

False gods

# Idolatry / Polytheism

- Gn.31:30 (19)
- Idolatry can be subtle

“Idolatry is worshipping anything that ought to be used, or using anything that ought to be worshipped”

- 2 Co.4:1
  - Answers question: ‘Who is sufficient for these things’ (2:16)?
  - Paul does not lose heart (4:16). Ac.14

# Items

- If God had sent angels to preach gospel, we would give credit to proclaimer, not message
  - Lk.1:6, 12, 18
- Weak men have done so much, the honors must be the Lord's alone. 1 Co.2:5
  - *'The Battle Belongs To The Lord'*

# 1 Co.2:2-7

- 2: Paul renounces gimmicks...
- 3: veiled audience (3:14-15)
- 4: blinded by satan (1:18; 11:3, 14)
- 5-6: we preach Christ, not ourselves
- 7: earthen vessels ... hide glorious treasures

# I. False gods

# Molech

- **Lv.18<sup>21</sup>** and you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD
- Idolators heated a metal statue of god until it was red hot
- Placed baby on its outstretched hands
- Beat drums to drown out child's screams...

# Baal

- **Num.22<sup>41</sup>** ...Balak took Balaam and brought him up to the high places of Baal, that from there he might observe the extent of [portion of, NASB] the people
- Nature gods were 'fun': gluttony, drunkenness, ritual (religious) immorality

# Asherah

- Jg.3<sup>7</sup> the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth
- Wife of baal . . . chief goddess of Tyre



# Dagon

- 1 Sm.5:2-7
- Chief god of Philistines
- Vegetation deity
- Some – work ... food ... prosperity

# Ashtoreth

- **2 K.23<sup>13</sup>** Then the king defiled the high places that *were* east of Jerusalem, which *were* on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon
- Syrian / Phoenician goddess of moon, immoral love, fertility. Venus

# Chemosh

- **Jer.48<sup>7</sup>** For because you have trusted in your works and your treasures, You also shall be taken. And Chemosh shall go forth into captivity, His priests and his princes together
- **2 K.3<sup>27</sup>** Then he took his eldest son who would have reigned in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall...
- **1 K.11<sup>7</sup>** Solomon built him a temple...
- National god of Moabites and Ammonites

# Bel (Marduk)

- **Isa.46<sup>1</sup>** Bel has bowed down, Nebo stoops;  
Their idols were on the beasts and on the  
cattle...
- Marduk, Babylonian sun god
- People still worship the sun...

# Zeus

- **Acts 14<sup>12</sup>** And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes
- Supreme god of Greeks
- KJV; ASV: Jupiter
- Head of Greek Olympian pantheon
- Temple in Athens is largest in Greece

# Diana

- **Acts 19<sup>24</sup>** For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen . . . **27** So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship”
- Ephesus: goddess of fertility
- Included hierodules

I. False gods

II. The god behind the gods

# satan

- 2 Co.4:4
- Why 'god'? (No divine attributes)
  - Worldly people give him service, honor, worship... Mt.4:8-10



# satan's devices

- (2 Co.4:4)
- Minds. 2 Co.3:14, insensible, dull
  - **Blinded.** 3:14. 1 K.22. Jn.9:39-41
  - **Do not believe.** Ac.26:18 (13)
  - **Glory of Christ** [jealous satan blinds them to Lord's true glory]

# Pagan deities are imaginary

- demons use pagan deities to entice people away from God. 1 Co.10:14-22
  - Satan → demons → idols → Israel
  - Satan → demons → idols → Corinthians

# Parallel passages

## Wisdom of this world, 1 Co.1:20

- “In truth the world has derived very little, if any, moral good, either from the Jewish rabbins or the Gentile philosophers” (Clarke)
  - Socrates
  - 1 Co.6:7
    - Socrates approved of immorality
  - Jesus chose no philosopher to spread His gospel (1 Co.1:26)

# Parallel passages

Wisdom of this world, 1 Co.1:20

Form of this world, 1 Co.7:31

- Form: outward appearance: marrying, houses, work...now passing away like scenes on stage

# Parallel passages

Wisdom of this world, 1 Co.1:20

Form of this world, 1 Co7:31

Course of this world, Ep.2:1

- Conformed to ways of world; live like other heathens...

I. False gods

II. The god behind the gods

III. satan Is Still On The Job

# God does not speak audibly to people today

- Even if He did, He would never contradict His Word. Jer.23:16ff
- “God wants me to do **x**” – which god?
  - Gn.3:1-6, how did satan destroy Eve?

Drew her focus from God to fruit

- 2 Co.11:13-15, major decisions...
- Prov.14:12, seems right...
  - “God wants me to be happy”

# God does not speak audibly to people today

- Jer.7<sup>31</sup> they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart
  - “God told me to leave my wife...”
- A god gets to make its own rules. New Age
- U.S.: god of self encourages lust, materialism, hedonism...
  - Turns Christianity into Selfianity



# Idol

Anything that people worship / serve  
/ glorify instead of God

- Money? Mt.6:24
  - Mammon: 4x in NT; Aramaic
  - Property, earthly goods, wealth
  - Mammon demands our all; cannot serve God and mammon
  - Lk.12

# Idol

Anything that people worship / serve  
/ glorify instead of God

- Money? Mt.6:24
- Relatives? Mt.10:37
- Praise? Jn.12:42-43
- Protection? 1 Th.4:18
  - “The gods have feet of wool” – Macrobius
  - “Alone among the gods, Death loves not gifts” – Aristophanes

# Idol

Anything that people worship / serve  
/ glorify instead of God

- Money? Mt.6:24
- Relatives? Mt.10:37
- Praise? Jn.12:42-43
- Protection? 1 Th.4:18
- Pleasure? 2 Tim.3:4
  - Lk.9:23-24

# Ruler of this world

Jn.12<sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out

- Jesus rules believers; satan, unbelievers

# Ruler of this world

1 Jn.5<sup>19</sup> **We know** that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of the wicked one*. <sup>20</sup> And **we know** that the **Son of God** has come and has given us an understanding, that **we may know** Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. <sup>21</sup> Little children, **keep yourselves from idols**

Col.3:5, covetousness is idolatry