

## I. The Nature of God in the Bible: OT and NT

### Old Testament

- **Genesis 1:26-27** (~Moses 2:26-27) “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ... So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
- **Genesis 3:22** (~Moses 4:28) “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil”
- **Deut 4:7** “The Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him” (If wicked, the opposite D&C 101:4-7)
- **Ps 77:13** “What god is as great as our God? ... O God, your ways are holy.”
- **Nah 1:2** “God *is* jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and *is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies” (also ~D&C 63:11; 88:92)
- **Hosea 9:8** God is the watchman over Ephraim (also see D&C 127:3; )

### New Testament

- **Matt 3:9; Luke 3:8** “God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham”
- **John 4:24** “God is Spirit,” (KJV) or “For The Spirit is God” (Aramaic Bible, English)
- **Acts 10:34** “God Is No Respector of Persons”
- **1 Corinth 1:25** “For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength”
- **1 John 1:5** “God is light and in him there is no darkness at all” (also see D&C 50:24)
- **1 John 4:8, 16** “God is love” (also see Moroni 7:47)

## From these scriptures and other thoughts, Judaic, Christian, and Islamic Theologies Developed

### *A Christian Trinity From Ecumenical Councils (AD 324-451)*

“During the first several generations of Christian history there was great variety and experimentation in Christian thinking. But as the faith was legally recognized under Constantine in 313 and then became the sole official religion of the Roman Empire under Theodosius, its doctrines had to be formalized throughout the church. This pressure for uniformity provoked intense debates. The orthodox versions ecumenical councils of the doctrine of Christ and the Trinity were finally established at the great (principally Nicaea in 325; Constantinople in 381; and Chalcedon in 451). The key ideas of these Christological and Trinitarian debates and their conclusions were (Encyclopedia Britannica, [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com))

### Catholic & Protestant

#### Nature of God: First Vatican Council (Catholic)

“The holy, Catholic, apostolic Roman Church believes and professes that there is one true, living God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth. He is almighty, eternal, beyond measure, incomprehensible, and infinite in intellect, will and in every perfection. Since He is one unique spiritual substance, entirely simple and unchangeable, He must be declared really and essentially distinct from the world, perfectly happy in Himself and by his very nature, and inexpressibly exalted over all things that exist or can be conceived other than Himself”

#### Westminster Confession (Reformed, Presbyterian)

I. There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory, most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin; and who will by no means clear the guilty.

II. God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them ...

III. In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.”

## *Judaic Thought on God*

“The Supreme Being, regarded as the Creator, Author, and First Cause of the universe, the Ruler of the world and of the affairs of men, the Supreme Judge and Father, tempering justice with mercy, working out His purposes through chosen agents—individuals as well as nations—and communicating His will through prophets and other appointed channels” (<http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/6725-god>).

## *Islamic Thought on God*

Three themes preponderate in the Qur’ān: (1) Allah is the Creator, Judge, and Rewarder; (2) he is unique (*wāḥid*) and inherently one (*aḥad*); and (3) he is omnipotent and all-merciful. Allah is the “Lord of the Worlds,” the Most High; “nothing is like unto him,” and this in itself is to the believer a request to adore Allah as the Protector and to glorify his powers . . . There is one infraction that God will not forgive in the hereafter: the sin of associationism, or polytheism” (Encyclopedia Britannica online). This last phrase means if you believe in the Son of God, you will not be forgiven.

*Can you see the need for a restoration?*

## **Restored Nature of God**

### *What did God Restore to the Prophet Joseph Smith?*

—*Sampling from the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearly of Great Price*

- **Joseph’s First Vision**
- **Moses 1:39** “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”
- **Article of Faith #1** “We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost”
- **D&C 3:10** “God is merciful”
- **D&C 19:1** “I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world.”
- **D&C 19:10** “I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name.”
- **D&C 19:16-19** “I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent . . . Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.”
- **D&C 63:11** “Without faith no man pleaseth God; and with whom God is angry he is not well pleased”
- **D&C 93:36** “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth...”
- **D&C 130:22** “The Father has a body of flesh and bones ...”

—*In The Book of Mormon*

- **1 Ne 13:40** “The Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world (also see 2 Ne 9:41)
- **1 Ne 14:17** The day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon . . . the devil . . .”
- **2 Ne 18:10** “God is with us” (also see Alma 56:46)
- **2 Ne 22:2** “God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid”
- **Jarom 1:3** “God is exceedingly merciful (also Alma 32:22)
- **Mosiah 3:8** “... Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth”
- **Alma 3:14** “Thus the word of God is fulfilled”
- **Alma 26:37** “We see that God is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in”
- **Alma 37:16** “God is powerful to the fulfilling of all his words”
- **Mormon 9:9** “God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness”
- **Moroni 7:12** “All things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil;
- **Moroni 8:18** “God is not a partial God”

## II. Nature of Man Western Christianity

### Catholic

“With the progress of Revelation, the reality of sin is also illuminated. Although to some extent the People of God in the Old Testament had tried to understand the pathos of the human condition in the light of the history of the fall narrated in Genesis, they could not grasp this story's ultimate meaning, which is revealed only in the light of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>261</sup> We must know Christ as the source of grace in order to know Adam as the source of sin. The Spirit-Paraclete [advocate or counselor], sent by the risen Christ, came to ‘convict the world concerning sin’ by revealing him who is its Redeemer.”

**AD 389:** The doctrine of original sin is, so to speak, the "reverse side" of the Good News that Jesus is the Savior of all men, that all need salvation and that salvation is offered to all through Christ. The Church, which has the mind of Christ, knows very well that we cannot tamper with the revelation of original sin without undermining the mystery of Christ.

### Protestant

“The creation of man was decreed by God in order to show his glory, and this glory was decreed to be shown by his plan of salvation. In order for God's glory to be exhibited through his loving and merciful plan of salvation man had to fall in order to be in need of salvation. Therefore according to the will of God man sinned and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From that moment the image of God in man was marred and man became his own moral authority, unwilling to accept the laws of God. Man became unable to do anything on his own that would please God, man retained a free will but now that will is only able to sin . . .”

## Restored Nature of Man

### *Book of Mormon on the Dual Nature of Man*

- **2 Nephi 2:5** “men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil”
- **2 Nephi 2:25** “Adam fell that men might be, men are that they might have joy”
- **2 Nephi 2:27**, “Men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil”
- **2 Nephi 26:28**, “hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden”
- **Mosiah 3:19**, “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.” (Similarly, Alma 10:28)
- **Mosiah 16:3-4**, “... carnal, sensual, and devilish . . . Thus all mankind were lost; and behold, they would have been endlessly lost were it not that God redeemed his people from their lost and fallen state.”
- **Mormon 9:13**, “because of the redemption of man, which came by Jesus Christ, they are brought back into the presence of the Lord; yea, this is wherein all men are redeemed, because the death of Christ bringeth to pass the resurrection, which bringeth to pass a redemption from an endless sleep”

### *Doctrine and Covenants and Book of Abraham*

- **D&C 93:29** “Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light and truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.”
- **Abr 3:19-26** “The Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all. And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell; And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; **26** And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.”
- **Abr 4:1** “the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth”

## April 7, 1844, Joseph Smith's Discourse from General Conference and King Follett's Funeral

- “I have another subject to dwell upon, which is calculated to exalt man. . . . It is associated with the subject of the resurrection of the dead,—namely, the soul—the mind of man—the immortal spirit. Where did it come from? All learned men and doctors of divinity say that God created it in the beginning; but it is not so: the very idea lessens man in my estimation. I do not believe the doctrine; I know better. Hear it, all ye ends of the world; for God has told me so; and if you don't believe me, it will not make the truth without effect. . . .”
- “I am dwelling on the immortality of the spirit of man. Is it logical to say that the intelligence of spirits is immortal, and yet that it has a beginning? The intelligence of spirits had no beginning, neither will it have an end. That is good logic. That which has a beginning may have an end. There never was a time when there were not spirits. . . .”
- “You ask the learned doctors why they say the world was made out of nothing, and they will answer, “Doesn't the Bible say he created the world?” And they infer, from the word create, that it must have been made out of nothing. Now, the word create came from the word baurau, which does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of chaos—chaotic matter, which is element, and in which dwells all the glory. Element had an existence from the time He had. The pure principles of element are principles which can never be destroyed; they may be organized and re-organized, but not destroyed. They had no beginning and can have no end.”
- . . . I want to ask this congregation, every man, woman and child, to answer the question in his own heart what kind of a being God is. What kind of a being is God? . . . I want you all to know God, to be familiar with him. . . . First, God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heaven, is a man like one of you. That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today and you were to see the great God who holds this world in its orbit and upholds all things by his power, you would see him in the image and very form of a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion and image of God. He received instruction from and walked, talked, and conversed with him as one man talks and communes with another.
- In order to understand the subject of the dead for the consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary they should understand the character and being of God; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. [That he was not is an idea] incomprehensible to some. But it is the simple and first principle of the gospel—to know for a certainty the character of God, that we may converse with him as one man with another. God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did . . .” (See: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1894&context=byusq>)

## The Plan of God or Plan of Salvation

### *Bible*

- **Lk 7:30**, ISV “. . . the experts in the Law rejected **God's plan** for themselves by refusing to be baptized by John”
- **Isa 5:19** “The **plan of the Holy One of Israel**—let it approach, let it come into view, so we may know it”
- **Eph 1:11** “In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the **plan of him** who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will”
- **Eph 3:9** “To bring to light for everyone where is **the plan** of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all”

### *Restored Scripture*

- **Jarom 1:2** “What could I write . . . ? For have not they revealed the plan of salvation?”
- **Alma 24:14** “In his mercy he doth visit us by his angels, that the plan of salvation might be made known”
- **Alma 42:5** “The word of God would have been void and the great plan of salvation would have been frustrated”
- **Moses 6:62** “This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten”