 51-86; John J. O'Rourke, "Romans 1:20 and Natural

theology necessarily presupposes at least the possibility of revealed theology; so the distinction between the two cannot be made absolute. Both are concerned with essentially the same object, but they operate according to different criteria."³³ Therefore, he concludes that "the content of 'revelation' thus has an essential role to play in the construction of natural theology," since "the biblical writers found evidence for God in the created world generally and in human experience in particular. So, this evidence establishes the possibility of natural theology."³⁴

Furthermore, Rice understands general revelation to be the basis for natural theology. According to him, "natural theology formulates religious concepts from the data that reason can acquire independent of the special illumination of revelation or the privileged vantage point of faith. It presents a rational, as opposed to a confessional,

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Revelation," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (1961): 301-306; Huw P. Owen, "The Scope of Natural Revelation in Rom 1 and Acts 17," *New Testament Studies* 5, no. 2 (1959): 133-43.

³³ Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 107–8; Rice, "Charles Hartshorne's Concept," 68. See Charles Hartshorne. Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism (Willett, IL: Clark, 1964); Robert Kane and Stephen H. Phillips, eds., Hartshorne, Process Philosophy, and Theology (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989); Sia, Charles Hartshorne's Concept of God; Lewis Edwin Hahn, ed., The Philosophy of Charles Hartshorne, Library of Living Philosophers (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1991); Daniel A. Dombrowski, "Alston and Hartshorne on the Concept of God," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 36, no. 3 (1994): 129-46; Daniel A. Dombrowski, Analytic Theism, Hartshorne, and the Concept of God, SUNY Series in Philosophy (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996); Ralph E. James, The Concrete God: A New Beginning for Theology—the Thought of Charles Hartshorne (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967); Sia, God in Process Thought; Santiago Sia, "Charles Hartshorne on Describing God," Modern Theology 3, no. 2 (1987): 193-203; Viney, Charles Hartshorne and the Existence of God.

³⁴ Rice. *Reason and the Contours of Faith*, 123.

account of certain religious concepts or doctrines."³⁵ In other words, Rice sees "natural theology as a theological foundation." According to him, natural theology

provides a basis, a foundation drawn from public evidence, on which the contents of faith can firmly rest ... This position makes a sharp distinction between two spheres of religious knowledge. Natural theology consists of religious truths which can be developed by reason alone. Revealed theology contains truths of a supernatural nature-truth which we could never know apart from divine revelation. Natural theology serves as a basis for the claims of faith, which are derived from revelation. It plays a preparatory or propaedeutic role. ³⁶

Rice's view that "private evidence" or special revelation substantiates "public accessible evidence" or natural theology creates a platform for his proposal to adopt multiple sources as a theological foundation in his methodology. Among the sources

³⁵ Ibid., 102.

³⁶ Ibid., 171. Concerning general revelation as a theological foundation, Rice argues that Thomas Aquinas "distinguishes two types of knowledge of God, but he does not regard them as discrete, separate spheres of inquiry. For him, natural theology is not an independent enterprise, which constructs a foundation for revealed theology on its own. It is clear from the context of the famous five ways that Aquinas sees natural theology as an integral part of revealed theology, not separated from it. Although Aguinas himself did not view natural theology as an independent foundation for revealed theology, there are theologians who see this as the role of reason in relation to faith. For them, a rational examination of public evidence provides an indispensable basis for the contents of revelation" (emphasis supplied). Ibid., 174. See Michael Durrant, "The Five Ways: St Thomas Aguinas' Proofs of God's Existence," Religious Studies 7, no. 2 (1971): 187-89; Eric George Jay, The Existence of God: A Commentary on St. Thomas Aquinas's Five Ways (London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1946); Anthony John Patrick Kenny, The Five Ways: St Thomas Aquinas' Proofs of God's Existence, Studies in Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); Anna Bonta Moreland, Known by Nature: Thomas Aquinas on Natural Knowledge of God (New York: Crossroad, 2010); Roland F. Ziegler, "Natural Knowledge of God and the Trinity," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (2005): 133-58.

from which Rice draws his theological data are Scripture, reason, religious experience, and tradition.³⁷

First, Rice is to be applauded for seeking to be faithful to the biblical understanding and interpretation of God's exhaustive foreknowledge. He recognizes the Bible as the infallible and authoritative Word of God, and emphasizes that personal notions must give way to the teachings of Scripture. Rice asserts that the hermeneutical principles that should guide the interpretation of Scripture include the literary and historical contexts. He also advocates the *sola Scriptura* principle, ³⁸ which in his understanding involves comparing Scripture with Scripture, remembering the progressive

³⁷ Although Rice did not list these terms sequentially as shown above, each of them has been discussed in his writings. "Scripture, Reason, Experience, Tradition" is often called the Weslevan Quadrilateral, a term coined by Albert C. Outler. However, according to Donald A. D. Thorsen, the use and meaning of the term has evolved and it is used with various connotations by different theologians. See Donald A. D. Thorsen, *The* Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990); Albert C. Outler, The Wesleyan Theological Heritage, ed. Thomas C. Oden and Leicester R. Longden (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991): 22–37; William J. Abraham, "On How to Dismantle the Wesleyan Quadrilateral: A Study in the Thought of Albert C Knudson," Wesleyan Theological Journal 20, no. 1 (1985): 34-44; W. Stephen Gunter, Scott J. Jones, Ted A. Campbell, Rebekah L. Miles, and Randy L. Maddox, Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997); John W. Haas Jr., "Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology," Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith 47, no. 4 (1995): 280-81; Henry H. Knight III, "Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology," Wesleyan Theological Journal 31, no. 1 (1996): 221-23; Roderick T. Leupp, "Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 40, no. 3 (1997): 494-495; Randy L. Maddox, Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology (Nashville: Kingswood, 1994); James D. Nelson, "Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology," *Theological* Studies 56, no. 3 (1995): 580-82.

³⁸ Rice, *The Reign of God*, 2nd ed., 41–44; Rice, *The Reign of God*, 1st ed., 39–42.

nature of revelation, seeking to harmonize its writings, and allowing Scripture to be its interpreter.³⁹ Rice defines the function of Christian theology as "interpreting the contents of the Bible.⁴⁰ He further contends that "agreement with Scripture is the most important test for any proposal.⁴¹

While Rice has a high view of Scripture and maintains that Scripture is the primary source and guideline for Christian teaching, ⁴² according to him "the Bible is the central authority for Christian theology, but it is not the only place where theological reflection originates nor the direct source from which all theological positions arise."⁴³ Rice concludes that "factors other than the Bible appear to enter to theological reflection. Indeed, careful investigation would reveal that a consideration of the Bible is virtually never the only factor at work in the development of a theological position. In spite of the slogan 'the Bible and the Bible only, a theological position is never a simple distillation of biblical materials."⁴⁴

Furthermore, Rice argues that *sola Scriptura* does not necessarily mean a "call to eliminate everything but the Bible from theological consideration. This is not only

³⁹ Ibid., 39-42.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 87–88.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 88.

impossible ... but it is not faithful to the activity of the great Reformers themselves."⁴⁵ According to Rice, the Reformers did not understand *sola Scriptura* in an exclusive way, since their works contain extra-biblical sources.⁴⁶ For Rice, *sola Scriptura* stands for

the superiority of the Bible to other authorities, including ecclesiastical officers, church councils and previous doctrinal formulas. It calls for Christians to study the Bible directly in order to determine its teaching and settle doctrinal questions, rather than rely on subsequent interpretations. Accordingly, those who are faithful to this principle allow nothing to substitute for the study of the Bible, and they insist on evaluating every interpretation of the Bible by the standard of the biblical text itself. But they do not, and cannot, ignore the established teachings of the Christian community.⁴⁷

What Rice appears to mean is that Scripture is the primary guide for all theological matters. From this revealed source, we should define our theological methodologies. However, Rice also argues that "doctrines arise not from the Bible alone," but from its interplay with other sources such as the "established teachings of the Christian Community, reason, human experience."

Moreover, Rice's high view of Scripture does not blind him to the real variety in the biblical data concerning foreknowledge. He seems to agree with biblical scholars who object to expressions like "the biblical view" or "according to the Bible." According to these scholars, "there are biblical views, but not one biblical view." Rice poses the question:

What, then, is the biblical view of God? It is a challenge to ascertain the biblical view of almost anything, let alone the most important idea of all. The Bible contains an

⁴⁵ Ibid., 93.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 93.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 90.

enormous range of material, and on virtually any significant topic we can find contradictory statements, if not diverse perspectives as well. This is certainly true of the idea of God. Thousands of texts refer to God, and they are immensely varied.⁴⁹

Second, Rice recognizes reason as a source of theological methodology.⁵⁰
According to Rice, reason can mean three different things: (1) "'reason' refers to our general faculty or capacity for reflective thought." (2) "'Reason' can also refer to the various operations of discursive reason, or the activity of reasoning. To reason is to think something through." (3) "A 'reason' is something which supports a conclusion ... to justify it."⁵¹ Rice concludes that reason is that which "undergirds" and "strengthens

⁴⁹ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 16, 177. See also Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, *God as Trinity*.

⁵⁰ Fernando Canale states that "theologians usually refer to reason not as a cognitive tool, but as a source of philosophical and scientific teachings regarding the natural world (natural-general revelation)." See Fernando L. Canale, *Back to Inspiration-Revelation: Searching for the Cognitive Foundation of Christian Theology in a Postmodern World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), 13. Fernando Luis Canale, *The Cognitive Principle of Christian Theology: A Hermeneutic Study of Revelation and Inspiration of the Bible* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Lithotech, 2005); Canale, *Basic Elements of Christian Theology: Scripture Replacing Tradition* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Lithotech, 2005); Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason: Time and Timelessness as Primordial Presuppositions* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1983).

Terese Auer, eds., *The Human Person and a Culture of Freedom* (Washington, DC: American Maritain Association, 2009); Daniel J. Adams, "The Rational and the Mystical in Theological Construction," *Taiwan Journal of Theology* 4 (1982): 249-66; Jana Daly, "Some Reflections on Sources and Reasons for Charity in Catholicism and Orthodoxy," *Baptistic Theologies* 2, no. 2 (2010,): 110-19; Edward H. Henderson, "Faith and Inquiry," *Anglican Theological Review* 58, no. 1 (1976): 43-59; James Michael Lee, "The Authentic Source of Religious Instruction," in *Religious Education and Theology* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1982); Schubert M. Ogden, "Sources of Religious Authority in Liberal Protestantism: For Van A. Harvey on His 50th Birthday," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44, no. 3 (1976): 403-16; J. T. Sellars, *Reasoning Beyond Reason: Imagination as a Theological Source in the Work of C.S. Lewis* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011); James K. A. Smith, "Philosophy of Religion Takes

foundations for faith."⁵² Also, Rice contends that both the Scriptures and the practice of theological reflection on the biblical text buttress the practice of rational reflection upon "private evidence" for faith, mostly, on special revelation. Similarly, reason can be accurately useful to "public evidence" or "general revelation." Not only does Scripture support such activity, but, moreover, "publicly accessible evidence" substantiates revealed truths, making natural theology a viable venture.

Third, Rice adds that the "dynamic experience of the Christian community is a source and criterion of Christian beliefs." Rice argues that "although the Bible is the principle source and criterion of Christian beliefs, we discovered that theology involves more than biblical exegesis. It always reflects the dynamic experience of the Christian community as a source and criterion of Christian beliefs as well." Rice outlines two

Practice: Liturgy as Source and Method in Philosophy of Religion," in *Contemporary Practice and Method in the Philosophy of Religion: New Essays* (London: Continuum, 2008).

⁵² Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 171.

⁵³ Ibid., 126.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 126.

⁵⁶ Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith*, 90. Rice explains that "since doctrines arise, not from the Bible alone, but from the dynamic interplay between the Bible and the living experience of the church, we can characterize the church's doctrines in two different ways. We can describe them either as formal responses on the part of the Christian community to the ongoing challenges it meets in light of the Word of God, or as the community's understanding of the Bible within the dynamic context of its concrete historical development." He maintains that "this characterization of Christian doctrine with reference both to the Bible and the church requires a parallel characterization of theology. We can define theology as the attempt to formulate a coherent exposition of Christian doctrine that is faithful to the authority of the Bible and responsive to the experience of the Christian community. Theology thus involves bringing the church's

kinds of experience: the church and the individual.⁵⁷ The experience of the Christian church comprises the relationships of its members to each other and the world as a whole. He argues that "over the centuries, for example, heresy has provided a powerful stimulus to doctrinal development. The New Testament canon developed in response to short lists of authoritative Christian writings. Moreover, the orthodox view of Christ's nature developed in response to different Christological heresies."⁵⁸ On the other hand, the religious experience of the individual can also inform our theology and color our interpretation of Scripture. Rice concluded that "insisting on religious experience as the basis for Christian doctrine gives theology a strongly, in fact, an exclusively, ecclesiastical character. Because the Christian religious self-consciousness arises only out of the Christian community, the primary object of theological reflection is the Christian Church."⁵⁹

experience to bear on the Bible and bringing the Bible to bear on the experience of the church. It alternately views the Bible through the community's understanding of truth, and scrutinizes the church's formulation of truth in light of the Bible." See Paul D. L. Avis, "Does Natural Theology Exist," *Theology* 87, no. 720 (1984): 431-37; Philip N. LaFountain, "Theology and Social Psychology: Pluralism and 'Evangel' in the Thought of Peter Berger and John Howard Yoder," *Theology Today* 69, no. 1 (2012): 18-33; John Mahoney, "Reflections on Experience as a Source of Moral Theology," in *Personalist Morals: Essays in Honor of Professor Louis Janssens* (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1988).

⁵⁷ Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith*, 190; Rice, "Openness and Process Theism," 168–70.

⁵⁸ Rice, *Reason and the Contours of Faith*, 90.

⁵⁹ Rice, Reason and the Contours of Faith, 175.

Finally, in Rice's theological methodology, tradition has been considered a necessary source of theology. 60 Rice contends that "besides the Bible, the central authority for Christian belief ... theology must also take into account Christian tradition or the doctrines which the church has already formulated." According to him, "when people approach the Bible as a source of truth, they typically do so out of participation in a religious community." To support his view, Rice quoted from John Leith, who argues that "the church that is the geographically and sociologically describable community to which one belongs is foremost, although not exclusively, the place where theological reflection begins." 62

Summary

In this chapter, I have endeavored to outline Rice's educational background as well as his key theological interests and influences during his educational and professional journey. The chapter also highlights the similarities between Rice's view of Open Theism, and Process Theology. Despite their similarities, the two views have a number of very significant differences. However, both views make love a priority. Furthermore, Rice maintains that Scripture is the primary source of theological methodology and reiterates his strong belief in the *sola Scriptura* principle. At the same

⁶⁰ Ibid., 91.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 91–92; Dietrich Ritschl, "A Plead for the Maxim: Scripture and Interpretations," *Interpretations* 25 (January 1975): 15.

time, he proposes four sources for his theological methodology: Scripture, reason, religious experience, and tradition.

CHAPTER 3

RICHARD RICE'S MODEL OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents an analytical description of Rice's model of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices. First, I give a general presentation of Rice's view, and second, I discuss the issues identified in this general description. To ensure a clearer understanding of how Rice arrives at his conclusions about exhaustive foreknowledge of the future and to avoid distortion of his view, I will present his position in his own words (as far as is convenient), though in a condensed form. The issue of exhaustive foreknowledge and its relation to creaturely freedom is central to the subject of this thesis, and is discussed in greater detail in the subsequent analysis of Rice's position on foreknowledge in relation to divine emotions and prophecy.

Foreknowledge and Divine Emotions

The purpose of this section of the chapter is to describe and analyze Rice's view of foreknowledge and divine emotions. This descriptive analysis is the first step toward evaluating his view of exhaustive foreknowledge in the subsequent chapter. Rice's view of foreknowledge and divine emotions about future free choices has two essential propositions: first, Scripture ascribes emotional responses to God, and this is

confirmation of a genuine effect of the creaturely world on God.¹ Second, God's emotions imply the future is "open" and "unsettled," which means there is a genuine freedom to choose.² These propositions are grounded in Rice's view that scriptural descriptions of God's feelings should be taken at "face value" because "their expressions faithfully portray the inner life of God." According to him, while Scripture presents a God of love, it also reveals that "God expresses regret, God risks, and God expresses frustration over what transpires." Rice's view of these four aspects of God's emotions will be described below.

¹ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 18.

² Ibid.; R. M. Burns, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," *The Expository Times* 99, no. 8 (1988): 246; Anthony Brueckner, "On an Attempt to Demonstrate the Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," *Faith and Philosophy* 17, no. 1 (2000): 132–34; Arbour, "Future Freedom," 189–207; Alston, "Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions," 19–32; Mary L. Coloe, "Jesus' Emotions in the Fourth Gospel: Human or Divine?" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (2006): 557–59.

³ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 35.

⁴ Rice, The Openness of God, 34–38; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 40–45; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27; Rice, "Trinity, Temporality, and Open Theism," 321–28; Boyd, Satan and the Problem, 100–112; Boyd, "The Open View," 10, 23–35. Gregory A. Boyd expresses his convictions that led him to embrace Open Theism. According to him, "the most serious questions about the classical view of foreknowledge ... relate to the Bible. If the future is indeed exhaustively settled in God's mind, as the classical view holds, why does the Bible repeatedly describe God changing his mind? Why does the Bible say that God frequently alters his plans, cancels prophecies in the light of changing circumstances, and speaks about the future as a 'maybe,' a 'perhaps,' or a 'possibility?' Why does it describe God as expressing uncertainty about the future, being disappointed in the way things turn out, and even occasionally regretting the outcome of his own decisions? If the Bible is always true—and I, for one, assume that it is—how can we reconcile this way of talking about God ... with the notion that the future is exhaustively settled in his mind?" For these reasons, Boyd writes: "I came to believe that the future was, indeed, partly determined and foreknown by God, but also partly open and known by God as such. In short, I embraced what has come to be labeled the

God Loves

Rice makes God's love the hub around which his entire view of exhaustive foreknowledge revolves.⁵ According to him, divine love is an expression of God's intimate relationship with and genuine sensitivity to the world.⁶ Rice argues that

'open view' of God." Boyd, however, explains that this open view "does not hold that the future is wide open. Much of it, open theists concede, is settled ahead of time, either by God's predestining will or by existing earthly causes, but it is not *exhaustively* settled ahead of time. To whatever degree the future is yet open to be decided by free agents, it is unsettled. To this extent, God knows it as a realm of possibilities, not certainties." Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 11, 15.

⁶ Clark Pinnock emphasized that "unbounded Love is an invitation to consider God as a dynamic and loving triune being who wants to have meaningful interaction with us. Insofar as theology has allowed this vision to become clouded, we want to clarify it ... The image of God as severe Judge and absolute Sovereign has driven and can still drive people to unbelief and despair. Modern atheism is often not so much a denial of the existence of God as the denial of a God like that one. What is needed is not arguments for God's existence but clarification of God's gracious character and actual identity." Clark H. Pinnock and Robert Brow, Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 10. See Jeremy Begbie, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," Anvil 13, no. 1 (1996): 78-80; Mark Brimblecombe, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," Stimulus 3 (1995): 41–42; Daniel L. Chisholm, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," The Theological Educator 55 (1997): 165– 66; Daniel A. Dombrowski, "Developmental Theism: From Pure Will to Unbounded Love," Faith and Philosophy 26, no. 3 (2009): 353–55; Charles T. Evans, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," Reformation & Revival 5, no. 1 (1996): 143–47; Peter Forrest, Developmental Theism: From Pure Will to Unbounded Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Scott Hoezee, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," Calvin Theological Journal 30, no. 2 (1995): 593-

⁵ Rice argues that "God is not a center of infinite power who happens to be loving, He is loving above all else. Consequently, when we enumerate God's qualities, we must not only include love; to be faithful to the Bible we must put love at the head of the list ... Love is not only more important than all of God's other attributes, it is more fundamental as well. Love is the essence of the divine reality, the basic source from which all of God's attributes arise. Love is the concrete reality that unifies all of the attributes of God. A doctrine of God that is faithful to the Bible must show that all of God's characteristics derive from love." Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 21.

Scripture confirms that God interacts and responds to what transpires in the world, and what occurs in the world has an emotional impact on God.⁷ Rice's understanding of divine love in relation to foreknowledge of future free choices can be grouped into two main points.⁸

First, Rice argues that divine love implies the power to choose, and genuine freedom demands that God's foreknowledge be dependent on the future free choices of humans. According to him, "love is the most important quality we attribute to God, and

^{97;} Tom J. Nettles, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," *Trinity Journal* 15, no. 2 (1994): 280; Schubert Miles Ogden, "Love Unbounded: The Doctrine of God," *The Perkins School of Theology Journal* 19, no. 3 (1966): 5–17; Richard Sturch, "Developmental Theism: From Pure Will to Unbounded Love," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 59, no. 1 (2008): 432–33; Stephen M. Winstone, "Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century," *Crux* 32, no. 4 (1996): 47–48.

⁷ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 22–26. See John B. Song, "God Is Impassible and Impassioned: Toward a Theology of Divine Emotion," *Themelios* 38, no. 3 (2013): 513–15; Dirk G. Van der Merwe, "Jesus' Emotions in the Fourth Gospel: Human or Divine?" *Neotestamentica* 44, no. 2 (2010): 389–91; Stephen Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions in the Fourth Gospel: Human or Divine?* Library of New Testament Studies (London: Clark, 2005); Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Does God Suffer?," in *Questions About God: Today's Philosophers Ponder the Divine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Richard Alan Young, "Passion and Paradise: Human and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 32, no. 4 (2005): 461–64.

⁸ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 23–26; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 28–30; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 18–22.

⁹ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 19–23; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 16–19. Clark Pinnock shares similar views with Rice. According to him, "love and not freedom was our central concern because it was God's desire for loving relationships which required freedom." Pinnock, *Most Moved Mover*, 3. Furthermore, Pinnock argues that "human beings are able to respond (or refuse to) in love to their creator and enter into partnership with God. By its very nature, this covenant relationship cannot be coerced but is something, which both parties enter into voluntarily. In the light of this possibility, we must conclude that human freedom is significant and real. The response of faith and love

love is more than care and commitment; it involves being sensitive and responsive as well."¹⁰ Rice argues that the teaching that "God is love" is an essential truth in Scripture. This shows that love is primary but not contingent to the nature of God.¹¹ Implicit in

cannot he forced." Clark H. Pinnock, God Limits His Knowledge in Predestination and Free Will: Four Views of Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986): 147–48. Pinnock and Brow called this "creative love theism." They clarified that "it is a vision of God who, having created us to enjoy his love, does everything to enable us to participate in grace to the full." Pinnock and Brow, Unbounded Love, 8. Similarly, Sanders stated that "in creating us the divine intention was that we would come to experience the triune love and respond to it with love of our own and freely come to collaborate with God toward the achievement of his goals." Sanders, The God Who Risks, 14. See J. Mark Beach, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Mid-America Journal of Theology 13, (2002): 222–29; Sherwin Brantsen, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Reformed Review 55, no. 3 (2002): 255; Charles W. Christian, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Wesleyan Theological Journal 37, no. 2 (2002): 230–33; John Culp, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Christian Scholar's Review 31, no. 3 (2002): 339–41; Gary J. Dorrien, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Interpretation 57, no. 2 (2003): 226–28; Barry Ensign-George, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," *Perspectives* 17, no. 8 (2002): 18–22; Gabriel J. Fackre, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Theology Today 59, no. 2 (2002): 319–23; Lewis S. Ford, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 53, no. 3 (2003): 185–87; Christopher A. Hall, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Christianity Today 47, no. 2 (2003): 89-92; Boyd Luter and Emily Hunter McGowin, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 45, no. 4 (2002): 720–22; Jeromey Q. Martini, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," The Evangelical Quarterly 76, no. 1 (2004): 86–89; Matthew Mason, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," *Themelios* 28, no. 1 (2002): 109–11; Roger E. Olson, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," The Christian Century 119, no. 3 (2002): 37–39; Jeffrey T. Riddle, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Faith and Mission 20, no. 1 (2002): 86-88); David L. Smith, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Didaskalia (Otterburne, Man.) 13, no. 2 (2002): 122–24; Michael Eugene Wittmer, "Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness," Calvin Theological Journal 37, no. 1 (2002): 152–54.

 $^{^{\}rm 10}$ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 15.

¹¹ Ibid., 18-22.

Rice's interpretation of some manifestations of love is the idea that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. Persuaded by this notion of divine love and foreknowledge, Rice advocates for the non-traditional view of exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices as a realm of possibilities.¹²

Second, on the centrality of divine love, Rice asserts that "love is the first and last word in the biblical portrait of God." God's love is described as "the single attribute that best expresses the essential content of God's character." Rice concludes that "love is the concrete reality that unifies all of the attributes of God. A doctrine of God that is faithful to the Bible must show that all of God's characteristics derive from love." 15

Also, according to Rice, Scripture details other necessary features of the love of God. For example, God abounds in love (Ps 103:8), and God's love is everlasting (Isa 54:8; Ps 100:5). Also, Rice argues that the life of Christ and His death on the cross are the ultimate expressions of God's love for the human family. The apostles John and Paul

¹² Clark Pinnock seems to share Rice's understanding of human freedom; he states that "an important implication of this strong definition of freedom is that reality is to an extent open and not closed. It means that genuine novelty can appear in history, which cannot be predicted even by God. If creatures have been given the ability to decide how some things will turn out, then it cannot be known infallibly ahead of time how they will turn out. It implies that the future really is open and not available to exhaustive foreknowledge, even on the part of God. It is plain that the biblical doctrine of creaturely freedom requires us to reconsider the conventional view of the omniscience of God." Pinnock, *God Limits His Knowledge*, 150.

¹³ Ibid., 15, 18,

¹⁴ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 28; Rice, The Openness of God, 23.

¹⁵ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 21.

¹⁶ Ibid., 18-22.

express the enormousness of love involved in God's giving of His Son (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; 8:32).¹⁷ Rice concludes that "love, therefore, is the very essence of the divine nature. Love is what it means to be God."¹⁸

Furthermore, Rice argues that "the New Testament applies only $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$ to God." According to him, $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$ "refers to affection motivated by the subject, not the object of love. God loves us, not because we are lovable but because He is loving. Spontaneous and unconditional though it is, God's love is not a mechanical outpouring, an inexorable natural process." Rice follows a word study by Anders Nygren, a Swedish theologian, who differentiates between $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$ and $\xi\rho\omega\varsigma$. According to Nygren, "in the $\xi\rho\omega\varsigma$ sense of love certain qualities or features in the object of love make it attractive to the lover, who desires to possess it." However, in the case of $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$, the lover is motivated not by attractive qualities in the beloved or by a desire to possess the object." In other words, $\dot{\alpha}\gamma\dot{\alpha}\pi\eta$ "is self-giving. Its only motive is the welfare of its object." Rice asserts that the attractiveness of the object does not motivate God's love. Rice adds that it is not driven

¹⁷ Ibid., 19; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 22.

¹⁸ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., 21–22; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 28–29; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 23—24.

²⁰ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 21; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 24; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 28.

²¹ Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, trans. Philip S. Watson (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), xvi-xvii. See Ysabel de Andia, "Erós and Agapé: The Divine Passion of Love," *Communio* 24 (1997): 618–42; John Blevins, "Uncovering the Eros of God," *Theology & Sexuality* 13, no. 3 (2007): 289–99; Brantsen, "Most Moved Mover"; Delois Brown-Daniels, "Eros and Agape," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 21 (2001): 255; Christian, "Most Moved Mover"; David Clough, "Eros and Agape in Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 2, no. 2

by a "desire to possess the object. Agape is self-giving. Its only motive is the welfare of its object." Rice notes that the verses surrounding 1 John 4:8 demonstrate God's love as unconditional and sacrificial.²³

Finally, divine love is central in Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices as possibilities. Divine love implies the freedom to choose, and genuine freedom eliminates God's absolute definite knowledge of future free choices. As a result, the deliberations of free moral agents over the decisions they have made imply that the future is "partly definite" and "partly indefinite" in God's "perspective." These prove to Rice that the Bible does not support the concept of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. With a partly open future, God is able to relate and respond to future free actions by regretting the outcome of some decisions He makes, taking risks in creation, and being frustrated when things turn out against His will. Rice contends that if God has infallible exhaustive definite knowledge of all events and human choices, these emotional reactions lack authenticity.

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^{(2000): 189–203;} Janna Gonwa, "Eros, Agape, and Neighbour-Love as Ontological Gift," *Toronto Journal of Theology (Online)* 31, no. 1 (2015): 84–93; Frederick Clifton Grant, "Agape and Eros," *Anglican Theological Review* 37, no. 1 (1955): 67–93; Jean Guitton, "Eros and Agape," in *Christian Married Love* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1981).

²² Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 28; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 24. See also Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 21–22.

²³ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 18.

²⁴ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 59; Rice, The Openness of God, 51.

God Regrets

According to Rice, several passages of Scripture describing God's emotional regret suggest that the "future is partly determined and partly opened" and therefore partly unknown by God. For example, Moses writes, "And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart" (Gen 6:6).²⁵ This leads Rice to conclude that the fact that God is *sorry* or *regrets* (בתם) how things turn out, even concerning His prior decisions, suggests that He does not have exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices.²⁶

Another fascinating example Rice uses is that the Lord regretted His decision to make Saul king of Israel. Saul had become so wicked that the Lord said, "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned his back from following me" (1 Sam 15:10). Again, "the Lord was sorry that He had made Saul king over Israel" (1 Sam 15:35). If God had exhaustive definite foreknowledge of how Saul would be, God could not "genuinely

²⁵ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 43; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 42. See Eugene H. Peters, "Divine Foreknowledge," *Encounter* 40, no. 1 (1979): 31–34; Robert P. Lightner, "God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will," *Bibliotheca sacra* 143, no. 571 (1986): 275; Basinger, "Can an Evangelical Christian Justifiably Deny," 133–45.

²⁶ Walter A. Maier III succinctly explains that what Rice implies is that "if God 'repents' or 'regrets,' that seems to imply that God at an earlier point in time engaged in an activity with one result in mind. However, another result, which God did not anticipate and does not like, is the reality, and thus God is sorry that he carried out that earlier activity. If God 'changes his mind,' the average Bible reader could understand this to mean that God's final decision on an issue was unknown even to God himself; that God initially had one plan in mind, but then adopted another. Both the translations 'repent' or 'regret,' and 'change the mind,' can lead to the same conclusion: God does not know everything that will take place in the future. That is exactly the conclusion reached by open theists." Walter A. Maier III, "Does God 'Repent' or Change His Mind?" *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2004): 127–43.

regret" His decision to appoint him king. Therefore, Rice concludes that these scriptural passages allude to a God who does not have absolute definite knowledge of how the future will turn out.²⁷

In conclusion, Rice argues that God regretting the outcome of what has transpired implies His lack of absolute definite knowledge of future free choices. According to him, "if God could foresee infallibly every future event and every future decision, then He must have known in advance which creatures would remain loyal to Him and which would obey. Consequently, God could have prevented evil simply by creating beings whom He foreknew would always choose the good."²⁸

²⁷ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27, 33. See Tomis Kapitan, "Can God Make Up His Mind," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 15, no. 1-2 (1984): 37–43; Charles J. Kelly, "God's Knowledge of the Necessary," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 20, no. 2-3 (1986): 131-45; William M. King, "God's Nescience of Future Contingents: A Nineteenth-Century Theory," *Process Studies* 9, no. 3-4 (1979): 105-115; Michael E. Marmura, "Divine Omniscience and Future Contingents in Alfarabi and Avicenna," in *Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence in Medieval Philosophy* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: D Reidel, 1985); George I. Mavrodes, "Is the Past Unpreventable," *Faith and Philosophy* 1, no. 2 (1984): 131–46; Michael Rota, "A Problem for Hasker: Freedom with Respect to the Present, Hard Facts, and Theological Incompatibilism," *Faith and Philosophy* 27, no. 3 (2010): 287–305.

²⁸ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 41; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 50. See D. R. McAnally, *A Future Life: Its Certainty and Character* (St Louis: Advocate Pub House, 1880); Philip L. Barclift, "Predestination and Divine Foreknowledge in the Sermons of Pope Leo the Great," *Church History* 62, no. 1 (1993): 5–21.

God Risks

Rice argues that while exhaustive definite knowledge and divine risk are incompatible, the open view of foreknowledge permits us to ascribe risk to God.²⁹

According to him, "a risk is an undertaking whose outcome is indefinite. The person who risks his life, for example, places himself in a situation where his survival is genuinely in doubt."³⁰ Rice argues that attributing divine risk to God allows us to be appreciative of His love toward us. For Rice, divine love implies risk, the freedom to choose, and being responsible for our choices.³¹ He says that

God decided to create a world containing morally free beings. These beings had the choice of serving Him or not. Since their obedience or disobedience was something,

²⁹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 36; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 42. See Matthew G. Fisher and David L. Paulsen, "The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence," *BYU Studies* 42, no. 3-4 (2003): 110-23; Niels Henrik Gregersen, "Risk and Religion: Toward a Theology of Risk Taking," *Zygon* 38, no. 2 (2003): 355–76; John S. Hammett, "The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence," *Faith and Mission* 16, no. 3 (1999): 114–16; John S. Hammett, "Divine Foreknowledge and Open Theism," *Faith and Mission* 21, no. 1 (2003): 18–31; William D. Horton, "Faith in a Risk Taking God," *Expository Times* 103, no. 11 (1992): 348–49; Ardel B. Caneday, "Putting God at Risk: A Critique of John Sanders's View of Providence," *Trinity Journal* 20, no. 2 (1999); A. B. Caneday, "Veiled Glory: God's Self-Revelation in Human Likeness- a Biblical Theology of God's Anthropormorphic Self-Disclosure," in *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Undermining of Biblical Christianity* ed. John; Taylor Piper, Justin; Helseth, Paul Kjoss (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003).

³⁰ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 42; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 36. In relation to divine risk, Sanders commented that "in sovereign freedom God has decided to make some of his actions contingent upon our requests and actions. God genuinely interacts and enters into dynamic give-and-take relationships with us. The only wise God has chosen to exercise general rather than meticulous (tight control) providence, allowing space for us to operate and for God to be creative and resourceful in working with us. By creating us with libertarian freedom God takes risks for some things because God is not tightly controlling everything that happens." Sanders, *The God Who Risks*, 14.

³¹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 36–37; Terry Biddington, *Risk-Shaped Discipleship: On Going Deeper into the Life of God* (San Jose, CA: Resource, 2010).

He left up to them to decide, it was not definite. Therefore, their future decision was not knowable until they existed and made a choice themselves. God knew they could rebel when He created them. But it was not certain that they would rebel until they decided to do so.³²

What Rice implies is that for God to create responsible people, He must foreknow their freedom to choose; however, He must lack foreknowledge of their free choices.³³

For Rice, there are at least two important divine actions in which we can think of God as assuming a risk.³⁴ The first divine action involving risk is the creation of the universe with free beings.³⁵ Rice argues that in creating morally free beings with the

³² Rice, *The Openness of God*, 43; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 51. See William Hasker, "Foreknowledge and Necessity," *Faith and Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (1985): 151–64. Katherin A. Rogers, "The Necessity of the Present and Anselm's Eternalist Response to the Problem of Theological Fatalism," *Religious Studies* 43, no. 1 (2007): 25–47; Craig, "Temporal Necessity," 65–91; Jeffrey H. Green and Katherin A. Rogers, "Time, Foreknowledge, and Alternative Possibilities," *Religious Studies* 48, no. 2 (2012): 151–64; William Hasker, "Theological Incompatibilism and the Necessity of the Present: A Response to Michael Rota," *Faith and Philosophy* 28, no. 2 (2011): 224–29; Kapitan, "Can God Make Up His Mind"; King, "God's Nescience," *Process Studies* 9, no. 3-4 (1979): 105–15; Marmura, "Divine Omniscience and Future Contingents"; Mavrodes, "Is the Past Unpreventable"; Rota, "A Problem for Hasker."

³³ Clark Pinnock argues that "if choices are real and freedom significant, future decisions cannot be exhaustively foreknown. This is because the future is not determinate but shaped in part by human choices. The future is not fixed like the past, which can be known own completely. The future does not yet exist and therefore cannot be infallibly anticipated even by God. Future decisions cannot in every way be foreknown, because they have not yet been made. God knows everything that can be known—but God's knowledge does not include the undecided." Pinnock, "Systematic Theology," 123.

³⁴ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 42–43; Rice, The Openness of God, 36.

³⁵ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 36; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 42–43. See Ian A. McFarland, "The God Who Risks: Perspectives on the Trinity in Contemporary Theology," *Lutheran Forum* 28, no. 2 (1994): 23–25; Frederick G. McLeod, "The Ascent to God: Faith as Art, Risk and Humor," *Theological Studies* 42, no. 4 (1981): 711–12; Christopher Partridge, "God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism," *Evangelical Quarterly* 77, no. 1 (2005): 69–72; Edward Patey, *Faith in a Risk Taking*

capacity to love, God took a risk that humans would not love Him in return.³⁶ In his view, God freely dedicated Himself to creating and foreknowing the freedom of morally free agents despite lacking foreknowledge of their future free choices. He writes, "God undertook the risk of their disobedience. It was a risk He was willing to take because without it their obedience would not have manifested a personal love for Him." Thus for Rice, at creation "God left the future of the world partially indefinite."³⁷ Therefore, God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. God left the future open for free moral agents to complete it with their free-will choices, and at the incarnation, God risked His Son in the battle against Satan and his angels.³⁸ According to Rice, the temptations of Christ during the forty days of fasting and prayer strongly support the Open Theism view that it was a genuine risk.³⁹ He says that

God (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1991); Don J. Payne, "The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence," *Themelios* 25, no. 1 (1999): 118–19.

³⁶ Clark Pinnock contends that "according to the Bible, human beings are creatures who have rejected God's will for them and turned aside from His plan. This is another strong piece of evidence that God made them truly free. Humans are evidently not puppets on a string. They are free even to pit their wills against God's. We have actually deviated from the plan of God in creating us and set ourselves at cross purposes to God. Obviously, we are free because we are acting as a race in a way disruptive of God's will and destructive of the values God holds dear for us. It is surely not possible to believe that God secretly planned our rebelling against him. Certainly our rebellion is proof that our actions are not determined but significantly free." Pinnock, *God Limits His Knowledge*, 149.

³⁷ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 36; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 43. See Simon Oliver, "Actuality in Theology and Philosophy," in *Theology, University, Humanities* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011).

³⁸ Rice, The Openness of God, 36; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 43.

³⁹ Rice, The Openness of God, 36–38; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 43–45.

If God could foresee from all eternity the fall of man and the success of salvation, then neither Creation nor the Incarnation really involved a genuine risk. If at Creation God knew with absolute certainty that man would fall, He was not risking the moral harmony of the universe in making man. He was simply sacrificing it. Similarly, if God knew with complete certainty that Christ's earthly mission would end in victory, He did not risk His Son in sending Him to the world for man's salvation. He simply paid the price for a guaranteed result ... It does exclude a quality from His experience that is one of the most moving aspects of human love, namely, the willingness to commit oneself wholly to another in spite of an uncertain and indefinite future.⁴⁰

Thus, for Rice, love involves risk, and because of love, God assumed risk in the creation and the incarnation. Scripture supports the open view of God because love involves risk for God.

God Is Frustrated

According to Rice, Scripture shows God as striving with people only to be frustrated by their unwillingness to do what is right. Ezekiel records God saying, "I sought for anyone among them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land so that I would not destroy it: but I found no one" (Ezek 22:30). It is perplexing to comprehend why a God with absolute definite foreknowledge would genuinely search for someone to intercede on behalf of Israel if He was infinitely certain that there was no one. For Rice, the fact that God searched for this nonexistent intercessor implies a lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge on His part.

Another biblical story of God's frustration mentioned by Rice is the story of Moses. God attempted many times to convince Moses that He could still use him regardless of his speech impairment. Moses repeatedly declined to consent to this (Exod

⁴⁰ Rice, The Openness of God, 36–37; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 43.

4:10-15). Conclusively, Scripture says, "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, 'what of your brother Aaron'" (v. 14). Moses' obstinate unbelief obviously exasperated God. Rice sees this as additional support for the Open Theist view that God does not have absolute definite knowledge of future free choices. ⁴¹

This evidence leads Rice to conclude that the theme of an open future is unambiguously clear throughout Scripture. We find God being frustrated as free moral agents resist His plans for their lives. Due to this dominant feature of the biblical narrative, it is hard for Rice to accept the traditional interpretation of complete exhaustive foreknowledge of free choices. Rice's conclusion concerning foreknowledge is also a response to his view of prophecy.

Foreknowledge and Prophecy

Traditionally, God's exhaustive definite knowledge of the future is viewed as essential to the prophetic pattern that underlies the biblical scheme of history whereby prophecies concerning the future were fulfilled. Understanding the content and function of predictive prophecy in Rice's view of foreknowledge of possibilities is essential to this thesis. The purpose of this section of the chapter is to present Rice's view of predictive and conditional prophecies.

⁴¹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 76; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 93; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 55.

Predictive Prophecies

Rice partly agrees with the traditional understanding of foreknowledge, in that he affirms that God's ability to predict the future accurately distinguishes Him from other gods. ⁴² He cites Isa 46:9-10, "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done." Rice outlines three main points to support his view of predictive prophecy.

Rice argues, first, that predictive prophecy comes because of God's perfect knowledge of past and present historical events. God's knowledge of the present is exhaustive, and His knowledge of the future is "unimaginably extensive." This provides

⁴² Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 75. See Tiemeyer, "Prophecy as a Way of Cancelling Prophecy," 329–50; Kenneth Albert Strand, "Prophecy and Prediction," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 18, no. 1 (1980): 102–5; Philipp Stoellger, "Philosophy of Religion—and Its Sense for 'the Impossible': In the Chiasm of Memory and Imagination (between Past's Future and Future's Past)," in *Impossible Time: Past and Future in the Philosophy of Religion* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

⁴³ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 75; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50. See Stephen A. Kaufman, "Prediction, Prophecy and Apocalypse in the Light of New Akkadian Texts," in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1973* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977); Roderic Dunkerley, "Prophecy and Prediction," *The Expository Times* 61, no. 9 (1950): 260–63; Van Campbell, "The Evidence of Prophecy: Fulfilled Prediction as a Testimony to the Truth of Christianity," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33, no. 2 (1990): 253–55; George Ricker Berry, "Messianic Predictions," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 45, no. 3-4 (1926): 232–37; Hans F. Bayer, *Jesus' Predictions of Vindication and Resurrection*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament (Tubingen: J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1986).

⁴⁴ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 77. See Stoellger, "Philosophy of Religion"; Stephen D. O'Leary, "When Prophecy Fails and When It Succeeds: Apocalyptic Prediction and the Re-Entry into Ordinary Time," in *Apocalyptic*

a possible explanation of God's ability to account for events in the distant future, events that may seem highly improbable at present. According to Rice, "a skilled physician can predict the death of a seemingly healthy individual because he perceives symptoms that escape the untrained eye." In the same way,

God may describe apparently unlikely events in the relatively remote future because He knows and understands the present exhaustively. Possibly this explains prophecies concerning the demise of one nation and the ascendancy of another, like those found in Daniel 2. God must be able to chart the future course of history in significant detail if He knows everything about the present, even on the view that the future is to some extent open.⁴⁶

Second, Rice proposes that God's deterministic knowledge refers to God's plans in response to the free-will moral choices of humankind. According to him, divine predictions may "express God's knowledge of what will occur in the future as the inevitable consequence of factors already present. According to Rice, these events are certain because they do not involve human free-will choices, but God's agency.

Therefore, the part of the future that contains God's plans is foreknown and determined

Time (Leiden: Brill, 2000); William Wallace Martin, "Immanuel—Prediction, Content, Fulfillment," *Methodist Review* 73 (1891): 699–708.

⁴⁵ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 77–78; Rice, The Openness of God, 64.

⁴⁶ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 77–78. See Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53; Joseph Corabi and Rebecca Germino, "Prophecy, Foreknowledge, and Middle Knowledge," *Faith and Philosophy* 30, no. 1 (2013): 72–79; T. Ryan Byerly, "Ockhamism vs Molinism, Round 2: A Reply," *Religious Studies* 47, no. 4 (2011): 503–11.

⁴⁷ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 78. See also Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53; Hasker, *God, Time, and Knowledge*, 195; Robert M. Johnston, "Apocalyptic and Free Will," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 22, no. 2 (2011): 32–41; Anthony A. Hutchinson, "Prophetic Foreknowledge: Hope and Fulfillment in an Inspired Community," in *Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture* (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1990).

by God, but the part that is determined by free-will creatures, God does not know exhaustively. 48 Similarly, according to Open Theism, Scripture clearly stipulates that certain actions predicted by God will occur regardless of the decisions of humans. These are events that God intends to make happen directly. "I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it" (Isa 46:11). "The former things I declared of old, they went forth from my mouth and I made them known; then suddenly I did them and they came to pass" (Isa 48:3).49

Rice makes a third point similar to his first point: that predictive prophecy can indicate God's knowledge that something will occur because the required circumstances for it have been satisfied and nothing can avert it. By the time God predicted Pharaoh's behavior to Moses, the monarch's character might have been so inflexible that it was entirely predictable (Exod 4:21).⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 56; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 51; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 47–48; Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 30–51. See also Kaufman, "Prediction, Prophecy and Apocalypse."

⁴⁹ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 78; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–51; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 64. See Bryan R. Wilson, "Prediction and Prophecy in the Future of Religion," in *Predicting Religion: Christian, Secular and Alternative Futures* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003); Kris J. Udd, "Prediction and Foreknowledge in Ezekiel's Prophecy against Tyre," *Tyndale Bulletin* 56, no. 1 (2005): 25–41; Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, "Prophecy after the Prophets?: The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Understanding of Biblical and Extra-Biblical Prophecy," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34, no. 5 (2010): 200–201.

⁵⁰ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 77; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 93; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53. See also Tiemeyer, "Prophecy as a Way of Cancelling Prophecy"; Strand, "Prophecy and Prediction"; Thomas, Renz "Proclaiming the Future: History and Theology in Prophecies against Tyre." *Tyndale Bulletin* 51, no. 1 (2000): 17–58; Alan R. Rhoda, "The Philosophical Case for Open Theism." *Philosophia* 35, no. 3–4 (2007): 301–11.

Rice concludes that "conditional prophecies are better interpreted in the open view than in the traditional view." According to him, "conditional prophecy summons people to God in a relationship with God. It vividly reminds us that the future depends on our response to Him."

Conditional Prophecies

According to Rice, conditional prophecy and foreknowledge are crucial concepts in Scripture. Some predictive prophecies are conditional in the sense that their fulfillment is not certain. When human agency satisfies the condition, the prophecy is true; when it does not, the prophecy is false. ⁵² Furthermore, there are some predictions in Scripture that have not been fulfilled. He argues that the focal point of conditional prophecy is to produce an unambiguous response to God. "Conditional Prophecy summons people to a

⁵¹ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 81; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65–67; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53; Pruss, "Prophecy without Middle Knowledge"; Peters, "Divine Foreknowledge"; Timothy Pawl, "The Freedom of Christ and Explanatory Priority," *Religious Studies* 50, no. 2 (2014): 157-73; Lightner, "God's Foreknowledge"; Samuel Lamerson, "The Openness of God and the Historical Jesus," *American Theological Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2008): 25-37; Johnston, "Apocalyptic and Free Will"; Hutchinson, "Prophetic Foreknowledge."

Ferspective," 50–53; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65–66. See Sanders, *The God Who Risks*, 133; Robert Anchor Thompson, *Christian Theism: The Testimony of Reason and Revelation to the Existence and Character of the Supreme Being* (London: Rivingtons, Waterloo Palace, 1855); Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Robert L. Thomas, "The Hermeneutics of 'Open Theism," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 12, no. 2 (2001): 179–202; Christopher J. Thompson, "The Theological Dimension of Time in Confessiones XI," in *Augustine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993); J. Blair Wilgus, "Open Theism and the Old Testament: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis" (MA thesis, Lincoln Christian Seminary, 2006); A. Rhoda, "The Philosophical Case for Open Theism," *Philosophia* 35, no. 3-4 (2007): 301–11.

relationship with God. It vividly reminds them that the future depends on their response to Him."⁵³ For instance, Jer 18:7-10 gives the strongest picture of a conditional prophecy:

If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will repent of the evil that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will repent of the good which I had intended to do to it.

Jonah

Rice mentions the stories of Jonah and the repentant Ninevites as illustrations of conditional prophecies. According to him, the proclamation of Jonah that "Nineveh would be destroyed in forty days" (Jonah 3:4) is the "best known" conditional prophecy in the Scriptures. The ruin of Nineveh did not transpire as it was prophesied because the people responded positively. "When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the evil which He had said He would do to them; and He did not do it" (Jonah 3:10).⁵⁴

⁵³ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79–81; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65–66. See Mark E. Biddle, "Obadiah—Jonah—Micah in Canonical Context: The Nature of Prophetic Literature and Hermeneutics," *Interpretation* 61, no. 2 (2007): 154-66; Berry, "Messianic Predictions," 232-37; Ehud Ben Zvi, "Jonah 4:11 and the Metaprophetic Character of the Book of Jonah," *The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9 (2009): 1-13; Bayer, *Jesus' Predictions*; Rachel Adelman, "Jonah through the Looking Glass: Pirqe De-Rabbi Eliezer's Portrait of an Apocalyptic Prophet," *ARC* 39 (2011): 79-92.

⁵⁴ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–51; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66–67. See Michael Walzer, "Prophecy and Social Criticism," *The Drew Gateway* 55, no. 2-3 (1984): 13-27; Raphael Shuchat, "Jonah the Rebellious Prophet: A Look at the Man Behind the Prophecy Based on Biblical and Rabbinic Sources," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2009): 45-52; Stanislav Segert, "Syntax and Style in the Book of Jonah: Six Simple Approaches to Their Analysis," in *Prophecy: Essays Presented to Georg Fohrer on His 65th Birthday*, 6

Rice places emphasis on God's openness to change according to the situation. In his view, God's pronouncements about the future are flexible; consequently, His statements about the future are just possibilities. According to Rice, there are many passages in Scripture in which God predicts that something will happen, but then repents so that the predicted event does not come to pass. This suggests to Rice that the future is open, and God does not know it in detail.⁵⁵

Cyrus

Rice argues that the prediction that Cyrus would help in the rebuilding of

Jerusalem is a conditional prophecy. "Who says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and he shall
perform all my pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, 'you shall be built,' and to the temple,
'your foundation shall be laid'" (Isa 44:28). According to Rice, "God may have perceived
factors that indicated the decline of Babylon and the rise of Persia and must have known
the ancestors of Cyrus and foreseen the possibility of his birth. Also, God may have been
actively involved in bringing events to the place where this prophecy would be
fulfilled."56

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Sept 1980 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1980): 121-30; Annette Schellenberg, "An Anti-Prophet among the Prophets?: On the Relationship of Jonah to Prophecy," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 39, no. 3 (2015): 353-71.

⁵⁵ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 80–81; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65–67; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53. See Walzer, "Prophecy and Social Criticism"; Shuchat, "Jonah the Rebellious Prophet"; Louis H. Feldman, "Josephus' Interpretation of Jonah," *AJS Review* 17, no. 1 (1992): 1-29; Fred Blumenthal, "Jonah, the Reluctant Prophet: Prophecy and Allegory," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (2007): 103-108.

⁵⁶ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 78–79; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–53. See Segert, "Syntax and Style in the

However, Rice made a startling admission about the prophecy of Cyrus. He says:

Admittedly, there is no way to calculate the relation in a given Prophecy between what God can foresee as the direct result of present factors and what will happen as the result of His personal activity. But we cannot exclude the possibility that both elements play a part in many biblical prophecies. So, even predictive prophecies pertaining to what appears to us to have been the very remote future do not necessarily require the traditional understanding of divine foreknowledge.⁵⁷

In summary, Rice argues that predictive prophecy does not mean God has absolute definite knowledge of future free choices. Since the future is partly open and partly determined, God can relate to His creatures on a temporal level. This is evident in His flexibility in responding to human actions by asking questions, changing His mind in response to situations, regretting the outcome of some decisions He makes, and finding out about His people's decisions. At the same time, Rice affirms that God is omniscient. The next section of this thesis describes how Rice reconciles his view of omniscience with God's lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge.

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Book of Jonah"; Ray Lubeck, "Prophetic Sabotage: A Look at Jonah 3:2-4," *Trinity Journal* 9, no. 1 (1988): 37-46; Sandor Goodhart, "Prophecy, Sacrifice and Repentance in the Story of Jonah," *Semeia* 33 (1985): 43-63; Yehoshua Gitay, "Jonah: The Prophecy of Antirhetoric," in *Fortunate the Eyes That See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995).

⁵⁷ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 65. See John C. Whitcomb, "Cyrus in the Prophecies of Isaiah," in *Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1974): 388-401; Moshe Reiss, "Cyrus as Messiah," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (2012): 159-62; Goodhart, "Prophecy, Sacrifice and Repentance"; Milton Eng, "What's in a Name?: Cyrus and the Dating of Deutero-Isaiah," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient near East: Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon* (London: T & T Clark, 2004): 216-24; Asher Eder, "King Cyrus, Anointed (Messiah) of the Lord," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (1995): 188-92.

The Definition of Exhaustive Foreknowledge

Divine foreknowledge and divine omniscience are fundamental to the doctrine of God, with abundant implications regarding all areas of theology. Scripture affirms that God is omniscient or all-knowing, which includes exhaustive knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, including our free choices. However, Rice's view and the traditional view are sharply divided regarding the nature of divine foreknowledge and omniscience about future free choices of humans. According to Rice, for creatures to be free, "certain aspects of the future" must be "indefinite" and therefore, cannot be foreknown. The purpose of this section of the chapter is to present Rice's model of exhaustive foreknowledge and future free choices. Rice begins with a description of the traditional interpretation of exhaustive definite foreknowledge and the reasons he objects to it. This section of the thesis is organized in terms of three key elements in Rice's understanding of foreknowledge and omniscience: God's foreknowledge of the future as possibilities, God's definite foreknowledge of those certainties that He has predetermined, and God's exhaustive (perfect) knowledge of the past and the present. As a result, Rice affirms God's omniscience while denying His exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

Knowledge of Possibilities

Rice posits that, while God can know everything there is to know, since future free choices "do not yet exist," God does not know them with absolute certainty. This is because the future is composed partly of possibilities (which can only be foreknown as

possibilities) and partly of certainties (which God foreknows because He determines them).⁵⁸

Using William James's analogy of two chess players, Rice argues that God is like an international grandmaster who knows and anticipates all the moves of His opponent, not because He has absolute definite knowledge of what will transpire, but because He knows how to respond to anything that the opponent poses. Putting it differently, Rice is asserting that the future is not determined; hence, God knows the future as possibilities. Conversely, God as a superior skillful player can attend to every possibility as if there are no other options.⁵⁹

Zagzebski, "Divine Foreknowledge, 53–54; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 45–46. See Zagzebski, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will"; David Widerker, "Theological Fatalism and Frankfurt Counterexamples to the Principle of Alternative Possibilities," *Faith and Philosophy* 17, no. 2 (2000): 249-52; Joseph Peter Wawrykow, "Theology at Paris, 1316-1345: Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents," *Theological Studies* 63, no. 3 (2002): 609-610; Christina Van Dyke, "Theology at Paris, 1316-1345; Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents," *Philosophia Christi* 5, no. 2 (2003): 603-605; Terrance L. Tiessen, "God, Time and Knowledge: What Does God Know and When Does He Know It?," *Didaskalia (Otterburne, Man.)* 18, no. 1 (2007): 141-63; Alan R. Rhoda, Gregory A. Boyd, and Thomas G. Belt. "Open Theism, Omniscience, and the Nature of the Future." *Faith and Philosophy* 23, no. 4 (2006): 432–59; Hugh Rice, "Divine Omniscience, Timelessness, and the Power to Do Otherwise." *Religious Studies* 42, no. 2 (2006): 123–39.

⁵⁹ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 66; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 56–57. Gregory A. Boyd, another Open Theist, explained exactly how God's knowledge of possibilities can be equal to His absolute definite knowledge of the future. He contends, "Why are we humans less confident considering possibilities than we are with certainties? It is only because our intelligence is finite. If I have two possibilities I have to anticipate rather than one certainty, I have to divide my intelligence in half to cover both possibilities. If I have four possibilities to consider, my intelligence has to be divided into fourths, and so on. This is what makes us humans 'intrinsically fallible and faulty in making ... future plans' which involve various possibilities." "But now consider the implications of our shared faith that God possesses infinite wisdom. God's intelligence is not limited. This means that God does not have to 'spread out' his intelligence over possibilities. God can

According to Rice, the open view of God is entirely compatible with the view that God knows a great deal about the future course of events. "Certainly some of what will happen in the future is determined by factors that already exist. The vast majority of future events may be the inevitable outworking of past and present causes. All that the Open view of reality requires is that the future be indefinite to the extent that the world contains genuine freedom."

Furthermore, Rice argues that possessing exhaustive knowledge of the past, God, therefore, knows all that will happen as the result of "factors already" in existence.⁶¹ In

consider and anticipate each of trillion billion possibilities as though each one was the only possibility he had to consider. Since His intelligence does not have to be—cannot be!—'divided up' among items, we could say that all of God's intelligence is focused on each and every possibility, and each series of possibilities, as though there were no alternative possibilities. In other words, for a God of infinite intelligence, there is virtually no distinction between knowing a certainty and knowing a possibility. God gains no providential advantage by knowing future events as certain as opposed to knowing them as possible. He anticipates both with equal perfection." See Boyd, "Christian Love and Academic Dialogue," 235.

⁶⁰ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 55; Rice, The Openness of God, 47. See Gary L. Shultz Jr., "How Much Does God Foreknow?: A Comprehensive Biblical Study," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 50, no. 4 (2007): 878-82; John Sanders and Christopher A. Hall, "Does God Know Your Next Move?: Christopher A. Hall and John Sanders Debate Openness Theology," Christianity Today 45, no. 7 (2001): 38-45; Tamar Rudavsky, "Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents," Speculum 77, no. 4 (2002): 1390-1392; Richard Rice, "Does Open Theism Limit God?" Wesleyan Theological Journal 48, no. 2 (2013): 30-43; John C. Peckham, "Does God Always Get What He Wants?: A Theocentric Approach to Divine Providence and Human Freedom," Andrews University Seminary Studies 52, no. 2 (2014): 195-12; Robert Lovering, "Does God Know What It's Like Not to Know?" Religious Studies 49, no. 1 (2013): 85-99.

⁶¹ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 55; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 47. Gregory Boyd affirms that the debate is not really about "God's knowledge" but about "the nature of the future." He continued that "Open theists affirm God's omniscience as emphatically as anybody does. The issue is not whether God's knowledge is perfect. It is. The issue is about the nature of the reality that God perfectly knows. More specifically, what is the

other words, God knows infallibly (or foreknows absolutely) all the future consequences of the past and present.⁶² God's knowledge of the future is like ours "in that it is both definite and indefinite." However, it differs greatly from ours in that

since we are largely ignorant of the past and present, the future appears vastly indefinite to us. We know very little of what will happen because we know and understand so little of what has already happened. God, in contrast, knows all that has happened. Therefore a great deal of the future that appears vague and indefinite to us must be vividly clear to Him. ⁶³

In summary, Rice believes the open view is compatible with God's exhaustive foreknowledge and human freedom. He argues extensively that the future God foreknows is partly composed of possibilities and partly determined by God. Furthermore, God does not possess exhaustive definite knowledge of some future events, which are dictated by human free-will choices.

content of the reality of the future? Whatever it is, we all agree that God perfectly knows it." Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 15–20.

⁶² Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 55; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 47. See Boyd, *God of the Possible*; Thomas D. Sullivan, "Omniscience, Immutability, and the Divine Mode of Knowing," *Faith and Philosophy* 8, no. 1 (1991): 21-35; Alfred J. Stenner, "A Paradox of Omniscience and Some Attempts at a Solution," *Faith and Philosophy* 6, no. 3 (1989): 303-19; Frederick E. Sontag, "Omnipotence Need Not Entail Omniscience," *Anglican Theological Review* 73, no. 1 (1991): 68-72; Frederick E. Sontag, "Omnipotence Need Not Entail Omniscience," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34, no. 4 (1991): 505-508; Henry Simoni, "Omniscience and the Problem of Radical Particularity: Does God Know How to Ride a Bike?" *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 42, no. 1 (1997): 1-22; Marcel Sarot, "Omniscience and Experience," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 30, no. 2 (1991): 89-102.

⁶³ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 55-56; Rice, The Openness of God, 47.

Knowledge of Certainties

According to Rice, God's certain foreknowledge is of what God intends to do. He argues that Scripture clearly stipulates that certain decisions determined by God will occur regardless of the decisions of humans. These events will happen because He makes them happen by directly acting Himself. For instance, "I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it" (Isa 46:11). "The former things I declared of old, they went forth from my mouth, and I made them known; then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass" (Isa 48:3).⁶⁴

Rice concludes that Scripture supports the open view for many reasons. First, Rice agrees with Scripture that "foreknowing" and "predestining" are divine activities. 65 Several specific passages of Scripture describe how God foreknows about the lives and decisions of Bible characters. According to Rice, when the word "foreknowledge" is used, it "refers to some phase of redemption history as the fulfillment of a preexistent plan."

The people involved in the death of Christ were acting by this plan. For instance, "This Jesus, delivered up and killed by the hands of lawless men" (Acts 2:23). "For truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and had predestined to take place" (Acts 4:27-28). "He [Christ) was destined before the foundation of the world of

⁶⁴ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 83–84; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 53–57; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 68.

⁶⁵ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 68; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 83–84; Rice, Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 53–57.

the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Pet 1:20).⁶⁶ In the same vein, Rice argues that "the existence of a plan for human salvation as early as Creation does not necessarily indicate God definitely knew that man would sin before He created him. It may indicate only that God was aware that sin was a distinct possibility with man's creation, rather than a future actuality, and that He was fully prepared to meet the situation should it arise."⁶⁷

Second, Rice argues that the word *foreknowledge* is used in reference to the elect, who are "objects of divine calling, foreknowledge and predestination." According to Scripture, "those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified" (Rom 8:29-30). "God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew" (Rom 11:2). "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will" (Eph 1:4-5). "To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for and

⁶⁶ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 84; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 53–57; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 69.

⁶⁷ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 84–85; Rice, The Openness of God, 69.

⁶⁸ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 53; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 69; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 84.

sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood" (1 Pet 1:1, 2).⁶⁹

Third, Rice argues that specific predictions regarding individual behavior do not come from God's exhaustive definite knowledge of the future, but from known facts. ⁷⁰ He cites the stories of Pharaoh, Peter, and Judas as examples of individual predictions. In the case of Pharaoh, Rice argues that

knowing precisely the nature of Pharaoh's personality, God may have known that such a command would elicit only one response. Pharaoh's "hardened of heart" was, therefore, definite in advance. It was foreknowable to God because his previous behavior made certain his response to this particular situation. Thus, "God hardened his heart" only in the sense that He created a situation in which the monarch's behavior was determined completely by his character. Therefore it was entirely foreknowable.⁷¹

Similarly, Rice argues that "the same considerations are pertinent to other instances in which the misbehavior of certain individuals seems to have been foreknown, such as Judas' betrayal of Jesus. There may have been a time when the traitor's course of action was inevitable, even apparent to Jesus' astute observation."⁷² However, the roles

⁶⁹ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 84; Rice, The Openness of God, 69.

⁷⁰ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 95–96; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 54–55; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 76–78.

⁷¹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 77–78; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 94; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 54; Richard Rice, "Divine Foreknowledge and Free-Will Theism," in *Grace of God, the Will of Man: A Case of Arminianism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989): 121-139.

⁷² Rice, *The Openness of God*, 78.

played by Peter and Judas were not determined by God. They "were free to select a course of action that would have ended differently."⁷³

In conclusion, Rice maintains that God's foreknowledge of certainty refers to God's own decisions to act in the future. Rice insists that God is omniscient and therefore knows all reality perfectly, but the realities God knows are composed of possibilities because the future is not yet there for God to know.

Exhaustive Knowledge

Rice does not deny divine omniscience and exhaustive foreknowledge of the future. 74 What he argues against is the concept that God possesses absolute definite

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 54–55; Rice, The Openness of God, 46–47. David Basinger argues that "those of us who deny that God has exhaustive foreknowledge of the future do not deny that God knows all that can be known. The debate is over what it is that can be known." See Basinger, "Can an Evangelical Christian Justifiably Deny," 133– 45. Gregory Boyd, in his response to Bruce Ware about God's exhaustive foreknowledge, explained the difference between exhaustive definite foreknowledge and divine foreknowledge. He contends that "open theists do not deny that God possesses exhaustive knowledge of the future. In our view, as in the classical view, God's knowledge is coextensive with reality. What we deny is that the future is exhaustively definite. In our view, the future is rather partly composed of possibilities. Hence, precisely because we affirm that God's knowledge is perfect, we hold that God knows the future as partly definite and partly indefinite. He possesses exhaustive foreknowledge, for he knows everything about the future there is to know. But He does not possess exhaustively definite foreknowledge, for the future He perfectly knows is not exhaustively definite." Gregory A. Boyd, "Christian Love and Academic Dialogue: A Reply to Bruce Ware," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 45, no. 2 (2002): 233-43. See Donald Wayne Viney, "Does Omniscience Imply Foreknowledge: Craig on Hartshorne," *Process* Studies 18, no. 1 (1989): 30-37; Peter Van Inwagen, "What Does an Omniscient Being Know About the Future?" in Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Frederick E. Sontag, "Omniscience Reinterpreted," Theologia Evangelica 19, no. 2 (1986): 26-32; Henry Clay Sheldon, "The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge," Methodist Review (Nashville, Tenn.) 43, no. 3 (1896): 323-332; Joseph Runzo, "Omniscience and Freedom for Evil," International Journal for Philosophy of

foreknowledge of the future: i.e., that God knows the future including the free choices of humans with absolute certainty.⁷⁵ Therefore, Rice proposes that God knows the past, the present, and the future exhaustively,⁷⁶ but the "future is almost entirely indefinite for us and only partly indefinite for Him (God)." Moreover, God does not possess definite

Religion 12, no. 3 (1981): 131-47; Michael Rota, "Synchronic Contingency and the Problem of Freedom and Foreknowledge," *Faith and Philosophy* (2015): 81-96; Michael D. Robinson, "Why Divine Foreknowledge?" *Religious Studies* 36, no. 3 (2000): 251-75; Mohammed S. Abouzahr. "Future Contingents, Freedom, and Foreknowledge." PhD diss., Wayne State University, 2013.

⁷⁵ Rice, The Openness of God, 46–47; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 54–55. Clark Pinnock agrees with Rice "that if God's foreknowledge were indeed exhaustive, libertarian freedom would not exist. God's omniscience does not mean exhaustive foreknowledge of all future events. If that were its meaning, the future would be fixed and determined, much as is the past. Total knowledge of the future would imply a fixity of events. Nothing in the future would need to be decided. It also would imply that it human freedom is an illusion, that we make no difference and are not responsible." Pinnock, "Systematic Theology," 121. See Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, "Omniscience and the Arrow of Time," Faith and Philosophy 19, no. 4 (2002): 363-69; Amos Yong, "Divine Omniscience and Future Contingents: Weighing the Presuppositional Issues in the Contemporary Debate," Evangelical Review of Theology 26, no. 3 (2002): 240-64; Laurence W. Wood, "Divine Omniscience: Boethius or Open Theism?" Wesleyan Theological Journal 45, no. 2 (2010): 41-66; Edward Wierenga, "Omniscience and Time, One More Time: A Reply to Craig," Faith and Philosophy 21, no. 1 (2004): 90-97; Stephen J. Wellum, "Divine Sovereignty-Omniscience, Inerrancy, and Open Theism: An Evaluation," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 45, no. 2 (2002): 257-77; Donald Wayne Viney, "God Only Knows? Hartshorne and the Mechanics of Omniscience," in Hartshorne, Process Philosophy, and Theology (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).

⁷⁶ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge, 56*; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 48. See Boyd, *Satan and the Problem,* 90–92; Peter Van Inwagen, "What Does an Omniscient Being Know"; Todd and Fischer, "The Truth About Foreknowledge"; John Sanders, "The Openness of God and the Assurance of Things to Come," in *Looking into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001): 281-294; Lewis S. Ford, "God as the Subjectivity of the Future," *Encounter* 41, no. 3 (1980): 287-292; William Lane Craig, "Process Theology's Denial of Divine Foreknowledge," *Process Studies* 16, no. 3 (1987): 198-202.

foreknowledge of some future events, which are dictated by human free-will choices.⁷⁷ Sometimes, God does not know what an individual is going to choose until that person decides and acts. Rice maintains that God is omniscient, for He perfectly knows all reality, but the reality God perfectly knows is partly composed of possibilities.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ To understand Rice's model of exhaustive foreknowledge of the future free choices as possibilites, one must consider the reasons he objects to exhaustive definite knowledge of the future. According to him, for creatures to be free, "certain aspects of the future" must be "indefinite" and therefore, cannot be foreknown. Rice's view is based primarily upon three basic assumptions: (1) since future free-will decisions have not been made, they do not exist, and, therefore, cannot be foreknown even by God. (2) Libertarian freedom and exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future are incompatible; and (3) Scripture supports his model of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of the future as possibilities. Rice, The Openness of God, 8-9, 45-46; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 10-11, 53-54. See Gregory A. Boyd, "Christian Love and Academic Dialogue: A Reply to Bruce Ware," JETS 45 (2002): 233-243; Boyd, "Two Ancient (and Modern) Motivations for Ascribing Exhaustively Definite Foreknowledge to God," 41-59; Paul R. Raabe, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," Concordia Journal 17, no. 1 (1991): 104-106; Philip L. Quinn, "Plantinga on Foreknowledge and Freedom," in *Alvin Plantinga* (Dordrecht, Netherlands: D Reidel, 1985): 271-287; Philip L. Quinn, "Divine Foreknowledge and Divine Freedom," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 9, no. 4 (1978): 219-40; Robert E. Picirilli, "Foreknowledge, Freedom, and the Future," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 43, no. 2 (2000): 251-71; Eugene H. Peters, "Divine Foreknowledge," Encounter 40, no. 1 (1979): 31-34; Alan G. Padgett, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: The Coherence of Theism: Omniscience," The Evangelical Quarterly 66, (1994): 362-64; Mark D. Linville, "Divine Foreknowledge and the Libertarian Conception of Human Freedom," International Journal for Philosophy of Religion 33, no. 3 (1993): 165-86; Brian Leftow, "The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge," Ethics 103, no. 1 (1992): 163-64; Thomas P. Flint, "The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge," Faith and Philosophy 11, no. 3 (1994): 482-88; Fischer, "Foreknowledge and Freedom: A Reply to Gale"; Fischer, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom."

⁷⁸ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 54–56; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 46–48; Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 190–91. See Todd and Fischer, "The Truth About Foreknowledge"; Robert E. Picirilli, "Foreknowledge, Freedom, and the Future," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43, no. 2 (2000): 251-71.

Furthermore, Rice argues that if humans are free to make their own decisions, then the future is open and indefinite.⁷⁹ But if "God knows the future in all its detail it implies that the future itself is there to be known fixed and changeless in every respect. This will exclude creaturely freedom because genuine freedom requires that part of the future be indefinite until decided by free personal agents."⁸⁰ And this means that God's knowledge of the future cannot be definitely exhaustive.⁸¹ With this view in mind, Rice defines omniscience as follows:

The Openness of God, 46–47; Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 54–55. See Douglas P. Lackey, "New Disproof of the Compatibility of Foreknowledge and Free Choice," *Religious Studies* 10, no. 3 (1974): 313-18; Paul Helm, "Plantinga's Point," *American Theological Inquiry (Online)* 6, no. 1 (2013): 39-41; Joel Hedgepeth, "The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge," *Methodist Review (Nashville, Tenn.)* 47, no. 1 (1898): 62-69, 128; William Hasker, "The Foreknowledge Conundrum," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 50, no. 1-3 (2001): 97-114; Thomas M. Crisp, "On Divine Foreknowledge and Newcomb's Paradox," *Philosophia Christi* 1, no. 2 (1999): 33-43; Randall B. Bush, "The Suffering of God as an Aspect of the Divine Omniscience," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51, no. 4 (2008): 769-84; Anna Brückner et al., "Omnipotence, Omniscience, and God's Right," in *Richard Swinburne: Christian Philosophy in a Modern World* (Frankfurt: Ontos-Verlag, 2008): 125-39.

⁸⁰ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 45; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 53. See Richard E. Creel, "Continuity, Possibility, and Omniscience," *Process Studies* 12, no. 4 (1982): 209-31; Robert F. Brown, "Divine Omniscience, Immutability, Aseity and Human Free Will," *Religious Studies* 27, no. 3 (1991): 285-295; Francis Beckwith, "Limited Omniscience and the Test for a Prophet: A Brief Philosophical Analysis," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36, no. 3 (1993): 357-362; David Basinger, "Divine Omniscience and the Soteriological Problem of Evil: Is the Type of Knowledge God Possesses Relevant?" *Religious Studies* 28, no. 1 (1992): 1-18; David Basinger, "Omniscience and Deliberation: A Response to Reichenbach," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 20, no. 2-3 (1986): 169-172.

⁸¹ William Hasker emphasizes that "since the future is genuinely open, since it is possible for a free agent to act in any of several different ways, it follows that it is not possible for God to have complete and exhaustive knowledge of the entire future." William Hasker, "An Adequate God," in *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue Between Process and Free Will Theists*, ed. John B. Cobb Jr. and Clark Pinnock, 218. In

Perfect knowledge, or omniscience, is not simply, "knowing everything." Rather, it is "knowing everything there is to know." And, as we have seen, future free decisions are not there to be known until they are actually made. Accordingly, God's not knowing them in advance does not imply that His knowledge is less than perfect. It simply means that His knowledge corresponds precisely with what there is to know.⁸²

Also, Rice contends that his view "is more faithful to the biblical portrait of God than the more widely accepted view." According to him, many passages of Scripture depict part of the future as exhaustively settled. However, Rice strongly denies that all the biblical passages used to support God's foreknowledge actually claim that God has definite exhaustive foreknowledge of the future. 84 He argues that these scriptural

view of this understanding, Open Theists define God's omniscience as "knowledge of all that can be known given the sort of world that he chose to create." Sanders, *The God Who Risks*, 15. Richard Swinburne says that "omniscience is limited to knowledge of everything true which it is logically possible to know." Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 175.

⁸² Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 54–55; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 46. See Sullivan, "Omniscience, Immutability"; Stenner, "A Paradox of Omniscience"; Sontag, "Omnipotence Need Not Entail Omniscience," *Anglican Theological Review* 73, no. 1 (1991): 68-72; Sontag, "Omnipotence Need Not Entail Omniscience," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34, no. 4 (1991): 505-508; Sontag, "Omniscience Reinterpreted"; Simoni, "Omniscience and the Problem of Radical Particularity"; Sarot, "Omniscience and Experience."

⁸³ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 11; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 15; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 9. See Robert Cook, "The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom," *Themelios* 15 (1990): 106-107; Robert Cook, "Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: The Coherence of Theism: Omniscience," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 69 (1997): 187-188; Cheung, "A Defense of Compatibilism"; Burns, "The Only Wise God"; Brueckner, "On an Attempt to Demonstrate"; Arbour, "Future Freedom and the Fixity of Truth: Closing the Road to Limited Foreknowledge Open Theism"; Alston, "Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions."

⁸⁴ Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 11; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 15; Rice, *The Openness of God*, 9. See Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 82; William J. Courtenay, "Theology at Paris, 1316-1345: Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*

passages are generally focused on particular events. According to him, Open Theism has no problem saying that God can settle (and therefore foreknow) some of the future, and so claims that these Scriptures should be limited specifically to the events they describe.

According to Rice, the nature of God's foreknowledge is apparent in the way scriptural passages depict God's response to decisions of contingent beings in time. God regrets the results of His own decisions (Gen 6:6), He gets disappointed by the questionable decisions of free moral agents (Jer 3:6), He asks questions about the decisions of individuals (1 Kgs 22:20), and He searches for an intercessor for people who have lost their connection with Him because of their continuous sinful actions (Ezek 22).⁸⁵ In the opinion of Rice, the picture that emerges from these passages reinforces his view that God does not know the future as certain but as a possibility.

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^{53,} no. 3 (2002); Shawn Bawulski and James Watkins, "Possible Worlds and God's Creative Process: How a Classical Doctrine of Divine Creation Can Understand Divine Creativity," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 65, no. 2 (2012): 174-191; Alston, "Divine Foreknowledge and Alternative Conceptions."

Perspective," 24, 27, 34. See Ron Highfield, "Does the World Limit God?: Assessing the Case for Open Theism," *Stone-Campbell Journal* 5, no. 1 (2002): 69-92; Hasker, "Foreknowledge and Necessity"; Christopher A. Hall and John Sanders, "Does God Know Your Next Move?; Christopher A. Hall and John Sanders Debate Openness Theology Part 2," *Christianity Today* 45, no. 8 (2001): 50-56; Green and Rogers, "Time, Foreknowledge, and Alternative Possibilities"; Fischer, "Freedom and Actuality"; Richard Cross, "Theology at Paris, 1316-1345: Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 53, no. 2 (2002).

Summary and Conclusion

Rice maintains that God's emotions described in Scripture are real and should be interpreted literally because they "reflect the inner experience of God." Therefore, scriptural descriptions of God's feelings should be taken at "face value" because "their expressions faithfully portray the inner life of God." 86

Also, Rice argues that divine "love is the concrete reality that unifies all of the attributes of God. A doctrine of God that is faithful to the Bible must show that all of God's characteristics derive from love." According to Rice, divine love implies the freedom to choose, and genuine freedom eliminates God's absolute definite knowledge of future free choices. As a result, the deliberations of free moral agents over the decisions they have made imply that the future is "partly definite" and "partly indefinite" in God's "perspective." This accounts for God regretting the outcomes of some decisions He makes, taking risks in creation, and being frustrated when things turn out against His will. Rice contends that if God has infallible exhaustive definite knowledge of all events and human choices, these emotional reactions are meaningless.

In addition, Rice proposes that God's predictive knowledge comes from His limited knowledge of the future, since part of the future is closed and determined.

According to him, God foreknows what He has predetermined, and He manipulates events to bring about the fulfillment of what He has determined in eternity. Therefore,

⁸⁶ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 35.

⁸⁷ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 59; Rice, The Openness of God, 51.

God's predictive knowledge concerns what He has predetermined and the possibilities of future free actions.

Furthermore, Rice affirms that God is omniscient. However, he insists that God does not have absolute definite knowledge of the future. He also maintains that in a sense, God's knowledge of the future is exhaustive, because the future which God knows is partly open and partly determined by God. God does not possess absolute definite foreknowledge of some future events, which are dictated by human free-will choices. Sometimes, God does not even know what an individual is going to choose until that person decides and acts. Rice maintains that God perfectly knows all reality, but the reality God perfectly knows is partly composed of possibilities.⁸⁸

In conclusion, this descriptive analysis of Rice's view has raised a number of important questions concerning divine foreknowledge that need to be addressed. Is Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge and future free choices internally coherent and externally consistent with Scripture? In other words, should divine and human emotions be interpreted equivocally, univocally, or analogically? Does predictive prophecy presuppose absolute definite foreknowledge? "How can God know what He is going to

⁸⁸ Arie Blok, "Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace," *Reformed Review* 54, no. 3 (2001): 237-38; Daniel Cameron, "Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace," *Stone-Campbell Journal* 5, no. 2 (2002): 298-99; John W. Cobb, "Election Is Based on Foreknowledge," *Review & Expositor* 51, no. 1 (1954): 22-28; E. Earle Ellis, "Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 44, no. 1 (2001): 120; John S. Hammett, "Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace," *Faith and Mission* 18, no. 3 (2001): 124-25; Abel Stevens, "God's Determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge," *Methodist Review* 21, no. 1 (1839): 39-69.

do in the future, when God's own future acts are a response to future human free actions that He cannot know?" What is the biblical meaning of omniscience? Should divine omniscience be understood in terms of future possibilities, future certainties, or both?

The scope of the conflict between the traditional and non-traditional models in this study, as well as the current unresolved questions around divine foreknowledge, substantiates an investigation into the biblical data to determine whether the apparent weaknesses of the non-traditional model can be overcome by employing an analogical method of understanding God's foreknowledge of the future. To answer these questions, Chapter 4 offers a partial evaluation of Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge of the future.

CHAPTER 4

EVALUATION OF EXHAUSTIVE FOREKNOWLEDGE IN THE MODEL OF RICHARD RICE

Introduction

In Chapter 3, I described Rice's view of how God's emotions affect his view of God's exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices. Now in Chapter 4, I turn to evaluating Rice's view. According to Rice, sometimes God expresses deep emotional displeasure with how things have gone, and He *regrets, repents,* or *changes His mind* (נחם). Rice interprets these emotional statements to mean that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. More specifically, God's emotional *regretting, repenting,* or *relenting* has created an apparent contradiction between the

¹ The Hebrew word בהם is first used in Gen 6:6, and is translated as *regretted*, *grieved*, or *sorry*. According to Heinz-Josef Simian-Yofre, "the verb בהם occurs 108 times in the Old Testament, forty-eight times in the *niphai* stem, fifty-one times in the *piel* stem, twice in the *puai* stem, and seven times in the *hithpael* stem ... The only element common to all meanings of בהם appears to be the attempt to influence a situation: by changing the course of events, rejecting an obligation, or refraining from an action, when the focus is on the present; by influencing a decision, when the focus is on the future; and by accepting the consequences of an act or helping another accept them or contrariwise dissociating oneself emotionally from them, when the focus is on the past." Heinz-Josef Simian-Yofre, "בהם", "Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, trans. David Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998): 9:342; Maier, "Does God 'Repent," 113.

traditional view and Rice's non-traditional view of God's foreknowledge of future free choices.²

This leads me to ask the following questions about Rice's view of God's emotional *regret* and foreknowledge: What does God's emotional regret (בותם) imply, and how should it be interpreted? Does יותן imply lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices? How does Rice's view of God's emotional regret (בותם) impact his view of predictive prophecy in relation to God's foreknowledge of future free choices? Is there any alternative approach to God's emotional regret to clarify the issues of divine emotions, prophecy, and free choices and provide a way beyond the impasse between Rice's view and the traditional view?

Divine Emotions and Foreknowledge

This section focuses on the role of divine emotions in Rice's view of exhaustive foreknowledge and future free choices. Scripture affirms that God is profoundly emotional and interacts with humanity in a truly dynamic relationship.³ According to Rice, God is in emotional crisis over His plans when the unexpected happens, and hence makes a different decision, which usually involves *relenting*, *repenting*, or *changing His*

² There appears to be an apparent contradiction in Scripture about God's repentance. On one hand, Scripture seems to suggest that God *repents*, *relents*, or *changes His mind* (Gen 6:6; Exod 32:14; 1 Sam 15:11, 35 Jer 18:7-10; Jon 3:9, 10; 4:2) and on the other hand, God does not *repent*, *relent*, or *change* (Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Mal 3:6). Some of these passages are relevant to the study of and will be discussed in this thesis.

³ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27.

mind.⁴ Rice takes God's *relenting*, *repenting*, or *changing His mind* as an affirmation of God's lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.⁵ This section of the study is limited to the key word [Incomplete] (*relenting*, *repenting*, or *changing His mind*) and its relation to God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge and future free choices.

Divine Regret

In this section, I evaluate Rice's view of מוֹם in relation to God's foreknowledge. My purpose is not to deny God's emotional regret (מוֹם) in Scripture, but to see if מוֹם must necessarily be interpreted to mean that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. The lexical structure of מוֹם is very complex and poses many challenges to theologians. There are two main reasons for the complexity of מוֹם. First, biblical writers appear to contradict themselves as to whether God מוֹם or does not מוֹם (God changing His mind) seems to contradict God's fundamental nature of being omniscient and perfect. The Hebrew root מוֹם seems to have

⁴ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27.

⁵ Boyd appears to support Rice here. According to him, "the most serious questions about the classical view of (God's) foreknowledge ... relate to the Bible. If the future is indeed exhaustively settled in God's mind, as the classical view holds, why does the Bible repeatedly describe God changing his mind? Why does the Bible say that God frequently alters his plans, cancels prophecies in the light of changing circumstances, and speaks about the future as a 'maybe,' a 'perhaps,' or a 'possibility'? Why does it describe God as expressing uncertainty about the future, being disappointed in the way things turn out, and even occasionally regretting the outcome of his own decisions? If the Bible is always true—and I, for one, assume that it is—how can we reconcile this way of talking about God ... with the notion that the future is exhaustively settled in his mind?" See Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 11.

originated from the Ugaritic word אובהם, which means to console. The root מבחם appears in the niphal, piel, pual, and hitpael stems of the Hebrew language. In the Brown, Driver, and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, מחם is translated as be sorry, moved to pity, have compassion, rue, suffer grief, repent, comfort oneself, be comforted, or ease oneself for the Niphal and Hithpael stems, and comfort, console, be comforted in the Piel and Pual stems. In spite of the lexical analysis of מחם. Some commentators and translators have chosen

⁶ Wilhelm Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906), 636–37; John B. Curtis, "On Job's Response to Yahweh: (Job 40:4-5; 42:2-6)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 98, no. 4 (1979): 497–511; Jonathan Master, "Exodus 32 as an Argument for Traditional Theism," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45, no. 4 (2002): 585–98; Martin Stephen Davis, "An Investigation of the Concept of the Repentance of God in the Old Testament" (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983), 28.

⁷ Gesenius, Hebrew and English Lexicon, 636–37; Simian-Yofre, "נחם," 9:340– 55; Marvin R. Wilson, "נחם"," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (1980), 2:570– 71: Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "Does God 'Change His Mind'?" Bibliotheca Sacra 152 (1995): 388–89; Lee M. Fields, "Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 56, no. 4 (2013): 846–49; Terence E. Fretheim, "Divine Foreknowledge, Divine Constancy, and the Rejection of Saul's Kingship," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 47, no. 4 (1985): 595-602; Terence E. Fretheim, "The Repentance of God: A Study of Jeremiah 18:7-10," in Hebrew Annual Review, Vol 11, 1987: Biblical and Other Studies (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 1987), 81-92; Terence E. Fretheim, "The Repentance of God: A Key to Evaluating Old Testament God-Talk," Horizons in Biblical Theology 10, no. 1 (1988): 47–70; Mark S. Krause, "Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible," Stone-Campbell Journal 9, no. 2 (2006): 286–89; Lester Jacob Kuyper, "Repentance of God," Reformed Review 18, no. 4 (1965): 3-16; Lester Jacob Kuyper, "Suffering and the Repentance of God," Scottish Journal of Theology 22, no. 3 (1969): 257–77; H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Semantic Survey of החם," Biblica 56, no. 4 (1975): 512-32; John T. Willis, "The 'Repentance' of God in the Books of Samuel, Jeremiah, and Jonah," Horizons in Biblical Theology 16, no. 2 (1994): 156–75; Christopher Bryan, Listening to the Bible: The Art of Faithful Biblical Interpretation (2014).

English words such as *relent*, *retract*, *sorry*, *regret*, and *changing of mind* in an attempt to capture the root of the Hebrew word בחם. John Briggs Curtis argues that while is often translated *repent*, there is no biblical backing for such translation.⁸

The English translations of בהם as *relenting, changing of mind,* or *regretting* appear not to come from the Hebrew lexicons, but from other translations. Such translations appear to reflect the problem of understanding the Hebrew word בהם. Some theologians have broadly grouped בהם into two main terms relevant to God's emotions and foreknowledge of future free choices: (1) *affective*, which refers to God's intense

⁸ Curtis, "On Job's Response to Yahweh," 497–511; Master, "Exodus 32 as an Argument," 585–98; Davis, "Investigation of the Concept," 28; Norman H. Snaith, "The Meaning of the Paraclete," The Expository Times 57, no. 2 (1945): 47–50; J. X. Yang, From Narrative to Doctrine: A Critical Examination of the Use of Scripture in the Open Theism Debate (Deerfield, IL: Trinity International University, 2010); Francis I. Andersen, "Lexicographical Note on Exodus 32:18," Vetus Testamentum 16, no. 1 (1966): 108–12; Elliot Gertel, "Divine and Human Anger and Grace: Scroll of Esther and Exodus 32-34," Jewish Bible Quarterly 40, no. 3 (2012): 151–58; Jörg Jeremias, "The Wrath of God at Mount Sinai (Exod 32; Deut 9-10)," in Bible as Christian Scripture: The Work of Brevard S. Childs (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013): 21-35; Meshullam Margaliot, "The Theology of Exodus 32-34," in *Proceedings of the Eleventh* World Congress of Jewish Studies, Div A: The Bible and the World (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1994): 43-50; Clinton J. McCann Jr., "Exodus 32:1-14," Interpretation 44, no. 3 (1990): 277-81; Jean-Pierre Sonnet, "God's Repentance and 'False Starts' in Biblical History (Genesis 6-9; Exodus 32-34; 1 Samuel 15 and 2 Samuel 7)," in Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007 (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 469-94.

⁹ Davis, "Investigation of the Concept"; Yang, From Narrative to Doctrine.

¹⁰ T. C. Ham, "Relational Metaphors and Divine Omniscience in the Hebrew Bible" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2007), 222. See John C. Peckham, "The Passible Potter and the Contingent Clay: A Theological Study of Jeremiah 18:1-10," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 18, no. 1 (2007): 130-50; John C. Peckham, "The Concept of Divine Love in the Context of the God-World Relationship," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 50, no. 2 (2012): 303; John C. Peckham, *The Love of God: A Canonical Model* (2015); Eva Braunstein, "Words and the Word: Metaphor, Analogy and Dialogic Discourse as a Theology of Language," *Crux* 47, no. 2 (2011): 17-28; David H. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics and Divine Imagery* (Leiden: Brill,

inner feelings of "joy, grief, anger, regret, [or] compassion," and (2) *volitional*, ¹¹ which refers to God *changing His mind*. The main issue to be discussed here is not whether God experiences emotions, but whether such emotions as depicted in Scripture create any contradiction with exhaustive definite foreknowledge. Rice sees an apparent contradiction between the *affective* and *volitional* meanings of in relation to God's exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices. This leads me to ask the following

^{2001);} Luke Timothy Johnson, "Imagining the World Scripture Imagines," in *Theology and Scriptural Imagination* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998): 3-18; Cor Notebaart, *Metallurgical Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible*, Amsterdamse Cahiers Voor Exegese Van De Bijbel En Zijn Tradities (Bergambacht: 2VM, 2010); Ben C. Ollenburger, "We Believe in God ... Maker of Heaven and Earth: Metaphor, Scripture, and Theology," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 12, no. 2 (1990): 64-96; Piotr M. Paciorek, "The Metaphor of 'the Letter from God' as Applied to Holy Scripture by Saint Augustine," in *Studia Patristica* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013): 133-46; Richard Duane Patterson, "The Imagery of Clouds in the Scriptures," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 165, no. 657 (2008): 13-27; Glenn R. Kreider, "The Love of God: A Canonical Model," *Criswell Theological Review* 13, no. 2 (2016): 143-45.

¹¹ Ham, "Relational Metaphors and Divine Omniscience," 222. See Aaron, Biblical Ambiguities; Johnson, "Imagining the World Scripture Imagines"; Notebaart, Metallurgical Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible; Ollenburger, "We Believe in God"; Paciorek, "The Metaphor of 'the Letter from God'"; Patterson, "The Imagery of Clouds"; Nelson Pike, "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action," in Contemporary Philosophy of Religion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982): 61-76; John Shortt, David Smith, and Trevor Cooling, "Metaphor, Scripture and Education," Journal of Christian Education 43, no. 1 (2000): 21-28; Nelly Stienstra, YHWH Is the Husband of His People: Analysis of a Biblical Metaphor with Special Reference to Translation (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1993); Jesper M. Svartvik, "How Noah, Jesus and Paul Became Captivating Biblical Figures: The Side Effects of the Canonization of Slavery Metaphors in Jewish and Christian Texts," Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism 2 (2001): 168-27; Steven Shawn Tuell, "True Metaphor: Insights into Reading Scripture from the Rabbis," *Theology Today* 67, no. 4 (2011): 467-475; Stephen J. Wellum, "Divine Sovereignty-Omniscience, Inerrancy, and Open Theism: An Evaluation," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 45, no. 2 (2002): 257-77; Hugh C. White, "Metaphor as Performative," in *Reading Communities, Reading* Scripture (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002): 66-87.

questions: Should נחם be translated to mean *changing of mind?* How do you explain the harmony between God's *affective* and *volitional* statements of נחם in Scripture? In what sense is God *volitional* and in what sense is God not *volitional*? Is there a viable alternative to Rice's approach that can bring harmony between the *affective* and *volitional* statements of נחם in Scripture?

According to Rice, the "biblical description of divine *repentance* indicates that God's plans are exactly that—plans or possibilities that He intends to realize." This understanding of God's *repentance* is consistent with Rice's interpretations of biblical passages that describe God's *relenting*, *regretting*, or *changing His mind* (DD). This seems to have influenced Rice's rejection of the traditional view of foreknowledge of certainties in favor of his non-traditional view. This conclusion by Rice leads me to ask the following questions: Does the biblical description of DDD imply lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices? Should DDD be understood in terms of future possibilities?

Rice proposes some key reasons for his interpretation of בהם: (1) "the frequency with which ... [it] appear[s] in Scripture" and (2) the strategic significance of the passages where we find [it]" suggest that "the biblical writers were not employing figures of speech or deliberately contriving analogies when they spoke of such things as divine love and divine repentance" with regard to God's emotions. Rice's interpretation of בהם has implications for how one understands God's foreknowledge of future free choices. Both

¹² Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 26.

¹³ Ibid., 35.

Rice and the traditional view appear to read בחם analogically. ¹⁴ Within the spectrum of possible analogical reading, there are two ways of approaching בחם. Some scholars lean toward an analogical reading that is closer to a univocal reading. Other scholars lean toward an analogical reading that is closer to an equivocal reading. ¹⁵ Rice goes with the

¹⁴ Analogical statements or concepts imply that there is some degree of similarity and dissimilarity of words and concepts when applied to God and human creatures. Thomas Aquinas, who advanced this approach, argues that "such words apply to God and creatures neither univocally nor equivocally but by what I can analogy (or proportion). This is the way a word like healthy applies to organisms (in a primary sense) and to diets (as causing health) or complexions (as displaying it). Whatever we say of God and of creatures we say in virtue of the relation creatures bear say of God and of creatures we say in virtue of the relation creaturely perfections pre-exist in a more excellent way." Thomas Aquinas, *St Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1989), 32, I. 13.5. See Braunstein, "Words and the Word"; Daniel Castelo and Robert W. Wall, "Scripture and the Church: A Précis for an Alternative Analogy," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 5, no. 2 (2011): 197-10.

¹⁵ Univocal statements or concepts mean exactly the same thing when referring to God and human creatures. The univocal approach to Scripture was used in the Middle Ages by John Dun Scotus (1264-1308). According to him, "since it is clear that meaningful revelation has been given, religious language must consequently be either univocal or based on univocal language." Dan R. Stiver, The Philosophy of Religious Language: Sign, Symbol and Story (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 20. He cited this example in support of the univocal view: "all humans are mortals; Socrates is human; therefore Socrates is mortal, *human* is used univocally as the middle term." Ibid. Recently, Charles Hartshorne, a proponent of this approach, claimed that univocity or a literal approach to theology is supported by Scripture. See Douglas C. Langston, "Scotus and Ockham on the Univocal Concept of Being," in Franciscan Studies, 17 (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute of St Bonaventure University, 1982): 105-29; Justus George Lawler, "The Univocal Temper and Political Ambiguities," Continuum (Chicago, Ill) 3, no. 4 (1966): 535-48; Jordan Wessling, "Colin Gunton, Divine Love, and Univocal Predication," Journal of Reformed Theology 7, no. 1 (2013): 91-107. In contrast, equivocal means that statements or concepts about God hold a completely different meaning than when applied to human creatures. An equivocal approach to Scripture was espoused by theologians such as Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), the Jewish scholar Meister Eckhard (1260-1327), and John Damascene (674-749). This approach is often driven by a theory called *apophaticism*, which Denys Turner defines: "it follows the unknowability of God that there is very little that can be said about God: or rather, since most theistic religions actually have a great number of things to say about God, what follows from the unknowability of God is that we can have

option in the former kind of analogical reading that leads him to deny God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. My evaluation of Rice has to do with this question: Why does Rice choose the reading that interprets נהם to mean foreknowledge of possibilities rather than foreknowledge of certainties? This question suggests that the issue is not simply about univocal versus analogical approaches to בהם. The issue is about the apparent tension between exhaustive definite foreknowledge and future free choices. Rice sees the tension and wants to affirm the biblical teaching of human freedom.

However, there is another option in the analogical reading that is harmonious with God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. The analogical reading could allow for the translation of in terms of a *volitional change*. However, the analogical reading could also allow for God simply being upset and emotionally angry about the problem of people making the wrong choices. The *repentance* of God could be

very little idea of what all these things said of God mean, And, strictly speaking, that is what *apophaticism* asserts, as one can tell from its Greek etymology: *apophasis*, is a Greek neologism for the breakdown of speech, which, in face of the unknowability of God, falls infinitely short of the mark." Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 20. See Heather A. R. Asals, *Equivocal Predication: George Herbert's Way to God* (University of Toronto Press, 1981); Charles Ess and Walter B. Gulick, "Kant and Analogy: Categories as Analogical Equivocals," *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 17, no. 2 (1994): 89-99; John Goldingay, "The Hermeneutics of Liberation Theology," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 4-5, no. 2-1 (1982): 133-61; Roger Hazelton, "Theological Analogy and Metaphor," *Semeia* 13 (1978): 155-76; E. Glenn Hinson, "Equivocal Predication: George Herbert's Way to God," *Review & Expositor* 79, no. 4 (1982): 720-21; Yair Hoffman, "The Use of Equivocal Words in the First Speech of Eliphaz (Job 4-5)," *Vetus Testamentum* 30, no. 1 (1980): 114-119; John A. L. Lee, "Equivocal and Stereotyped Renderings in the LXX," *Revue Biblique* 87, no. 1 (1980): 104-17.

understood as a *repentance* that is not *volitional*, but reflects God's concern, upset, and anger about what has happened.

In harmony with Rice, Scripture affirms that God does בהם. However, the Scriptures claim, God does not בהם like a man. For instance, in Hos 11:9 God states, "I am God and not man" (compare Isa 55:8). Since Scripture indicates that God is not human, it implies that God's בהם is different from human בהם. This section of the thesis will show the possibility of an alternative to Rice's approach to God's *repentance* (בהם). The thesis will demonstrate that addressing בהם at the level of the Hebrew semantic context does not require the conclusion that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

First, Rice and I have chosen two different options that are available within the semantic range of the text. Rice interprets God's emotional regret (בהם) in a way that leads to his conclusion that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. For instance, Rice cites Gen 6:6, which says, "The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart." The text, if is interpreted as regretful or sorry, could raise two questions: was God sorry for what occurred or sorry for creating humans, in that He did not foreknow that humans would sin, and now wished He had not created them? The text does not need to imply that God was sorry for creating humans. There is no indication in the passage that God wanted to rescind His previous pronouncement that His creation was good. Rice interprets God's emotional regret (בחם) in a way that denies God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. He seems to assume that sorry really means that God's decision to

create man was wrong in some way and God *regretted* the decision. ¹⁶ However, when understood in the semantic Hebrew context, the text could be saying that God *regretted* that the man He decided to create had sinned. There is no hint in the text to deny God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

Furthermore, the passage appears to convey the intensity of God's emotional pain over the fall of the human race. The word עצב in the active sense means *hurt, pain, grieve,* ¹⁷ and is passive here in the *hithpael*. This means that the pain is located in God's heart, expressing some emotional anguish. Van Dyke Parunak argues that Gen 6:6-7 and 1 Sam 15:11, 35

may describe God's pain on witnessing the sin of men on the analogy of the compassion felt by a comforter on witnessing the pain of a mourner. It may be no coincidence that the same root, שוב (turn), which parallels in Genesis 6:6 to

¹⁶ Boyd seems to define Rice's understanding of בחם in this statement: "Now, if everything about world history were exhaustively settled and known by God as such before he created the world, God would have known with absolute certainty that humans would come to this wicked state, at just this time, before he created them. But how, then, could he authentically regret having made humankind? Doesn't the fact that God regretted the way things turned out—to the point of starting over—suggest that it wasn't a foregone conclusion at the time God created human beings that they would fall into this state of wickedness?" See Boyd, God of the Possible, 55.

¹⁷ Fretheim, "The Repentance of God: A Study"; Fretheim, "The Repentance of God: A Key"; L. Daniel Hawk, "Saul's Altar," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72, no. 4 (2010): 678-687; Kuyper, "Repentance of God"; B. Lynne Newell, "Job: Repentant or Rebellious," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 46, no. 2 (1984): 298-316; Parunak, "Semantic Survey of נותם"; Paul R. Raabe, "When Yahweh Repents," *Logia* 16, no. 3 (2007): 31-34, ; Michael J. Vlach, "Israel's Repentance and the Kingdom of God," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 27, no. 2 (2016): 161-86; John T. Willis, "The 'Repentance' of God in the Books of Samuel, Jeremiah, and Jonah," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 16, no. 2 (1994): 156-75; Martin Stephen Davis, "An Investiation of the Concept of the Repentance of God in the Old Testament," (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983).

describe the pain of God over man's sin, denotes in Genesis 3,16.17 the punishment to which man is liable because of sin. 18

The word and is better understood in the context of God's sorrow or grief in Gen 6:6. God's genuine grieving over what transpires does not need to be viewed as incompatible with God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge and human freedom. In addition, Van Dyke Parunak argues that נחם in Gen 6:6 is better read as emotional pain. He offers three "semantic indicators" in the text that support this translation. First, parallelism: according to him, the use of the in Gen 6:6 corresponds with the word "to grieve" in other parts of Scripture (Jer 31:19; Job 42:6). Second, the context in which נחם appears in Gen 6:6 suggests a grief-stimulating situation that produces and, which is similar to Exod 13:17 and Judg 21:6, 15. Third, the idiom in Gen 6:6 uses a distinctive • clause that is parallel: Gen 6:6-7, Judg 21:15, and 1 Sam 15:11, 35 all have a distinctive clause that links them together. An alternative approach to Rice's reading is possible because the text does not say that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge. ¹⁹ God's emotional regret (נחם) may have an affective meaning in Gen 6:6 rather than indicating God's volitional change. The passage has potential for a wider range of interpretive options than Rice seems to acknowledge.

In the same way, is used in two different ways in 1 Sam 15. God said, "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions." Again, Rice's interpretation of this text suggests that God

¹⁸ Parunak, "Semantic Survey of החם," 527.

¹⁹ Ibid., 19.

lacks exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices. ²⁰ However, Samuel's words contradict this interpretation of Did: "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or *repent*; for He is not a man that He should *repent*" (vv. 28-29). The pain experienced in this text is parallel to the pain God was going through because of the fall of man (Gen 6). God's Did in the case of His response to Saul's disobedience is not *repentance* that is *volitional*. The text should therefore be interpreted as indicating that God suffered emotional pain. ²¹ This approach to the text can help us avoid the problems related to the expressions *repented*, *regretted*, and *sorry*, which may seem to imply God lacks exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices. It is apparent in this analysis that an alternative approach to Rice's view of Did is possible to harmonize and assuage the apparent tension between foreknowledge and human freedom.

Second, Rice interprets God's *changing His mind* to be a general affirmation of God's lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. God *changing His mind*

²⁰ John Piper states, "A natural reading of 1 Samuel 15 would seem to imply that there is a way that God does 'repent' and a way that He does not. That is what I am arguing in the texts that Boyd puts forward. He insists that God repents in a way that implies lack of foreknowledge of what is coming. I think this is the kind of 'repentance' that would fall under Samuel's criticism: 'God is not a man that He should repent.'... In other words, God does not have the human limitation of knowledge that would involve him repenting *that way*. Rather His repentance is an expression of a resolve or an attitude that is fitting in view of new circumstances. That God is ignorant of what will call for the new resolve or attitude is not necessarily implied in the change." John Piper, "Answering Greg Boyd's Openness of God Texts," http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/answering-greg-boyds-openness-of-god-texts.htm (accessed December 12, 2016), 4.

²¹ Marvin R. Wilson, "המם" in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R Laird Harris (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980): 570–71.

seems to have created an apparent tension between exhaustive definite foreknowledge and future free choices.²² Scripture seems to suggest that God *changes His mind* and at the same time that God does not *change His mind*.²³ Rice solves the apparent tension by proposing that God is both *changing* and *unchanging*. Rice rightly affirms Scripture that God is *unchanging* in terms of His "existence, nature, and character" and *changing* when it comes to His "actions and experience." According to Rice, God's *changing His mind* over His plans suggests that God's "knowledge of the world is constantly increasing ... we can accept at *face value* biblical statements that attribute powerful emotions to God.

²² Again, Boyd argues that "the motif that God changes his mind is not an incidental one in Scripture. It runs throughout the biblical narrative and is even exalted as one of his praiseworthy attributes. It is very difficult to see how passages such as these can be fairly interpreted if we assume that the future is exhaustively settled and known by God as such. ... God is not only the God of future certainties; he's the God of future possibilities." See Boyd, *God of the Possible*, 85.

²³ While some biblical passages affirm that God *changes His mind* (Jer 18:7-10; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2), others depict Him doing so (Exod 32:14; Amos 7:3, 6; Jonah 3:10), and still others accept that He might *change His mind* (Jer 26:3; Joel 2:14; Jonah 3:9).

We do not have to dismiss them as *anthropomorphisms*²⁴ or *anthropopathism*,²⁵ which have no application to His real life."²⁶ It is true that "the open view of God does justice to

²⁴ See also *Anthropomorphism* (from the Greek *anthropos*, "human," and *morphe*, "shape") is ascribing human emotions to a deity. See John C. Peckham, "Theopathic or Anthropopathic? A Suggested Approach to Imagery of Divine Emotion in the Hebrew Bible," Perspectives in Religious Studies 42, no. 4 (2015): 341–55. Bryan C. Babcock, "Forming God: Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch," Bulletin for Biblical Research 25, no. 4 (2015): 558-60; John Baker, "Anthropomorphism and the Idea of God," London Quarterly and Holborn Review 180 (1955): 125-28; Richard S. Briggs, "Forming God: Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch," *Journal for the Study of* the Old Testament (Online) 40, no. 5 (2016): 67; Robert B. Chisholm Jr., "Anatomy of an Anthropomorphism: Does God Discover Facts?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 164, no. 653 (2007): 3-20; E. David Cook, "Weak Church, Weak God: The Charge of Anthropomorphism," in Power and Weakness of God: Impassibility and Orthodoxy (Edinburgh, Scotland: Rutherford House Books, 1990): 69-92; F. Gerald Downing, "Language for God in Patristic Tradition: Wrestling with Biblical Anthropomorphism," Journal for the Study of the New Testament (Online) 38, no. 5 (2016): 119; Shamma Friedman, "Anthropomorphism and Its Eradication," in Iconoclasm and Iconoclash: Struggle for Religious Identity (Leiden: Brill, 2007): 157-78.

²⁵ Anthropopathism (anthropos "human" and pathos "suffering") is attributing human emotions to nonhuman entities who do not possess such traits. See Peckham, "Theopathic or Anthropopathic?"; B. Barry Levy, "Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Targumim of the Pentateuch," Journal of Biblical Literature 104, no. 4 (1985): 708-709; J. Maier, "Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Targumim of the Pentateuch," Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 95, no. 3 (1983): 462-63; Arthur Soffer, "The Treatment of Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Septuagint of Psalms," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 28 (1957): 85-107; H. G. M. Williamson, "Anthropomorphisms and Anthropopathisms in the Targumim of the Pentateuch," Vetus Testamentum 35, no. 2 (1985): 248; Fredrik Lindström, "I Am God and Not Human' (Hos 11,9): Can Divine Compassion Overcome Our Anthropomorphism?" Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament 29, no. 1 (2015): 135-51; John L. McKenzie, "Biblical Anthropomorphism and the Humaneness of God," in Religion and the Humanizing of Man: International Congress of Learned Societies in the Field of Religion, Los Angeles, Calif. 1972 (Waterloo, Ontario: Council on the Study of Religion, 1972): 172-86; Goce Naumov, "The Objectified Corporeality: Prehistoric Implications of Anthropomorphism and Hybridism within Christian Iconography," Anthropos 108, no. 1 (2013): 97-115.

²⁶ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 48–49. See Christopher A. Graham, "Language for God in Patristic Tradition: Wrestling with Biblical Anthropomorphism," *Criswell Theological Review* 13, no. 2 (2016): 130-32; Stewart

a broad spectrum of biblical evidence and allows for the natural reading of the Bible," at least in part.²⁷ However, Rice seems to imply that there was something God did not know before that accounted for His *repentance* or *changing of mind*. This leads Rice to conclude that part of the future is open and undetermined and therefore is not foreknown with certainty; and that another part of the future is closed and determined and therefore is foreknown with certainty. ²⁸ This implies that God's knowledge of the future cannot be definitely exhaustive. ²⁹ However, Rice's reading is not the only possible reading of and.

However, Rice's reading is not the only possible reading of בחם. Hebrew lexicons and other sources suggest that the Hebrew בחם does not necessarily imply *change of one's mind* when used in reference to God. Rice's interpretation of מוס gives the impression that God receives entirely new information He did not know before, and that this compels Him to *change His mind*. This translation of מוס might have led Rice to deny God's

Elliott Guthrie, "Anthropology and Anthropomorphism in Religion," in *Religion*, *Anthropology, and Cognitive Science* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2007): 37-62; A. Dudley Hallam, "Old Testament Anthropomorphism," *Milla wa-milla* 13 (1973): 14-19; Paul Helm, "Anthropomorphism Protestant Style," in *Whose God? Which Tradition?: The Nature of Belief in God* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008): 137-57; Edmond La Beaume Cherbonnier, "The Logic of Biblical Anthropomorphism," *Harvard Theological Review* 55, no. 3 (1962): 187-206; Edmond La Beaume Cherbonnier, "In Defense of Anthropomorphism," in *Reflections on Mormonism: Judaeo-Christian Parallels: Papers, Religious Studies Center Symposium, Brigham Young Univ, 1978* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young Univ, 1978); Gary Chartier, *The Analogy of Love: Divine and Human Love at the Center of Christian Theology (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2007).*

²⁷ Ibid., 49.

²⁸ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 53–54; Rice, The Openness of God, 45–46.

²⁹ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 53.

exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. In contrast, an alternative semantic reading of God's מום can affirm God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. I will illustrate below why an alternative semantic approach to נחם in some of the primary biblical texts dealing with the apparent tension between God *changing His mind* and *not changing His mind* might be a better option.

The semantic indicators in the primary biblical texts do not support the notion that translating as changing of mind means a lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge. Interpreting in line with the semantic indicators will contribute to understanding the meaning of the word. Robert Chisholm has outlined two types of divine statements in relation to it announcements and decrees. Announcements have a particular grammatical structure, which is subject to change by the speaker, whereas a decree is an unconditional pronouncement binding the speaker. In discussing divine announcements, Chisholm asserts that "God can and often does retract announcements." In every case where God retracts His announcement, He has not decreed a course of action. Rather, "He chooses to wait patiently hoping His warnings might bring people to their senses and make judgment unnecessary." Steve C. Roy goes a step further when concluding his discussion on divine repentance; he points out that divine repentance is God responding to human actions.

God's repentance or regret does not necessarily imply a lack of foreknowledge on His part. Nor does it imply any admission of mistake on the part of God. ... Admittedly, it is difficult from our human perspective to conceive of genuine repentance coexisting

³⁰ Ibid., 399.

with exhaustive foreknowledge. ... We must not understand the *repentance* of God in any way that diminishes or minimizes His foreknowledge of free human decisions.³¹

This definition of divine announcement is clearly seen in the primary biblical texts where DTD is translated to mean *changing of mind*. For instance, Rice argues that in Exod 32:10-14, God immediately *repented* of the evil He planned to do in response to Moses' pleading, "Turn from your fierce wrath, and *relent* from this harm to your people" (compare Jonah 3:9-10). In this passage, DTD is used in the *Niphal* imperative form. The only other verse where DTD is used in this manner is Ps 90:13, where it is translated *be sorry* or *have compassion*. The grammatical structure of the passage has a conditional element in it. The passage begins with an imperative: "Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them, and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation" (Exod 32:10). Chisholm argues that "the form of the statement (imperative + jussive + cohortative + cohortative) indicates that it is not a decree but an expression of God's frustration with his people." This grammatical structure is parallel to many other passages with the Abrahamic covenant. For example, Gen 12:1-2: "Go (imperative) from

³¹ Stephen C. Roy, "How Much Does God Foreknow: An Evangelical Assessment of the Doctrine of the Extent of the Foreknowledge of God in Light of the Teaching of Open Theism" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001), 144, 176. Köhler comes to the same conclusion when he states that "to describe God in terms of human characteristics is not to humanize Him. ... Rather the purpose of anthropomorphisms is to make God accessible to man. They hold open the door for encounter and controversy between God's will and man's will. They represent God as person. They avoid the error of presenting God as a careless and soulless abstract Idea or fixed Principle standing over against man like a strong silent battlement. God is personal. ... Through the anthropomorphisms God stands before man as the personal and living God." Ludwig Köhler, *Old Testament Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), 24–25.

³² Chisholm, "Does God 'Change His Mind'?" 391–93.

your land ... in order that I might make you (waw + cohortative) a great nation, bless you (waw + cohortative), and make your name great (waw + cohortative), and so that you in turn might be (waw + imperative) a blessing" (compare Gen 17:1-2). These semantic indicators in the text do not in any way imply that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future.

Although the translation *change of mind* might seem like the best interpretation of God's response to Moses' intercession, the willingness to *relent or retract* is as a result of God describing Himself as "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin" (Exod 34:6-7). In addition, the semantic indicators in the text do not require Rice's interpretation of a lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. Rice's interpretation of DTD creates the impression that God *repented* from carrying out His threat to pass judgment on the Israelites because He learns something He did not know before. However, considering the semantic range of DTD, the message of Exod 32:12, 14, and the significance of Moses' appeal to God, it seems that God *having compassion* on the Israelites might be a preferred translation and within the semantic range and contextual evidence of the biblical text.

Moreover, Chisholm explains that the divine decree has "clear contextual indicators that the declaration is unconditional. The statement that God will not *change His mind*, made in tandem with a synonymous expression, formally marks the divine

³³ Ibid.

proclamation as a decree."³⁴ What this means is that, if God has issued a decree, He will not מום סוד or retract it. There are clearly semantic indicators in the primary texts that confirm that there is a sense in which God does not *change His mind*. For instance, in Num 23:19, semantic indicators show that מום and the parallel verb מום, which means *to lie* but is used here as *retract*, as in announcement, suggests a decree. The verb has this same sense in Ps 89:35, where God decrees, "Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David." While the verbs refer to how God typically acts when He has made a decree, the principle here applies to the specific blessing to follow. Similarly, in 1 Sam 15:29, Samuel declares that God will not lie or *change His mind* and formally marks this as a decree. The semantic indicator מום מום לובים in verse 28 confirms that Saul's kingdom has come to an end. When the word שום and the שום *lie* are used together, here they mean *to retract*. The Lord had decreed Saul's demise and nothing could alter His decision.

In conclusion, my objective in this discussion has been to explore an alternative approach to God's emotional *regret*, *relenting*, and *changing His mind* (בתם). On one hand, Rice interprets this to imply that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. On the other hand, an exegetical approach to God's *regret*, *relenting*, and *changing of mind* (בתם) affirms God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. Also, it is apparently clear that divine announcements implore people to repentance, while divine decrees cannot be retracted. Divine announcements in the primary biblical texts that indicate a *change of mind* do not require a lack of exhaustive

³⁴ Ibid., 395–96.

definite foreknowledge of future free choices. Rice interprets them that way, and that is the cause of the appearance of a conflict between foreknowledge and freedom.

Foreknowledge and Prophecies

This section of the thesis focuses on the role of God's emotional regret in Rice's view of predictive prophecy and exhaustive foreknowledge. Scripture upholds that God knows the "end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done" (Isa 46:10). However, Rice's approach to a in predictive prophecy raises some important questions that need to be addressed. First, should *regret* (בחם) in relation to predictive prophecy be interpreted to mean lack of exhaustive definite foreknowledge? Second, how does Rice's view of God's emotional regret (בחם) affect his view of predictive prophecy? Third, does predictive prophecy not presuppose God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future? Rice grouped prophecies into two groups: conditional and unconditional. His discussion of unconditional prophecies is minimal, and as such, this discussion will not dwell on unconditional prophecies. However, Rice's view of conditional prophecy is discussed, since it supports his view of foreknowledge.

This section of the chapter is limited to the study of regret (בחם) in conditional prophecy.

Conditional Prophecy

Interpreting God's emotional *repenting* or *relenting* (בחם) in connection with conditional prophecy is very important in Christian theology. Rice proposes a face value reading of conditional prophecies because they "indicate a real interaction between God

and the creaturely world."³⁵ This leads me to ask these questions: (1) Does divine *relenting* or *repenting* in passing judgment on Nineveh imply lack of exhaustive definite knowledge? (2) Why would God *repent* or *relent* if He already has exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices? (3) Did God learn anything from Nineveh that He did not know before? This section will study the use of in the description of conditional prophecy in Jer 18:7-10³⁶ and the prophecies of Jonah and the repentant Ninevites (Jonah 3:9-10; 4:2).³⁷

First, Rice's interpretation of בחם in Jer 18:7-10 suggests that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. Jeremiah employs this metaphor to illustrate the relationship between God and Judah. The verses (7-10) can affirm with Rice that God *changes His mind* (בחם) in response to future free choices. In addition, when people are repenting (from sin) and God is repenting (from judging them), the authors of the Bible differentiate their actions by choosing בחם for God and שוב for people. Therefore, there exists some lexical distinction between human and divine repentance. The Hebrew word שוב means "to physically turn or change course," and here indicates the meaning of *repentance*. It thus signifies a "change in direction, a change of

³⁵ Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 50–52; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 80–81.

³⁶ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 151.

³⁷ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27; Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 145.

³⁸ Robert D. Holmstedt and Alexander T. Kirk, "Subversive Boundary Drawing in Jonah: The Variation of אשר and ש as Literary Code-Switching," *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no. 4 (2016): 542-55; John F. A. Sawyer, "The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew Viii תרש","

heart."³⁹ We would expect the word for God's *relenting*, if meant to be the same as human *repentance*, to be the same word.⁴⁰ The difference of words may imply that cannot be used for God univocally, but can analogically. This is because the different words chosen illumine the vast difference between the *repenting* and *change* of a human and the *relenting* and grace of God.

In addition, an alternative approach to End in Jer 18:7-10 supports God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. The comparison of the potter and the clay reveals two important principles of divine *repentance* (Jer 18:7-10). These two principles show how God will act in different situations. The first principle is that God can *change His mind* or *repent* regarding the evil He plans to execute based on a positive response to His warning. The second one is that God *repents* or *changes His mind* regarding the good which He plans to do if a nation disobeys. The key principle is clear and precise: God will *change His mind about* His good purpose if a nation does evil. Similarly, God will *change His mind* about His purpose for evil if a nation does good. In verses 7-10, God's final call of *repentance* to Judah highlights the relationship between

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Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 37, no. 5 (2013): 252-53; Albrecht Vogel, "\varphi in Der Mischna," Zeitschrift f\varphir die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 31, no. 3 (1911): 205-17.

³⁹ John C. Peckham, "The Passible Potter and the Contingent Clay: A Theological Study of Jeremiah 18:1-10," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 18, no. 1 (2007): 130-150.

⁴⁰ Davis, "Investigation of the Concept," 10-11; Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), 996.

God and His people. If Judah "turns from evil," God will *repent* or *relent* (that is, God will not "pluck up, pull down, or destroy") them. On the contrary, God will *change His mind* about the good (that is, to "build" and "plant") if they turn to evil.

Second, Rice interprets in connection with God's decision to *relent* or *repent* in passing judgment on Nineveh in a way that denies God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge. According to him, God's *relenting* or *repenting* in the prophecies of Jonah⁴¹ suggests that God's statements about the future are possibilities. Rice argues that the future God knows is "only partially indefinite" and "partly determined" by God. Yet, God does not possess absolute definite knowledge of some future events, which are dictated by human free-will choices. However, the text does not say that God's turning away from passing judgment on Nineveh was as a result of receiving new information He did not know. In fact, God's relenting in passing judgment on Nineveh could be interpreted as God turning from His anger and *retracting His declared action* of bringing disaster against Israel instead of God *repenting*.

Moreover, approaching Jer 18 exegetically will allow us to affirm God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge and God *changing His mind* (נחם) about passing judgment or doing good. In the case of Nineveh, God threatened to "pluck up, pull down, and destroy" if they did not repent (Jonah 3:4, 9-10; 4:2). The people of Nineveh turned from their evil ways, and God *repented* or *relented* in passing judgment. This *repentance*

⁴¹ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 66; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 79; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 27; Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 145.

⁴² Rice, *The Openness of God*, 46–47; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 55; Boyd, *Satan and the Problem*, 190–91.

of the people of Nineveh is described as *turning from evil* (שׁוֹב). This kind of *repentance* prevented God from passing judgment on Nineveh. Consequently, Jer 18 and Jonah 3-4 appear to present no contradiction between God's *repentance* and foreknowledge of future free choices. God's *changing His mind* about carrying out His threat does not require the conclusion that God lacks exhaustive definite foreknowledge.

Conclusion

Both the traditional and the non-traditional views of foreknowledge can affirm the affective and volitional nature of בחם. However, the views differ on how regretting, repenting, relenting, or changing His mind (בחם) should be applied to God. On one hand, Rice assumes that these emotional responses imply God's lack of exhaustive foreknowledge. On the other hand, an alternative semantic approach to בחם affirms God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

The Definition of Exhaustive Foreknowledge

This section of the chapter is the climax of the study of the tension between exhaustive foreknowledge and God's emotional regret (בחם) in the theology of Rice. Rice argues that God's *relenting*, *repenting*, or *regretting* suggests that He does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. This leads me to ask this question: Is Rice's definition of foreknowledge the only view that can be harmonious with the biblical data?

Exhaustive Knowledge

In this section, the thesis shows that an alternative approach is available to harmonize the apparent tension between the traditional and the non-traditional views. 43

According to Rice, God's foreknowledge cannot be definite because "certain aspects of the future are as yet indefinite. Therefore, they are unknowable. And this means that God's knowledge of the future cannot be exhaustive." 44 Rice further explains that God's "knowledge of the world is constantly increasing" and that "God's knowledge of the world depends on the world, but it does not follow that God will have nothing to know without a world to experience." 45 The main problem that led Rice to his current position is the issue of the *definiteness* of the future. How can God foreknow the future that does "not yet exist"? In Rice's mind, the word *definiteness* implies settled. However, in this thesis *definiteness* means God exhaustively foreknows the future, including all future free choices. From this perspective, the wider biblical evidence can be reasonably interpreted in harmony with the concept of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

⁴³ The concept of God's exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices is depicted in other parts of Scripture. Notice the many explicit biblical examples regarding the exhaustive definite knowledge of God. As the Creator, God knows everything about the individual person (Jer 12:3). He knows what is in the mind of a person (Gen 18:12; 1 Sam 16:7; 1 Chron 28:9; Jer 17:10). There are instances in the Old Testament where God tells the minds of individuals through His prophets (1 Kgs 14:5). The intellectual attributes of God include His foreknowledge (1 Sam 23:10-12).

⁴⁴ Rice, God's Foreknowledge, 53; Rice, The Openness of God, 45.

⁴⁵ Rice, *The Openness of God*, 39; Rice, *God's Foreknowledge*, 33; Rice, "Biblical Support for a New Perspective," 48–49.

First, although I agree with Rice that God foreknows all possible future free choices, an alternative approach to passages on God's foreknowledge seems to affirm that God has exhaustive definite foreknowledge of all possible and actual future choices. This seems apparent in the episode of David and Saul in Keilah:

David said, O Lord God of Israel, your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah to destroy the city for my sake ... Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, they will deliver you. So David and his men ... departed from Keilah and went wherever they could go. Then it was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah; so he halted the expedition (1 Sam 23:10-13).

The story illustrates three simple facts of God's foreknowledge. "God knew (1) what Saul would do if David stayed in Keilah; (2) what David would do if he knew what God knew; and (3) what Saul would do if David left the city."⁴⁶ This story highlights the fact that there is an alternative approach that can affirm both God's foreknowledge of possibilities and His exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices.

Second, Scripture states that "known to God from eternity are all His works" (Acts 15:18). In this context, God's foreknowledge includes His works of salvation. This suggests that He foreknows the free-will choices of sinners. For God to predetermine and foreknow His plan or unilaterally intervene in human events, He must, of necessity, first know exactly what He is responding to. Roland Nash expresses the issue as follows: "How can God know what He is going to do in the future when God's future acts are a

⁴⁶ Craig, *Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom*, 247–48; Martin Hanna, "Predestined to Freedom According to Foreknowledge and Other Kinds of Divine Knowledge" (Unpublished paper, Andrews University, 2010), 6.

response to future human free actions that He cannot know?"⁴⁷ Therefore, it seems that from eternity, God foreknows with exhaustive definite foreknowledge all possibilities and certainties, including libertarian free-will choices.

In conclusion, Rice insists that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices because these choices are not yet realized. He also maintains that in a sense God's knowledge of the future is exhaustive because the future, which God knows, is "partly open and partly determined by God." However, an alternative semantic approach may be reasonably derived from the biblical data as follows. God's foreknowledge includes (1) all possible future free-will choices, (2) the certainty of future free-will choices of free moral agents, and (3) God's own plans for the free choices He will make in interaction with the choices of created persons.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ According to Scripture, God's work is intertwined with our work, "for we are workers together with God" (1 Cor 3:9). God's work makes our work possible and "without Him we can do nothing" (John 15:5). Paul used the phrase "all in all" (1 Cor 12:6) to describe God's work in relation to the work of those who are in Christ Jesus. God's mighty power works as we are working together with God. As Paul expresses it: "I also work, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily" (Col 1:29). "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil 2:12-13) "according to His foreknowledge and predestined purpose" (Rom 8:28-30). Therefore, in knowing all of His works and our works, God must also know exhaustively the free-will choices of humankind.

⁴⁸ Hanna, "Predestined to Freedom," 6.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

As I bring this research to a close, it is essential to look back at the main purpose of this study, which was to discuss Rice's model of God's exhaustive knowledge of the future and the traditional model of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. Specifically, this research sought to evaluate the nature and causes of the tension between these two models. This was done by examining some selected texts as a means to address the apparent conflict between foreknowledge and freedom.

Chapter 1 introduced the background, problem, purpose, significance, and delimitation of the study and the research methodology employed in this investigation. Chapter 2 briefly surveyed Rice's theological education, professional development, and methodology, and gave a general review of the theological scope of his writings. In addition, Rice's shift from the traditional view to the non-traditional view was discussed.

Chapter 3 presented a descriptive analysis of Rice's definition of exhaustive foreknowledge of future free choices. The descriptive analysis was centered on Rice's two most important books devoted to his model from 1980 to 2000.

Chapter 4 presented an evaluation of Rice's view of God's foreknowledge of the future and human freedom. This was done by studying the Hebrew word מחם (relent,

repent, or *regret*) in some selected biblical passages as a means to address the perceived tension.

Conclusions

Rice is to be commended for desiring to "formulate" a robust view of God's foreknowledge "that is superior by every relevant criterion to the God of classical theism." This desire is the driving force behind his rejection of the classical view of exhaustive definite foreknowledge. In his attempt to solve the perceived tension between exhaustive definite foreknowledge and future free choices, Rice opts for an open view of God's foreknowledge rather than the classical view, which affirms God's absolute definite foreknowledge. Rice wants to affirm the biblical teaching of human freedom and does not see how that can be compatible with exhaustive definite foreknowledge. However, an alternative approach to biblical passages that refer to God's emotions in response to free choices allows for the affirmation of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge.

First, Rice's approach to scriptural passages expressing God's emotions creates the tension he perceives between divine foreknowledge and future free choices. Within the spectrum of analogy, there are different options for analogical reading. Rice takes the option that denies God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge so as to preserve human freedom.

¹ Rice, "Process Theism and the Open View," 166.

In addition, God is a non-created Being and His emotions are beyond physical human emotions. At the same time, what emotions mean for God is not entirely distinct from what they mean for man. The Hebrew semantic approach affirms that God but מותם, but God does not מותם as humans do. Rice's quest to affirm the biblical teaching of human freedom drives him to conclude that God does not have exhaustive definite knowledge of future free choices.

Second, Rice's understanding of God's emotional regret (נהם) in relation to foreknowledge is consistent with his view that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. However, an alternative exegetical approach to God's emotional *regretting, relenting, repenting,* or *changing His mind* (נהם) allows for the affirmation that God knows everything, which includes exhaustive, definite, certain knowledge of all His plans in response to the future free choices of humans. James expressed it to the Jerusalem council: "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).²

Finally, this thesis attempted to address the apparent tension between Rice's view of God's knowledge of the future and the traditional model of God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge of the future. The question that led Rice to his current position is "How can God foreknow the future definitely when it is not yet there?" It is beyond the scope of this thesis to deal with all the issues related to this problem; it specifically addresses the analogical spectrum of options available for interpreting God's emotions. Rice takes the option that interprets God's emotional *regretting*, *relenting*, *repenting*, or *changing His*

² Hanna, "Predestined to Freedom," 99.

mind (נחם) to mean that God does not have exhaustive definite foreknowledge of future free choices. In contrast, another analogical option affirms God's exhaustive definite foreknowledge even though He reacts emotionally to future free choices. Further research is needed to give additional biblical explanations of how God can have exhaustive definite knowledge even though free choices involve alternate possibilities.

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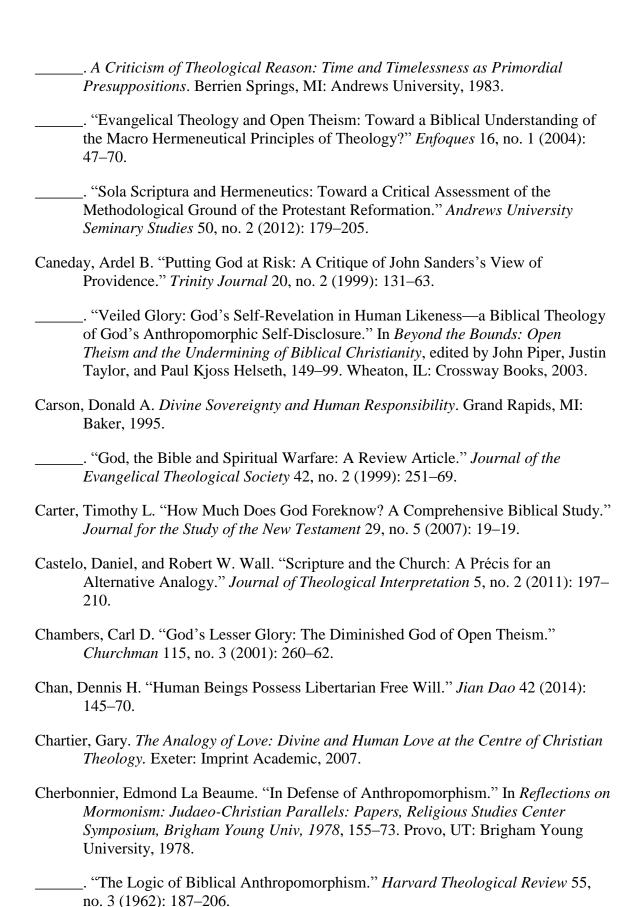
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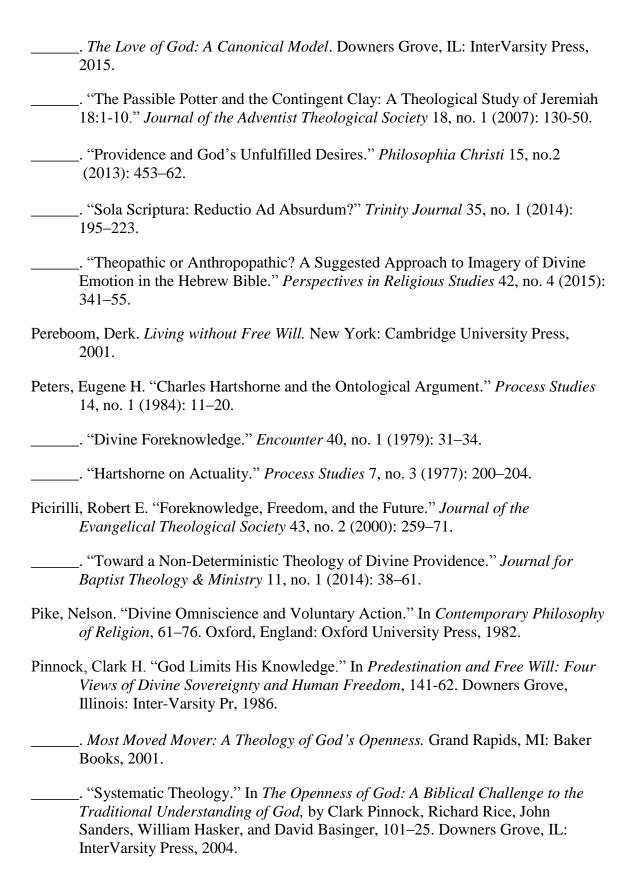
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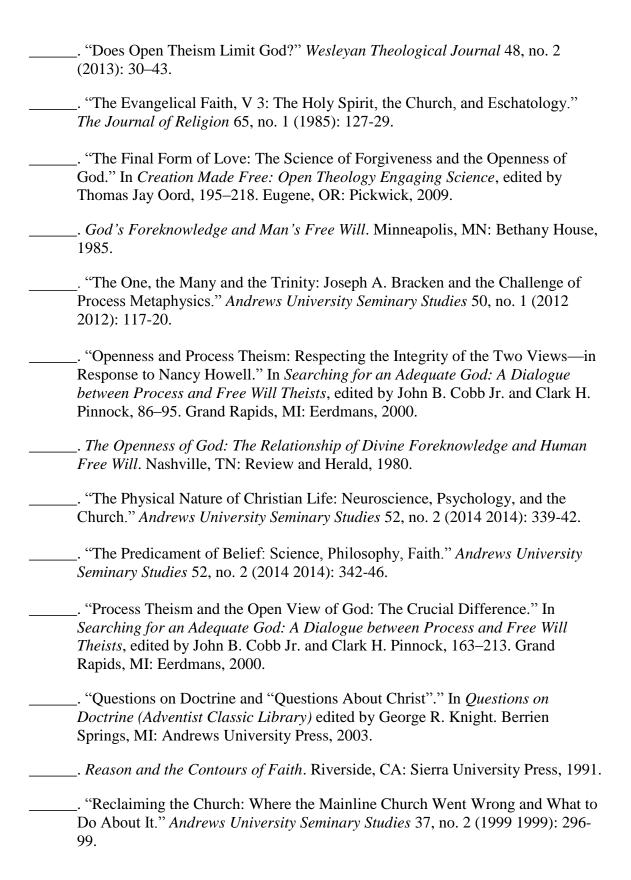
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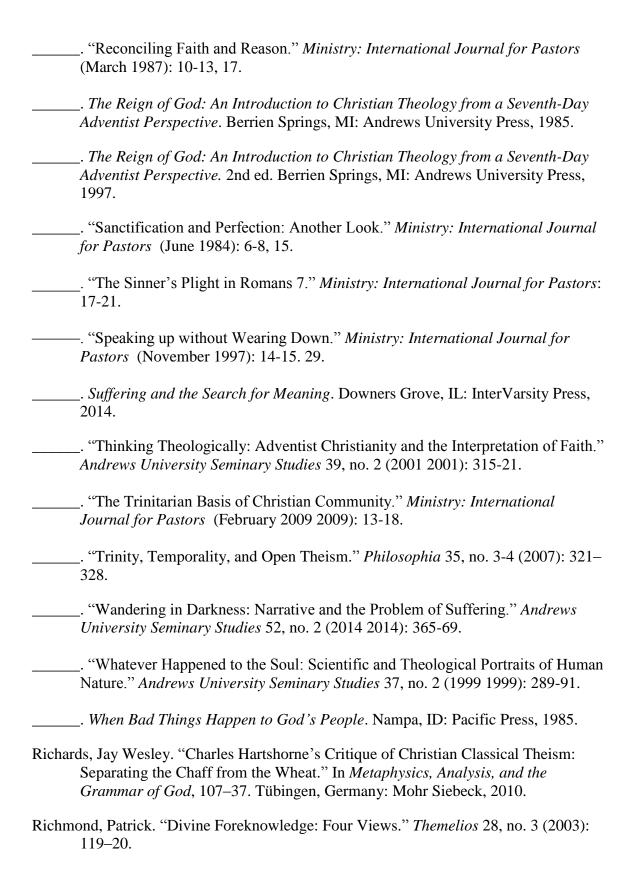
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