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 CHAPTER TEN
 

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 THE THEOLOGICAL OBJECTION  
 TO DIVINE DETERMINISM
**THE THEOLOGICAL OBJECTION:**

*In light of what the Bible teaches us—namely, that God is a perfectly good being—divine determinism and the existence of evil in the world are logically incompatible. God, being a perfectly good being, cannot be the cause of any evil. Or—even if we concede that God could, in certain cases, cause some particular evils in order to accomplish a greater good—he certainly cannot be the cause of the whole extent of the evil that actually exists in the world. The nature and extent of the actual evil in the world is inexcusable. It follows, therefore, that there must exist sources of evil in the world that are beyond God’s control. It further follows that divine determinism cannot be true, for there exist some aspects of reality—namely, these sources of the actual evil—that are not determined and controlled by God.*

The philosophical objection to divine determinism—discussed in the last chapter—is an objection to determinism in general. It is an objection to natural determinism just as surely as it is an objection to divine determinism. In this respect, the theological objection is quite different. Due to its very nature, the theological objection is leveled against divine determinism in particular. It has no force against natural determinism.

Furthermore, while the philosophical objection must begin with the virtually universal belief that humans have free will, the theological objection must begin with the not-at-all-universal belief that a morally perfect God exists. If the existence of a morally perfect God is not granted, the theological objection cannot get off the ground. As such, the theological objection is an objection that is entirely without force outside the context of theistic belief. Only a theist who believes that God exists, that God is omnipotent, that God is morally perfect, and that evil truly does exist in the world can possibly feel the force of the theological objection. The person who has rejected any one of the above assumptions would not be phased by this objection. In other words, the theological objection is unmistakably part of an in-house debate among fellow Judaeo-Christian theists.<sup>180</sup>

One further point of comparison: both objections are raised against

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180. For a fuller discussion of this point, see appendix F, *A Detailed Analysis of the Theological Objection to Divine Determinism*.

the extension of God's determinative power to everything. Generally speaking, God may be said to be the first cause of all of reality, but he does not cause every particular thing within it. Some things within reality are outside his control. In this regard the two objections agree. But they differ with respect to exactly which set of things they would identify as outside the scope of God's determination. The philosophical objection contends that divine determinism would preclude free will. Hence, it insists that freewill decisions are outside of God's control. The theological objection, on the other hand, contends that divine determinism would preclude the perfect goodness of God. Hence, it insists that the occurrence of evil is outside God's control.

Accordingly, the philosophical objection, standing alone, would readily concede that God is the determinative cause of natural evil—devastating earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, famine, etc. But the theological objector is unwilling to concede this. The suggestion that God causes any evil whatsoever is precisely what this objection opposes. The theological objector assumes that God cannot be the cause of any evil whatsoever. If a devastating earthquake is truly evil, then God did not cause it. If God did cause it, then, while devastating, it is not truly evil. It may be difficult to understand how an earthquake with such apparently evil consequences is not evil, but—if God is its cause—it cannot be an evil occurrence. This is the underlying perspective that forms the foundation of the theological objection to divine determinism.

In a similar vein, the theological objection, taken alone, would have no problem with the suggestion that God is the determinative cause of some (or even all) of our freewill choices—so long as those choices were morally good. So, for example, God could be the cause of our choice to act in compassion toward someone. But this is the very thing the philosophical objector is unwilling to concede. From the standpoint of the philosophical objection, a choice is only truly a freewill choice if God did not cause it. It makes no difference whether that choice is morally good or morally evil. It cannot qualify as a moral choice at all if God—not an autonomous human will—caused it.

Both the theological and philosophical objections are seeking to establish boundaries to the determinative control of God. While the philosophical objection opposes the extension of God's causation to freewill choices, the theological objection opposes the extension of God's causation to anything evil, whether it is the result of freewill choices by men or the result of the impersonal forces of nature.

## Clarifying the Theological Objection

The theological objection is founded on the contention that the following three beliefs are mutually incompatible: (1) a belief in divine determinism, (2) a belief in the perfect goodness of God, and (3) a belief in the reality of evil. Belief in the perfect goodness of God and belief in the reality of evil are incontestable aspects of Christian belief. Hence, it logically follows that if Christian belief is valid, then divine determinism is not.<sup>181</sup> The crux of the objection, therefore, is the alleged logical incompatibility of the above three beliefs. There are two different forms that this objection can take. I will examine each.

### THE WEAKER FORM OF THE THEOLOGICAL OBJECTION

An assumption that undergirds the theological objection is the assumption that if God is the cause of my acting in a particular way, then it is God, not I, who is morally accountable for my deed. The assumption undergirding the philosophical objection reverses the emphasis—namely, if God is the cause of my acting in a particular way, then I am not morally accountable for my deed, God is. While the philosophical objection focuses on the absence of moral accountability in me, the theological objection focuses on the fact that God must be morally accountable.

Beginning from this initial assumption, consider a specific action I might take. If God is the ultimate cause of an evil deed that I commit—as divine determinism would assert—then God is the one who is ultimately to blame for it. But divine determinism extends God’s determinative control—and, with it, his moral accountability—to everything. Hence, God is morally accountable for every deed done by every human being everywhere throughout time. With that in mind, how then can we consistently maintain that God is a perfectly good being while affirming divine determinism? For if God is ultimately accountable for every individual evil deed that human beings perform, he can hardly be credited with moral perfection. We must either concede that God is evil, or we must concede that divine determinism is false. But we cannot simultaneously embrace divine determinism and the moral perfection of God.

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181. See appendix F, *A Detailed Analysis of the Theological Objection to Divine Determinism*.

## THE STRONGER FORM OF THE THEOLOGICAL OBJECTION

A second form of the theological objection is stronger in force in the sense that it is more difficult to refute. It presents a decidedly more difficult challenge, for a completely adequate response cannot be formulated that does not rely upon ultimately subjective perceptions. This form of the objection focuses on the nature and extent of evil in the world, not simply on the fact of evil in the world. It does not insist that God is culpable for each individual act of evil—as the weaker form of the objection does. It merely asks whether a world with the nature and extent of evil that ours has could be totally determined by a perfectly good God.

I have already agreed that God is not above moral judgment altogether. He can and must be held accountable for what he has created. The moral structure of reality demands it. As we have seen, we must take care in passing such judgment that we don't hold him accountable for things for which he is not legitimately responsible. We must keep in mind that God is the author and creator of all and that he has all the prerogatives of such.

But whether God can legitimately be blamed for a man's particular evil choices becomes irrelevant to this stronger form of the argument. God can certainly be blamed (or praised) for reality as a whole. He can and must answer for the whole of existence. He can be held accountable for bringing this created order into being at all. The stronger form of the theological objection attacks divine determinism at exactly this point: how can it be maintained that a perfectly good God who is completely in control of every facet of reality would purposely will into existence a reality that contained within it the nature and extent of evil that this one does? Would a perfectly good God who was perfectly in control of everything create a world that included murder, rape, unthinkable inhumanity, wanton cruelty, devastating natural disasters, disease, war, child molestation, and starvation—to mention just a few? This, so the objection maintains, is unthinkable. But this is precisely the sort of reality we live in. So either God is not the determiner of all things (as divine determinism asserts), or God is not as good as he is purported to be. But we cannot maintain God's complete determinative control over every facet of reality at the same time that we maintain God's perfect goodness. God cannot be both perfectly good and the creator of this evil world in which we live. But surely God is morally perfect! (Or so our theology asserts.) Therefore, he must not be the determiner of absolutely everything. Evil enters into reality from some other source—uncaused and undetermined by God.

We must take note of the subtle but important shift in strategy from the weaker argument to the stronger one. The stronger form of the objection does not attempt to suggest that, given divine determinism, God would be to blame for every particular act of evil that is committed; rather, it suggests that God can legitimately be blamed for the overall moral quality of the reality he has created. If the God who has everything totally under control has chosen to bring an evil and cruel world into being, then how can he legitimately claim to be a good God?

This objection itself is employed by many different people with many different agendas. Something like this objection is employed by the atheist against theism. The atheist argues that given the nature and extent of evil in the world, it is not reasonable to believe in the existence of a God who is both all-powerfully in control and perfectly good. The atheist's goal, of course, is to persuade the theist to give up his belief in the existence of God altogether. This classic argument against the rationality of belief in the existence of God is known as THE ARGUMENT FROM EVIL. But the argument from evil *per se* is not under scrutiny in this chapter.

Something like this objection is also employed by certain non-traditional Christian theists (for example, those who believe in Process Theology) to defend their belief in a finite, not-all-powerful God. The finite-God theist argues that given the nature and extent of evil in the world, it is not reasonable to believe in the omnipotence of God. We know that God is perfectly good, they argue. If he were all-powerful as well, then he would eliminate the evil, pain, and suffering in the world. Since he obviously is not eliminating them, it follows that he must not have the power or ability to do so. In other words, he is not all-powerful. But again, this is not the objection that is under scrutiny in this chapter either.

To defend the traditional view of God as simultaneously good and all-powerful is not my purpose. For a Christian believer who takes the biblical text seriously, this is not even in question. Only by disregarding (or misinterpreting) significant portions of biblical teaching can one accept a non-traditional view of God as finite and limited in power. My purpose is to defend divine determinism as a biblical doctrine to people who desire to take biblical teaching seriously. I direct my arguments to traditional theists who care what the Bible teaches. If such as these object to divine determinism, I am seeking to answer their objections.

So, what is this stronger form of the theological objection posed by those who uphold a traditional view of the nature of God and yet reject divine determinism? It goes something like this:

As the Bible maintains, God is ultimately sovereign over and in com-

plete control of the outcome of human history. But how are we to reconcile God's sovereign control over reality with the nature and extent of the evil that exists within it? There can be only one way to effect such a reconciliation. We must assume that there are certain realities, certain phenomena, certain events, and certain forces that are outside the scope of God's direct causation and determination. Evil must arise from these other realities. God is not the source and cause of evil. It is these other realities (for example, human free will) that cause evil.

But if certain facets of reality are outside God's control, how do we still maintain that he is sovereign? While God does not directly control non-divinely-determined forces like free will, he can nevertheless indirectly control their outcome. God's power, creativity, and intelligence is such that he can sovereignly control the ultimate outcome even of free choices that were not directly caused by him. Accordingly, he can guarantee that his good pre-ordained purposes will be achieved, because—by manipulating that portion of reality that is directly under his determinative control—he can control the final outcome of choices and forces that were not directly under his control. In other words, God is so exceedingly wise, clever, and powerful that he can manage to bring his good purposes to pass out of any and every event that occurs even when he was not the first and direct cause of that event. So, for example, I may introduce sin and evil into the world through a freewill choice that I make, but that does not prevent God from cleverly combining the results of my sinful choice with the results of other things that he directly determines such that he ultimately accomplishes the good and perfect result that he had ordained from the beginning.

Under such a viewpoint, God's sovereignty and moral perfection are successfully reconciled with the nature and extent of evil in the world. On the other hand, if we accept the notion that every facet of reality is directly caused and determined by God—as divine determinism does—then it becomes impossible to reconcile God's sovereignty and moral perfection with the nature and extent of evil in the world. Accordingly, in light of the evil that exists in our world, the only way we can rationally affirm the biblical concept of God as both sovereign and good is by positing that certain aspects of reality (such as human free will) are beyond the determinative control of God. In other words, only by rejecting the doctrine of divine determinism.

This then is the strong form of the theological objection to divine determinism—an objection by traditional theists who uphold a traditional conception of God's sovereignty and goodness but who reject divine determinism as I have defined it in this book. They do so on the grounds

that, if we add the doctrine of divine determinism to the biblical conception of God, then our concept of God becomes incompatible with the nature and extent of evil in the world. Only by rejecting divine determinism can a biblical notion of God be plausibly reconciled with the nature and extent of the evil that exists.

## Answering the Theological Objection

### IN ITS WEAKER FORM

To answer the weaker form of the theological objection, we need only recognize that it mirrors one of the sub-arguments of the philosophical objection. By disposing of the philosophical objection in the last chapter, we have already disposed of this form of the theological objection.<sup>182</sup>

The crux of this objection, as in the philosophical objection, lies in the assumption that God is morally culpable for the evil he creates. As we saw in the last chapter, the problem with this assumption is its failure to distinguish between a transcendent cause and an ordinary cause and its failure to recognize that these two different kinds of causes have radically different natures.

In divine determinism, God is a transcendent cause, analogous to the author of a novel. The logic of transcendent causation does not permit a shift of moral accountability from us, the agents of evil deeds, to God, their transcendent cause.<sup>183</sup> Yes, we do make evil choices. Yes, God is ultimately responsible for them as their transcendent cause. But we—not God—are morally culpable for the choices we make. Just as the characters in a story and not the author of the story are morally culpable for the choices authored in them in the unfolding of their story, so we are responsible for the choices God authors in us. Therefore, though evil choices do exist in the world, God is not the one who is morally culpable for those choices. My evil choices, therefore, provide no ground upon which to challenge God's goodness. My evils do not appear on his record; they appear only on mine.

Similarly, God is not morally culpable for the evils that occur by the agency of impersonal forces. As the transcendent cause of the created

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182. For a full discussion of my response to the corresponding portion of the philosophical objection and, hence, to the weaker form of the theological objection, see chapter 9.

183. See chapter 9 for a full discussion of this point.

order itself, God—though totally in control of what transpires—is not morally accountable for what transpires. We do not consider the author of a book morally blameworthy for the accidental death of one his characters in a flood. Why? Because that is the nature of transcendent causation. Transcendent causation does not entail moral culpability at the level of an individual impersonal event. Similarly, God is not morally culpable for the “acts of God” that lead to negative or adverse consequences.<sup>184</sup>

## IN ITS STRONGER FORM

The crux of the matter with respect to the stronger form of the theological objection is whether there exists any possibility, in the light of the evil world we live in, of reconciling the goodness of God with the sovereignty of God on the assumption that divine determinism is true. The objection states that there is not. It argues that we must reject divine determinism because, if we do not reject it, we will be unable to reconcile the existence of the biblical God (sovereign and good) with the nature and extent of the evil that is in the world. If the objection is wrong about this—that is, if in fact there is a way to reconcile the existence of God as sovereign and morally perfect with the existence of this evil world while maintaining a belief in divine determinism—then the objection fails completely. Its entire force as an objection rests on the merits of this claim: divine determinism and the nature of the evil that exists cannot be reconciled. To answer the objection, therefore, I must show how divine determinism is, in principle, compatible with the existence of the evil in the world.

To do so, I turn once again to the author/novel analogy. Consider the author of a particular novel. A particular novel includes many different moral realities. It includes everything from impatience to murder, disease,

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184. Nowhere in this book do I argue specifically that a transcendent cause of impersonal events is not morally culpable for those events. But I believe it is self-evident. If the transcendent cause of the acts of free moral agents is not morally responsible for those acts, then likewise the transcendent cause of impersonal events is not morally responsible for those events. There is only one notable difference between the two types of events. There does exist moral accountability in the case of free moral agency—namely, the free moral agent who does the deed is morally culpable. But in the case of an impersonal event, there exists no moral culpability at all. Granted, we might be tempted to make God—the transcendent cause—morally culpable for an impersonal event. For who else could we blame? Yet we must resist the temptation. There is no logical reason why there has to be any moral accountability at all in the case of an event where no free moral agency is involved. Indeed, I would argue that denying the existence of moral culpability in the case of impersonal natural events is eminently commonsensical.

and war. Upon reading such a novel, could we justifiably conclude that it was written by an evil man? The question is not whether we know that the author is evil. (If we believe the Bible's teaching, we know that he is evil. He was born a sinner.) The question is whether we could validly conclude that he was evil merely on the basis of his novel.

We can approach this same question another way. Could Jesus (one who, according to orthodox Christian theology, was morally perfect) have written that novel? Would it have been morally possible for him to have done so?

Common sense says, "yes." Without jeopardizing or compromising his morally perfect character in any way, Jesus could have written such a novel. So presumably we would not be justified in concluding that an author is evil on the basis of the content of such a novel.

Granted, some novels that contain evil are indeed evil creations. Pornography is an example. It not only contains evil within it, its very existence is motivated by, panders to, and serves the purposes of evil. But other novels that contain evil are not similarly evil. At least, in theory we can conceive of one that is not.

The evil of a story must not be judged on the basis of whether it contains evil within it. Rather, it must be judged on the bases of (a) the motive behind the story, (b) the purpose it accomplishes, and (c) the final effect that it has. If the motive behind it is pure, its purpose is righteous, and its final effect is good, then the story is a good creation, not an evil one. It is one that a morally perfect person would be morally justified in creating, regardless of what particular evils may exist within its pages.

By analogy, the same can be said of God, who (according to the doctrine of divine determinism) is the divine author of all reality. The fact that this reality contains evil, suffering, and cruelty is not sufficient in and of itself to justify the conclusion that a good God could not be its author. The mere existence of evil within this reality does not justify the judgment that it is evil rather than good. Before we can judge the moral quality of our reality, we would need to know the ultimate motive behind its creation, the purpose for which it was created, and the nature of the final outcome. If we find that the motive, purpose, and result (or any one of them alone) are evil, then we can legitimately say that this reality is evil and a perfectly good God could not possibly have determined its every feature. But if the motive, purpose, and overall result are, in fact, good and right, then this reality—regardless of all the evil that is contained in it—is nevertheless a good creation—one of which a morally perfect God could be the author.

## IS REALITY EVIL?

The critical question, then, is the moral nature of this reality in which we dwell. Is this reality that God has created evil or good? More specifically, what are the motive behind, the purpose for, and the overall result of the creation of this reality? Are these good or evil?

If they are incontrovertibly evil, then the stronger form of the theological objection stands. A morally perfect God could not be totally and absolutely in control of the reality that exists and divine determinism cannot be true. But if the motive behind, purpose for, and ultimate outcome of reality are good, then the theological objection fails. The mere fact that particular evils exist within reality is no indicator of any moral flaw in its creator. Hence, under such an assumption, a morally perfect God could reasonably and morally be the creator of this reality. Regardless of the particular evils it contains, there is no incompatibility between the moral perfection of God and God's total control of this reality.

So what is the fact of the matter? Is reality, in fact, good? Or is it evil? Everyone can agree that the evidence is mixed. Some of what we experience would seem to point to the goodness of God. Other aspects of our experience would seem to suggest that God may be evil.

To make a decision about the moral quality of this reality is particularly problematic in light of the fact that none of the three important considerations—namely, the motive behind, the purpose for, and the final outcome of this reality—can yet be fully known to us. We have no direct experience of the whole of reality from beginning to end. But without such experience, we are in no position to make a judgment with respect to the moral character of created reality. Surely no one can presume to finally know whether reality is good or evil when he has not yet seen the last chapter. Whether God is good or evil will finally be decided on the basis of the whole story. How will it all turn out? What will have been the final result? What will have been God's point in all of this? What will have been his ultimate motive? No one can possibly yet know. At least, not on the basis of experience. But until we can know such things, we are in no position to judge.

For this strong form of the theological objection to have any force, one must presume to know that the nature and extent of the evil that exists in this world is such that a perfectly good author of all reality, who controlled every detail of reality, would never have authored this one. But such a conclusion is just presumption. How could one know that? On what basis? Having only such a limited and narrow perspective as human

experience gives, how can I confidently know that the nature and extent of evil in the world does not ultimately serve some perfect purpose that is being achieved by a perfectly good divine author who, with utterly pure motives, is directing the entirety of cosmic history toward a perfect outcome? The opponent of divine determinism presumes to know that this is not the case. I cannot be so presumptuous. I do not have the kind of clarity that permits me to know what evil would and could fit a morally perfect author's purposes and what could not. Maybe the evil that exists in the world is ultimately irreconcilable with what a morally perfect being would author. Then again, maybe not. I cannot know from my present standpoint. One day we will all know firsthand. In the end, when all has been said and done, we will—with our own eyes—see whether the final result was utterly and entirely good from beginning to end, or whether the outcome—to the extent that it is a good one—was only good because it was cleverly snatched out of the jaws of evil by a clever, sovereign God. But as we sit here now, we must sift through puzzling and ambiguous evidence. We do not have a clear vision one way or the other. To presume to be able to judge from our own experience is arrogant. To presume to be able to see is to presume to have the perspective of God himself.

The theological objection to divine determinism, therefore, fails. In order to succeed, it must show that divine determinism cannot possibly be compatible with the nature and extent of the evil that exists in the world. But the theological objector has never demonstrated that point. He has only dogmatically asserted it, having no firm foundation for his assertion. The objection has emotional appeal, certainly; for to separate the God we serve as far as possible from the horrendous evils we see in our experience is emotionally appealing. But as emotionally appealing as it is, the theological objection is groundless. It has offered no argument for believing that the evil that exists in the world makes divine determinism untenable.

That God is good is foundational to the divine determinist's (as indeed to any traditional Christian's) view of the world. It is not wishful thinking. The divine determinist has reasons for such a confidence. While he acknowledges the ambiguity of the data of life experience, he has other reasons—other evidences—that give him a basis for confidence in the goodness of God. He has what he believes to be a reasonable and intel-

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185. It is outside the scope of this work to spell out the nature of the evidence that results in the Christian's conviction that God is good. To do so would be tantamount to a defense of the Christian faith itself. My purpose in this book is not to defend Christianity in the face of its critics. Rather, my purpose is to defend the doctrine of divine determinism as rationally and biblically required by the nature and content of Christian faith. If the reader is a non-Christian, unconvinced of the goodness of God, then divine determinism is neither relevant nor prob-

lectually responsible confidence that God is perfectly good.<sup>185</sup>

As a consequence, the divine determinist trusts God. He assumes that the things that God does are ultimately good, even though they cannot be clearly and unambiguously seen to be good. Ambiguous and problematic evidence does not dissuade him from his confidence. His basis for believing that God is good is so secure that evidence that seems ambiguous and problematic is not sufficiently unsettling to compel him to alter his view. The only thing that would cause a divine determinist to change his mind about the goodness of God would be some clear and incontrovertible evidence that God is ultimately evil or capable of evil. Heretofore—so far as the Christian is concerned—no such evidence has been forthcoming. Accordingly, the theological objection fails to have any effect on him. Granted, if reality were evil, then a morally perfect God could not be in absolute control of it. But the divine determinist does not assume that reality is evil. Rather, he assumes that reality (for all the evil that it contains) is ultimately good. Hence, there is no logical tension in his beliefs. A morally perfect God in absolute determinative control of an ultimately good reality is logically unassailable. The divine determinist firmly believes that experience itself will vindicate his assumption of God's goodness in the end. Reality will be shown to be truly good. That being the case, divine determinism is not vulnerable to the theological objection. Reality will be shown to be truly good—according to the divine determinist's expectations—precisely because a perfectly good God is totally in control of authoring every facet of it.

## Summary and Conclusion

There are two forms that the theological objection to divine determinism can take:

1. The first assumes that were God the ultimate cause of every particular evil, he would thereby be culpable for every particular evil and could not then be seen as morally perfect. Since the moral perfection of God is so foundational to Christian belief, Christian belief and

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lematic. It is a non-issue. It is only in the face of the Christian assumption that God is perfectly good that divine determinism has to even answer the theological objection. That is what I am attempting in this chapter. I leave it to another time and place to defend the Christian assumption of God's goodness that gives rise to the theological objection in the first place.

divine determinism are therefore—it is argued—logically incompatible.

This argument is fallacious. It fails to see that God, as the ultimate cause of every evil, is not the ordinary cause of those evils, but is rather their transcendent cause. As such, no moral culpability for those evils is attributable to him.

2. The second form of the objection assumes that, if God were the ultimate cause of everything in reality, his moral character would ultimately be reflected in the moral quality of that reality. It further assumes that—due to the extent and nature of the evil that exists—the moral quality of this reality is evil. The powerful, sovereign God may very well be capable of salvaging reality by bringing good out of the evil that exists. But the reality that exists is inherently evil. And it is evil in such a way that no morally perfect creator with any sovereign control over his creation would have ever willingly brought it about that such a reality exists. Since we can be confident of the moral perfection of the creator, there is only one explanation for the evil state of the created order: its morally perfect creator does not totally and absolutely cause nor determine everything that transpires within reality. Only by rejecting divine determinism can we account for the nature and extent of evil in the world without casting aspersions on the moral character of God.

This argument is also fallacious. A reality that contains evil is not necessarily an evil reality. It is logically possible for an ultimately good reality to contain horrendous evil within it. What this form of the theological objection must prove, in order to make its case successfully, is that reality taken as a whole is in fact evil. That is, it must prove that the nature and extent of the evil in the world is incompatible with the whole of reality having an ultimately good purpose with a perfectly good outcome. That has not and indeed cannot be shown. Hence, this form of the theological objection is without force. It has done nothing to demonstrate the incompatibility of the goodness of God, absolute divine determinism, and the nature and extent of the evil that exists in the world. It dogmatically asserts such incompatibility, but it has done nothing to demonstrate it. It assumes the very thing that it needs to prove if this objection is to serve as a refutation of divine determinism.