

# Does God Ever Make Mistakes?

Gen 6:5 – 8

**Gen 6: 5** *“When the LORD saw how wicked everyone on earth was and how evil their thoughts were all the time, he was sorry that he had ever made them and put them on the earth. He was so filled with regret that he said, “I will wipe out these people I have created, and also the animals and the birds, because I am sorry that I made any of them.”*

Illustration – The story of Hosea - Finding love . . . & misery

The big question for today is – does God ever make a mistake? When he made man he had a plan for him. But man rebelled and sinned, and became so evil in heart that by Gen 6:6 we are told God was sorry he ever made him? Does God make mistakes, because if he does, then how can we entrust sovereign control of our lives to him? Won't he make mistakes and give us a miserable life? Could it be that the seemingly insurmountable issues in your life are an example of mistakes God has made? These are troubling questions that raise real questions of trust.

By his very nature God cannot make a mistake . . . strange – why?

III – Being in Nairobi & London at the same time, or the President and poor - to be the one mutually excludes the other – incomprehensible.

If we approach it from Gen 6 it confuses us

But if we approach the same questions from a different perspective, then it becomes clear why God can never make a mistake. Today I would like to give you 2 reasons why God NEVER makes a mistake, and teach you 6 big words that describe the character of God - you'll need those notebooks because if this is the first time you are coming across these words, you will not be able to remember them or tell others about them.

## REASON 1: The Omni's of God – God is eternal

What do we mean when we say that God is eternal?

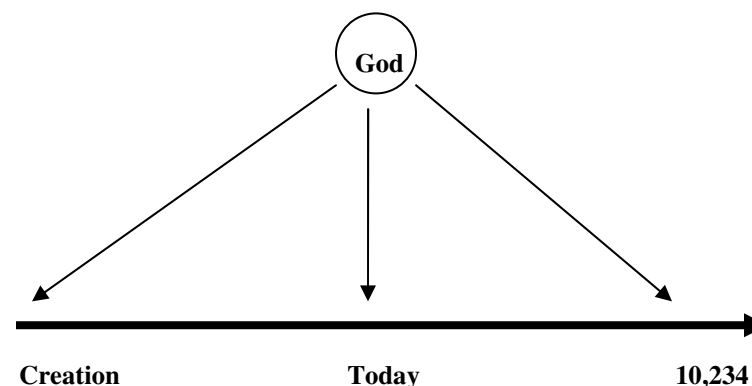
- It means God has no beginning or end. He was there at the beginning of the world, and will be there at the end.
- He does not dwell in the realm of time, He just is.
- He has no beginning or end, He has always been.

It's hard for us to imagine what eternity is because we are so subject to the element of time. Our world works because time works. We are born, we age, we die, and we never come back. When you step out of the realm of this world however, you enter the realm of eternity – time as you know it ceases to exist. That's where God dwells.

**God is Omniscient:** The fact that God dwells in eternity is well seen in **Ps 90:2** *“Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”*

That's why God is described in **Revelation 1:8** as the God *“who is, who was, and who is to come”* – present, past and future. When God created the universe, he created time as well.

Are we still together? Once we have grasped this fact about God being eternal, then the first Omni kicks in. You see if God is eternal, then he can see the whole of time at one go.



He can see 10,000 years of history at one go. As **Ps 90:4** says *“For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.”*

**Is 46:9 – 10** says *“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end*

*from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.”*

This attribute of God, that he knows everything from beginning to end, and he knows all things at once – is called God’s Omniscience – God’s all-knowing! And because God knows all things at once – he can never make a mistake. He sees the event in its genesis, as it unfolds and long after it has passed. He sees the details, and knows the exact outcome, with all its possibilities, nuances and ramifications a million years before it happens, and a thousand years after it is gone. Nothing surprises him, nothing is hidden from him – he cannot make a mistake.

**God is Omnipresent:** God is not only Omniscient (all knowing), he is also Omnipresent. Because he does not dwell in time and space like you and I do, God can be in more places than one, in more time zones than one.

### III - Little boy and glass.

God can be in New York, in Paris and in Nairobi at the same time – he is not limited by time or space. Right now God is present at your birth, he is here with us, and he is at your bedside as you die – right now. He not only knows all things, but is at every event in your life, and knows exactly how everything will happen– even your future.

This character of God’s nature is called God’s Omnipresence. The Psalmist captured this thought perfectly in **Ps 139 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me.**

*You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

*You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.*

*Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in--behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.*

*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?*

*If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

*If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.*

*If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.*

This attribute of God means because God is present everywhere, you cannot hide from him. Secrets are not possible in the presence of the omnipresent. **Amos in 9:1 – 4** gives this terrifying vision of the Day of Judgment

*I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and he said: "Strike the tops of the pillars so that the thresholds shake. Bring them down on the heads of all the people; those who are left I will kill with the sword. Not one will get away, none will escape.*

*Though they dig down to the depths of the grave, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down.*

*Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt them down and seize them. Though they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them.*

*Though they are driven into exile by their enemies, there I will command the sword to slay them. I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good."*

But because God is present everywhere, he also sees every act of obedience, and is present to bless. The psalmist says *“In your presence there is fullness of joy. In your right hand there are pleasures forevermore” (Ps 16:11)*

**God is Omnipotent:** The other Omni of God is that He is **Omnipotent** – he is all powerful. With God all things are possible! We sometimes repent and change our minds because we lack foresight to anticipate everything that could go wrong, or we lack the power to accomplish what we set out to do – things don’t always work out the way we had anticipated, and so we have to reset our goals and time-table.

But not so for God! Because God is all powerful, he is able to accomplish everything he sets out to do, and to accomplish it perfectly. His purposes stand, and as we read in Is 46:10, he does all that he pleases.

So there you have it – the 3 Omni’s of God –

- Omniscient – all knowing
- Omnipresent – present everywhere at once, and
- Omnipotent – all powerful.

- God cannot make a mistake because he is omniscient and knows all things fully.
- God cannot make a mistake because he is omnipresent and sees the unfolding of every situation and event as it happens,
- And God cannot make a mistake because he is omnipotent and has the power to determine and accomplish exactly what he sets out to do.

God never makes a mistake!

**REASON 2: God’s Immutability** – The Unchanging God.

But there is another reason why God cannot make a mistake . . . and this is the 4<sup>th</sup> big word. It is that God is immutable. What that means is that God **NEVER** changes.

Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever the bible tells us.

**James 1:17** *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

**Mal 3:6** *I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.*

**II Tim 2:13** *If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us;*

*If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.*

Each of these passages point to the immutability of God – He does not change, He remains constant and dependable.

**Num 23:19** *God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?*

Repenting means to revise ones plan of action, but God never does so. His plans are made on the basis of perfect knowledge, and his perfect power sees to their accomplishment.

**Ps 33:11** *The plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

**Is 14:24** *The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.*

Because God is immutable, **THEREFORE** God is dependable! We can build our lives on him and know that we are safe, secure – he is not whimsical.

**How then do we explain Gen 6:6?** So what then does the bible mean in Gen 6:6 when it says God was sorry that he had made man?

Let me give you the 5<sup>th</sup> Big word. Many of us read the book of Revelation and it leaves us somewhat confused. There are pictures and images given there that we just can’t comprehend – they look like nothing we have ever seen in this world. The bible is much, much easier to understand when it uses pictures and images that are familiar to us.

III – baby comes from the tummy.

For a little child they can understand this, but in actual truth, that statement is incorrect biologically – the baby does not come from the tummy. In the same way using language in this sort of way helps us to grasp the difficult concepts of scripture. When we say God stretched out his hand . . . actually Jn 4:24 tells us that God is Spirit – he has no material body – he does not have a hand – but by using human language and human form it helps us understand.

God does not have feet, or eyes, or a mouth . . . all this is human form to help us understand God's actions.

Take Ps 18:6 ff – a classical example of the use of such language  
*In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried to my God for help.  
From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.*

*The earth trembled and quaked, and the foundations of the mountains shook; they trembled because he was angry.  
Smoke rose from his nostrils; consuming fire came from his mouth, burning coals blazed out of it.*

*He parted the heavens and came down; dark clouds were under his feet.*

*He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind.*

*He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him-- the dark rain clouds of the sky.*

*Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of lightning.*

*The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.*

*He shot his arrows and scattered the enemies, great bolts of lightning and routed them.*

*He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.*

This is what we call **anthropomorphic** language - Language that attributes human form to God. **Anthro** means Man; **Morpos** means form.

And here's the last big word. Sometimes we liken – not human form – BUT human emotions to God, so that we can understand how he feels. Human form is called **Anthropomorphic**; but likening human emotions to God is called **Anthropathism**. **Anthro** means man, **Pathos** means passions or emotions.

### **Anthropathic expressions.**

*Ps 78:40 How often they rebelled against him in the desert and grieved him in the wasteland!*

*Ps 103:13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;*

Gen 6:6 is an attempt, in simple language, to capture an emotion of sorrow God felt when he saw how evil man had become. It is not an admission of error on his part. It's the 'baby in the tummy explanation', but in fact

- God cannot make a mistake because he is **omniscient** and knows all things fully.
- God cannot make a mistake because he is **omnipresent** and sees the unfolding of every situation and event as it happens,
- And God cannot make a mistake because he is **omnipotent** and has the power to determine and accomplish exactly what he sets out to do. And
- God cannot make a mistake because he is **Immutable** – he never changes his purposes and plans.

### **Application**

- God has never made a mistake in your life in the way he has dealt with you.
- God is trustworthy and dependable
- I can abandon my self to His will

### **Altar call**

Those who struggle with the outcome of their life, and have felt God gave them a raw deal.

Those who wish to repent for questioning the wisdom of God.