

Illogical Idols vs. the God of Impossible Things

The root word for *idolatry* (in Greek, *eidolon*) refers to a *picture* or *copy*- the idea being that such an *image* is a *reflection* of the deity represented. However, the LXX (the Greek version of the OT (the Septuagint) uses the term in a derogatory sense for the images of the gods/idols, which are **empty**, and thus expresses the **unreality** of them. “The main point is not that another god is worshipped but that this is **an unreal god**.”¹

Stephen emphasizes this point in Acts 7:41 by referring to the *idol* (of the *golden calf*) as “*the works of their hands*.” Rev.9:20 adds that “...*idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk*.” Note also the specific words of Paul in 1Thess.1:9 that reflect a comparison between *idols* and “*the living and true God*.”

The History of Illogical Idols vs. the God of Impossible Things

- Man has, almost from the beginning, worshipped and served idols. Eve, the *mother of all living*, chose to serve the idol of *self* (with the help and urging of Satan, of course) instead of the God she knew- her Creator, Gen.3:5-6.
- Even in Egypt, where there was seemingly a *god* for everything, Jehovah demonstrated His supreme power over man’s so-called *gods*. The nature of the *plagues* may seem somewhat strange and random to us, but they were actually specific manifestations of God’s supremacy over Egypt’s *false, empty, and powerless* gods:
 - The **Nile being Turned to Blood** demonstrated God’s supremacy over *Khnum* (guardian of the Nile), *Hapi* (the spirit of the Nile), and *Osiris* (of whom the Nile was bloodstream- how ironic!);
 - **Frogs** demonstrated God’s supremacy over *Heqt* (the god of resurrection whose form was that of a frog);
 - **Pestilence on Livestock** demonstrated God’s supremacy over *Hathor* (mother-goddess in cow form), *Apis* (the bull-god *Ptah*, symbol of fertility), and *Mnevis* (the sacred bull-god of Heliopolis);
 - **Hail** demonstrated God’s supremacy over *Nut* (sky goddess), *Isis* (goddess of life), and *Seth* (protector of crops);
 - **Darkness** demonstrated God’s supremacy over the gods *Re*, *Aten*, *Atum*, and *Horus* (all sun-gods of sorts); and,
 - **Death of the Firstborn** demonstrated God’s supremacy over *Osiris* (giver of life) and *Pharaoh* (Egypt’s deity incarnate).
- But throughout time, the God of the *impossible*, who *created all things from nothing* (cf. Rom.4:17; Heb.11:3), has *sustained* mankind, Acts 14:15-17. All the while, man in his *delusion* has chosen to worship and serve illogical idols who can’t even perform what for a “god” should be at least *possible*, Jer.10:3-5.

The Illogical Nature of Idols and Idolatry

Despite ample evidence of His power, love, and concern throughout history man has illogically turned to *idols* invented by his own imagination, and formed by his own

¹ Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*](#) (pp. 202–203). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

hands (and often in his own *image*). But perhaps the most pointed application of the *emptiness* and *illogical* nature of idolatry is found in **Isa.44:12-17**.

These things notwithstanding, man has constantly turned to illogical idolatry, either in part or wholly, cf. 1Kings 11:4-9 (Solomon's duality).

"But we're not idolaters!" Really? Then why were the Corinthians told to "*flee from idolatry*," 1Cor.10:14; cf. 2Cor.6:14ff? And why did John warn, "*Little children, guard yourselves from idols*," 1John 5:21? **"But that was way back then, no one worships idols today."** Let's think about that...

Modern Forms of *Illogical* Idolatry:

- **"Mother Nature/Earth"** has become "sacred" to many, Rom.1:22-23,25,28a (or *Father God?*). That's why "Environmentalism" has become a *religion* of sorts.
- **Family**, Matt.10:34-37; While some *leave family* to follow and worship God, still others *leave God* to follow/worship *family*? How many choose *family* over God, even in what we would call "small" ways, such as aside setting aside spiritual duties and privileges to God for the sake of family?
- **Self**, Matt.16:24; Are we more likely to deny God for *self*, or deny *self* for God? But there are other specific ways we worship the *idol of self*...
 - **Wealth worship- "Winning/Success is Everything"**- Obviously, *Mammon* can become our "god," and we can *sacrifice* God to *worship* it, Matt.6:24. When we become servants/slaves to *worldly* definitions of what "winning" or "success(ful)," we cannot *serve God*, Matt.6:19-23. Remember that Col.3:5 says that *greed* is *idolatry*.
 - **Health worship-** Are you afraid to die? We're supposed to be *delivered* from "*the fear of death*," Heb.2:15 cf. 1John 4:18. Exactly *how* and *when* do you plan to die? "Well not like *that!*" and "Not any time soon!" Plans of this nature are *arrogant*, and "maintaining" and "protecting" your health can become *idolatrous*, Jas.4:13-17. We had better be planning to "*die in the Lord*," Rev.14:13! Are you making an *idol* of your health? cf. Acts 21:12-13.
 - **Pleasure worship-** In Luke 8:14, the seed which *fell among the thorns* was "*choked with the worries and riches and pleasures of this life*." 2Tim.3:1-4 says that, *in the last days*, men will be "*lovers of self, lovers of money...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*;" such is surely *idolatry!* Where here.

We must, like the Thessalonians before us, "... *turn(ed) to God from idols to serve a living and true God*," 1Thess.1:9!

Conclusions:

1. **Idols are *illogical*- why worship what you create rather than the God who created you?** Or worship that which can't even do what you can- like *move*, *walk*, or *speak*?
2. **Even in man's imagination, idols only did what was possible (what would occur anyway); the *impossible* was/is done by God.**
3. **We need a God for whom *nothing is impossible*, Luke 1:37; Matt.19:26. One who can: **Create *everything* from *nothing*; Set aside the *laws of nature* (causing the Sun to "stand still" or even "back up," allow man to *walk on water*, and even *raising the dead*); and even **Forgive MY sins!******