

When Your Worship Turns Against You

A river turns to blood. Croaking, hopping frogs inundate a city. Clouds of gnats darken the streets. The blood-soaked river, heaps of frogs and cloud of gnats as told in Exodus 7-8 were a demonstration of Egypt's gods turning on them.

The Egyptians worshipped Hapi, the river god for the water it brought to their empire, Heget the frog god, a symbol of life and fertility and Get, the god of the earth. While God was setting His people free from slavery, He was making a show of how the gods of the world can turn on you. This epic battle centered on worship.

Moses declared to Pharaoh to let God's people go so they could go and worship. Pharaoh's heart is hardened and a fight begins with the God of the Hebrews setting the gods of Egypt against them. What the Egyptians worshipped would destroy them.

We don't think much about worship when we go through our day. But worship was so important to God that He started a war to set His people free. He didn't set His people free so they could relax and enjoy life, though that's a benefit. He set them free to worship Him and Him alone.

What you worship determines whether you will live or die. Even if you don't believe in God, worshipping yourself will cost you. How do you know what you worship? Well, what do you think about? What do you look forward to? What makes your heart beat?

You can worship money, your car, nice home, fancy job or even your family without realizing it. Or a church, a doctrine, a ministry, a title or a position can be at the heart of your worship.

I was on staff with a church and when I left that position, God convicted me of worshipping that place of prominence. I wanted to leave the church because I felt lost and like God and people had forgotten me. When I prayed about this, God asked me, "Are you at the church to sit on the front row or because I called you?" I replied, "I'm there because You called me." He answered, "I haven't changed My mind. I've called you to that church. And I've called you to worship Me alone."

I realized that ministry had become an idol. God doesn't want any other god to get the attention and worship that belongs to Him alone. In fact, this is the first commandment:

"You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:3).

Those idols can turn on you without the hand of God in your life. When you pursue God, He brings what you need to live.

"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need" (Matt. 6:33, NLT).

To get everything you need, you must seek the kingdom of God above all else and live righteously. What does it mean to seek the kingdom of God above else? That's a future post.

In the meantime, may the Lord show you and me what we're really worshipping.

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24, MEV).

Worship Him alone.

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