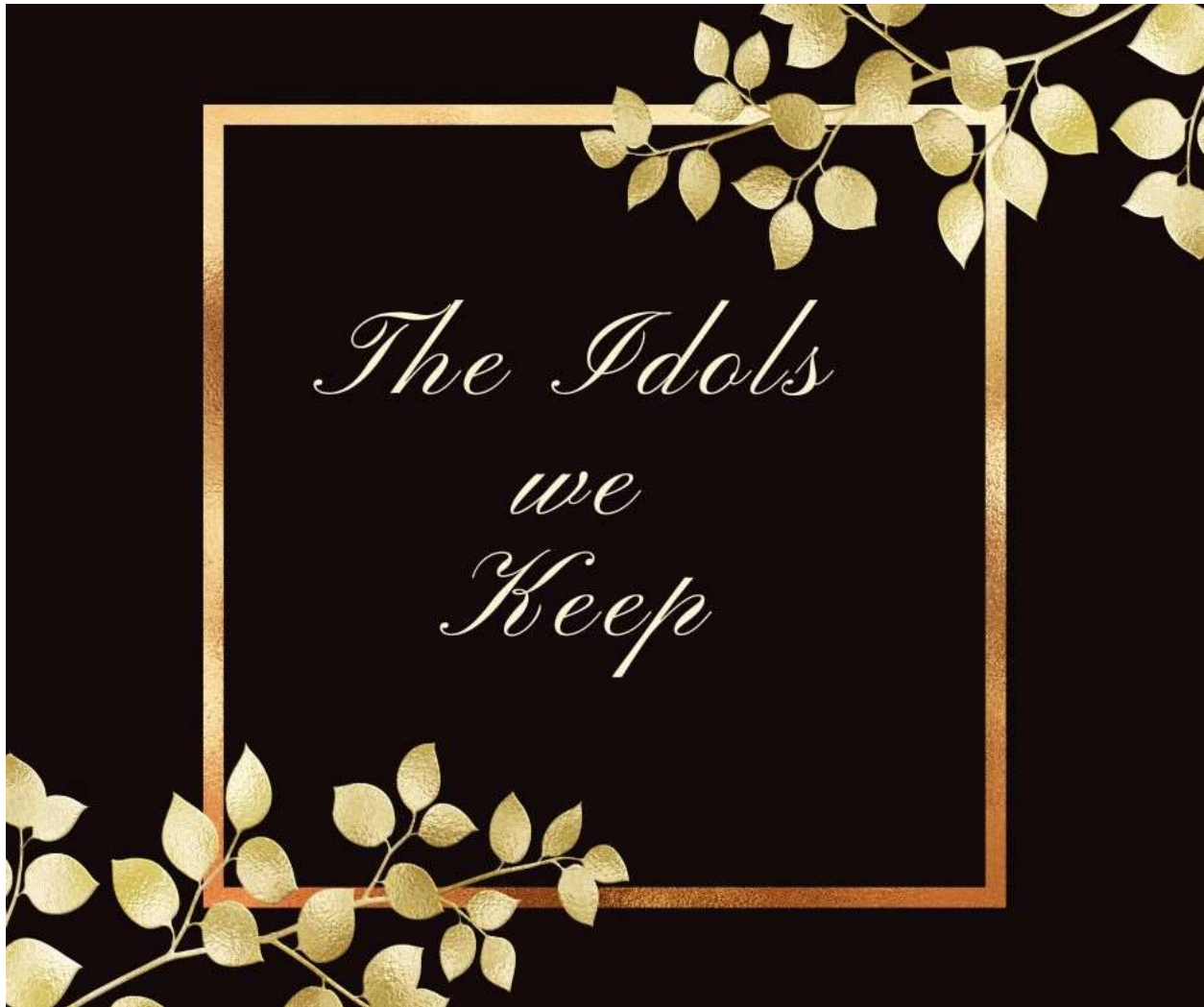


The Idols We Keep



When we think of idols what usually comes to mind is the golden calf, asherah poles on the hills rising out of the mist, and the fiery furnaces of Moloch.

But, if we are really honest with ourselves, we can find little idols hiding in our lives, obscure and anything but obvious. And I don't mean the little Buddha statue your great aunt has on a shelf amongst all her other knick-knacks – although that is one too.

What I'm talking about is anything that we rely on, care for or love more than YAHUAH, our Creator and heavenly Father.

Is YAHUAH your top priority or do other things come first in your life?

I know I'm often guilty of this. I find myself scrolling on Pinterest instead of reading my Bible, complaining to a friend instead of praying. Forgetting to tell Him how grateful I am for everything He has given me.

Do you make sure to “pray ceaselessly”, and study your Bible daily? Do you spend hours in front of the TV or lost in video games? Do you rely on your money or your job rather than relying on Him for provision? Are your family more important to you than your – and their – Creator?

Do we put our own wants above the needs of others or the commands of the Most High?

Can we give everything and anything in our lives up and follow Him?

Modern life has given us so many opportunities to become idolaters, and if we’re not very careful we will most assuredly fall into this trap!

Let’s take a look at what the Word can tell us about idols, and what YAHUAH thinks of them.

“You have no other mighty ones against My face. You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth, you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, YAHUAH your Elohim am a jealous Ēl, visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving-commitment to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.” Exodus 20:3-6

The Law is crystal clear about the Most High’s position on idols! No idol is allowed, nothing that is modelled after creation or in creation is to be worshipped or served. YAHUAH has never taken this lightly, and never will; He punishes this sin harshly and it is considered a generational curse. But those who are true to Him will be blessed to thousands of generations beyond themselves!

Each of us has ancestors who stayed loyal to YAHUAH, and their faithfulness, as well as His, can be seen in our lives!

“You do not make besides Me mighty ones of silver, and you do not make mighty ones of gold for yourselves.” Exodus 20:23

Nothing, not gold or silver, nor wood or stone, is to be worshipped. The Creator is above the creation, and is worthy of all praise.

“Do not turn to idols, and do not make for yourselves moulded mighty ones. I am YAHUAH your Elohim.” Leviticus 19:4

We should never turn away from our heavenly Father, He is our sustainer, provider and protector, and no idol will ever begin to come close to Him.

“And you shall know today, and shall recall to your heart that YAHUAH Himself is Elohim in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is none else.”
Deuteronomy 4:39

We are to always remember that there is no one like YAHUAH, there never will be. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

“Walk after YAHUAH your Elohim and fear Him, and guard His commands and obey His voice, and serve Him and cling to Him.” Deuteronomy 13:4

This is how we stay true to YAHUAH, being obedient to, and keeping His Law, putting Him above all else as our priority and holding on to Him for our very lives and salvation.

“And if it seems evil in your eyes to serve YAHUAH, choose for yourselves this day whom you are going to serve, whether the mighty ones which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the mighty ones of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But I and my house, we serve YAHUAH.” Joshua 24:15

The Most High gave us all free will. We all have the ability to choose who and what we are going to be true to in our lives. He never forces our hand in any direction. We can choose blessing and life, or cursing and death. We can choose to worship and follow YAHUAH, or we can choose to put other people or things before Him. He obviously wants us to choose Him, to choose the way of life, but He leaves it up to us.

I stand in agreement with Joshua. “But I and my house, we serve YAHUAH!”

“And now, put away the mighty ones of the stranger which are in your midst, and incline your heart to YAHUAH Elohim of Yisra’el.” Joshua 24:23

Foreigners and unbelievers will always have false elohim or idols that they worship. It was true back in Joshua’s time and it is true today. We have to choose not to fall into the false worship of those around us.

The fact that believers are scattered all over the world today doesn’t make this easier. We live around and between people who keep other beliefs and religions, we live with insane amounts of marketing and commercialism that can cause us to be envious and even worship these goods or money.

But we are to “put them all away”!

“Go and cry out to the mighty ones which you have chosen, let them save you in your time of distress.” Judges 10:14

Yashar’el was, unfortunately, known for their flights of idolatry. Even after seeing – with their very own eyes – the miracles of their Exodus from

Mitsrayim, they wanted something else to look up to. I can do nothing but roll my eyes and shake my head.

YAHUAH's miracles were so fresh for them, but generation after generation faltered and ran after false elohim that could do nothing for them.

I see a bit of sarcasm in this passage. "Call on your false gods, see if they can save you." The idols would never be able to save them.

They would realize this and turn back to YAH, only to stray again a generation or two later.

Those who make an idol, all of them are emptiness, and their delights do not profit. And they are their own witnesses; they neither see nor know, so that they are put to shame. Who would form a mighty one or cast an idol that is of no value? See, all his companions are ashamed, and the workmen, they are but men. Let them all be gathered together, let them stand up, let them fear, let them be put to shame, altogether. The craftsman in iron with the tools works one in the coals, and fashions it with hammers, and works it with the strength of his arms. Even so, he shall be hungry, and has no strength; he drinks no water and is weary. The carpenter stretches out his rule, he outlines it with chalk; he fashions it with a plane, and he outlines it with the compass, and makes it like the figure of a man, according to the comeliness of a man, to remain in the house. He cuts down cedars for himself, and takes cypress and oak, which he raised among the trees of the forest. He has planted a pine, and the rain nourishes it. And it shall be for a man to burn, for he takes some of it and warms himself. He also kindles it and shall bake bread. He also makes a mighty one and bows himself to it – has made it a carved image and falls down before it. Half of it he shall burn in the fire; with this half he eats meat. He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire." And the rest of it he makes into a mighty one, his carved image. He falls down before it and worships, prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my mighty one." They do not know nor understand, for He has smeared their eyes from seeing, and their hearts from understanding. And no one recalls it to his heart, nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire, and I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it. And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Should I fall down before a log of wood?" Feeding on ashes, a deceived heart turns him aside, and he does not deliver his being, nor says, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isaiah 44:9-20

The irony of idol worship! A man who makes an idol with his own hands, and then worships it, expecting deliverance to come from his own creation – is this not the height of willful ignorance?

This reminds me of the story of Abraham destroying all his father's idols but the largest, and leaving the axe with it. When his father accused him of the vandalism, he stated that it must have been the largest idol. His father ironically states that it couldn't have been, it was only a statue. Why then was it being worshipped???

Why do we choose something from creation, or even the works of human hands, to bow down to, rather than the Creator of earth, of our intelligent minds and creative hands? How do we have the ability to create something without Him having created us first? What we make can never come close to He who created everything!

“Gather yourselves and come; draw near together, you who have escaped from the nations. No knowledge have they who are lifting up the wood of their carved image, and pray to a mighty one that does not save.” Isaiah 45:20

We are to come out of, and away from, the idolatry happening in the nations we are in. The prophet here says the idolaters have no knowledge, and Scripture warns us that His people, us, will perish from a lack of knowledge.

This knowledge is the Truth about Him! We are to have the wisdom and knowledge to worship Him correctly, and to endure in this knowledge, and only then will we be saved.

“No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall prove wrong. This is the inheritance of the servants of YAHUAH, and their righteousness from Me,” declares YAHUAH. Isaiah 54:17

The enemy will rely on their weapons – and YAHUAH is above all of these. We are not to fear the enemy's threats or weapons, because we trust in He who is above all else! Fear can even be a form of idolatry, because in our minds the thing we are fearing is stronger than He that protects us. As humans it is easy to fear, but He tells us over and over in His word that we should not fear but rather trust in His faithfulness.

“For the laws of these peoples are worthless, for one cuts a tree from the forest, work for the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. They beautify it with silver and gold, they strengthen it with nails and hammers so that it does not topple.” Jeremiah 10:3-5

Hmmm, Christmas trees anyone? This was obviously already a pagan practice in the prophet Jeremiah's time. This practice is called “worthless”! We would do well to remember that this, as well as other pagan rituals, are against our heavenly Father!

“But I am YAHUAH your Elohim since the land of Mitsrayim, and an Elohim besides Me you shall not know, for there is no Saviour besides Me.” Hosea 13:4

No one, not some scientist with a fancy injection, not a doctor, not a fancy rich man, and not a well-spoken politician. No one is the Saviour besides our Father and the Son He sent to us.

*“Those observing false worthlessnesses forsake their own loving-commitment.”
Jonah 2:8*

The book of Jonah points out that we become untrustworthy when we observe false worship, or worship worthless idols.

The sorrows of those who run after another one are increased; I would not pour out their drink offerings of blood, nor take up their names on my lips. Psalm 16:4

False worship will indeed increase the sorrows and curses in our lives. We may chase after riches, and property, and whatever else we choose to look up to, but these things will never fill the hole inside us that only our Father in heaven can fill! Idols are empty, and the only promises false elohim can provide are empty promises.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we remember the Name of YAHUAH our Elohim. Psalm 20:7

We as believers, should never put our trust in our things – chariots (cars), horses (livestock), or even our own gardens, or jobs, or other people. Our trust should remain solely in Him.

We have learned this lesson the hard way, many times! We have relied on jobs or clients or family for provision and those have been taken away until we learnt to rely on YAHUAH only for our daily bread; looked to Him alone for our provision and protection.

Trusting in anyone or anything else to keep us going is idolatry – and so difficult to spot in our lives sometimes.

Turn away from evil and do good; Seek peace, and pursue it. Psalm 34:14

So simple, do good and pursue peace – YAHUAH and Ruach can help us. We can only truly do good and find peace through Him.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see; they have ears, but they do not hear; also there is no breath in their mouth. Those making them become like them, everyone who is trusting in them. Psalm 135:15-18

Wow! Reading this kind of blew my mind. Those who believe in worthless and useless idols become like them! Their hearts are hardened and their eyes and ears become closed up to truth.

Trust in YAHUAH with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; know Him in all your ways, and He makes all your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear YAHUAH and turn away from evil. Proverbs 3:5-7

Leaning on our own knowledge and understanding can also be idolatry – egotism, or putting ourselves and what we think of as our personal wisdom above Him. It always leads us astray!

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart shall be also... No one is able to serve two masters, for either he shall hate the one and love the other, or else he shall cleave to the one and despise the other. You are not able to serve Elohim and mammon.” Matthew 6:19-21, 24

The Messiah told us that we shouldn't treasure earthly possessions, because our heart will be with them. They will be like idols. They can be damaged or stolen. But we should keep our hearts with the Father, and build up heavenly treasures through our belief in Him, keeping His commands and in by our works.

We cannot serve both I own earthly desires and YAHUAH. We will end up loving one more than the other. It will lead to our downfall if we love our riches and possessions more than our Creator. They cannot save our souls.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amēn. 1 John 5:21

Sweet and simple. And some good advice for us all!

Who changed the truth of Elohim into the falsehood, and worshipped and served what was created rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amēn. Because of this Elohim gave them over to degrading passions. For even their women exchanged natural relations for what is against nature, and likewise, the men also, having left natural relations with woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing indecency, and receiving back the reward which was due for their straying. And even as they did not think it worthwhile to possess the knowledge of Elohim, Elohim gave them over to a worthless mind, to do what is improper, having been filled with all unrighteousness, whoring, wickedness, greed, evil; filled with envy, murder, fighting, deceit, evil habits; whisperers, slanderers, haters of Elohim, insolent, proud, boasters, devisers of evils, disobedient to parents, without discernment, covenant breakers, unloving,

unforgiving, ruthless; who, though they know the righteousness of Elohim, that those who practice such deserve death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1:25-32

Going back to the passage about people worshipping idols becoming like the idols themselves, Sha'ul here tells us that the people who run after their false elohim will be given over to sin and unnatural lifestyles. Their hearts will be hardened, truth will be kept from them and they will fall into lives of sin.

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:21

We can overcome evil with good by putting aside our idols, and following the ways of YAHUAH!

Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the reign of Elohim? Do not be deceived. Neither those who whore, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor greedy of gain, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the reign of Elohim. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

Those who worship idols and false elohim will never enter the kingdom of the Most High.

And do not become idolaters as some of them, as it has been written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and stood up to play." 1 Corinthians 10:7

Therefore, my beloved ones, flee from idolatry. 1 Corinthians 10:14

"Flee from idolatry." Don't just turn from it but run in the opposite direction.

But then, indeed, not knowing Elohim, you served those which by nature are not mighty ones. But now after you have known Elohim, or rather are known by Elohim, how do you turn again to the weak and poor elementary matters, to which you wish to be enslaved again? Galatians 4:8-10

How do we, once knowing YAHUAH, turn to things to fill us up, provide for us or protect us?

And the works of the flesh are well-known, which are these: adultery, whoring, uncleanness, indecency, idolatry, drug sorcery, hatred, quarrels, jealousies, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, envy, murders, drunkenness, wild parties, and the like – of which I forewarn you, even as I also said before, that those who practice such as these shall not inherit the reign of Elohim. Galatians 5:19-21

Idolatry is indeed a fleshly act. We turn to idols out of fear, greed, lust and envy. They can give a false and temporary sort of fulfillment to our fleshly desires. But we should not let our flesh control us, but rather our spirits,

breathed into us by YAHUAH, Who can fulfil us completely because He made us!

And have no fellowship with the fruitless works of darkness, but rather convicted them. For it is a shame even to speak of what is done by them in secret. Ephesians 5:11-12

Idolatry is a “fruitless work of darkness”, a deception from the enemy. We should never get involved with it at all.

Put on the complete armour of Elohim, for you to have power to stand against the schemes of the devil. Because we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against authorities, against the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual matters of wickedness in the heavenlies. Ephesians 6:11-12

Trusting in YAHUAH and daily putting on His armour can protect us from falling into the trap of idolatry.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: whoring, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed of gain, which is idolatry. Because of these the wrath of Elohim is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you also once walked when you lived in them. Colossians 3:5-7

For the love of silver is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some, by longing for it, have strayed from the belief, and pierced themselves through with many pains. But you, O man of Elohim, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, reverence, belief, love, endurance, meekness. 1 Timothy 6:10-11

We should put aside our greed and love of money and earthly goods, the love of these things can only lead to spiritual death.

And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship the demons, and idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood, which are neither able to see, nor to hear, nor to walk. And they did not repent of their murders, nor of their drug sorceries, nor of their whoring, nor of their thefts. Revelation 9:20-21

Mankind is stubborn. Sometimes the very Wrath of YAHUAH isn't enough to get us to open our eyes to sin. We should always strive to remain humble and open to teaching and correction, so that we don't fall into lawlessness.

And see, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good shall I do to have everlasting life?”

And He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One – Elohim. But if you wish to enter into life, guard the commands.”

He said to Him, “Which?”

And Yahusha said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Respect your father and your mother,’ and ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ ”

The young man said to Him, “All these I have watched over from my youth, what do I still lack?”

Yahusha said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven. And come, follow Me.”

And when the young man heard the word, he went away sad, because he had many possessions.

And Yahusha said to His taught ones, “Truly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the reign of the heavens. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the reign of Elohim.”

And when His taught ones heard it, they were very astonished, saying, “Who then is able to be saved?”

And looking intently Yahusha said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with Elohim all is possible.”

Then Kēpha answering, said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. What then shall we have?”

And Yahusha said to them, “Truly I say to you, when the Son of Adam sits on the throne of His esteem, you who have followed Me in the rebirth, shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Yisra’ēl. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My Name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many who are first shall be last, and the last first. Matthew 19:16-30

I left this passage until the end so that this message can truly hit home for my readers. And for myself.

We can keep the Law – the Torah – and have faith in the Messiah. But do we really mean it? Will we truly go all the way to show Him we love Him?

The rich man was sad when he heard Yahusha’s instructions. He loved his money and possessions, and even though he was willing to keep Torah, he was

not willing to part from what he owned. His possessions were his idols, his false gods, the things he loved more than YAHUAH.

Now, Yahusha's instructions to you or I might have looked different were it us asking him this man's question. It might have been "Give up that business you worked your entire adult life to build," or maybe "Give up control over your husband and children, they are Mine and I will look after them," or even "Ditch that Disney+ subscription, and your television, phone, computer and WiFi while you're at it."

For some of us it might be our gold, our property, our physical possessions, our prepper's stash.

He knows our hearts, the things we treasure in our hearts about Him. If we were to ask Him what we should do to enter the Kingdom He would tell us the exact most difficult thing for us to give up. This thing is our idol.

Without Him standing in front of us telling us this, we need to really examine our hearts, pray for guidance, and be honest with ourselves. And then we need to lay our idols down, turn from them, and walk towards YAHUAH.