

## God's Non-transmittable Attributes (Part Four): Immutability

by Martin G. Collins  
*Forerunner, "Bible Study,"*

Much of the essence of Christian hope is based on faith in something or someone guaranteeing a hopeful outcome. The author of Hebrews declares, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Our faith is founded on the trustworthiness of God to keep His promises (Deuteronomy 7:9; Hebrews 10:23).

Such trustworthiness implies that God’s nature and character are unchanging or immutable. In all situations, God is constant and consistent. Unlike humans, He can always be trusted because He always keeps His word, never succumbing to emotional, impulsive, or temperamental actions.

In tandem with His supreme intelligence and foreknowledge, His immutability extends to never changing His mind about His plan or His requirements for salvation. He may occasionally use a new or different approach to account for human variability, but He never changes His standards or His goals. We can rest assured that the God we worship is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

1. Can God break a promise? Numbers 23:19; Psalm 89:34.

**Comment:** God never makes a promise or a declaration that He fails to stand by for all eternity (Isaiah 40:8; Titus 1:2). If He says He will do something, He does it (I Samuel 15:29; I Thessalonians 5:24). He confirms by an oath to His followers that His will is immutable (Hebrews 6:17-18). He cannot lie. The mind and the intentions of God never change, and all the hope that we have of our salvation and eternal life is founded on the fact that He and His purpose are fixed (Isaiah 14:24; 46:10-11). He cannot and will not ever break a promise (II Timothy 2:13).

2. Does God *ever* change anything? Isaiah 14:24; 46:9-11; Proverbs 19:21.

**Comment:** Solomon declares in Ecclesiastes 3:14, “I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it.” His father, David, proclaims in Psalm 33:11, “The counsel of the lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.”

Compare the chaos and confusion of humanity’s ever-changing world (Isaiah 24:5-8; Judges 17:6) with the absolute perfection and unadulterated truth of the coming Kingdom, designed by a God who has permanently established and fixed all principles of eternal existence (Revelation 21:3-5). He leaves nothing to chance! We can find comfort in our confidence that He and all He has promised and declared are unchanging (Job 23:13). Isaiah records God’s guarantee, “Indeed, I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it” (Isaiah 46:11).

3. Do some biblical passages represent God as changeable? Genesis 6:6; Exodus 32:8-14. Why would a perfect God change? Psalm 102:25-27.

**Comment:** The Bible often portrays God as a Teacher (Exodus 4:15; Psalm 32:8), Parent (Exodus 20:12), or Judge (Leviticus 26). All three portrayals allow for disappointment, aggravation, frustration (Psalm 78:40)—and mercy and forgiveness. As our Judge, God maintains the right and the power to bless or curse, to extend mercy, and to reverse His judgment in accordance with *our response* to Him (Exodus 34:6-7).

After all, He has called us to change. If we do so in accordance with His will—or if we fail to—He must, by His design and unchanging purpose, update His disposition toward us (II Timothy 2:12). This does not imply a change in His law or the doctrines of His church or an alteration of His promises. It signifies, instead, that *we* have changed (Exodus 32:10-14; Jonah 3:10).

Ultimately, God’s immutability grants us the assurance that “He who has begun a good work in [us] will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

In a world suffering from the constant and unpredictable changes of humankind, we find stability and peace in a God who does not change

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(Hebrews 6:19). We know that His truth and His values are grounded in His nature: the divine essence that defines the character of our immutable God (Psalm 119:89-90; James 1:17; Malachi 3:6; Romans 11:29).