

The Shield of Transcendence

A Reflection on Morality, Accountability, and the Divine

By Ninox Antolihao

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Introduction

In every age, people have been taught what to believe about God—but rarely invited to think deeply about what God truly is. This reflection explores the tension between morality and transcendence, asking whether divine justice can exist without accountability. It is not written to challenge faith, but to cleanse it—to free the divine from human fear and return it to the realm of truth and love.

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There is a silent contradiction that lingers in the heart of organized belief—a paradox that few dare to confront. We are told that God is the source of all morality, the eternal judge who measures human hearts and weighs every intention. Yet when the question of accountability is turned toward Him—when pain, injustice, or senseless suffering are asked to make sense—we are told that He is beyond our understanding, beyond questioning, beyond the reach of the very morality He commands us to uphold. This asymmetry between divine demand and divine exemption is where faith often fractures. For how can one preach of moral order if the highest being exists outside of it? How can justice flow from a source that refuses to be subject to the same justice it requires of its creation? When transcendence becomes a wall instead of a window, it ceases to be holy—it becomes convenient. Religion often teaches that God's will is the foundation of right and wrong—that human morality is only valid insofar as it aligns with divine decree. Yet, in moments of great suffering, when humanity dares to ask why, the answer too often returns as silence wrapped in mystery. “It is not for man to question God,” they say. But if morality itself is the reflection of divine goodness, then questioning the morality of events attributed to God should not be rebellion—it should be reverence for truth. To love justice is to love God—but how can one love justice if one must accept injustice as divine? The contradiction tears at the conscience of anyone who believes that goodness should be consistent, no matter how infinite its source. Perhaps the God who “refuses accountability” is not the true divine essence, but a human invention. Throughout history, humanity has molded God's image to fit the structure of kings and empires—authority without answerability, command without consent. The phrase “God's will” has justified wars, hierarchies, and even cruelty. When leaders hide behind the idea of transcendence, they turn the infinite into a fortress of power rather than a sanctuary of understanding. In truth, such a god reflects not the nature of divinity, but the shadow of human ego—our craving to dominate while remaining blameless. If God is truly transcendent, then He is not above morality—He is morality. He does not demand justice; He embodies it. He does not need worship to affirm His authority; His existence radiates love that requires no defense. A truly divine

being would not ask humanity to kneel in fear, but to rise in awareness—to see that conscience itself is the whisper of the divine within us. In this light, God ’ s transcendence is not a shield against judgment but the eternal openness to it. For what is infinite has nothing to fear from truth. Faith without the freedom to question is submission; faith that survives the question is transformation. To ask “ Is God just? ” is not blasphemy—it is the heart yearning to understand the justice that moves through all creation. If our morality is to mean anything, it must not stop where our fear of questioning begins. A God who demands human morality but refuses human accountability seems to be using transcendence as a shield against justice. But perhaps the real divine does not hide behind transcendence—He reveals Himself through it.

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About the Author

Ninox Antolihao is a Filipino thinker, writer, and restaurateur based in Leyte, Philippines. Through his work at Stone Grill Restaurant and his ongoing reflection series **Moments of Solitude**, he bridges philosophy, science, and spirituality—seeking harmony between reason and faith, between the tangible and the unseen. His writings invite readers to question deeply, feel freely, and awaken consciously.