Characteristics of God (Genesis and Exodus)

Characteristics of God Revealed in the Bible

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I also plan to create a document “Thoughts on Bible Passages” as I work through the Bible for this document.

This writing represents my own thoughts about how God is revealed in the Bible. I will give sources from time to time but I expect most of the words will be my own. I plan to take most of the Bible quotes from the NET Bible. THE NET BIBLE, NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION, COPYRIGHT © 1996 BY BIBLICAL STUDIES PRESS, L.L.C. This Bible is a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org/). The First edition without notes is free from<https://netbible.com/download>. The second edition with notes is $4.95 download as of 2018. The NET 2nd edition can be read online for no cost at [https://lumina.bible.org/bible/Genesis+1](https://lumina.bible.org/bible/Genesis%2B1) (starts at Genesis).

GENESIS

1. GOD CREATES, GOD IS BIGGER (MORE POWERFUL, etc.)THAN THE UNIVERSE

GOD EXISTED BEFORE THE UNIVERSE BEGAN

Genesis is a spiritual description of the creation of the universe, earth, life. In Genesis 1:1 the “beginning” is the beginning of the universe we live in, not the beginning of God's existence. I believe that the “time” we experience is different that the “time” that God experiences. I don't think we can propose a solution of when God came into existence. I believe that we have no valid concept of God's timescale. From my viewpoint God did not have a beginning and will have no end. This topic will come up again in other Bible passages. As I accept a 14 billion year age for the universe that only makes God bigger in his characteristics … he is longer lasting than just a few thousand years, his patience is longer than we can fathom, etc.

It is my firm belief that God created space, created energy (light), created matter, and created what we know as time.

John 1:1-5 “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. **2** The Word was with God in the beginning. **3** All things were created by him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. **4** *In him was life*, and the life was the light of mankind. **5** And the light shines on in the darkness, but the darkness has not mastered it.”

Psalm **19** For the music director; a psalm of David.

“1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky displays his handiwork. **2** Day after day it speaks out; night after night it reveals his greatness.”

Isaiah 40:28 “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is an eternal God,

the Creator of the whole earth. He does not get tired or weary; there is no limit to his wisdom.”

1 Timothy 6:**16 “**He alone possesses immortality and lives in unapproachable light, whom no human has ever seen or is able to see. To him be honor and eternal power! Amen.”

Proverbs 3:19-20 “ **19** By wisdom the Lord laid the foundation of the earth;

he established the heavens by understanding. **20** By his knowledge the primordial sea was broken open, so that the clouds drip down dew.”

Genesis 2 God Ceases Creating; Man and Woman Created

2:2

(glc) God rested (ceased his creative work described in Chapter 1) on the 7th day .. This does not mean that God needed rest. I take this to signify that God finished his work of creation, his work of getting the universe, we live in, started. We can apply this to our own lives. After finishing a project perhaps we should take a break and appreciate the finished work. We should also learn to take breaks periodically from our activities, from our work.

2:7

(glc) God creates man. There is more to our life than just our bodies. God creates a living soul in us. Our soul will outlast our body and go to heaven, if we accept Jesus free gift of salvation through his sacrifice on the cross.

Job 32:8 “But it is a spirit in people,the breath of the Almighty,that makes them understand. [©NET](http://bible.org/page.php?page_id=3537)”

2:8,9,15-17

(glc) God takes care of us. God provided a good place to live for Adam. The garden had food, and trees good to look at. The garden also was given two special trees … the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God knows that man must be tested (not tempted). Even though God knows man will fail the test, God is willing to let man go against God’s desire. God knows how God will redeem man (at least those who choose to accept salvation through Jesus’ sacrifice) out of man’s failure. It is interesting to note that it appears the command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was given to Adam before Eve existed.

2:18-25

(glc) God recognized that man needed to not be alone. God had caused the creation of animals and birds in a similar manner to how Adam was created, except there is no reference to a soul for animals and birds. Animals and birds could not fill Adam’s need to not be alone. Also, God’s plan was for humans to reproduce. Genesis 1:22 animals are to be fruitful and multiply; Genesis 1:26 God’s plan was for humans to “rule” over earth; I take this “rule” in the sense of stewardship of the earth, managing it for God. God made a woman and brought her to Adam. God’s general plan is for a man and woman to have children who will carry on the stewardship of earth after the parents die. This is not to say that not having children is outside of God’s plan. Some have the gift of singleness (Paul) and some husband and wife couples do not have children. Those individuals without children are still included in God’s plan for humans as long as they are following God’s leading. (I am already straying from the intention of this document and I am not an authority on the preceding subject so I will move on.) v22 is interesting in describing how woman was formed from a part of man and not from the soil of the earth as man was formed. Perhaps God wanted to emphasize how man and woman should be connected to each other and to emphasize to man that the woman was special and suited for him (and he for her). Genesis 2:24 describes how a man should put his wife ahead of his parents and that husband and wife should become “one flesh.” God wants husband and wife to be committed to each other and be intimate.

Genesis Chapter 3 Temptation and Fall

GOD JUDGES SIN

3:8-19

(glc) Adam and Eve disobey God and then seek to hide from God. God announces there will be conflict between Adam and Eve’s descendants and the descendants of evil (represented by the serpent). God announces that evil will do damage but that evil will be overcome. God has a plan for dealing with sin and dealing with evil. God gives Adam and Eve consequences for their sin. God cannot let sin occur and then do nothing. God judges sin. If God didn’t do this I am sure that people would sin even more. Note that the judgment is not total destruction. God is willing to let sinful people live.

God Provides Clothing

3:21

(glc) God meets their need for clothing. Adam and Eve felt a need for a covering on their bodies. God responds by providing animal skin garments God doesn’t abandon people.

3:22

(glc) “us” God is more than one entity. The concept of the trinity will come up later in this document (if I live long enough and don’t procrastinate on this writing). (Note added March 2022…I have written a separate document on the Trinity.)

Genesis Chapter 4 Cain and Abel

4:3 - 7

(glc) God does not accept offerings to him that don’t meet his standards (more on this later in this document I hope). The description of Abel’s offering indicates that it was the best of his flock. God’s discussion with Cain implies Cain did not do what was right for the offering. God expects us to master sin (that is seeking to master us).

4:9-12

(glc) God did not kill Cain after Cain killed Abel, but there was punishment… his farming would not be blessed and Cain would be homeless. God showed mercy to Cain. God also separated Cain’s bad influence from the rest of Adam and Eve’s family.

6:5 - 7

(glc) Mankind drifted away from God and into sin. God knows our thoughts and sees our actions. Sin offends God. He is displeased by sin and takes action against sin and sinners. God was grieved by the rampant sin and decided to wipe out life on land and in the air.

GOD ACKNOWLEDGES GOOD

6:8 - 9

(glc) God recognizes the good thoughts and good actions, that Noah had. We are not saved by our good actions today (Galatians 2:16) but rather we are saved (obtain God’s favor now) by faith in Jesus sacrifice for us.

6:11 - 12

(glc) God created a “good” earth (Genesis 1). Man’s selfish choices ruined Earth and filled it with ungodly ways. God did not like the Earth in this form.

6:13 - 22

(glc) God extends mercy to Noah and his family. God is not an unfeeling tyrant. He extends grace to those who “walk” with him, and extends grace to those under the authority of one who “walks” with him. (I believe this will come up again throughout the Bible.)

(glc) God acknowledges good behavior and a good heart.

Genesis 7:1 “The Lord said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, for I consider you godly among this generation. “

7:4

(glc) God reveals his plans to the godly.

7:16

(glc) God completes his work of protecting people.

7: 17-24

(glc) God completes his work of destroying ungodly people. Land animals and birds not in the ark also died. I believe the flood was an actual global event, not just a local flood. There was a change in the nature of the Earth as water was released from the interior and the nature of the atmosphere changed. The further discussion of the evidence for the flood would take this document away from its main intent so I move on.

GOD REMEMBERS (DOES NOT ABANDON) THE GODLY

 8:1- 19

(glc) God caused the waters to recede and dry ground to become available for those in the ark.

8:21

(glc) God decides to not repeat the flood even though he knows mankind will drift towards sin.

9:6

(glc) God starts to establish laws to restrain human behavior.

(glc) God makes and keeps promises

9:12-17

(glc) When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth.”

(glc) God warns people who have a clear conscience

Genesis 20:3-7 “ But God appeared to Abimelech in a dream at night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken, for she is someone else’s wife.”

(glc) God keeps promises (in his own time)

21:1-2

Sarah becomes pregnant with Isaac (glc I think this is about 10 years after the promise)

(glc) God Tests Us

22:1-18

(glc) God tells Abraham to offer Isaac (to test Abraham). Abraham obeys. God sees that Abraham confirms that he fears (glc wants to obey because of faith in God) God.

(glc) God Intervenes

38:6-10

(glc) God kills Er and Onan. They did evil in the Lord’s sight. The evil is not all described but the point is that people can “cross the line” and God will take action. Seek to keep in good relationship to God

Exodus

(glc) God Remembers His Promises

Exodus 2:23-25 “**23** During that long period of time the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out, and their desperate cry because of their slave labor went up to God. **24** God heard their groaning, God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, **25** God saw the Israelites, and God understood.”

(glc) God’s Name … I AM

Exodus 3:13-15 “ **13** Moses said to God, “If I go to the Israelites and tell them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ – what should I say to them?” **14** God said to Moses, “I am that I am.” And he said, “You must say this to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’” **15** God also said to Moses, “You must say this to the Israelites, ‘The Lord – the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is my memorial from generation to generation.’ “

(glc) The notes in the NET Bible expand on the “I am that I am.” God is “sovereignly independent of all creation….” To me the phrase indicates that God is most important in the universe, that he is eternal and self-existent.

(glc) God Knows the Future and Has a Plan

Exodus 3:19-22 “ **19** But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even under force. **20** So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you. **21** “I will grant this people favor with the Egyptians, so that when you depart you will not leave empty-handed. **22** Every woman will ask her neighbor and the one who happens to be staying in her house for items of silver and gold and for clothing. You will put these articles on your sons and daughters – thus you will plunder Egypt!” “

(glc) God is also performing justice with the payment to the Israelites for the years of slave labor endured under the Egyptians.

How does God know the future? I believe that God does not know the future based on wisdom of how things will develop. Rather, God knows the future because he lives outside of our experience of time. I believe God created the time we experience and that in some way God has access to all the times that this universe will experience. There is some sense of this in the book of Revelation. In Revelation the events near the end of our time are described in detail. God has seen it take place and that revelation was given for John to write down. The prophecies in the Bible can be thought of in some way as God giving knowledge to men based on what God already sees in the span of human history. It is amazing that God sees how we will fail in our futures but chooses to allow us to be forgiven through the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross.

(glc) More on God’s Name … I am the Lord

Exodus 6:2-8 “**2** God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord. **3** I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name ‘the Lord’ I was not known to them. **4** I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they were living as resident foreigners. **5** I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant. **6** Therefore, tell the Israelites, ‘I am the Lord. I will bring you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians, I will rescue you from the hard labor they impose, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. **7** I will take you to myself for a people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians. **8** I will bring you to the land I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob – and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.’” “

(glc) “I am the Lord” gives me the message that God exists in the past, in the present, in the future, and is sovereign.

Exodus 7:1-5 “So the Lord said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet. **2** You are to speak everything I command you, and your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh that he must release the Israelites from his land. **3** But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and although I will multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt, **4** Pharaoh will not listen to you. I will reach into Egypt and bring out my regiments, my people the Israelites, from the land of Egypt with great acts of judgment. **5** Then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord, when I extend my hand over Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them.”

(glc) Even the people of Egypt will know that “I am the Lord.”

GOD PROVIDES

(glc) In Exodus, God proves to the people that he is in control and that he will take care of them.

Exodus 14 and 15

(glc) delivered from Pharaoh’s army through the Red Sea

Exodus 15

(glc) bitter water made drinkable, and Israel camps by oasis

Exodus 16

(glc) quail and manna brought to Israel to meet the need for food. Israel could not have brought out of Egypt all the food they needed for this journey. God provided after the people complained. God is testing the people to build up their faith in him.

Exodus 17

(glc) water is provided out of the rock of Mt. Horeb

Exodus 17

(glc) victory over Amalekites

GOD WANTS A PEOPLE

(glc) God Wants Israel To Be His People

Exodus 19:3-6 “ **3** Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, “Thus you will tell the house of Jacob, and declare to the people of Israel: **4** ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I lifted you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. **5** And now, if you will diligently listen to me and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is mine, **6** and you will be to mea kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites.” “

(glc) God continues this characteristic into the New Testament in a larger way by providing a way for Gentiles to be in right relation with him, to become his spiritual children.

**Eph 1:5** “He did this by predestining us to adoption as his legal heirs through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will –”

Romans 8:**15** “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, “*Abba*, Father.” “

**Gal 4:6** “And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who calls “Abba! Father!” “

**Rom 3:29** “Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles too? Yes, of the Gentiles too! “

Romans 11:17-25 “ 17 Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among them and participated in the richness of the olive root, 18 do not boast over the branches. But if you boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 Then you will say, “The branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” 20 Granted! They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but fear! 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you. 22 Notice therefore the kindness and harshness of God – harshness toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And even they – if they do not continue in their unbelief – will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree? 25 For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: A partial hardening has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.”

GOD IS A JEALOUS GOD

 Exodus 20:3-6 “3 You shall have no other gods before me. 4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, responding to the transgression of fathers by dealing with children to the third and fourth generations of those who reject me, 6 and showing covenant faithfulness to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

(glc … my discussion on verses 5 and 6 is in the “Thoughts on Bible Passages” document I wrote.)

(glc) There is only one God (in three persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit) who created and rules the universe; who is worthy of our worship; who is interested in having a personal relationship with you. Any attempt to substitute something for the true God (another spiritual being, a person, material wealth, self-sufficiency, thinking our way of behaving is the best) is putting something ahead of God. The best path for your life is to align yourself with the true God, to honor and worship the true God. Replacing the true God with anything will lead you away from God, who desires the best for you.

Romans 5:6-11 “ 6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 (For rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person perhaps someone might possibly dare to die.) 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, because we have now been declared righteous by his blood, we will be saved through him from God’s wrath. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, since we have been reconciled, will we be saved by his life? 11 Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.”

(glc) GOD GUIDES US INTO REVERENT AWE OF HIM

Exodus 20:18-20 “ **18** All the people were seeing the thundering and the lightning, and heard the sound of the horn, and saw the mountain smoking – and when the people saw it they trembled with fear and kept their distance. **19** They said to Moses, “You speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak with us, lest we die.” **20** Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you so that you do not sin.” “

(glc) See my other writings on “the fear of God.” This fear is not a crippling, paralyzing fear, but rather a deep seated respectful fear of God. It should lead us to acknowledge that God is God and we are to follow his ways.

(glc) GOD IS HOLY

Exodus 29:44-46 “**44** “So I will set apart as holy the tent of meeting and the altar, and I will set apart as holy Aaron and his sons, that they may minister as priests to me. **45** I will reside among the Israelites, and I will be their God, **46** and they will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out from the land of Egypt, so that I may reside among them. I am the Lord their God.”

(glc) God is the standard of holiness. In order to approach him we must be holy, set apart. God provides a way for us to be holy and acceptable to him.

Ephesians 3:11-12 “**11** This was according to the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** in whom we have boldness and confident access to God by way of Christ’s faithfulness.”

Hebrews 4:14-16 “14 Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.”

1 Peter 1: **16** “for it is written, “***You shall be holy****,* ***because I am holy***.” “

Revelation 4:2-8 “ **2** Immediately I was in the Spirit, and a throne was standing in heaven with someone seated on it! **3**And the one seated on it was like jasper and carnelian in appearance, and a rainbow looking like it was made of emerald encircled the throne. **4** In a circle around the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on those thrones were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white clothing and had golden crowns on their heads. **5** From the throne came out flashes of lightning and roaring and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God, were burning in front of the throne 6 and in front of the throne was something like a sea of glass, like crystal. In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second creature like an ox, the third creature had a face like a man’s, and the fourth creature looked like an eagle flying. 8 Each one of the four living creatures had six wings and was full of eyes all around and inside. They never rest day or night, saying:

“Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God, the All-Powerful, Who was and who is, and who is still to come!” “

(glc) GOD GIVES SKILL TO PEOPLE

Exodus 31:1-6 “ The Lord spoke to Moses: **2** “See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, **3** and I have filled him with the Spirit of God in skill, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, **4** to make artistic designs for work with gold, with silver, and with bronze, **5** and with cutting and setting stone, and with cutting wood, to work in all kinds of craftsmanship. **6** Moreover, I have also given him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, and I have given ability to all the specially skilled, that they may make everything I have commanded you: “

(glc) GOD GIVES SECOND (and more) CHANCES

Exodus 32:9-14 “ **9** Then the Lord said to Moses: “I have seen this people. Look what a stiff-necked people they are! 10 So now, leave me alone so that my anger can burn against them and I can destroy them, and I will make from you a great nation.”

11 But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God and said, “O Lord, why does your anger burn against your people, whom you have brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12Why should the Egyptians say, ‘For evil he led them out to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your burning anger, and relent of this evil against your people. 13Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel your servants, to whom you swore by yourself and told them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken about I will give to your descendants, and they will inherit it forever.’” 14 Then the Lord relented over the evil that he had said he would do to his people.”

(glc) Israel had started worshiping a golden calf when Moses did not return soon from the mountain. God and Moses have a conversation about the people. God tells Moses he should destroy them. Moses intercedes and God gives Israel another chance (he relents). There were still consequences. Exodus 32:35 God sends a plague on Israel.

COMPASSIONATE, GRACIOUS, SLOW TO ANGER, ABOUNDING IN LOYAL LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS

Exodus 34:5-7 “ **5** The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the Lord by name. **6** The Lord passed by before him and proclaimed: “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger,and abounding in loyal love and faithfulness, **7** keeping loyal love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. But he by no means leaves the guilty unpunished, responding to the transgression of fathers by dealing with children and children’s children, to the third and fourth generation.” “

(glc) Summary

Genesis and Exodus - God created all. God wanted a good relationship with mankind. When we sinned it broke that relationship. Adam and Eve disobeyed and ate the forbidden fruit. Israel worshiped the golden calf. But God did not give up. Sin had, and still does have, consequences. But God is abounding in compassion, love, mercy. Still, there is a limit to God’s patience, a limit to his extension of love and mercy. There is no warning as to when we are about to cross that limit, but the limit does exist. The limit is when we die without having accepted Jesus’ sacrifice for sin in our lives. The plans of God are not revealed, or do not take place, in short amounts of time.