

God Takes Calculus
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“Do we have a God?” Asked the professor.

“Yes, present,” replied God, and Professor Chimera marked God present on the class attendance sheet. It was the first day of a new year at the community college, and God sat at his table eagerly, ready to learn calculus.

“Do we have a Jared Lewis?” The professor continued.

The community college, a Jesuit institution, had been surprised to see God himself in their applicant pool. But it made some sense, since God had been meaning to learn calculus after all this time. He was confused about its current state, despite being the divine hand in all its holy creation. Too many symbols, he thought. But he found it a beautiful amalgamation of all the peoples of his design.

Professor Chimera was now writing on the blackboard. So, God opened his infinite backpack of the vault of Heaven, took out his stone tablets and chisel, and began to take notes.

“Every function has its outputs,” began Professor Chimera, “and every function has its derivatives.”

God watched, etching into his tablet as she created a function on the board, and then from the function she began to extrapolate another, and then a third, but God couldn’t see how they linked together. How were they related?

“The output of a function changes over its trajectory. Calculus allows us to see these changes as their own functions,” Professor Chimera said. “Therefore, each of these three functions produces their own unique results, but all are united over the same broader narrative.”

But God was still confused. “Professor Chimera,” God said.

“Yes, God?” She responded.

“If their core is all the same, why have three functions in the first place? Don’t they communicate the same story?” God asked.

“Great question. They help reinforce each other, and allow us to analyse the contexts of the others,” Professor Chimera said, drawing out a graph on the board. “I couldn’t find any of the slopes, for example, at single points on a given graph unless I looked at its derivative. So while they may slightly differ, their unification is exactly what justifies their separation: these three work as parts of a tapestry, representing themselves and helping understand the others.”

“And Professor Chimera,” God continued, “if we were to use these three functions to analyse reality, how practical would we find their teachings to be?”

“Another good question, God. As with all theory, they’ll reach a limit, and are only a guiding postulate to life. But they would serve as a relatively firm structure by which we could *base* analysis and conclusions,” Professor Chimera answered. “These three are more practical in the world of theory

alone — in their description of each other. In the real world, we just ought to take them with a grain of salt.”

God was satisfied, and sat back in his seat, while Professor Chimera went back to the blackboard. But her voice disappeared into the background as God began to gaze around the classroom, noticing these weird, glowing metal tablets that the other students seemed to have. God leaned left to the student next to him.

“Excuse me,” God said.

“Oh, hello God,” the student said.

“Could you tell me what all these glowing rectangles are?” God asked.

“They’re called iPads. Here, try mine,” the student replied, handing over his rectangle, along with a white stylus. “Just write on the screen itself, and you can take notes.”

God placed down his stone tablets and his chisel and held the iPad in his hands. It glowed like his moon, its screen an incredible reinvention of light he wondered if even he could have thought up. It was magnificent: smooth, silky, effortless note taking, far easier than the stone tablets he had been inscribing his notes on for years. Perhaps he’d update his commandments for the iPad, God thought.

“Thank you,” God said, handing the iPad back to the student, “I will be definitely purchasing an iPad of my own.”

“It’s a wonderful instrument,” the student said, and the both of them sat back in their seats and looked back to the board.

God wondered how his creation, this humankind, had become so glorious, so infinitely complex, so godlike in itself. He recalled how he had appeared to his peoples, in those three periods all those centuries ago, and sat in awe as he witnessed their greatness — his greatness. He had all the answers, and his species had evolved to a level that beat all the others. And yet, God wondered to himself, if humankind had outpaced their creator, as the blackboard’s triplet of derivatives spiraled into complexity.