THE MONEY CHANGER AND CENRAL BANKER AT THE GATES OF HEAVEN

CHARACTERS

God

Moses

A money changer

President Lincoln

Factory worker

A central banker

The gates of heaven. Lots of traffic is heard in the background. Horns beeping. Some sirens. Men hawking their wares. Women and Children walking together. GOD is an old man with a long white beard and long flowing hair and gown. He sits on a throne. He is very happy and talks with MOSES beside him, who holds a book entitled ‘LAWS’.

During the play, every time GOD gets angry, there may be thunder and lightning. The thunder is heard as a rumbling. The lightning is shown by the flashing of STAGE LIGHTS either front or behind. The thunder and lighting will be indicated in the stage directions with ‘T’ and ‘L’. The various degrees of T and L will be indicated. Every time there is T and L, the characters do not talk over it but only after the sound and lights have stopped.)

GOD: What a day, Moses! I’ve already sent 50 men and women to hell. Can’t be too careful whom I let into heaven.

MOSES: Sir, your judgment is impeccable. I always said your word is law.

GOD: But it bothers me Moses. How much my children lie and steal and just plain ain’t very nice.

MOSES: God, sir, it’s not their fault.

GOD: What! (angrily. Much T and L.)

MOSES: (sweating) Well, I only meant….

GOD: I know what you meant. You’re always trying to protect them. It doesn’t work, believe me. My children only learn by feeling the consequences.

(A money changer walks in from stage left. He stands before God.)

GOD: Hello, money changer.

MONEY CHANGER: Be merciful, my god. I love you with all my heart.

GOD: Glad to hear that.

MONEY CHANGER: May I enter heaven?

GOD: And how have you shown your love?

MONEY CHANGER: God, I had a wife which I treated well. She never wanted for food or roof or clothes. My two sons I raised to honor you, God. They were worthy sons, and never raised hand or voice to their father, but followed in my footsteps.

GOD: (getting irritated. Small T and L.) Can you be a little bit more specific?

MONEY CHANGER: (blurting out) I charged interest on my loans. I did. I did. How else was I to live in the land of gentiles?

GOD: (Great T and L.) Did you hurt people with your usury?

MONEY CHANGER: Only one. An old woman who had a large farm, but no silver coins. She was about to be evicted so I loaned her silver……with interest.

GOD: And what became of this old woman?

MONEY CHANGER: (hesitating) I’m not sure. She died before she paid me back all my money.

GOD: (Great T and L.) Died!

MONEY CHANGER: Well, she was 117 years old!

GOD: (T, L) What happened to her farm?

MONEY CHANGER: It was my collateral.

GOD: (Great T and L.) Will my children never learn? (God starts to cry.) To use my invention of money against each other, when it is to be used only in exchange to bring joy. How can loaned money give birth to interest money, Money changer?

MONEY CHANGER: She’s got to find the interest somewhere. It’s not my problem….(stops because he realizes he is not being contrite)…. I don’t know, God. But it works. I’m able to raise my family. My sons have job security….

GOD: (Very great T and L.) Silence! Luckily you are small fry. I am waiting patiently for the big fish.

MONEY CHANGER: Oh, God. Thank you, great sir. So will I be allowed into heaven?

GOD: (suddenly smiling) Yes. (threatening thunder is heard) But you no longer can practice usury. There is no charging interest in heaven.

MONEY CHANGER: (bows) Heavenly god. My family thanks you. (walks inside the gate)

GOD: Moses, there are sins (his hands shape a small ball) and then there are the really BIG SINS! (his hands and arms open up into a huge ball)

MOSES: Master, you are the wisest.

GOD: Yes, Moses. You know, I invented money.

MOSES: Yes, yes, you’ve told me this.

GOD: Yes. It was brilliant. Here were my people needing and wanting. There had to be something to help them buy food and drink and pay for college. So I came up with money. But man was not to charge interest, cause that ended up with poverty, starvation, death. Wasn’t it one of the laws I gave you, Moses?

MOSES: I don’t think so, God.

GOD: Well, if I didn’t put it in my laws, then man put it into his laws. The shape of money would change over the millennia, but its purpose was always clear, to serve mankind, to satisfy their needs. That’s what works, Moses, for happy men and women.

(Lincoln in his top hat walks in from stage left.)

LINCOLN: Well, I guess I’m here finally. You must be the mighty benevolent God.

GOD: And you must be President Lincoln?

LINCOLN: Well, indeed, yes. How did you know me, God?

GOD: Lincoln, you have been a blessing to all your brothers on earth.

LINCOLN: But, you know, God, it’s been a hard life there. War sucks. Slavery sucks. Politics sucks. But most of all, the bankers suck!

GOD: (Great T and L.) We never mention that word in heaven!

LINCOLN: War?

GOD: No.

LINCOLN: Slavery?

GOD: No.

LINCOLN: Politics?

GOD: No.

LINCOLN: …ah…(pauses)…must be… bankers?

GOD: (Huge T and L. STAGE LIGHTS flash for several seconds.) Whew. (to himself) I’m glad feelings are not facts, but come and go. (continues to Lincoln) Son, I am proud of your greenbacks.

LINCOLN: Oh, God, you heard of them here in heaven?

GOD: Yes, many people have told me how their sons in the northern army sent home their greenbacks so the family could eat.

LINCOLN: Yes, God, our constitution gave our government the power to create money without debt. We printed the greenback paper money and spent it to keep the union together, and made sure people had money to buy food and keep shelter over their heads.

GOD: What a blessing I have given mankind.

LINCOLN: It was better than borrowing our money from the international bankers at 36%.

GOD: (Sudden T and L.) 36%! A mighty SIN! (More T and L.)

LINCOLN: Like I’m always quoted: “I had two great enemies. The southern army in front of me. And the bankers in the rear. Of the two, the one in my rear is my greatest foe.”

GOD: Lincoln, I am so proud of you. I couldn’t have said it better. Please, pass into heaven, Lincoln, with my blessing.

(Lincoln tips his hat and goes thru the gates.)

(Factory worker walks in from stage left. He has overalls, workpants, boots, and some tools are hanging from his belt.)

WORKER: Is this the gate to heaven?

GOD: yes.

WORKER: Are you God?

GOD: Yes, the real deal.

WORKER: Boy, am I glad I found you. Listen, you got to do something fast. I left my family in big trouble.

GOD: Tell me more.

WORKER: Well, it wasn’t my fault, I swear. I ended up with a decent factory job so I thought I’d get married and raise some kids. Make myself a good family.

GOD: Good for you.

WORKMAN: But things didn’t turn out great.

GOD: Oh, dear, tell me what happened.

WORKMAN: I got in trouble with the ‘banks’. (At the sound of the word ‘banks’, there is great T and L. GOD looks angry.)

(MOSES tries to silently tell workman to be quiet, without God seeing him do this, but workman is oblivious, even to the T and L.)

WORKMAN: I left my wife with a 30 year mortgage on our house. I bought high at 500 thousand. The interest rate was adjustable and after 3 years went from 3% to 7%! We were screwed. Then the real estate market tanked, and the house was only worth 200 thousand.

(GOD is having trouble breathing from his anger.)

WORKMAN: (continues, oblivious of his effect on God) To make matters worse, my wages were cut so we had to live on credit cards. Ran up a debt of 40 thousand at 26% interest. Best I could do, especially since the two boys were both in college and, boy, talk about being ripped off! Hundreds of thousands of college debt and no jobs for the boys in sight.

(GOD finally expels his breath. Hugh T and L. A harsh gust of wind sends items flying off stage right.)

WORKMAN: (oblivious to the effect he is having on GOD) So I need you to help me God. I left my family real sudden. My heart stopped, after my job was shipped out and given to someone in Vietnam, living on 20 cents an hour.

GOD: (in threatening tone of voice) Who were these banks?

WORKMAN: Well, there was, of course, Citibank, the bank with the most branches around the world. (T and L.) Goldman Sachs, the ones who work in our government. (T and L.) Bank of America, Wells Fargo. Gosh, let’s just say the Too Big to Fail. (T and L.)

GOD: (resolving something to himself) William, don’t worry. I care for my people and your family is, of course, included.

WORKMAN: God, what a relief to hear it.

GOD: Pass through my gates, happily.

(Workman walks happily into heaven.)

MOSES: A good man.

GOD: (thinking of other things) yes…um…

MOSES: God, you have many good children.

GOD: (even more distracted) yes…um…things have got to change…enough is enough. (rumblings of constant thunder)

MOSES: (trying to sooth by sucking up to God) God, you are so brilliant. Your wisdom lights up all our hearts.

GOD: Enough already…I’ve made my decision. (T and L.). The next central banker who comes this way…screw him… (T and L.)

(In walks an executive. When he turns to face GOD, the audience sees a sign on his back that says in big letters, ‘PRESIDENT, NY FED BANK”.)

GOD: Yes?

PRES: Hello. Glad to be here.

GOD: Where are you from?

PRES: Earth.

GOD: Yes, I see that. Your name?

PRES: Well…if you must know….

GOD: Why wouldn’t you tell me?

PRES: Well, you see, I don’t trust very many people.

GOD: Why not?

PRES: Most people are pretty fowl really. Not too bright. Make mistakes. Overweight. Yucky. Clothing too loud. Poor. Lazy. Trying to eat off the dole all their life. Having all these kids they can’t support. Want this. Want that. Always wanting something. Disgusting.

GOD: What about me?

PRES: Well, you’re God, right?

GOD: Yes.

PRES: Glad to meet you.

GOD: And your name?

PRES: (whispers) zzzzzz zzzzz zzzzzzz

GOD: What?

PRES: (louder whisper) DUDLEY.

GOD: Dudley. Where have I heard that name?

PRES: Well, I try to stay under the radar, so to speak.

(The following dialogue is said with GOD pretending to be interested in learning about central banking.)

GOD: Well, tell me. Shed some light on your old God.

PRES; Well, I’m the president of the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

GOD: (T and L from LEFT STAGE and RIGHT STAGE). Really? I haven’t seen one of you central bankers here at the gates of heaven for centuries. (T and L from LEFT STAGE and RIGHT STAGE.) What’s happening with our money system down on earth, these day?

PRES: Well, I must say, I have everything to do with it, if I’m allowed to blow my own horn. Well, you see, now that I’m no longer… on earth, so to speak… I can let the cat out of the bag!

GOD: Is it a big cat?

PRES: Like a lion!

GOD: Can this lion be tamed?

PRES: Only if you know how money works. We bankers created this game. We have hidden the rules for centuries, and kept the earth pure for God’s chosen people.

GOD: Ah, my chosen people. (T and L heard from far off.)

PRES: You, see, God, we always knew we could lead mankind away from stupidity which could cause the world terrible problems.

GOD: I’m so glad you have taken care of us all.

PRES: (feeling exposed) Well, yes, yes.

GOD: So what is this money system of yours? This lion of a system?

(MOSES tries to sneak off stage right without God seeing him.)

GOD: Moses, do not leave our friend here… Mr… Mr. Dudley. Sir, what if I call you Mr. One Percent?

PRES: (relieved he doesn’t have to use his own name) Perfect, God. Mr. 1% will do fine.

GOD: Ah, so Moses, Mr. 1% will tell about his money system. Proceed, please. I am so interested. (T and L in distance.)

(MOSES sits down and pours himself a drink and drinks the whole thing.)

PRES: You see, God, it started long ago when there wasn’t enough money and trade was expanding all over the place. The government issued gold and silver coin. But It wasn’t enough to buy all those dresses and teas and silks. More money was needed, so we international bankers invented our credit-money. We just wrote checks on our account or just printed bank notes with our letterhead and the checks and notes circulated for exchange. People accepted them. Oh, it was just delightful how we could create money. It wasn’t real money like the King’s gold and silver coins, but debt-money, because we created it whenever we gave a loan – a debt.

GOD: (T.) So you created debt-money. (Louder T.) And did you charge interest for the use of your debt-money?

PRES: Well…(hesitating)… sort of.

GOD: ‘sort of’? (Louder T.)

PRES: We pretended not to but we did, or else the Church would have sent us to hell.

GOD: Ah, the old church.

PRES: Yes, the old fashioned church. But we had to make a profit, right? Had to keep the world chugging along. And you didn’t expect your other subjects to be able to do that, did you? No bank debt-money, no business. No business, well that’s just dull serfdom.

GOD: I see.

PRES: But it gets better.

GOD: Better?

PRES: We came up with a grand idea. Get a charter from the government, and have the government cede the power to create money to our private banks. It was in the law! Perfectly legal. It worked every time.

GOD: What do you mean, ‘it worked’?

PRES: If a government cedes us its power to create money, then from then on that government must borrow from us with interest to make ends meet. That government will forever be in debt. And our private commercial banks always create the money as a debt.

GOD: What government is that?

PRES: Well, the English were the first. Then it spread over Europe and now the United States. Today most of the world. You know, it takes a lot of secrecy to bribe the politicians to cede us their power to create money, and not want too much for themselves. But, they’re so greedy, and they don’t really know how money runs the world the way we do.

GOD: ‘In the dark’ so to speak?

PRES: Well, you wouldn’t like a whole lot of people to know your angle. Spoils the soup, as the cooks say.

GOD: We don’t want spoilt soup, no, no, no. By the way, how has it all worked out?

PRES: Excellent! Excellent! Nobody knows our secret. And, if someone does leak it, our media covers it all up with the words “A conspiracy theory”.

GOD: But, it is a conspiracy, yes?

PRES: Of course. But we conspire to confuse, threaten, and drive the world into thoughtless fear. And wars, we love our wars. We make the most money on our wars. Our economists are very helpful too. They keep the 1% controlling the 99%, as you would put it. Their theories always sound so very good, but are always proven wrong. No problem. We control any critique and go to the next crisis with more convoluted, high sounding, non-understandable theories and charts. Meanwhile, we are changing the world.

GOD: What changes have you performed with your hidden debt-money system?

PRES: Let’s see. We now own about 50% of all the wealth. For the 1%, that’s excellent. We are funding both sides of many wars – the most profitable lending there is, and keeps people fighting the wrong enemy. People fight to keep jobs paying lower and lower wages, since we have used free trade agreements to move jobs to stinking-poor countries. That’s worked quite well.

GOD: You 1% are quite good at all this, I must say.

PRES: Yes, our debt-money system is quite versatile. We are unbelievably creative with our strategies. And owning the major press and media is critical.

GOD: More?

PRES: You know, keeping the politicians glutted with our debt-money but ignorant of the money system has also been excellent strategy. It means they are true believers in AUSTERITY and PRIVATIZATION, cause they have no idea they, the government, have the power to create all the debt-free money they need for their programs. And since by this point in history major debt for consumers, businesses, and governments is worldwide and growing, AUSTERITY is the only answer. Citizens, or should I call them consumers, are oblivious to the private bank debt-money system, and blame everything on the government.

GOD: Blame?

PRES: Yes, you see, this is the absolute beauty of the game. Everyone blames everyone else – and no one sees the root cause of all this worldly woe. It’s exquisite. Blacks blame whites. Whites blame blacks. Republicans blame Democrats. Democrats blame Republicans. States blame the feds. The feds blame the states. Unions blame employers. Employers blame unions. Women blame men. Men blame women.

GOD: Enough. Enough. (Huge T and L.)

(PRES dives under God’s throne.)

PRES: Whoa!

GOD: Come out of there now, or I will… (T and L)

PRES: Did I upset you? (Knees shake.)

GOD: Answer the next question, as if your life depended on it.

MOSES: Sir, I think you mean ‘his afterlife’.

GOD: Okay. Your afterlife depends on it.

PRES: Yes, God?

GOD: Are you doing the old Mesopotamia trick? You know – I will loan you money but you have to find the interest and the money for the interest doesn’t exist?

PRES: If I say no, will everything be alright?

GOD: Tell the truth! (T and L.)

PRES: Well…(teeth click in fear) yes, yes, yes. How else will our debt-money be scarce? How else to get every family, business, government borrowing more to pay our loans. The more debt for the 99%, the more power and wealth for the 1%.

GOD: Woe! Woe! Woe! (T and L crash.) I’m getting a headache from all this thunder and crashing going on today. Woe is me! Woe is me!

(More T and L, but this time rain starts to pour down and God and Moses each take out an umbrella. The Pres is standing in the rain, unmoving.)

GOD: Moses, go share your umbrella with Dudley. We are all Christians here.

MOSES: As you say, God.

(MOSES goes over and stands with Pres under his umbrella. T and L continue.)

GOD: What will be done? What will be done?

(GOD suddenly has a huge idea! The rain stops. God and Moses put down their umbrellas.)

GOD: Moses, go into heaven and get me Abraham.

MOSES: God, I’m not sure where Abraham is today. He was off in Canaan the last I saw him.

GOD: Moses, no, not that Abraham. PRESIDENT Abraham Lincoln. Here, sit down, make a list.

(MOSES sits down, takes out his pencil and paper, and writes as God dictates.)

GOD: One, President Abraham Lincoln, the government debt-free money man.

 Two, Mr. Gerald McGeer.

MOSES: Sorry, sir, but can you spell that? I’m not aware of this person?

GOD: (shouts) My money history has been suppressed! (T, L., Dudley is scared and withers.) Gerald McGeer…. Capital M – c – capital G – e – e - r. He was a Canadian politician who knew about my money! He studied President Lincoln’s Greenbacks. He convinced the Canadian government to buy all the shares in the private Bank of Canada in 1938. The now publicly-owned Bank of Canada issued debt-free money to fund free higher education and a public health care system for all Canadians among other things. He was just plain brilliant! Here, I have one of his books here. (Rumages around in a bag and takes out a book. Opens to a certain page.) Here listen to this!

“The issue is perfectly plain – Shall the power to create money be managed by men responsible to the government and the nation as a public utility or shall it be managed as the stock-in-trade of a private profit-seeking monopoly of mass usury? That is an issue to which the answer was made more than 3,000 years ago when Moses (God looks over at Moses from his book) , under the direction of God, laid down the law ‘Thou shalt not lend on usury.’ “ (God beams.)

MOSES: (begins to get up) I’m on my way, sir.

GOD: No, Moses, No! Sit right down. There is one more to get. Mr. Benjamin Franklin.

MOSES: Mr. Benjamin Franklin? The Ben Franklin with the newspaper?

GOD: (God again gets angry, T, L) Again, the money system has been erased from my people’s minds! This has got to stop! (T,L) Ben understood my invention of money. He helped spread government debt-free money to all the English colonies in America. Each colonial legislature issued its own debt-free paper money to pay expenses, and the money circulated to bring prosperity. Ben explained that the American Revolution wasn’t caused by some little tax on tea. No way. It was caused by the English Parliament passing laws to suppress the colonies’ debt-free money.

MOSES: That’s a new one for me.

GOD: (T,L) It should be known to all! Again, my money history has been suppressed! (T,L)

MOSES: Okay, I got the three.

GOD: I am sending them back down to earth to help the very brave Mr. Dennis Kucinich, as he tries to educate the American people and all people about the NEED Act.

PRES: (blurts out) The NEED Act!

GOD: (T,L) Yes, Dudley, the NEED Act. True monetary reform. This act will take the power to create money away from the banks and return it to the government, where it belongs.

DUDLEY; My life is over.

GOD: Yes, Dudley. You are correct. You are on your way to hell!

THE END