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### MY PROBLEM WITH THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

Last month I started getting calls telling me that letters and Christmas cards addressed to me here in Grand Junction had been returned marked "Undeliverable." I have lived at the same address on Lark Drive for over 30 years.

I had to go to the Regional Center near Fruita, some 20 miles away, and appear personally to get the problem resolved. It was a mistake that the Postman made, so I apologize to you on behalf of the United States Government.

### THE MOST EVIL PERSON IN THE BIBLE?

There are some really bad dudes in the Bible. The worst one is a matter of opinion. Let me give you a partial list:

- **Judas** - This man had the privilege of personally knowing and serving the Son of God, Jesus Christ. He could have been one of the great ones like Peter and John. But he betrayed Jesus and even sold him for 30 pieces of silver. Jesus said about him that "It would have been better for him if he had never been born." But was Judas the most evil?
- **King Herod** - He was not a Jew but an Edomite appointed by Rome. He was so jealous of his power that he murdered his own wife and two of his sons. When the wise men told him that the King of the Jews had been born, he sent soldiers to slaughter all the infants two years old and younger in that area. He was truly an evil man.

The books of Kings And Chronicles contain God's report card of the Kings of Israel and Judah. Some of those Kings and Queens need to go on my list.

- **Ahab and Jezebel** - They were an evil couple. You can read about them in 1 Kings, chapters 16-21. Jezebel murdered God's prophets and controlled her weak husband. Her evil spirit is even said to control a church in Revelation 2:20. Of course, Revelation 2 & 3 represent God's judgment on all churches throughout history.
- **Queen Athalia** - She was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. When her parents died, she immediately slaughtered all of her relatives, even the babies, so that she could be Queen. Her name even sounds evil - "Athalia:." Awful!
- **King Manesseh** - In my opinion, this was the most evil person in the Bible. He reigned over Judah for 55 years, far longer than any other king. He was the son of King Hezekiah who was a good King and raised his son Manesseh to be a good and righteous King. But when Hezekiah died, Manesseh became King and was bad from the beginning. Following is God's evaluation of King Manesseh in 2nd Chronicles 33:  
*"Manesseh was 12 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 55 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites. He rebuilt the high places (these were places of idolatry) his father Hezekiah had demolished. He also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts to worship them. He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the valley of Ben Hinnom. He practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft and consulted mediums and spirits, He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger."*

I'm sure you noticed that Manesseh burned his own sons alive as a sacrifice to demonic

gods. He murdered God's prophets and persecuted God's people. He reigned for 55 years, turning the entire nation away from God and toward demonic idolatry.

And do you know what God did to this man who was probably one of the most evil people in history? When Manasseh repented, God forgave him and restored him as king! The Scripture says: *"The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. So the Lord brought against them the army of Assyria who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles, and took him to Babylon. In his distress he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. And when he prayed, the Lord was moved and listened to his plea and brought him back to Jerusalem. Afterward, King Manasseh rebuilt the outer wall of the city of David. He got rid of the foreign gods and removed the image from the temple of the Lord. He restored the altar of the Lord and sacrificed to Him. He told Judah to serve the Lord..... and finally Manasseh rested with his fathers."* Note that Manasseh truly repented and tried to undo all the evil he had done, but it was too late.

When I first read this story in the Bible, nearly 70 years ago, I was astounded. How could God have forgiven this evil man who had turned the nation of Israel against the God who had patiently established them in history for His own loving purposes? How could God do it? This is a story of God's Amazing Grace.

As I read this story, it tells me that no one is past the point of being forgiven and rescued by our magnificent God. All we have to do is humble ourself before Him, repent and turn away from our sins, and ask Him to forgive us. Jesus, the Lamb of God, died on the cross for our sins so that we can be forgiven.

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## **IS GOD REAL?**

I read that the question, "Is God real?", is entered into internet search engines some 200 times a second. People are desperate for certainty in this world, desperate to know whether there is really a God who knows and

cares. But they will never discover the truth by asking Google. The Bible tells us that we can know about God, we can even be sure, by faith. Hebrews 11 is the faith chapter, and we need to study it carefully.

Hebrews 11:1 says: *"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."* (Note the words that I underlined.)

Faith is not foolishness, it is based first on our reason. Vs. 2 says: *"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command...."* Our mind, our reason, our understanding tells us that the universe did not form itself out of nothing (that is utter nonsense and irrationality), but that Someone with infinite wisdom and power created it, created us.

Romans 1 tells us that God can be clearly "seen" (by our intellect and imagination) by the things He has made. Psalm 19 says: *"The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands...."*

Christians are supposed to "live by faith." But in reality everyone lives by faith. When you get married, are you sure it's going to work out as you hope? No, it's a step of faith. When you choose a doctor or a surgeon, you are putting your life in their hands - by faith. When you buy meds from a pharmacy, when you board an airliner, when you buy an insurance policy or deposit your money in a bank, when you vote - it's all based on faith.

If you believe that life has no purpose and that it ends at the grave, that is your faith. But the Bible says: *"Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*

So how do we get this faith? I believe there are two parts: first, the Bible tells us that faith comes *"by hearing the word of God, the message about Jesus Christ"* (Romans 10:17); second, it is a matter of choosing, deciding to believe (Proverbs 1:29 and hundreds of other Scriptures).

You have heard the message of Christ, but have you chosen to believe, to repent of your self-directed, rebellious life, and to let Him rule and reign in your heart? And are you making that decision daily?

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## **THE UNSEEN REALM**

By Michael S. Heiser

A friend loaned me this book before Christmas, and it has been a challenging and eye-opening book. Following are some quotations:

“Children often ask, ‘What was there before God made the world?’ Most adults would answer that God was there. That’s true, but incomplete. God had company. And I’m not talking about the other members of the Trinity.

### **GOD’S FAMILY**

According to the Bible, the “heavenly host” was with God before creation. In fact, they witnessed it:

*“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth..... when the morning stars were singing together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”* (Job 38:4-7)

The ‘sons of God’ were there, and they weren’t humans since this was before the creation of the world. We might think of them as angels, but that would not be quite correct. Angels were in most cases a lower order, they were merely messengers.

### **ELOHIM, THE ASSEMBLY, THE GODS**

Psalm 82:1 reads: *“God (elohim) stands in the divine assembly; he administers judgment in the midst of the gods (elohim).....”*

Note that there are “gods,” who are “divine,” and they form an “assembly.” But many other verses make it clear that there is only one God, the Creator, the Almighty God. The “gods” are divine as angels are divine, they were created by God for his purposes. Lucifer, Satan, the devil, is also one of the *elohim*. The other *elohim*, gods, and angels were created with free will; therefore some fell.

Men are a little lower than the *elohim*, not a little lower than God. We are infinitely lower than God.

### **THE COUNCIL**

Psalm 89:6-7 reads: *“For who in the sky is equal to Yahweh? Who is like Yahweh among the sons of God, a God feared greatly in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all surrounding him?”*

In the Bible, the Hebrew word *elohim* includes:

- Yahweh, the God of Israel (thousands of times, Gen. 2:4-5)
- Members of God’s council (Ps. 82:1, 6)
- Gods and goddesses of other nations (Judg. 11:24)
- Demons (Deut. 32:17)
- The deceased Samuel (1 Sam. 28:13)
- The Angel of Yahweh (Gen. 35:7)

What does God need with a council? God doesn’t *need* a council, but it is Scripturally clear that he has one. What does God need with people? The answer is the same. God doesn’t *need* people, but he chose to create them. God could bring history to the end he desires in the blink of an eye, but he doesn’t. Instead, he works his plan for all things on earth by using human beings. He is not incomplete without our worship but desires it.

### **MISUNDERSTANDING IDOLATRY**

The Biblical prophets made fun of idol-making. It seems stupid to carve an idol from wood or stone and then worship it. But ;people in that time did not believe that their gods were actually images of stone or wood. What they believed was that the objects they made were *inhabited* by their gods. So they performed ceremonies to “open the mouth” of the statue. The mouth and nostrils had to be ritually opened for the spirit of the deity to move in.

Paul told the Corinthians (1 Cor. 8:4) that an idol in itself was nothing, but he warns them (1 Cor. 10:18-22) about the worship of idols, which imbues them with spiritual power because they can become inhabited by a “god” or demon.

### **Examples**

- This means that if you set up a Buddha or a Shiva, or a statue of Jesus or a saint, or a shrine to your dead parent or child in your house and start talking to it, praying to it, making offerings to it, it will become inhabited by a spirit, a god, a demon, and it may start talking to you in some way. (This is literally true, not fiction, and I, Glenn, have ministered to

people who recounted experiences like this.)

- When people seek wisdom or direction from a Ouija board, or from horoscopes (85% of the newspapers in our country still carry a daily horoscope), or from a photo of their dead grandmother, they can start receiving information and guidance. This can be intoxicating. The person is thrilled to be in contact, they think, with their deceased relative, or with God - - but it is not their grandmother, and it is certainly not God. It is a god, a demon. So they are really communicating with an emissary of Satan, not with God.
- Money. The most common idol in our world is money. When people love money, trust money, make any sacrifice for money, then money becomes their god. Jesus said, *"You cannot love God and Mammon."* Mammon was the name of the god of greed - the god of money. More of Jesus' parables were about money than any other subject, because our hearts are so quickly captured by the allure, the exotic power of money. Tithing, giving one-tenth of our income to God, shows that we really trust God, and it can break the power of money over our life.
- This subject of idolatry is so important that it is one of the Ten Commandments; it is Number Two: (Exodus 20:4) *"You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations, to those who love me and keep my commandments."* Note that God considers those who "bow down" to idols to be people that "hate" him, and he judges them accordingly.

This is why the "innocent" promotion of witchcraft by the Disney empire, by the Harry Potter books and movies, and by Halloween is so dangerous. We are teaching our children that these things condemned by God are harmless fun, when they can be deadly traps of a very real enemy.

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## **A VERY PERSONAL QUESTION**

I have a very personal question for you:

*Is there something that you have not been able to forgive yourself for?*

I found this question in a devotional book, and as I thought about it, things that I had said and done when I was ruled by pride and lust came to mind. Tears of sorrow and shame came to my eyes.

This is the reality: I know that the Lord has forgiven me and cleansed me from all of that. But it has been difficult to forgive myself.

So once again I felt assured that the Lord has forgiven me and removed all of those things from me as far as the east is from the west.

And so I said the words, "I forgive myself for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ." And I felt at peace and at rest

As we start this New Year, you might want to consider this question yourself.

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God bless,

Glenn