



Research Paper

A Comparative Study of Bada's Doctrine and Openness Thinking in Solving the Conflict between Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will

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Abstract

Open theology is a theological movement that emerged from the heart of the evangelical Christian tradition at the end of the 20th century and was concerned with drawing a model of God's action in the world, based on which it could resolve the conflict and inconsistency in traditional theology, that is, between free will/human agency and God's prior and absolute knowledge. This thinking, which is considered a new approach in the field of theology and philosophy of religion, has raised views that have attracted the attention and criticism of many thinkers, both philosophically and theologically. Looking at the precious heritage of Islamic and especially Shiite thought, it can be seen that the doctrine of Bada can be more successful in solving the problem of human free will and divine foreknowledge; because based on open theism, it is necessary to give up the application of divine knowledge, in addition to ascribing attributes such as changeability to God in order to protect human free will, while with the help of Bada's teaching, it is possible to maintain the application of divine knowledge and to consider man as a being with absolute free will. In this research, an attempt was made to explain this superiority.

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Open theism is a new approach in the field of theology and philosophy of religion, which has attracted many criticisms from contemporary thinkers with its opinions and views. The main claim of the supporters of this approach is that many of the common teachings of the Christian word about God's nature and attributes are not in accordance with the Bible, and therefore, it has created inconsistencies in religious thoughts. One of these inconsistencies is manifested in the conflict between divine foreknowledge and human free will. While redefining some of God's attributes, open-minded believers have attributed other characteristics to God, such as dynamic absolute knowledge, universal sovereignty, and temporality, and in this way have tried to resolve the aforementioned conflict.

They also believe that by gaining new experiences, God's knowledge is greater, and changes in His plans or decisions are achieved. On this basis, open theologians consider the knowledge of God and the future of the world to be open and document the determination of the direction of the future to human discretion and the lack of God's knowledge.

Despite all the efforts of open theologians, their thinking has faced many criticisms from Western thinkers and even Christian and church elders, which will be mentioned in this study. However, another doctrine that has been raised regarding the issue of human free will and changing destiny in the future is the doctrine of Bada.

With the help of this teaching, it is possible to avoid the problems faced by classical theism (which needs to modify its traditional propositions in the face of modern problems) and open theism (which breaks

too much from their religious tradition to solve problems) and provided the appropriate answer to resolve this inconsistency.

In this model, without creating any injury, modification, or limitation in the absolute knowledge of God, it is possible to create more space for human will and discretion and to resolve the incompatibility claimed by the dissidents, in addition to the fact that with the help of this doctrine, religious tradition and theology also remained intact.

Therefore, the present study first explains the doctrine of openness and their method of solving the famous conflict between divine foreknowledge and human free will. Then, to resolve the conflict between divine foreknowledge and human free will, another model is drawn that does not fall into the trap of the extremes of open theologians, whose critics have accused them of breaking from their religious tradition, and while adhering to the tradition of Abrahamic religions and the traditional image of God in these religions, it also answers the question of the defenders of human free will. This more successful model is the Islamic and Shia Bada's theological perspective and intellectual principle that the Imami Shia tradition has put forward.

2. Findings

Based on what is obtained in this research, it can be said that the Islamic doctrine of Bada is a more successful model compared to the newly emerging doctrine of openness in solving the conflict between divine knowledge and human free will.

3. Conclusion

Open theology is a theological movement that emerged from the heart of the evangelical Christian tradition at the end of the 20th century and was concerned with drawing a model of God's action in the



world that could be based on the conflict and incompatibility in traditional theology, that is, between free will/human agency and God's prior and absolute knowledge. This thinking, which is considered a new approach in the field of theology and philosophy of religion, has raised views that have attracted the attention and criticism of many thinkers, both philosophically and theologically.

Regarding God's knowledge of the future, they believe that God has a complete and definite knowledge of the past and present, but the future is not completely determined. Therefore, God's knowledge of the future is certain and definite (closed) to a certain extent and uncertain (open) to an indefinite extent; because the future is open and uncertain to what humans decide to do. While denying God's definitive previous knowledge of the voluntary actions of humans in the future, they attribute the characteristic of possibility and probability to these events in relation to divine knowledge, and by stating that divine knowledge is equivalent to reality, they try to prove that God's knowledge is passive and consider it subordinate.

This view has been criticized by many Christian thinkers and some Muslim researchers. In this research, after explaining the doctrine of openness, the principle of innovation has been introduced as a successful model compared to the doctrine of openness in solving the problem of divine foreknowledge and human free will. The difference is that by adhering to this Shiite doctrine, man has not fallen into the trap of many problems and conflicts that open theology has faced, and more importantly, we will not distance ourselves from the conventional religious tradition.

Based on what was presented from Shiite thinkers' point of view, divine

knowledge is absolute and infallible, and it is only in the third order of divine knowledge that Bada occurs because it depends on the fulfillment of conditions or the removal of obstacles. Of course, this dependence on divine knowledge has been done by the will of God and based on wisdom and justice. But in God's inherent and immanent knowledge, all possible situations are assigned to fulfill the conditions and remove the obstacles of divine knowledge, and the final destiny is known only to God.

In addition, according to these thinkers, divine judgment is of two types: definite and non-definite, and Bada is present in the second part. According to this principle, the good and bad deeds of man change his destiny, and with this interpretation, in addition to recognizing the authority of man in doing his deeds, it is also possible to give him the possibility of changing his developmental destiny as the application of God's knowledge and will is also preserved.

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Contribution of the authors

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Conflict of interest

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