

The Naked Bible Podcast 2.0

Number 91

“Q&A 10”

Dr. Michael S. Heiser

With

**Residential Layman
Trey Stricklin**

March 14, 2015

Q&A 10

Our 10th Question and Answer episode!

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 91, Q&A 10. I'm your layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you doing?

MSH: Very good, very good. Been on the road and I'm glad to be back.

TS: I wanted to call attention, I was looking at the stats of the shows and I noticed episode 86, which was about the head covering in 1 Corinthians, I want to promote that show a little bit and plug it and see if we can't get a little bit more listeners. Maybe some people who don't listen to every episode of the show but to me, I think this is the quintessential episode that points to what we're trying to do here and what the show was about, and 86 I think really is a shining example of the content that you're producing.

MSH: Yeah, you just want more people at Unseen Realm events to bring that up during Q&A. Every place I've gone since we did that episode, somebody has asked something or came up to me and said I can't believe that one episode about the head covering. I had to send the kids out of the room.

TS: It's really a good episode. It's one of my favorite ones, so if you have not listened that show, please go back and listen to it. It's one of my favorites. Well, let's get into our tenth Q&A here. We've got probably 10 or so questions so I'm ready if you're ready.

MSH: Sure, let's go.

TS: Okay, our first one is from Isaac. In Mark 8:33 when Jesus tells Peter to "get behind me Satan", he is obviously using the term in the Old Testament sense of an oppositional role that can apply to humans and not to Peter having been possessed by a singular cosmic arch nemesis. This seems to be reflected in some translations such as those by NT Wright, which he prefers to use the Satan in his translation as opposed to Satan, S there, during New Testament exegesis. To what extent should we consider the authors to have intended the use of role as opposed to singular cosmic arch nemesis? Furthermore, should there be a clear delineation between Satan and Diablos or is it much more murky giving they appear conflated in the Septuagint?

MSH: I think I'd say first of all, I do agree with the adversarial sense behind what Jesus is saying here to Peter. I don't think there's a contextual argument for presuming that Peter was Satan, that he was like turned and viewed as Satan, the cosmic nemesis. I also don't see any a contextual argument that he was possessed. Where you get that elsewhere, the language is pretty clear about Satan entering into someone like Judas or something like that. So I don't think that's intended at all. I do think what is intended, the term being used essentially is saying hey Peter, don't oppose me. Don't be an adversary to what I've just said what's coming down the road. So I think Wright and others of course, it's not something that only he has noticed but I think that's the consistent way to view it.

The whole question about distinguishing between Satan and Diablos, the equation is certainly made in the New Testament but it's all about context. So if you have a situation where one or the other term is used, especially if it's Satan, then I think you have to look at context. Is this a neutral use of the term or does it refer to an entity? I've actually looked this up. You can't

really determine it through morphology alone or use of the definite article because in Greek anyway, Greek is not Hebrew, so the stuff about the definite article that I have in the book about, in Unseen Realm about *satan*, the article doesn't really apply here because it's a different language. But you will have instances where you have *Satanas* in Greek there occurs with or without the article where the context clearly points to a specific individual, the devil or some other term that's applied. So there's no neat break down there and Diablos, the devil, is certainly used of Satan in the New Testament but does that mean everywhere we see one term Satan that we need to think of the other?

Well, not necessarily, and I think Mark 8:33 is a good instance of that. And that overlap in terms does start in the Septuagint but you can't look at trend or a phenomenon and say well, I see this trend or phenomenon here so everywhere I run into this same term I have to think this way. That isn't the case. Trends are trends. Phenomena are phenomena, even with outliers to deal with, and you certainly have outliers here. So the context is always king. You try to determine what the best sense, the best semantic sense of the term in any given context, and you can't impose a meaning that would work in one context with all the other contexts.

TS: Our next two questions are from Corby. First question is, Mike has talked about how Psalm 82 speaks of the punishment of the elohim for failing in a Yahweh assigned task. He has suggested that the elohim failed to faithfully testify about Yahweh to the nations. Is it overreaching to see in Acts 14 a polemic against the failure of both the elohim and the Jews to testify faithfully about Yahweh to the nations? If so, what does this say about Paul and the apostolic mission from a Deuteronomy 32 perspective as faithful emissaries of Yahweh over and against the elohim and Jews who fail to point the nations to Yahweh?

MSH: I would quibble with the terminology, the question a little bit. I don't think that it was the job of the sons of God and the elohim in Psalm 82 who are being judged who were put over the nations, assigned to the nations in Deuteronomy 32, I don't think it was their job to testify about Yahweh. That language is a bit too strong. And Corby didn't use that terminology but I kind of got the flavor or the feeling for the question that he thought I was suggesting that they were supposed to evangelize or something like that, bring the nations actively back to faith in Yahweh. I think that goes little bit too far.

What I have said is that it was their job to rule the nations justly according to Yahweh's law and not solicit worship that belonged to Yahweh to themselves. They violated both of those situations, the former Psalm 82 makes clear and the latter about the worship issue that Deuteronomy makes clear. But that is sort of like active evangelism, so I don't know if that's what Corby was thinking of in the question or not, but I kind of got that feeling from it. So I think we should say that. Paul thinks in some way and he's not specific, but Paul apparently thinks that in some way the situation where the nations were assigned to the other gods and dispersed, that that would prompt people in those nations to seek God, Acts 17:26-27. Let me just read that.

²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their

way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

MSH: Paul sees some relationship between the return of the nations sort of into the fold back into the family of Yahweh and this situation that derives from what happened at Babel. But his statement doesn't actually have them doing some sort of evangelism or have them testifying to the nations about the true God so I think that goes a little bit too far. So the rest of the question referring to Acts 14, something about Acts 14 being a polemic against the failure of the elohim, Acts 14 is when the Gentiles mistakenly identify Paul and his preaching companion, identifies them as gods, divine beings, Zeus and Hermes and that sort of thing. Paul says wait a minute. We're just men like you.

We're not gods. So is Acts 14 kind of a polemic because here you have two men that people assume are gods testifying to the people about the Messiah. Is there something going on there that would go back to Psalm 82 and say look, two guys are out here doing your job, doing the job at you gods should have done. The gods are inept and whatever and you deserve judgment back in Psalm 82. I think that's a stretch. I think it goes a bit too far so I would view it as overreaching. Paul denies the identification which sort of seems necessary for the analogy but he wouldn't have to affirm it. Literarily it is a stronger case if there's something a little more pointed in that direction. I guess what I would say I just need to see more in the text. In another words, is there some definite hook linguistically textually summed some term that really matters, is there a hook back in the Psalm 82 and Acts 14, and I don't know of any. So for that reason plus just more generally that I just don't see evangelism or telling the nations, giving the nations a message about Yahweh, I don't see that as a specific thing that's brought up in Psalm 82. So for those two reasons, I would be disinclined to go that direction with Acts 14.

TS: Corby's second question is, just heard Larry Hurtado discussing Jesus devotion. He's speculated that if Paul was asked why Jesus was worshiped, Paul's answer would be something like "God raised him. God exalted him and God requires that we worship him". In contrast, Hurtado said that Greek notions of essence and person would not have been categories that Paul would have used to describe or understand Jesus' relationship to Yahweh. My question is how would second temple Jewish views of divine plurality, Angel of the Lord, Divine Council regent stuff give us more insight into how Paul would have understood Jesus in light of the Shema and exclusive worship of Yahweh?

Though Hurtado said Greek thought didn't provide the categories for the earliest Jewish Christians, to understand this Yahweh Jesus relationship he didn't seem to make an attempt unpack categories available to the first century Jewish Christians that can illuminate the situation, such as Old Testament divine plurality concepts and language. This left me very confused. And he sent the question to Dr. Hurtado and his response was "I contend that the chief agent traditions were a factor but not sufficient to account for the kind of cultic reverence given to Jesus. None of them received anything equivalent". Does Mike agree with Hurtado's assessment? I get the impression from Dr. Heiser that Jewish divine plurality ideas were far more influential in New Testament thought than guys like Hurtado are granting.

MSH: Yeah, I've mentioned before that Larry Hurtado, we know each other. We chatted a good bit about this. We disagree on this point and I'm not the only one who disagrees with Hurtado

on this point. It really comes down to questions like his contention that the chief agent traditions were factor but not sufficient to account for the cultic reverence, that's a key phrase for him given to Jesus. Well, that depends how you look at worship, cultic reverence. That tells you where Hurtado is at on worship. He's defining worship in terms of cult ritual, cult observance and for those who don't know, the word cult there refers to kind of ritual observances, something where there's prayer to a certain being, in this case Jesus in what we're talking about here. There some sort of ritual observance that has him as the focus. There's the Lord's supper that sort of thing. So his argument is that well the other chief ages that you see in second Temple Judaism never get that kind of stuff. People don't pray to them.

There is no ritual service element that would show that they are the object of devotion like you do with Yahweh of Israel. And so that's why his answer goes in the direction it goes. Well a lot of people who think that Hurtado defines worship too narrowly and I would also be one of those, but I would also ask how do you divorce incarnation from all of this? So sure, the other chief agents don't get the sort of adoration or devotion that Jesus does. Well they're also not incarnate. They're not the incarnation. That element is lacking in the way other chief agents get talked about in second temple Jewish literature. It's not lacking in the New Testament. And so once you factor the incarnation in then this person Jesus becomes in flesh the God of Israel. And so what Hurtado is saying is that knowledge alone, in his view, is somehow insufficient, would not have prompted worship, and that seems a little odd to me.

So as a Jew why would I feel compelled to worship the God of Israel just for who he is the Old Testament and then if I believe that that same God is now in this man, in this incarnate, in this man Jesus, so why wouldn't I just sort of automatically look at him the same way? Hurtado's trying to sort of not go that direction and I think his view is too narrow. And so I don't think that he's really considering Jesus identity consistently in terms of the way he approaches it. Let me just flip row quickly. There are a number of people that sort of criticize Hurtado on this point and not in a caustic way. When I say criticize I mean they just don't buy it. So in a lot of the two power stuff this name will be familiar. Daniel Boyarin in his article, *The Gospel of the Memra*, and it's about Jewish Binatarianism in the prologue to John, the beginning of the Gospel of John that's very familiar to most Christians. On page 257, there's a long footnote and Boyarin writes this. I'm going to read this just to give you a flavor of how other scholars look at Hurtado's sort narrow definition of things here. Boyarin is a Jew but he's really into the two powers whole discussion so he would say,

While in general I find Hurtado's argument bracing and important, his exclusive reliance on only one criterion, worship, as determining the divine nature of a given intermediary seems to me overly narrow and rigid. There may be no gainsaying his demonstration, I think, that worship of the *incarnate* Logos, is a novum, a "mutation" as he styles it, introduced by Jesus-people, but the *belief* in an intermediary, a *deuteros theos*, was common to them and other Jews. To Hurtado's one-dimensional notion of what constitutes a divine being, contrast Daniel Abrams: "When is an attribute a literary means of describing divine activity, and when is it personified as a hypostatic element, receiving an identity of its own, while nevertheless partaking in the divine ontology? The latter appears to be the case when the physical manifestation of God

is not excluded from the divine being" On this criterion, as I have indicated, many non-Christian Jews did indeed believe in second divinities or second divine beings.

MSH: So personally, I'm still not really sure why Hurtado wants to see the worship of Jesus, wants to see the binatarian thing that you see in the New Testament, why he wants to look at that, what happens with Jesus as being totally unique. There's this hesitancy to tie it back into other chief agent figures and second deity figures, second divinity figures and all that stuff. On one level the answer to my own question there is well, he doesn't want to tie it back to them because if you look at those other examples, they don't receive worship and so he sees this disconnection. Okay, that's true but does that really build a wall between what's going on in the New Testament and what's happening in these other examples because they do use phrases like *deuteros theos*, the second god.

They do depict second agents on Yahweh's throne, which is language that you see in the New Testament of Jesus. These things are in the text and to sort of focus on cult, cultic reverence to use Hurtado's term, to me just seems a little bit narrow. And I'm not sure really what purpose this serves. Why does it matter? I've talked to Larry enough to know that it does but I'm still not sure why it matters. Does he want to reserve something, some extra special category for Jesus? I'm not sure but it seems to me that the way we look at Jesus and factoring in incarnation, when you look back at the Old Testament, you do have Yahweh as a man along with an invisible Yahweh. You do get that. And so if I'm a Jew that's sort of aware this sort of thing happens in the text, I'm going to connect it back to the Old Testament. And when you have other texts, other Jewish texts that sort of riff off or build off some of these passages, and they might not express it exactly the same way as the New Testament does or to the nth degree that the New Testament does, well okay. They don't all have to be the same but yet I still look at it as there's more consistency here than inconsistency I think, even though the worship thing is important. There is a disconnect. I'm not denying that but I just don't think that that is sufficient reason to sort of a disconnect what's happening. I just don't know what point it really serves. Maybe someday I'll have another conversation with Larry and he'll say something that makes it go off in my head, I don't know. But to this point, I'm not sure why it matters so much to talk about it one way as opposed to another.

TS: Our next question's from Bill. I don't believe Babel was a historic event. Human languages show a definite lineage and it doesn't match the Babel story. Does that matter? Doesn't the interpretation still work since the first century Jews believed it to be historical? In a general sense, how much historicity is required of Genesis 1-11 for the Divine Council interpretation to work?

MSH: Well, I would say in very loose general terms, if you're looking at Divine Council stuff as a theological statement both in terms of a supernatural realm and in terms of how people not only believed that the divine world intersected with the human world but also that it did in some way, then you don't need precise historicity. But I'm actually going to object to the premise of the question because I think evangelicals tend over claim when it comes to Genesis 11 and the whole Babel language thing. I think they over read the passage and that feels like what's the cause or

what's behind this question. In other words, because you can't really do linguistics, let's just put it this way. There's no linguist that's going to say all the language's of the world come from one language. There's just no evidence for that. That's true but here's my question. Does the Tower of Babel story require that thought? I don't think it does. That's why I'm saying evangelicals tend to overreach and over claim from this passage. Let's just go look at the passage here. We have Genesis 11. Here's what we read. God is the speaker here, speaking in his council,

⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, [**MSH: in verse 1, the text makes a statement that all the world had one language.**] so that they may not understand one another's speech.” ⁸ So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth.

MSH: Now this has been read so frequently to say that there was one language and now all the languages of the world resulted from this event. That is not actually what the text says. So here are my questions. Where is the claim in those verses, where is the claim in the text that all the earth's languages arose as a result of what happened here? There is no such claim in the text. The text says the language of the people in verse 1 was one. They had one language and that that circumstance, having one language that was ruined. That was undone. So in verse 1 we have the whole earth had one language and then in verse 9 the Lord confused that one language of all the earth. We're not told how many languages created the confusion. We're not given a number at all. Was it two? Was it four? Why does it have to be 10-20,000 in all the dialects we see today? That is assumed.

That is read into Genesis 11 and it's linguistically indefensible just on the basis of a linguistic science. And even if you say look, we're talking about the nations that they knew about. There are 70 of them, Genesis 10 and all that kind of stuff, even if you take those it doesn't work because if you actually go look at ancient languages, you have, without getting too peripheral here, too far off of the beaten path, Sumerian as a language is unaffiliated. It's not Semitic. It's not Asian. It's not Egyptian. It stands alone. What it is is something that you can't tie all the others too and frankly, it's difficult to tie any known language completely to Sumerian. There are some candidates to have some specific overlaps with Sumerian but nothing sort of works that says we understand that Sumerian was the parent language of this, that, or the other thing. Even Akkadian is a Semitic language. Sumerian is not. Akkadian's used the Sumerian's script, the invention of cuneiform, to represent their own language.

So their relationship is the script, the idea, the innovation of using wedges to represent verbal speech. It's not that the languages are related because they're not. Egyptian sort of is by itself because it has traces of the African family and also some Semitic, but neither of those is related to Sumerian. There's a complete disconnect there. I'll just stop there but you have a situation even if you're talking about the 70 nations of Genesis 10 where this doesn't work wind linguistically with all the data at our disposal. But I would suggest to you Genesis 11 never claims that. Think about what it says, all the earth had one language and that gets confused. That's a lot different than saying all the earth had one language and at the end of the Babel event the earth had 70 languages or 20 or 30 or whatever. It never says that. That has to be read into the account. So while I would say just broadly loosely you don't have to have some sort of detailed

proofiness for the historicity of every item in Genesis 1-11 to buy into the Divine Council worldview.

You don't have to have that at all. You have to believe that there is a supernatural world and it intersects with our world and you have to believe in big concepts like Yahweh chose a people for himself, the other ones he doesn't. He disinherits, still interested in them, that kind of thing. And those are big picture broad sweeping theological concepts. We can embrace all that without saying well, in southern Mesopotamia or northwestern Mesopotamia, since I can't know for sure I just have to throw up my hands and say I can't believe any of it. That's just ridiculous. You don't need that but I will object to just the premise of the question because I do think evangelicals typically over read the whole incident.

TS: Mike, Bill's going to get a gold star for his word of the show, historicity. It gets my gold star. Okay, the next one is kind of fun and it's from Renée and his question is, I've heard Mike in a few interviews hint at a few stories regarding his early Christian walk at home with his parents. Mike, could you tell us a few of those situations? I think testimonies like that are insightful and fun. And then he also, has information presented in the Façade novel surprised or changed your parents belief on the reality of the UFO phenomena?

MSH: Well, I'll take the second one first. I don't know. They never really commented on the UFO thing so I don't know one way or the other what they think about that. They constantly kind of needle me for killing them off in the first book. It's like what did we do? You killed us off in the first book. It's like kind of get over it. It's a novel mom. Just don't worry about it. They have a good time with it. I will also say that in the Portent, for those who haven't read the Portent, do I even want, how do I talk about this without giving a spoiler away? In the Portent, there is a scene in a conversation where two people are talking about how they met a third one, third character and it was through a supernatural visitation where someone who was dead visited somebody else and gave them a very brief instruction that was a portent, that was a foreshadowing of a set of circumstances that play out in real life and bring these characters together.

Well, that episode does come from something my parents did experience. I can tell you my parents experienced it because it doesn't completely overlap to the item in the story. Boy, I don't know how many years ago now, maybe 20? My dad's dad had died and they didn't have the best relationship but toward the latter part of his dad's life, it was considerably amended and positive. But I think part of my dad's concern of the time because they were believers by this time in their own lives, was about my dad, what's going on here, because his dad had been a churchgoer all of his life but really I think it's probably fair to say just churchgoer without a lot of which you would associate with being a true Christian or real Christian, just leave it at that. I don't know necessarily how my dad thought about that but I think there was some concern. And so after the funeral, I went to the funeral then I had to go back home and they went to their place. A few days or week or whatever later I get this phone call and my dad says we have to tell you something that happened. They're telling me because I'm the Bible guy. I'm supposed to know what's going on here. So they said we went to bed and they had in their room a clock. And it was one of these clocks that would talk.

I don't know if people in the audience remembers these but you used to get these novelty clocks and they say little things like get out of bed, get up, it's seven o'clock, whatever. They were

programmed to say something when the alarm went off instead of a clanging sound or whatever, instead of beeping and say something they were programmed to say. Well, they had this clock in their room. They went to bed and they were laying there and my dad said all of a sudden, just out of the blue, the clock spoke to them. The clock said everything was okay okay okay okay. And that was something his dad used to say all the time. It was sort of his thing, his little ditty that he would say. And my dad said I just looked over at your mother and asked did you hear that, because he wanted to make sure I wasn't imagining this, and my mom said, oh yeah. I heard it. So they got up and they disconnected the clock and put it in the closet. That was the end of the use of the clock.

But they wanted to tell me this and ask what I thought and so on so forth. So I used that episode in the book so there's at least that much of a connection. So if the question was about stuff like that, they're going to be right there because that actually happened to them. My parents have no reason to lie to me. There it was. It is what it is. Back to the first part, anecdotes, boy, I became a Christian when I was in high school and I wasn't raised in any sort of Christian tradition. My mom tells me they had me baptized. I'll take her word for it because obviously I don't remember any of it. We never went to church, never did anything like that. It was very irreligious in that respect. My dad who I refer to as my dad, he's actually my stepdad. He and my mom were married when we were real little. I was five. My brother was three. He had all sorts of experiences in Vietnam and Korea, very hardened person. I don't think he would say he didn't believe in God but didn't really have a very high view of God. I think that would be fair. So it wasn't anything that really mattered into the family, "religion". But I became a Christian when I was in high school through the influence of a friend who is the namesake for Brian Scott in the Façade, and, of course, the Portent.

That was this guy's name, my friend. We met when we were nine years old and eventually in high school I become a Christian. Well it wasn't the best situation because my parents thought I had joined a cult because I was going to church not once a Sunday but twice and I even went during the midweek so this is just bizarre behavior to them. Going to youth activities, that's nice, something to do, at least you're not in trouble but it's all this church stuff. So they admitted to me years later that they used to do things to me and say things just to see what I would do because they had no frame of reference for this. So when I was a senior in high school, we had a class called the Bible as literature, so there's all these kids taking their Bible to school. I was forbidden from taking my Bible to school. So here I am. I'm like a real Christian but everybody else is taking it because they have this class but I'm not allowed to. It was ridiculous but that's what they wanted so you know, obey your parents. I walked into arguments that my parents had about whether Mike was gay because I didn't go out and to be crass about it, I didn't go out and have sex with girls in my car like my brother did, not my natural brother but a stepbrother was really a carouser.

But it was like that was normal but Mike is abnormal. So it's like I walked into this conversation like I can't really believe I'm hearing this but the context for it made sense. My mom went off on me one time and I don't know what she was mad at me for. It was something spiritual. You don't even have to be confronted because when you're a good testimony, it's going to really create tension with people who are being challenged by the Holy Spirit about their own spiritual condition. So she got mad at me for something one time and she just yelled at me and said why can't you be like all the other kids and go out and do drugs then you'd be normal. So you just have situations like this that to say it is so bizarre but again, after-the-fact we can look

back on it and there's some humor in it. But it was really sort of an antagonistic kind of situation but then there were these episodes that were just the complete opposite. I was pretty directionless in high school because they hadn't gone to college. I didn't really know anybody who had gone to college. I'm done with high school so I guess that's what I'm supposed to go and do. I told this story in Michigan, just that the place in Michigan and I'll tell it here. This will give you an idea of how utterly clueless I was in high school. I have no direction at all. I'm smart. I have a good short-term memory.

I got good grades but I have no idea what I'm doing. So I went to take my SATs and at the end of the SAT, they make you put a number in to have the scores sent somewhere. Nobody told me that. I don't know what to put here, like what number do I put in here? They won't take the exam until I stick a number in there and I have no idea what to do. So I get this big list and all these numbers on them. I'm going through there. I guess I can put any one in there but I ought to look at it. Maybe something will ding a bell here. So I put in the number for the University of Kentucky. You say why Mike? Why did you put the University of Kentucky number into your SAT score, because I went to high school with Sam Bowie who wound up going to the NBA and Sam had just gone to Kentucky. And my thought, it was no deeper than this, was well, if I go there I'll know somebody. That was my plan. That was the level of cluelessness that I was. So I took the SAT but later on I went to my pastor and said to him, I'm going to be out of high school soon. What should I do? And he's like well you know, you like the Bible and you're pretty smart. Your grades are good.

Why don't you go to Bible College? Why don't you just try that? I said ok, I'll do that. Well, my parents got wind of this and were absolutely opposed. And so basically, we had a confrontation where I said look, I'm 18. I can sign up for the Army. I could do a whole host of other things and basically I have the right to do that. I'm technically looked on as an adult and if it means that I have to leave home and not come back to go to Bible college, I'll do that. That softened a little bit. They told me not to apply anyway but then my dad turns around and says, well, I heard you're taking this trip out to this college, and we've got two or three cars. They're all old junkers. Why don't you take our mobile home? I'm like what? What did you eat? Are you the same person that you've been for years? I couldn't believe it. So we actually had this sort of this luxury trip out there but told me not to apply but I actually did. And I still wonder to this day if I did the right thing. I basically applied in secret, got in, and I wound up going there. It was just part of this confrontation.

And it didn't end there. I spent a few years at Bible College and my grandma lived with us at the time and she was sort of my mole in the house. She was a believer and she called me one day and said I think you should probably not come home for Christmas break. I said what's going on, what happened? And she said well, I overheard her mom and dad say that when you came home, they were going to take your car so that you couldn't go back. So I had to find a place to stay. I was in Minnesota and sort of at the last minute so I couldn't go home. There were things like this that happened all through my high school and college years. But trying to be obedient to my parents because I wanted to be consistent and I didn't want to have anything I did affirm some sort of crazy idea they had or whatever. And so it wasn't the best situation. It wasn't awful but there could be confrontations there, too. They're believers now and I'm actually going out on the 19th, March 19th.

I will be at their church in Delaware doing an Unseen Realm event that they have spearheaded. So now it's like completely opposite. I can have people disparage me for all sorts of

things but I basically can do no wrong in front of my parents. They're my biggest defenders. They're just in my corner. They get it. They're believers now so it's just literally night and day. But you know we had all sorts of interesting episodes at home when I was in high school. But if you've read the Façade or the Portent, this is part of Brian Scott's sort of situation and the way he approaches things. Just do the right thing. Just try to do the right thing and yeah it's going to hurt but just try to do the right thing and let it play out. Let God do something with it whatever he's going to do with it, that's what he'll do with it. Just try to do the right thing. And that was the way I had to approach my whole high school experience because I had become a Christian.

TS: We're going to get back into some Bible questions and the next one is from Neal. What was the purpose of the pseudepigrapha? How do we know that these writings were not like the book of Mormon to Orthodox Christians today? Why were they written in a style mimicking that of an actual historic event? How do the people of that time view these writings?

MSH: I'm going to quibble with the wording of the question a little bit. What we think of as the pseudepigrapha, when we use that term, the pseudepigrapha, we're referring to this collection of books that we, and I say we collectively, the modern world, modern scholars over the last few centuries, we have collected these things and put them in a group and we've called that group the pseudepigrapha. So because that's the case, there was no intent or purpose behind the creation of these books that would sort of, all the authors of these books didn't have the same purpose. They didn't have the same idea. You can't look at it that way. Now when modern scholars group these books together and call them collectively the pseudepigrapha, they are called that because they have one fundamental characteristic and that is they were not written by the person's name either in the title or by the person who a sort of distant historical figure that they're about but they may or may not claim to have been written by. So pseudepigrapha doesn't mean false writings as in these are icky.

Don't read this stuff because it's all garbage in here. It's all false teaching. It doesn't mean that all. It refers to the authorship. It refers to false attribution like writing under a pseudonym or nom de plume or something like that. That's the characteristic they have in common. So the part of the question about aren't these just like the book of Mormon or something like that, I think in some cases the comparison can be made because we don't have, I should back up. The reasons why pseudepigraphical book might have been written, most of the time authors won't tell you or you won't have a real good idea, at least a certain idea, the reasons they could've been written are so varied that when I give you some of these, you could probably look at the book of Mormon and say number four. That's where the book of Mormon sort of aligns, or number three or number two, whatever. That's why I say you could look at the book of Mormon this way because do we really believe the story of how this book came to originate because the circumstances are modern history.

So there is a bit of an overlap there. But anyway, pseudepigraphy or pseudonymity, writing under a pseudonym, we're talking about people who wrote things and the content may be historical. If something that's in the book of Enoch or third or fourth Maccabees or the Ascension of Isaiah, they can read about a historical event and the event might be completely historical, well-known even. So the content doesn't mean that the contents are not historical, that there is no historicity in it. There could still be a lot of historicity to it so that isn't really the issue here. It's just the claim of authorship that is false or that is contrived or made up. So you

can ask the question, why did they do that? They could've had good motives. They might have bad motives. Who knows? Some books get attributed to certain writers by historical accident. In other words, the book doesn't really claim it but there's some church historical tradition that might have started in the second century that said this book was written by this guy and that just sort of sticks. And so then it gets grouped as a pseudepigraphical work because this is the authorship that's claimed for it and there's no real evidence for it. Internally, it doesn't even say anything like that so you could wind up being a pseudepigraphical work for that reason, too. But the writers themselves might have good reasons. They might have bad reasons. I'll give you some examples.

DA Carson actually has a reasonable list of this. This isn't going to be the whole list but these are some of the common ones but if you wanted to get a full list, I'd suggest reading Carson's article in the Dictionary of New Testament Background. But here's some possibilities. Sometimes writers did this out of pure malice. I'm going to write a book. I'm going to stick this name on it and I'm just going to basically make it all up. And I'm doing this to hoodwink the audience that would be interested in this. So you can have instances where it's malicious like that. They could do it because they figured hey people will want to read this. It has a famous name on it, famous biblical figure on it. People will read it and I might be able to make some money off of it. I might be able to make my living like this. That's not the best motive but they could do it for that reason. Sometimes they just wanted to have something to say. Let's just say this. This is sort of a more academic feel to it but they might have something to say and they figured I'm a nobody. Nobody's going to read my book unless I put this famous name on it. If it has that name on it then people would read it. So at least my ideas would get out into the public discourse this way. That's a little more of an honorable motive. It's more honorable than the other ones anyway.

So they might do it for that reason just to get read. Sometimes they would use an ancient name, stick it on the title of their book to get credence for an idea or to get people to interact with an idea that they had, so that's part of being read. Sometimes you'd have a situation where maybe an author wouldn't put their name on a book because they're too modest to, so it's kind of the reverse of the other circumstance. I don't want the attention here that this might get, for good reason. I don't know really need the adulation here or whatever they perceive might come of this on the positive side so I'm going to put somebody else's name on it, so that they can do it for that reason. There are any number of reasons why this would be done. Now going back to the book of Mormon thing, it's easy for us to look at that and say well, Joseph Smith made the whole story up because he wanted not only to be read but also he wanted to gain or grow a following. So since that is one of the possible motivations for pseudepigraphical work, well sure if that's how we're going to assess the book of Mormon. I don't assign any inspiration to the book of Mormon.

Then maybe that's what's floating around in Joseph Smith's head, certainly possible in my mind. So there could be a connection to that and it might be sort of the same thing. It's not quite the same but kind of in the same category. Pseudepigrapha, they get a bad reputation because of the modern name that gets stuck on the collection and because of the idea of pseudonymity but it was so common. I mean there aren't like five or ten of these things. There are dozens and dozens, maybe even into the three figures, maybe into the hundreds of these kinds of books that have survived from antiquity. So people knew this was a common practice. They didn't have the same sensibilities to it that we do now because it was so common. And so

out of the gate, it's not right to sort of denigrate books in this category as though they're not important. A book like 1 Enoch was real important actually. I'm working on a book right now that really focuses on the importance of not just the book of Enoch but specifically within the book of Enoch, the story of the Watchers, the importance of that story for New Testament theology. It's very evident that Peter and Jude read the book and it really helped them articulate and informed their theology in certain places. And the way they wrote what they did right became part of the New Testament. They're certainly not the only ones as the book I'm working on will demonstrate and as I've discussed already in certain podcasts. There's a lot of material that bleeds into the New Testament. So you can't just say because it's pseudepigrapha it's not important. It doesn't need to be inspired to be important. And I think that's one of the disconnects we have going on in our heads about to hold the whole collection.

TS: The next one's from Alan. How do we account for the vast amount of demons present? The traditional view can have as many spirits as it wants. Just say a third fell and you can make up a number. But if demons all trace back to the event in the days of Jared, how can we literally account for all of them or can we? How do 200 immediately sent to Tartarus, watchers, a local flood, and some conquest and lament create the amounts that are present today?

MSH: Well, I would ask first of all, how many are present today, and I'm asking that deliberately because we are never given a number. So here we are. We are back to a common assumption that there are myriads and myriads and myriads and hundreds of thousands and millions of demons out there. Really? On what basis would we draw that conclusion? Not in the New Testament. There is nothing in the Bible that gives us a specific number of demons or that even tells us it's a whole lot. There's simply nothing like that. The language you get about myriads upon myriads, in Hebrew, this thousands upon thousands and this kind of language like the scene at Deuteronomy 33 for instance.

There's one in Psalm 68. That language is always used of the good guys. That's always used of the host of heaven. You never see that language attributed to those spirits in rebellion. You just don't. So I'm going to answer the question that way. I don't know that it's vast. And since I don't know that the number is vast, I don't really feel any urgency to come up with an answer that assumes the vastness for demons. There could very well be only a relative handful. I don't know. We're not only not given a specific number, they're never described in multitudes in the Bible.

TS: The next one's from Brad and this question's about the Fern and Audrey episode number 68. The question is about the involvement of demons and watchers and the various contexts that they mentioned in which trauma-based programming takes place, Satanism, sex trafficking, and government experimentation. Are watchers and demons involved in all of these kinds of trauma programming or just the Satanic?

MSH: I can't speak precisely here for Fern and Audrey or how they would answer this. They're the ones that really need to field a question like that but I'll give you my best guess having talked to them a number of times. My best guess is that the true demonic demonic/watcher presence or involvement is pretty rare. When I've talked to them, this came out a little bit on the podcast, too, that yeah we do encounter that but really not that often. The problem is that people can be

programmed to believe what's going on or that this kind of thing is going on when it isn't. In other words, Fern and Audrey know what would be the first to say look, a person who's been traumatized, whether it's in some sort of ritual context or something else, can be told that there are these demonic entities that are doing this to you that are going to affect your life, that are going to do this, that, and the other thing to you, and that's just messaging.

In other words, there's no ontological reality to it in that case. It's just a manipulative tool. So even when people have such stories, I think they would say that they can't assume that that's actually what's going on. And to be honest with you, based on conversations I've had with them, they almost don't care because their approach to helping people recover from trauma and the different messaging that goes with it whether there is an entity, a nonhuman entity behind it or not, they're messaging to the victim, to the survivors is going to be the same. You need to stop believing lies and that's what they really focus on, to get people to not believe the lies that they have been told by their victimizer or that they've been programmed to think in certain situations or that this coping mechanism that they have, that we all have, this dissociation, that lies become part of the way they dissociate from the trauma as a coping mechanism. If a bunch of lies theological lies or lies about you as a person are part of that, you need to stop believing lies.

So it really doesn't matter to them what the origin point of the lies are on one level, but being careful because I can't speak with any sort of professional competence here like they can, they're going to say they run into it. But from the conversations I've had with them, they don't make assumptions about such things and you sort of know it when you see it. You know it when it manifests but it's not normative. In other words, to be, this might bother some people but they don't have a Frank Peretti view of reality here. It's not that there's a demon lurking behind every rock or under every rock or behind every tree. There's not a demon that is at the root of all your behaviors, of all the things that you believe, the lies that you believe. In most cases, it's not. It's programming and it's really the origin of the programming and the system of programming, the method of programming that varies and can include this element but really the way you get tracked back from that, the way you get healed from that no matter what the point of origin, the approach is going to be the same. If there are entities involved then they're going to run into some other difficulties and whatnot. But I think that's probably the best I can do with this question, not being on the same, not being anywhere near the level of expertise that they have. All that is based upon conversations I've had with them or where we sort of talked about the same question.

TS: Well Mike, since we're on the Fern and Audrey topic, now would be a good time to talk about the gofundme campaign, get an update on it? I just checked and it's over \$2000 now so that's awesome.

MSH: Yeah, for those that didn't see it on the blog, I would invite you to go out to my website, find the entry, it's a couple weeks old at this point. We're trying to raise money. We're taking a long-term look at this, something that can we raise a certain amount of money over the next two or three years to be able to fund people, cover their expenses that are involved, in having a week of Fern and Audrey's time. And in the case of some people, it might be more than one visit a year. It might be one every year. It is hard to tell and they operate on the situation by situation basis but they've operated this way for 11 years. They have no website. They have no Facebook

site intentionally. And so it costs money for people to get on a plane and go see them. It costs money for them to get have housing.

Fern and Audrey have a location that they use for this, a house but that costs money to maintain that, to pay the mortgage. They don't live there themselves. They use it just for this. All of this costs money and Fern and Audrey don't have other jobs. This is what they do full-time so there is a cost involved in that. And often survivors cannot pay all of that so a lot of the time they have friends or family that donate the money. I've actually donated once to get somebody out there. So we figured hey, the gofundme thing was such a pleasant surprise for the bibliography, why not try this. And so we set an amount. It was \$50,000 over the course of two to three years out so it's not all one year. We think maybe two or three years we could get this and sort of keep it going over the course of two or three years. And maybe it doesn't get used up, maybe half of the people that need their time can pay themselves already. That's great, then you save it for somebody else. But to sort of give them a little headway so they can respond to the people, especially the ones who responded to the episode, to the podcast episode, they've had over a dozen people contact either you or me and then we put them in touch with Fern and Audrey. And I always leave it up to them.

Do you want to have a conversation with this person or not? Fern has told me that they have over a dozen people that need and want a week of their time but basically all of those people have said that we really can't afford to do this ourselves. That's kind of what immediately prompted, well, we ought to do something about this. We ought to try to think long-term because as the show stays online, we just all expect that it's going to grow. We're going to get more e-mails. They're going to get more contacts. More people are going to hear that episode and think that's me, that's my story. Obviously, I'm not going to give any names or details but during my Unseen Realm events, I have had someone come, it's actually happened twice, people come forward and saying I know what this is. This is my story. This is my wife's story. This is my husband's story. We understand what this is and what the problem is, what the trauma is. Can you put us in touch with Fern and Audrey, so I have done that. But we have people contacting us by e-mail, too, so people just come out of the woodwork. They hear it and we all just sort of figure it's not going to stop. We're going to get a certain number of these every month, every quarter. They're going to get contacted. We're going to get contacted. We have to get contacted because we don't put their contact information up there.

TS: You can send me an email at treystricklin@gmail.com and I'm excited that we have a direct infrastructure through Miqlat to be able to help people in need like this that otherwise have no way of getting funding and Fern and Audrey don't have the infrastructure that now we have with Miqlat and its tax deductible. I couldn't be more thrilled to be able to be in a position to help these people that probably would not be able to have access to help at all. It's exciting that so many people are responding already. And I know Fern is already started preparations for a person so just an immediate impact for this is exciting for Miqlat and for us as a community and the show and everything to do really good work like this.

MSH: It is what it's for because they are, like we said, intentionally off the radar and that's just the way it needs to be. That's the way it functions for what they do.

TS: I want to thank everybody who's donated and everybody in the future who will donate. It's an awesome cause to help these people. Our last question is going to be from Tammy and it's regarding Luke 7:36-50. In lieu of your commentary on women's hair coverings, when the woman dry wipes Jesus feet with her hair mingled with her tears and the perfume, is there any significance to her using her hair?

MSH: I don't believe so. We're never told she was seeking anything and culturally washing the feet was something a household servant would do. It was a job for someone of low estate, which when Jesus does it later in the Gospels, Peter's pretty hesitant to let them do it. It's a familiar episode. So the reaction to footwashing itself is a gesture of low estate and humility. So I think that is actually the point of narrative. We're never told me anything otherwise. But when you look at 1 Corinthians 11, Paul is addressing Gentiles in the passage and the material that we talked about in that particular episode with the covering is all Greco-Roman. It's all Gentile, if we want to use that term material medical texts.

So while I don't doubt at all that certain Jews would've heard about these medical ideas, I think Paul certainly was because he was pretty well-educated. I think it's likely that Jews knew that this is the way that Greek and Roman, Greco-Roman doctors look at hair and associate it with fecundity and all that stuff. Most Jews, the average Jew like the Mary and Martha situation, people just sort of getting along in life, chances are may not have ever heard of it and it really wasn't really part of their lives. So I think in the wider context like that that it's something that if you had access to Greco-Roman learning, Greco-Roman medical texts or something like that, or someone who did and this was something that you talked about, okay, there's a chance that could've filtered into the average Jewish community.

There's a chance of that but I think really it's going to take someone like Paul who just had wide exposure to that kind of literature to really grasp it. And so I don't see it really being in view in an exclusively rural kind of poor Jewish situation like we see in the Gospels. And there's nothing actually in that account that really kind of draws our attention to this sort of thing going on with the hair. The scandal of it is really the expense. When you actually get the scandal commented on in the passage, it's really about the cost of what she had used, working with the alabaster and that sort of thing. So I think that's more in view than anything that would've been scandalous for some sexual reason or something like that.

TS: Would you like to tell us a little bit about your trip to Michigan? 1:05:25

MSH: The trip in Michigan went really well. I do want to give a kind of a shout and a plug to our host Landmark Community Church in Hazel Park, Michigan. The people there were just wonderful. I haven't done this in the past with the respect to other churches. We've had nothing but the same kind of reception, just all good. The people that come to these things are sincere. They are eager for content. All of that was the same in Hazel Park. I wanted to mention them specifically because this is a church without getting into the details but it has really suffered in the recent past in terms of kind of committing itself to being serious to having good content and it's really led to a situation where, I don't know how to put it any other way, but with a lot of people have left who would be I guess less tolerant of content, sort of want other things in church. So if you're looking for a church home in that part of the world, that part of Michigan, Hazel Park, Michigan, suburb of Detroit, you should check them out. I think you'll find some

like-minded people there for sure who are really appreciative of the content. So I wanted to make sure I said something on their behalf.

TS: And you've got another trip coming up to Delaware.

MSH: Delaware where my parents are, that is the actual event is 19th of March which is a Saturday. It's from 1 to 5. If people want the details, they can go to the website DRMSH.com/events or they can pull it off via the drop-down on the front page there. Under about you'll see speaking schedule. So that will give you the details there. The event is actually in Lewes, Delaware. There's Lewes Delaware, that's the address but then that the actual location is in a place called Angola. It's like can't they make up their mind what to call this place? But it's kind of overlapping so if people want to check that out, don't get confused by what you see on the events page. So that's on the 19th from 1 to 5 on that Saturday.