

The Nature of God

Isaiah Roman

Preface

The words in this document are a reiteration of many more words written over the last eight years. The symbol mark that dons the Isaiah Roman ministry represents the thought process expressed by these words. Combined they are an imperfect attempt to explain a perfect concept; the nature of God.

Over the millennia many men have attempted to write about God, for God, and yes, against God. The Bible is a collection of such writings; but, more importantly, it is a set of writings that span the millennia. It is a collection of humanity's experience with God over the span of many hundreds of years. It provides a consistent witness as to the nature and character of God. Moses existed some thousand years before David, and some sixteen hundred years before the Christ. We exist over two thousand years after that. Across that time we have learned that it is not one man's interpretation of these writings that matters. It is the combined experiences of all men that is pertinent. In that time there have been charlatans, deceivers, profiteers. There have also been many hundreds of thousands of faithful, righteous, penitent believers. It is their witness that matters. It is their witness that gives us strength.

Men have done evil in the name of religion throughout all time, but men have also done good for the same cause. How do you discern which is which? By asking some simple questions. Which religion promotes more good than evil? Which practices, when examined through the lens of history, show us the best that men have to offer? Which teachings match the reality we find around us? History is being sponged, rewritten and cleansed. Text books are no longer collections of facts about events in history. Rather, they are interpretations of selected events; events selected based on an agenda, a plan.

For all you know, these words could be no different. After all, I do have an agenda. I do have a plan. Your skepticism is not only requested, it is required. You must test what is written here to see who the author of my agenda is. You must test these words to see what plan I am offering.

Test all things in light of scripture, we are told. So be it. If I can, through this work, challenge you to examine your preconceived notions about God then I have done my best. But, if you are to test everything against scripture, then let it be against scripture and not against another man's interpretation of scripture. God used a lot of effort giving us the benefit of the words contained in that book. It does not come to us, so well preserved, over so long a time, by accident. It really is a shame that most people don't know what's in it, or who read into it their own interpretations, or who take another person's word about it for granted.

As always, seek the primary source. God is the primary source.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33

Knowing God

Many theologians assert that the nature of God is a mystery, unable to be discerned by men. I assert that this is not true. If it were true, then why would God spend so much time and effort causing the scriptures to be preserved? The Dead Sea Scrolls were supposed to finally disprove the Bible's authority. Today we know that this find has done just the opposite. A complete copy of the book of Isaiah, copied around 100BC was found. When compared against another copy from the middle ages it was discovered that there was no substantive difference between the two. This type of physical evidence not only shows the amazing accuracy of scriptural transmission, but the devotion by which these documents were preserved. If we can know scripture, we can know God, because those who wrote scripture tell us it is possible.

What does the Bible tell us about the nature of God? "God is a spirit, and his worshippers must worship him in spirit and in truth" – John 4:24 Throughout the Bible we are told that God is not a being with physicality. We are told that God can pick up and lay down physical appearance at will. We are also told that God existed before creation, that He is the author of creation. Such a being cannot be bound to the physical universe.

An unembodied intellect does not need a physical description. Such a thing is an oxymoron. Rather, this type of being has need of only character, will, and purpose. God's character, will, and purpose are not mystery. If there is anything about the Christian belief that is Truth, it is the fact that God went so far as to become human Himself in order to teach us about His creation and Himself. While we cannot yet fathom what an eternal, omni, spirit God is in actuality, we can know certainly what God has in mind. We can also understand the basic nature of God, because He has condescended to give us this understanding.

To begin with an understanding of God, one must first seek to know God. This statement is packed with subtext. Unfortunately, the entire prospect of understanding God is like a river. The surface is simple enough. Then, when we begin to look into the river we begin to see detail. But the detail doesn't stop there. The properties of water, the cause of the flow, the thermal properties, the river's place within the greater ecology all lead further and further into more detailed study. So it is with God, but on a far more infinite scale. This is a study that will take an eternity, and will never cease to amaze.

To begin one must start at the beginning, just like any other study or endeavor. To understand God, one must first seek to *know God*. This may seem trite to some, but it's actually one of the first things that gets overlooked by many who claim to hold to some form of religious faith. For far too many God is a set of practices, a form of procedure, a set of rules, or even a state of emotion. These things are transitory. Practices can be modified, or ignored. Procedures are invented, revised and over time become corrupted. Rules get broken, lost, or rewritten. Emotions change, fade, or get lost. God is a personal being with will and purpose. In other words, God is a *He*, not an *it*.

God is Love

One of the most basic descriptors of God is given to us by the Apostle John; "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." – I John 4:8

A lot of effort is being expended by those in the secular realm to change the meaning of the word love. Love has become an emotional state, prompted by biological impulses. Love is being described as that mechanism of evolution that keeps the species alive. It is referred to as a part of

the hard-wiring of the brain, just another bio-mechanical function of the human organism, but yet this same set of secular thinkers remarks about the miraculous nature of love. They must admit that love, above all other human traits, goes beyond mere emotion. Emotions flow from love, love is not a result of emotion.

Understanding that love is a choice is the first step in understanding what it means to seek to know God. Understanding that love is a subject / object relationship is the next step. Anyone who knows love, knows that love gets tested from time to time. It is our choice to persevere through these tests that makes true love. Love is a choice, but it is a choice that supersedes all other conditions. A person will give everything for love, even to the point of death. However, in order to love, there must be an subject of the object of love. In other words, love stands above emotion, above life itself, which makes it a force of will, a powerful object. This object cannot be expressed without something to be expressed on. You can love your neighbor, your parents, your wife, or your children, but love is nothing by itself.

You cannot love yourself. Love, by definition, requires a third party, an exterior subject. Loving one's self is selfishness at best. The traits of selfishness, self-gratification, self-aggrandizement, these are all traits of hubris; a condition considered by almost every sane person as counter to the meaning of love. Love requires something other than self to which you may express love.

You cannot love an inanimate thing. You can appreciate a rock. You can admire a rock. But you cannot invest emotions, devote your essence, give your life to a rock. The rock does not appreciate your efforts. The rock receives no benefit from your efforts. The rock cannot express response to your endearment. When an environmentalist talks about "saving the earth" they're not talking about saving the dirt. They're talking about preserving the environment in which people exist. They're talking about saving humans. The dirt doesn't care if we exist.

God is love. This means that God requires, by nature, an object / subject relationship. This thought process also presupposes certain principles, principles that exist in only one place, by one definition. Unlike what many would like to believe, not all definitions of God are the same. This definition of God, the one given in the Holy Bible, is unique. The God of the Bible has told His creation that His name is I AM. This statement is a proclamation of absolutes.

God is One

The statement I AM is more than just a self-affirmation. It is a statement of eternity. To say I AM is to not say I was, I will be, I want to be, or I should be. It speaks of being always present, in every moment, at every moment, and of that presence being fixed and absolute. If John tells us that God is love, one might make the leap to God proclaiming I AM love.

I mentioned certain presuppositions for my assertions. Those presuppositions are; 1 God is eternal. 2 there is only one God, 3 this one God is the God who is described within the pages of the Holy Bible.

Working backwards from there, the God of the Holy Bible is uniquely described as I AM. No other definition of God claims such an all-encompassing presence of deity. For example, in Islam Allah is the source of both good and evil. This means that Allah cannot be *all* good, he must be at least *part* evil. Therefore, Allah is not good, he is partially good. All religions, other than monotheistic religions (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism), have more than one god.

For instance, Mormonism (Latter Day Saints) believe that there are many gods, one of which you may become if you are among the lucky 125,000 to be chosen. All other religions, besides polytheistic religions, cannot have an eternal God. In Buddhism the force of will that binds the universe, from which all things flow, into which all energy goes, is part of the universe. Buddhism avoids the issue of eternality because it cannot explain the simple problem that the universe had a beginning. If the united conscience of the universe exists as a part of the universe, then that conscience came after the beginning of the universe. If, however, the universe flows from the conscience, then that conscience has to be a personal, willful conscience; i.e. a person. An undirected, un-willful, impersonal consciousness would have no need of creation, nor would it have the intrinsic capacity to create.

In the same way, naturalistic answers for the origin of the universe also fail. Stephen Hawking recently proposed that we no longer need to have an external creator being to explain the universe, because we have gravity. The problem with this prospect is that gravity, or formally the laws of gravity, describe a condition that exists. Gravity does not exist by itself. Rather, gravity is the result of existence. So, what Hawking is really proposing is that the universe doesn't have to exist materially, but the universe does have to exist eternally. This is nothing more than a return to constant state cosmology, without the constant state. In other words, the universe is and always has been in existence. However, the problem of entropy is not addressed. You cannot have an infinite regression of universes creating and destroying themselves without some force of energy acting upon that universe. Energy, by its very nature, is transient. The idea that energy can neither be created, nor destroyed applies only within a fixed realm, where there is a known sum of mass. The idea of an infinite multiverse means that you have to have an infinite supply of energy. Stephen Hawking requires a source of perpetual energy, external and superior to this universe, that operates by laws of order, but is undirected and un-purposed. In other words, God, without personhood. A creator without reason. A force without impetus. A fairy tale.

Presupposition 4 is that our definition of love is given to us by our Creator. Even the most ardent secularist will grant love the appearance of transcendence. Those who have any real experience with love will understand that love *is* transcendent. The greatest minds pagan society had to offer confirm what we already know. The poet Virgil said; "Love conquers all things; let us too surrender to love." Love resides above the human condition. It almost seems to exist as its own force of will. In truth, it does in the person of God.

But, if God is love, then what did he love before creation? If God is monadic, in other words, there is only one God, and only one essence of God, in one person, then one must assume that we have a false definition of love, or that God requires creations to which He may express His love.

If God is monadic, then either love is not as I described above (i.e. love is transcendent, requires a subject, and cannot be expressed within one's own self), or God has, throughout eternity, never ceased to create because God (because love is not a desire, or invention, but is rather a part of the *nature* of God) requires creation in order to fulfill Himself.

There are some very serious problems with these two ideas. First and foremost, if God requires creation to fulfill Himself, then creation is co-equal with God, because without it God cannot be God. Second, if we're wrong with our definition of love, then all of the selfish deeds that men do (even those that end up being detrimental to others) are really just an expression of love, and because God is love, then God is also selfish. But, if God is selfish, then why bother to create? So we end up with a huge dilemma.

God is Three Persons

There is, however, another principle contained within the Bible. In the very first chapter of the Bible, in the very first day of creation, the Bible states very clearly “Then God said, ‘Let *us* make human beings in *our* image, in our likeness,’ ...” – Genesis 1:26a No matter what translation you read, you read it this way because the original Hebrew used in this verse is plural. This raises another problem. Either the early Hebrews were actually polytheistic in their beliefs, or there is something else at play here. In either case, God cannot be monadic. We know that the Hebrews were not polytheistic. The scriptures that comprise the Old Testament of the Bible tell us time and time again that God is one god.

How is this possible? The answer to that is simple. God is a spirit, not a being with body. A spirit does not have the restrictions of time, space and matter. A spirit does not have the restriction of singularity. Singularity exists because of the nature of the temporal universe.

Humans live “right now.” Though we remember the past, we cannot have it in the present. Though we may dream and plan for the future, it does not yet exist. We live our lives sequentially, one moment to the next. This is the result of our current existence. The reason we mark time, have clocks, or wristwatches, is so that we can count down the moments before we die. The time that intervenes our birth and our death is marked with events, but make no mistake, the only reason we mark time is because sooner or later, we are going to run out of time. The concept of being timeless is a dream, but it is not easily grasped by human intellect because everything that we are, were and will be is based in the concept of time. Even the terms are, were and will be are elements of time. But, a spirit being, not tied to the conditions of relativity, does exist outside of time.

To this kind of being every moment doesn’t really matter, because all moments are contained within a collection. As humans, tied to this cosmos, we can only use analogy. Think of a flattened basketball. Imagine that the entire universe fits within that basketball. Now imagine that all time, from creation through to the destruction of this universe, is visible in that form. Now imagine that you can see into every single particle of the universe, every single interaction, every single decision, every single life. Do this and you will begin to understand how “big” God is. The important thing is that God exists outside of all of this, superior to all of this. God is not subject to time, He invented it. The idea that such a being cannot exist in three persons, yet remain one God is absurd. Yet, there is a way to understand the concept of the trinity.

In our existence we have computers. Computers run software. Software is not physical. The equipment that makes the operation of software possible is physical, but software itself is not. It is, in essence, etherial. It is a set of effects that are caused by a creator based upon a set of rules, within a fixed framework. One use of software is the generation of images. Most common to us, in this modern era, is the generation of 3D animations for movies. In the movie “Up” by Pixar Studios we see the story of a man seeking paradise lost. To get there he launches his house into the air under the power of thousands of balloons. In the software world, there was only one balloon.

When you create a 3D object for display, it is simply not practical to draw thousands of those objects. In the days of hand drawn animation you had no choice but to draw all of the balloons because of physical restrictions, but in the etherial realm of software, you don’t have to draw

them all. You only need to create one balloon. This one balloon can then be “instanced” thousands of times. In the realm of software, each “instance” of balloon is the same exact balloon, but it doesn’t look that way.

Each balloon has properties like size, opacity, color, density, etc. These properties are intrinsic to the existence of balloon, but in each instance of balloon they can vary. Changing balloon from blue to red doesn’t change balloon, but it does change the purpose, and effect of balloon on the audience. Every time a “new” balloon is “instanced” it appears to us as though there is another, unique balloon, but this is only a trick of programming.

How much more perfect can God be? God can exist in three, distinct “instances” of the same being, each with it’s own purpose, appearance, and effect, yet each completely and entirely the same being with the same nature, will and thought. The difference being, of course, that God does not require a programmer to have created him, but is, rather, the origin of the concept of programming.

Though we may not understand completely *how* God is three persons in one God, we can understand *that* God is three persons in one God. Furthermore, we can do so by letting God reveal Himself to us by simply asking. This is what it means to seek to know God. We do not seek to know God through men. We can only seek to know God, through God. The Holy Spirit is that person of God through whom we are able to reach God. The only means of receiving the Holy Spirit is as a gift of the Son. The only way we can receive the gift of the Son is by giving God the glory of His gift of the Son to us. In this way the Son honors the Father, the Spirit serves the Son, and the Father receives glory from the Spirit. This is a perfect community, within its diversity.

To summarize so far:

God is a personal being. Any other force, power, or impulse would have no ability to create because it would not be within that element’s nature to create.

God *is* love. This means that God does not express love, invent love, or mandate love. This means that love is intrinsic to His character, his being.

God is eternal. This means two things; God does not change and God is present, regardless of, and outside of the concept of time.

God cannot be monadic, even if He is one God, because God is love.

God is Order

There is only one description of God that fits all of these important truths. That description is found within the pages of the Holy Bible.

The idea that God is one God, but not monadic in essence, is the core of Trinitarian doctrine. The idea of three persons in one God is not a late invention of some offshoot branch of Christianity. The idea of three persons in one God is a core essential to the existence of Christianity, and Judaism. If there is no trinity, there is no Christianity.

The Father loves the Son. The Son loves the Father. The Spirit serves the Son. The son protects the Spirit. The Father uses the Spirit to bring life and power to creation. The Spirit

communes with the Father to take the prayers and praise of men to Heaven. Together there is unity in their diversity.

Each of the three persons of God acts out a purpose within the godhead. They each have a unique roll, the all have the same will, purpose and intent. This is nowhere better described than in John 3:16:

“For God (Father) so loved the world that he gave his one and only (Son), that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life (Holy Spirit).”

The descriptions of the individual roles of these persons is spread throughout the entire Bible, time and time again. The Father is the almighty God of heaven. The Son is the author of creation, the template by which all creation is formed, and the expression of the Father’s righteousness. The Spirit is the power of creation, the living water that brings life eternal, the “shekinah glory” of power residing with His people.

But, why three? Why three instead of seven, or ten, or a million? As God is One God, in three persons, so God has three primary traits; Love, Justice, Order. We have already discussed love. The next is order. Order is the thing necessary for all other things to exist. If you want to have a relationship you have to have some sense of order for that relationship. In a loving relationship, each member of the relationship must have a defined place within the relationship. When the order of the relationship begins to become disturbed the relationship begins to falter and will eventually fail. Order is required and the perfection of order requires perfect principles.

The very structure of God is orderly. The very structure of His creation is orderly. The term cosmos was created to describe the apparent order and systematic operation of this existence. This order is not incidental, it is intrinsic to the nature and character of it’s Creator. Within all good things there is a system of orderly operation. Things that promote chaos, or disorder, are always looked upon as evil. The very essence of “good” is the existence of order. But, the reason we perceive order as good is not necessarily because we recognize the perfection of God, but because we recognize that structure brings stability, and stability brings safety, and safety brings peace of mind.

There is a known phenomena called the Law of Threes. The triangle is the most solid simple structure known. To find a place in *three dimensional* space you use triangulation. The construction of complicated structures uses trigonometry. Three is the first perfect prime. There are three subatomic particles that make up all elements. None of these things were known to early men, yet the idea of one God, in three persons, is the primary principle of Christian theology. In this case the question of the chicken and the egg is clear. Trinitarianism, in all facets of the cosmos, came first. However, primacy is not a proof of truth. What is proof is the simple fact that three forms the perfect order in all cases. A family is mother, father, children. The law is defendant, prosecutor, judge. Look around you everywhere and you will find that existence is grouped by threes. This is the reflection of the Creator in His creation.

God is Justice

If you intend to have a loving relationship you need order, but you also need justice. Justice is the contingency in the case of failure.

The created cannot be equal to the creator. A person is superior to the shoe, or the table, or to the computer that they construct. If nothing more than the fact that the human is the creator, the creator is superior to that which they create. Humans, by virtue of their place in existence, are inferior to God. God is the standard of perfection by which all other things are measured. When, in the Declaration of Independence of the Thirteen United States of America, the words “all men are created equal” appears it does not announce the equality of one man to another by any other virtue than every man’s measure against their Creator.

In order to judge equality there must be a third, external standard by which that equality is judged. If you want to judge singing talent, you have in mind what “perfect” singing is and what is not “perfect” singing. If one person doesn’t measure up to the standard, then they are not perfect. By human terms they may be good, but there is no such thing as a perfect singer. Every person who sings makes a mistake, misses a pitch, flubs a line, or has a bad day. In today’s world we drop the idea of perfection because we understand that among humans there can be no perfection. Instead, we move good up to the space perfect is supposed to occupy. The same is true of morality.

When you remove God you remove the standard of perfection by which all men are judged, equally. When God speaks of equality, he speaks of examining all men equally, by the exact same standard, every single time and He finds that we have all “come short of the glory of God.” This is where justice steps in.

Because the created cannot be equal to the creator there must be a measure of forgiveness, a tolerance of gaps. When a carpenter makes a door, he understands that the door cannot fit “perfectly” into the frame. If it did, the door would never open. Instead there must be a gap, even if ever so slight, between the door and the frame. This is imperfection, but it is planned imperfection. If you understand the weakness of the design, then you can plan for a contingency against that weakness. But, moreover, it must be understood that the door could not exist without its intrinsic flaws. The carpenter does not suffer from the flaws of the door, but the carpenter wants a door, so in order to have a door he must deal with the consequences.

It is within God’s nature to love, and because he loves, to create. It is in God’s nature to create in an orderly fashion. God understands that the created cannot be equal to the creator. It is also within God’s nature to be just. He knows that there must be tolerances built into the system, contingencies against the “gaps” that will inevitably exist. Justice is the measure of that concept.

When you get pulled over for speeding and the police officer hands you a ticket, the police officer is not judging you. Rather, the police officer is merely a witness to your lack of adherence to the law. You must then make an appearance before a magistrate, or an official of the court. Even if you mail in your fine and never step foot into a court room, you still are making your presence known to an official of the court. The idea of fines for traffic violations were not originally intended as revenue generators. The fines were intended to persuade people to be mindful of others by not creating dangerous conditions on public roadways. The people who enacted these laws understood that from time to time mistakes would be made. People would, inevitably, break the traffic laws. To accommodate this a system of providing forgiveness was put into place.

In a relationship between people there is an order. When that order is broken there is a lack of trust, a “breaking” of the relationship. To restore order, and in turn restore the relationship, some form of penance must be paid. If that form of penance has been established before hand, then it is

agreed on by both parties that by performing that penance, the order is to be properly restored. Forgiveness can then be given to the offending party. Without penance, and without a restoration of order, the relationship cannot go on. If there is no attempt at reconciliation, there is no trust, no fidelity, no faith.

God establishes Law

The thing that describes this set of checks and balances, that establishes the order, and the contingent conditions of restoration, is the law. There are always two parts to law; the letter of the law, and the spirit of the law. All laws are created with intent. If one does not understand the intent of the law, the letter of the law can become whatever intent the current interpreter wants. Today in the United States we are watching progressives change the definitions of terms within our laws towards new meanings that were never intended by those who created the laws. The simple phrase “all men are created equal” has begun to mean that all men must be treated equally and that it is society’s responsibility to ensure this equality, when originally it meant that all men are equally beneath the law of God and are therefore should be equally granted opportunity to seek perfection, regardless of status. The common element between these two interpretations is the law.

In the first case all laws must be enacted in order to keep men equal. In the later case all men must be held to the standards of the law equally. The distinction requires that there is no perfect standard by which discrepancies are judged. Instead, there are only measures of good. Those men who wrote the founding documents of this nation all understood clearly that there is a perfect standard, and that it is not men who created that standard.

In all these things there is a test, a standard by which the words written here may be judged. That standard is not found in a seminary, or a pulpit, or on the Internet. That standard is found within the Holy Bible; the inspired word of God. In order to find God you cannot seek men, even this man. To find God you must seek God. There is only one place where the description of God comports with the entirety of reality. There is only one description of God that fits with what we know to be real.

Thus we arrive at our understanding of the person of God.

1. God is.
2. God is One.
3. God is Three Persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
4. God is Love.
5. God is Order.
6. God is Justice.
7. God establishes Law.

Seven is the number of God. Six is the number of man. You will be judged by the One, for the Three, by the Seven. If you lack the One, you will be found guilty. This is the Law.