



"A god who is all love, all grace, all mercy, no sovereignty, no justice, no holiness, and no wrath is an idol."

—R.C. Sproul

13-Feb-26

Judging Egypt's Gods (Part Two)

As with the first plague on Egypt, [God](#) used the second to strike at its gods, telling [Moses](#):

Go to Pharaoh and say to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.'" ([Exodus 8:1-4](#))

Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go, so God sent frogs. The frog, a prolifically reproducing creature like the rabbit, symbolized Heket, the goddess of procreation and childbirth, who supposedly breathed life into newborn children. As other pagan peoples did to their gods, the Egyptians would give offerings to Heket so they and their livestock could reproduce. This plague was a not-so-subtle attack on Egyptian sexual culture.

In Exodus 9, in the fifth plague, God struck a multitude of Egyptian gods and goddesses:

Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me. For if you refuse to let them go, and still hold them, behold, the hand of the LORD will be on your cattle in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the oxen, and on the sheep—a very severe pestilence. And the LORD will make a difference between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt. So nothing shall die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.'" ([Exodus 9:1-4](#))

Many of the types of livestock God sent disease upon—cattle, horses, donkeys, camels, and sheep—were sacred to various gods and cults. For example, the cow or bull was sacred to Apis, Ta, Ra, Hathor, Anubis, and Mintu—six different Egyptian gods! The ram was sacred to Amon and Knu. The donkey was linked to Seth, Egypt's god of chaos. The horse was a symbol of royal power and divine favor, striking at Pharaoh himself, who was considered divine.

In addition, this disease affected the wealth of both the royal house and the priesthood. In all of Egypt, these two groups owned, by far, the largest herds of these animals, which served as currency. The plague ruined them financially.

So, in these plagues and all the others, God executed judgment on Egypt's gods ([Numbers 33:4](#)). It makes for an interesting historical study, but what does it teach us, New Testament Christians some 3,500 years later?

We should not forget that God has never stopped judging foreign gods, and He still sends plagues. Perhaps we do not witness great plagues of lice, flies, boils, locusts, or darkness these days, but we do go through trials, some quite difficult and painful. God allows them to descend on us like plagues to test us.

From the moment He calls us, we experience a continuing process of coming out of Egypt, symbolic of this sinful world apart from God. Sadly, in this life, we never completely leave it. As [Jesus](#) says in [John 17:16](#), we are not of

[the world](#), but we must continue to live in it. It is always trying to pull us back into its embrace. Human nature, unconverted family and friends, our jobs, and our interests, among other things, keep us tethered to it in certain facets of our lives.

God desires to bring us fully out of the world spiritually. He wants nothing of the old world, the old self, the old way of doing things, to remain because those things are contrary to Him and His way of life. The plagues—trials, tests—force us to see our gods with His eyes and forsake them.

We have gods of a different sort from the ones the Egyptians worshipped. Their gods were made of actual stone, wood, or metal, and they bowed down to them. Our lingering gods from this world tend to be more subtle, revealed only when we consider the time and attention we pay them compared to God. God gives Israel a warning about idolatry in [Deuteronomy 6:14-15](#):

You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

Our God does not like competing with other gods. And it does not matter what the god may be: self, money, another person, a job, a car, an interest, health, pride, etc. Anything can become a god when we give it priority over the true God. Is that not what the first commandment says: "You shall have no other gods before Me" ([Exodus 20:3](#))? God forbids us to let these other gods have the most prominent place of influence and devotion in our lives. That is His place by many rights—by creation, by covenant, by sovereign power, etc.

As He says, He is a jealous God, and He will fight those other gods in any way He can. Why? He wants to show us that our gods are foolish, impotent, worthless, and ultimately detrimental to us. We often lean on our gods, thinking they will fulfill us, but they soon prove themselves, not just weak, but totally ineffective. They can do nothing for us. God considers exposing and punishing those gods, even if it hurts us, to be a worthwhile expression of His [love](#) for us. Though it causes us a little pain, if by it He brings us closer to fulfilling His purpose in us, it is an act of profound [goodness](#).

Pain is not easy to endure, but it is often pain that brings about the end or goal that God wants to produce. Sadly, it takes pain to produce in humans the character He desires. He shows this in the plagues of Egypt, too: He made His people Israel suffer through the first three plagues. The process worked: Israel walked out of Egypt.

Notice the apostle Paul's statement in [Colossians 2:15](#), speaking of God's work in Christ to deliver His people from this world: "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them." In Paul's metaphor, he pictures God as a warrior, engaging His enemies, stripping them of their weaponry, and publicly exhibiting His vanquished enemies in a victory parade, as triumphant Roman generals used to do to showcase their power.

God does a similar thing to us once He judges our false gods through the plagues of trial and testing. He will happily parade our defeated gods in front of us to show us their weaknesses and His strength. As it did for Israel, such a demonstration can effectively liberate us from the servitude of those false slavedrivers, freeing us to live the abundant life in Christ ([John 10:10](#)).

Paul writes in [Romans 6:16-22](#) that we were once slaves of [sin](#), but God has now redeemed us to be slaves of righteousness. Being servants of God is easy by comparison. Farther along in the epistle, he calls our ultimate state as God's children "the glorious liberty of the children of God" ([Romans 8:21](#)). Therefore, it is a good thing to be God's bondservants because serving Him only produces extremely good fruit to [holiness](#) and eternal life, the ultimate freedom.

The apostle encourages us in [II Corinthians 4:16-17](#):

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light [affliction](#), which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"

God is at work, destroying our old, impotent gods for our eventual glory. In Hebrews, it is called "the chastening of the LORD" (Hebrews 12:5, quoting

[Job 5:17](#)). Chastening hurts. But the hurt we receive through the discipline of difficult trials is proof that God is working in us. We can, believe it or not, rejoice in the fact that He is executing judgment on all our false gods.

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

New Transcripts

[1847s: Preparing For Our Spiritual Inheritance](#)

Given by Ryan McClure on 22-Nov-25

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[1857: The Eyes of the Blind Shall Be Opened](#)

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[1858: Psalm Genres \(Part Four\): Laments](#)

Given by Richard T. Ritenbaugh on 07-Feb-26

[623s: As A Man Thinks](#)

Given by Clyde Finklea on 26-Jul-03

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Flee From Idolatry \(Part One\): Self-Discipline](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

The dark sayings of Psalm 78 reveal some of the fatal flaws of our ancestors on the Sinai which Asaph hoped would help us to avoid the mistakes of previous generations, who foolishly acted stubbornly and rebelliousness toward God—a perennial characteristic not only of Jacob's children, but the

entire human race. Men and women in every generation, carrying the propensity to sin from Adam and Eve, have rejected Almighty God. The fleshly, carnal nature we all have is rotten (Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:23). Even after God has called His chosen saints, the waters of baptism do not reset our human nature. We still sin, committing new sins to replace the ones from which we have been previously justified. God's Spirit or the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16) has been given to us as a tool to overcome, but we are expected to exercise this power. Almighty God expects a return on His investment, having high expectations for us. God has done everything for us, except to make decisions for us and develop character for us. The Corinthian congregation gave the apostle Paul perpetual grief, having an ugly party spirit, riddled with schisms and factions, often stubbornly resisting Paul's counsel, administered in love. The Corinthians resemble Jacob's offspring today, having compassion on perversion, trying to make deviancy normal. Though Paul's spiritual credentials outstripped all of his coworkers, Paul used none of his rights as an apostle, but gave his life as a sacrifice (supporting himself) to this ungrateful group of complainers and whiners going all in serve them (I Corinthians 9:19-23). Late in his conversion process, realizing that he was still burdened with the "law of sin" Romans 7:21, he nevertheless understood that rigorously using the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, beating his body into submission (I Corinthians 9:23) would free him (Romans 8:2).

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Worship God!](#)

by Staff

What is worship? What should our attitude be in worship? How do we worship God? Our God is seeking people to worship Him in spirit and truth!

Featured Audio Schedule

Friday Night Bible Study

The next Bible Study (Friday 13-Feb-26) will be **Abraham (Part Three)**,

CGG Weekly: Judging Egypt's Gods (Part Two) (13-Feb-26)

given by **John W. Ritenbaugh**. The Bible Study will be featured on the [CGG homepage](#) from **6:00 pm Friday** (EST) and all day Saturday.

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