

## The “Impossible” God – Beyond our wildest hopes, dreams, and expectations!

1. No one expected to encounter a God and survive!
  - YHWH’s distinctives in the Hebrew Bible
  - Chemosh (Mesha Inscription) compared to YHWH in the Hebrew Bible
2. No one expected forgiveness, mercy, or divine favors ‘for free’ from a god -- they were always ‘bought’ with sacrifices and rituals and groveling in the ancient world.
  - Example of Noah after the Flood
  - Example in Babylonian satire:
  - Completely Unnecessary-Psalm 50!
3. Three: No one expected God to care about us, as opposed to just rituals to serve HIS needs.
4. No one expected God to be the One seeking us – Pagan Gods almost never left their abode except for war ... never for healing, restoring, or building beauty– they sent others to do the work.
5. No one expected God to be ‘fair and reasonable’ about His rules.
6. No one expected God to be ‘more than fair’—to be merciful and a peace-maker.
7. No one expected Grace instead of just mercy:
  - What is the Difference?
  - Biblical statements
8. No one expected a god to get His “hands dirty” for us, in creating a path to reconciliation/redemption/LIFE.
9. No one expected a god who “risks His reputation” on us.
10. No one expected a god who offered new life (birth and renewal) for free at no cost to us.
11. No one expected a god who Offered new life, new status, co-ownership to everyone – not just the elite.
12. No one expected a god who would extend His presence into our lives.
13. No one expected a god who would extend this presence into our very bodies/minds through the Indwelling Spirit of God.
14. No one expected a god who would use this Presence –Holy Spirit—to even intercede for us, for things beyond our knowledge!
15. No one expected this indwelling Spirit of God to actually empower us for LIFE, FREEDOM, and GOODNESS, unlike other indwelling spirits.
16. No one expected an emotionally rich God– involved in our lives in every facet.
17. But ABSOLUTELY No one would have expected this emotionally rich God to be emotionally vulnerable to us -- that we could cause Him sorrow over our bad choices.
18. And no one would have expected this emotionally rich God to be emotionally vulnerable to us -- that we could cause Him pleasure over our good choices [and not just ‘satisfaction’]:
  - NT Verses
  - The Parables of Jesus
19. And, finally, absolutely no one would have expected this emotionally rich God to delight in us to the point of SINGING!
20. *How Then Shall We Live?*