

The God We Love

The Character and Personality of God

Part 1

God Reveals Himself

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J. E. Hyndman

Theme Verse

David exclaims: “Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!” (Psalm 68:19 - NKJV)

Literally: Blessed be the Lord, *Who Daily Lays it on*, the God of our salvation

- Incredibly active every day!
- Purpose: our salvation

The Bible Reveals a God Who is ACTIVE!

A. God as Creator

What's our First glimpse of God??

Genesis 1:1-3 NKJV

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (2) The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

(3) Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light..

B. God is Spirit

...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Gen 1:2)

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Gen 2:7)

Jesus clarified: God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24)

Spirit...

Hebrew: rûach

- From: breath, wind, exhalation
- The Spirit is the expression of a living being, like wind is the expression of air

Bible introduces the concept of Spirit as the ultimate reality for a living person. If our spirit is 'dead', then we are 'dead' in spiritual reality...we need to be 'born again'

Jesus said: "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."
(John 3:8)

- Physical reality seems to be a subset of the Spiritual

Spirit: By the Way..

- We are made in God's image. You and I are 'Spirit' living in a body
 - Our Spirit will outlast this body!
- Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness **of the flesh and spirit**, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

(2Cor 7:1)
- But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are **spiritually discerned**.

(1Co 2:14)

C. God as Judge

On the 6th day: "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good...) (Gen 1:31)

- God carefully judges what is good (and improves it until it is very good).
God is Judge
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Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." (Gen 3:9-10)

- God doesn't overlook purposeful disobedience. God is Judge!

Then God passes personal judgement on: The Serpent, Eve, and Adam.

- God's judgement is careful, and often provides Hope
- All of Creation (which was delegated to man's authority) also received man's penalty

C. God as Judge

Daniel's Vision of the Kingdoms of the world,
and God as Judge

"I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened. (Dan 7:9-10)

"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. (Dan 7:21-22)

D. God as King

Daniel's vision showed God as King, as well as Judge –

- thrones were set in place..
- The Ancient of Days took His seat on THE Throne.
- He is KING over all other Kings

We see this also in

- Ezekiel's visions (And above the living creatures was the likeness of a throne, on the throne was a likeness of a man high above it...who's appearance was like fire all around) (Ezek 1)
- Isaiah's vision (I saw the LORD sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple...) (Isa 6)

D. God as King

John's vision of the Throne Room

Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

(Rev 4:2-6)

E. God is Holy

This word Holy first shows up in the story of Moses and the burning bush:

Then God said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."
(Exo 3:5)

After this, the word Holy is used 636 more times in the Bible

Holy:

- Completely good. No shadow of evil
- Or: Dedicated (only) to the service of a Holy God

E. God is Holy

"No one is holy like the LORD, For there is none besides You, Nor is there any rock like our God. (Hannah's psalm, 1Samuel 2:2)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the *knowledge of the Holy One* is understanding. (Pro 9:10)

E. God is Holy

For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy...(Lev 11:44)

You shall not profane My holy name, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I am the LORD who sanctifies you
(Lev 22:32)

F. God has a Personality

And (Moses) said, "Please, show me Your glory."
Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass
before you, and I will proclaim the name of the
LORD before you... (Exod 33:18-19)

The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out,
"Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and
mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing
love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a
thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion,
and sin. But I do not excuse the guilty..."
(Exod 34:6-7 NLT)

What about the 'Vengeful' God?

1. The Flood

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen 6:5)

2. Entering the Promised Land: wipe out the inhabitants!

Promise: And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. (Gen 13:14-15)

Promise Delayed: But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." (Gen 15:16)

"I will not leave the guilty unpunished"

When evil goes too far, God's compassion demands justice, and justice will be done. (God as Judge).

God of the Bible vs. All Others

Consider the Holy, Compassionate God of the Bible...

Contrast with the pantheons of 'Gods' found in many cultures

- Babylonian
- Phoenician
- Greek
- Roman
- Norse
- Etc.

God Calls Us Personally

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him..." (2Chron 16:9a)

The Lord is my shepherd... Psa 23:1

G. God in Three Persons

Hints in the Old Testament

1. The Bible starts with some grammatical oddities:

- God = Elohim; a plural (Gods)
- But the sentence structure and verb form often match a singular God

Gen 1: 26 "Then Elohim (translated as God) said (singular verb), 'Let us (plural) make (plural verb) man in our (plural) image, after our (plural) likeness'

2. The common title: LORD God = Yahweh Elohim

- Yahweh (singular) Elohim (plural)

Hints of the Three in One...

G. God in Three Persons

Hints in the Old Testament

3. The Son promised

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(Isa 9:6)

- This Son will somehow also be “Mighty God”, “Everlasting Father”!

G. God in Three Persons

Hints in the Old Testament

4. The Spirit promised

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

(Joel 2:28-29)

(Peter quotes this passage in Acts:2 to explain what is happening on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was “poured out” in a new way..)

G. God in Three Persons

Made Clearer in the New Testament

1. John the Baptist's testimony about Jesus:

For he is sent by God. He speaks God's words, for God gives him the Spirit without limit. (John 3:34)

2. At Jesus' Baptism

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mat 3:16-17)

G. God in Three Persons

Made Clearer in the New Testament

3. All three are deeply involved in our Salvation:

God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and His Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace. (1Peter 1:2)

G. God in Three Persons

Made Clearer in the New Testament

4. Jesus promises the Holy Spirit:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. (Joh 14:16-17)

Theme Verse

David exclaims: “Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!”
(Psalm 68:19 - NKJV)

Blessed be the Lord, *Who Daily Lays it on,*
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A personal example...

The Story Isn't Over...

The Father: And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."
(Rev 21:3-5)

The Son: "Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city... I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony....
(from Rev 22:12-16)



Benediction

“Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us
with benefits, The God of our salvation!”
(Psalm 68:19 - NKJV)