

# “There are gods many”



“For though there be that are called gods,  
whether in heaven or in earth,  
as there be **gods many**, and lords many,” 1Corinthians 8:5

Who are these gods many?

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# His Holy Church

## Dedicated to the service of the Lord.

“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:5)

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

“And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; [but] they did not so... And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, [that] they returned, and corrupted [themselves] more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.” (Judges 2:17...19)

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.” (Galatians 4:8)

“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” (John 10:34)

“Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.” (Exodus 23:32)

“For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” (Hebrews 8: 10,11)

### ***There be gods Many***

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be **gods many**, and lords many,)” 1 Corinthians 8:5

What is Paul talking about when he says there are “gods many”? People today who believe in a superior being that has brought about creation use the term to reference the creator of mankind. Besides the New Testament we can see that in the Old Testament, ancient history, and even modern language the term *god* often referred to a man.

“And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for [am] I in the place of **God**?” Genesis 50:19

Here in Genesis, Joseph asks if he is in the place of a god? He had the power of judgment, but left that judgment to God the Father and forgave his brothers.

In the Old Testament, the words “gods” and “God” are both translated from the single Hebrew word *elohiym*, defined “rulers, judges” and “applied as deference to magistrates” according to the Strong's Concordance.

*Elohiym* is even translated *judges*.

In Exodus 21 “if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master” and choose to serve him, “then his master will bring him unto the judges”. We also see in Exodus 22 that Moses uses it when he is talking about men judging matters of guilt and innocence in cases of robbery of personal property.<sup>1</sup>

Even in 1st Samuel 2:25 we see the word *elohiym* translated *judge* when speaking about men judging other men.

“If one man sin against another, the **judge** shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.”

The word was used by the Israelites to refer to men amongst their own people, men that had the right to judge certain matters of guilt and innocence.

Were other men called gods?

Joshua gives a choice in chapter 24 verse 15, ““And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. And the people answered and said, ‘God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods.’”

What are or who are those gods? No one serves stone. Stone statues were just the symbol of men who were the ruling judges of other men. Men who exercise authority over the service of others, making rules.

Exodus 22:28 tells us that, “Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.”

In the New Testament, the words “God” and “gods” is translated from the Greek word *theos*, which figuratively means “a magistrate.”<sup>2</sup>The word “god” specifies an office and means a “ruling judge”. It was a title used to address men who have a right to exercise authority or judgment in courts of law. To realize that, at the time of Christ, you would address a judge in a Hebrew, Roman, or Greek court as god should change the entire way you read your modern Bibles. This is why there are “gods many.”

“But to us [there is but] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom [are] all things, and we by him.”<sup>3</sup> The Kingdom of God is unique because, having

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1 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever. Ex 21:6 and If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods. For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour. Exodus 22:8-9

2 Strong's Concordance.

3 1 Corinthians 8:6

one God, Jesus told us: "...The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."<sup>4</sup>

His appointed government did not force the contributions of the people, but as Paul said, was bound together by charity according to the perfect law of liberty.

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" John 10:34

What He is saying is that each of us is a god, or ruling judge, of our own choices and action, but we are not gods of other men or our neighbors. We should not rule over men, nor should we make men rulers over us, but we should remain free souls under God, The Father.

If we do the things Jesus says and obey God's commandments, then we shalt have no other gods ruling over us.<sup>5</sup> But, if we make covenants,<sup>6</sup> swear oaths<sup>7</sup>, pray to other fathers on earth to obtain benefits<sup>8</sup> or break God's laws,<sup>9</sup> then we will go under the powers<sup>10</sup> of the gods of men and their rulers.

"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)" 1 Corinthians 8:5

In the days of Jacob and Egypt, Joseph's brothers delivered their brother into bondage as a result of their own selfishness, envy and covetous hearts. Had they not done this Joseph's relation with God would have revealed to them the coming events and they, not Egypt would have prepared for the famine. The sons of Jacob would have become wealthy among nations. Instead they cast the source of their own salvation into a pit.

Because of their straying from the righteousness of God they were delivered into bondage. This bondage grew until the powers of Egypt through the subtleties of the state brought heavy burdens on their bondage.

They weren't slaves as we often think of slavery but 2.5 months out of the year they labored for the government of Pharaoh. This would be called a corvee system of statutory labor. It was an excise or tribute tax upon the sweat of men's brows. All the gold and silver was in the treasuries of the government which meddled heavily into the family life of Israel, abortion was encouraged. The people only had a legal title to their land, animals and labor.

God eventually arranged that Moses was able to redeem the people and bring them out of this bondage. They were given the gold and silver [an honest money system] replacing their interest bearing scarabs. They got their animals and families back and once they learned the ways of the God they obtained some land of their own.

Today, the average laborer in the United States works to pay off his corvee obligation to the government. Through the graduated income tax, crafts of state, this amounts to more than 5 months of labor out of each year. The people no longer actually own their land, having a mere legal title, and pay a annual use tax just to remain in their homes. All the gold and silver is in the hands of the civil and commercial powers and the people use a fluctuating system of interest bearing notes.

"Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble." Jeremiah 11:12

How did all this happen and what is the hope of our redemption? Can we learn anything from history of Rome at the time of Jesus? They were very good at borrowing from other nations, including Egypt. Rome

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4 Luke 22:25, Matthew 20:25, Mark 10:42..

5 "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)

6 "Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods." (Exodus 23:32) and Deuteronomy 7:2

7 Matthew 5:34... :James 5:12

8 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matthew 6:9). "And call no [man] your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." (Matthew 23:9)

9 "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

10 "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1) "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (1 Corinthians 6:12)

had been a Republic, it also had strong commercial interests which had come to power after their major civil war.

Rome was doing much the same as Egypt after it had been invited into Judea by two brothers fighting over the kingdom. Rome had not conquered Judea, not yet, but they were spreading their commercial influence, civil methodology and system of corvee through commerce and trade. Rome had formed sort of an international peace keeping force to maintain order. Their presence in Judea was mainly to resolve civil and political disputes concerning who would be King. Their strong commercial interest, which always requires stable government and a compliant population, supplied their incentive.

Rome recognized Jesus as King and Jesus as king redeemed the people from their Roman involvement, if they would learn his ways. Jews and others who prescribed to the perfect law of liberty established by the government of servants appointed by Jesus became known in history as Christians while those who denounced Jesus as King and continued in apostasy were conquered and destroyed at the fall of Jerusalem. An exodus took place at the destruction of Jerusalem and during much of the persecution of the followers of Christ. These people who we call Christians were mostly Jews and Israelites as well as others who formed the political Kingdom of Jesus and therefore God on earth. His Kingdom was unique in history because it is not like the Kingdoms of the Gentiles or Nations. It is often over-looked because few know what the Kingdom of Heaven looks like. And there are factions that would not want you to truly understand God's Kingdom on earth and therefore they choose to keep it a "Mystery".

In Gibbon's Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, he praised "the union and discipline of the Christian republic." He also pointed out that "it gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire."

Romans knew what a republic was having formed one in 500 BC after they drove out the Tarquinian Kings. They fashioned it after the early patriarch of Israel. The word *Republic* comes from the Latin idiom *Libera Res Publica*, Free from Things Public.

#### Republic vs. Democracy

But alas as history repeats itself they too eventual went under a king type dominion.

In 29 B.C. Gaius Octavianus marched into Rome as the *savior* of the Republic and was given the title of Augustus by the Senate. He was then legally granted the position Emperor, under constitutional forms and limitations by an electoral college composed of the Senate, the Conscripted Fathers, or *Conscripti Patres*. Emperor means the 'commander in chief' [Emperor, *emperatoris* m. commander in chief Collins L.E. Dict. '62.] of all military and naval forces, for a period of ten years. He could set foreign policy and establish treaties. Each year he could also be elected consul (chief executive officer, *Principas Civitas*, the First Citizen or President, His wife was *Principa Femina*, the first lady). By this office Britannica calls him the President of Rome ["Thus the republic was restored under the presidency of its 'first citizen' (*princeps civitatis*)."<sup>11</sup>

The third office he requested was *ApoTheos* (literally the beginner of gods which means the appointor of magistrate). Each of these offices required swearing another binding oath of office.

Augustus as Emperor had dropped his position of Consul of Rome for almost 18 years while he settled disputes as a sort of combination N.A.T.O, U.N. and U.S. military force all rolled into one. He kept banking, trade and commerce prospering throughout the world and received great praise and adoration for the accomplishment.

Today, the president of the US is the Commander in Chief of the military, the Emperor. As first citizen he is the chief executive officer called the President. He also can appoint federal justices throughout the federal empire, who then sits as *theos* or judges or gods of its citizenry.

"Civil Law,' 'Roman Law' and 'Roman Civil Law' are convertible phrases, meaning the same system of

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<sup>11</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica Vol 2, p. 687, '53..

jurisprudence.”<sup>12</sup>

Welcome to Rome, again.

In the Old Testament the words "gods" and "God" are translated from the single word 'elohiym in the plural. 'Elohiym is defined "rulers, judges" and "occasionally applied as deference to magistrates" while in the New Testament the word God is translated from the Greek word *theos* which figuratively means "a magistrate." Check your concordance.

To realize that at the time of Christ you would address a judge in a Hebrew, Roman or Greek court as *god* should change the entire way you read your modern Bibles.

The emperors were often referred to as gods using the words Apo Theos. This was not because any one believed that they created heaven and earth but because they were the chief magistracy and ruler of the people appointing judges throughout the empire.

The president of the United States is also granted this office or title. We do not always read it in its Greek form but we can.

It is not so strange to think of the Roman Emperors as *gods* when you realize that George Washington himself was deified in the ceiling of the Capital dome. "Across the Dome's eye, 180 feet above the floor, spreads a gigantic allegorical painting by the Italian artist Constantino Brumidi. The painting depicts the 'Apotheosis,' or glorification, of George Washington. Surrounding Washington in sweeping circles are delicately colored figures--some 15 feet tall. They include gods and goddesses [among them Ceres, Vulcan, Mercury, Neptune, Minerva and 13 State goddesses] pictured as protectors of American ideals and progress."<sup>13</sup>

So, the dog does return to the vomit and the pig to the mire and history repeats itself. Jesus came to redeem us spiritually and in truth.

“Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last [state] of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” Matthew 12:45

History has repeated itself again and you are delivered into bondage. The redemption of Jesus still stands in the world today both in spirit and in truth but one must knock and the door shall be opened.

"Redemption is deliverance from the power of an alien dominion and the enjoyment of the resulting freedom. It involves the idea of restoration to one who possesses a more fundamental right or interest. The best example of redemption in the Old Testament was the deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage, from the dominion of the alien power in Egypt."<sup>14</sup>

Consider the word *god* now that we see it as an office and men can choose or not to have other gods before them.

If men make such foolish choices, then God may hold them accountable to the gods they have chosen for themselves.

“Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.” Ex 22:28

The Greek word for "god" may appear as *Theos*, *Theon* and *Theoi*. Greek and Latin are inflected languages and have different endings depending on how they are used in the sentence. That does not change the meaning of the word. The case of the word or a different grammatical role within a sentence will produce a different ending to the word. "The God" tells you something, but I could be saying "the God" of the Amalaks or "the God" of Abraham. You can add articles or create phrases, but again the word's meaning remains the same which is "ruling judge". It was used every day in the Bible to denote a person who had the power to judge *good and evil* for you.

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12 Black's 3rd p 332.

13 "We, the People" "The Story of the United States Capitol" by the United States Capitol Historical Society, Washington D.C., Library of Congress catalog number 65-20721.

14 Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible.

We should not make gods of men but we often do by making covenants with men and their “ruling judges” usually for granted benefits or protection, and by application, oath, and participation in schemes of social welfare.

### The “gods of the city”

“In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months: And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.” (Acts 7:19, 21)

What do they mean *exceeding fair*?

*Fair* is from the word *asteios* which in the original form was *astu* (a city). Here it is a form that mean "of the city" or civil authority of government. The word is only used in reference to Moses in the Bible, but it is another Greek word found in the text which is a key to understanding the author in this context. Of the over 1300 times it appears in the New Testament this word is translated "God" or “gods”. Yes, Moses was a *god* and had the power to rule over his brothers with executorial judgment as a *god of the city*.

All *god* or *gods* means is that he had the right to judge and rule according. Theos means *ruling judge* and was used every day through out the empire as an address for the appointed judges of Rome. The same can be said of the judges of Israel at the time of Jesus who were addressed also as *god*.

Moses had the right to judge, but did not want to take it for he despised the force that is required in such power and fled from it as Lamech and Cain should have done. The same could be said for Jesus and of course Peter and the husband and wife who lied about the land they sold. It was their money but they lied and were punished by the Holy Spirit, not Peter for he could not act as the princes of the Gentiles would if you cheated on your income taxes. Moses too showed this holy restraint in the case of Dathan and Abiram who could have been judged by Moses but he left judgment to God the Father for vengeance is mine saith the LORD.

In god men may trust, but we must always ask which god for there are gods many.

“But to us [there is but] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom [are] all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6

We should 'accept no substitute' god or father upon the earth, but God the Father who is in heaven. Yet, men do pray to other men for their salvation. Those are the men who often rule the people.

“The people always have some champion whom they set over themselves and nurse into greatness... This and no other is the root from which a tyrant springs; when he first appears he is a protector.”<sup>15</sup> These protectors often call themselves benefactors and by their welfare they snared back into some form of servitude where the people become human resources to be used up for the whim of the despots and tyrants.

These benefactors become the gods of our society where we pray to them for our civil and temporal salvation. Since their benefits are provided at the expense of our neighbor by the exercising authority of these gods our souls are soon altered by our rejection<sup>16</sup> of God's way of charity and love and we are returned to the bondage of Egypt.

It has been the practice of men to invent religions, surround them with mysterious rituals and complex doctrines for the purpose of justifying our selfishness and sin. While we covet our neighbors goods through the agency of governments we create with our own hands we ourselves are delivered into the net<sup>17</sup> of our own making.

Salvation is not dependent upon hollow professions of faith, self serving designer doctrines or dissembling adoration. Our verbal or melodic praises do not impress God.

15 Socrates quoted by Plato from The Republic, bk. 8, sect.. 565:

16 “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” (1 Samuel 8:7)

17 “My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not... Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse... For their feet run to evil... in vain the net is spread ... they lay wait for their [own] blood; they lurk privily for their [own] lives.” (Proverbs 1:10-18)

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21

Christ and His apostles were doers of the word. Their faith gave them spiritual motivation. To understand how Christ, His apostles, and His Church were turning the world upside down, may require us to turn some of our modern religious beliefs upside down--or throw them out all together.

“...certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”  
Jude 1:4

What is Proverbs 23 telling us when it says, “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what [is] before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou [be] a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they [are] deceitful meat”?

What did Jesus mean when he told us to pray (apply) to our Father in Heaven and “call no man father upon the earth”?

Why did Paul in Romans 11:9 repeat David's warning from Psalms 69:22, “...Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:”? David knew “*that which should have been for their welfare, [would] become a trap*”?

The kingdom of God binds men together by faith, hope, and charity.<sup>18</sup> The apostles, like Gideon,<sup>19</sup> would not rule over the people. Moses led the people out of bondage, to a place where there were no kings who exercised authority one over the other. Ministers of God are titular leaders of a peculiar people. They are not like Nimrod or Caesar.

Edward Gibbon praised “the union and discipline of the Christian republic” in his book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and explained that the Church “gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire.”<sup>20</sup> The Christian state was different.

Christians were told to “Obey the government, for God is the one who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power.” then why were Christians persecuted by governments? Why were they accused of *saying that there is another king, one Jesus*?<sup>21</sup> God instituted the government of the apostles, man instituted the government of Caesar.

“Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute [is due]; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” Romans 13:7,8

Why do you owe Caesar at all? How is it that you are under tribute, when we are told that, “The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute”? (Pr 12:24)

Governments of men are created by men. The righteous power of government to tax the people comes from the people by consent. When the *voice of the people* called for a leader who could rule over them in the days of Samuel, the election of the people was a rejection of God.

The people had lived without such authoritarian benefactors for centuries,<sup>22</sup> but they were now doing evil and rejecting God, because they were tired of taking on the responsibility of protecting one another, of loving their neighbor as themselves.

When the people called to the prophet Samuel to swear in a ruler to appoint judges, make laws, and to lead them in battle, that was an evil thing because God said they were rejecting Him. Before that the welfare of the people was attended to by the people and for the people through the charity and hope of the people.<sup>23</sup> Churches were a part of this system of daily ministrations to the needy of society. This was the *pure religion*<sup>24</sup> of loving your neighbor as yourself.

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18 “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these [is] charity.” 1 Corinthians 13:13

19 “And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.” (Judges 8:23)

20 Rousseau and Revolution, Will et Ariel Durant p.801. fn 83 Heiseler, 85.

21 Acts 17:6, 7

22 “In those days [there was] no king in Israel, [but] every man did [that which was] right in his own eyes.” (Judges 17:6)

23 Then John Wycliffe introduced his translation of the Bible in 1382 with the words, “This Bible is for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People.”

24 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.” Ja. 1:27



“The real destroyers of the liberties of the people is he who spreads among them bounties, donations, and benefits.” Plutarch.

Mankind has repeatedly been snared by his own wantonness and appetite, his own greed and lust for power over his neighbor. When John Wycliffe introduced his translation of the Bible in 1382 he wrote, “This Bible is for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People.” He was promptly arrested, died and his body was burned.

“He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the hunter before the LORD.” Ge. 10:9

The word *hunter* is from *tsayid* which is more often translated ‘provision, food, food-supply, or victuals’. This verse would be better translated to the effect that Nimrod was a mighty provider *instead of* the LORD. This concept of benefactors who exercise authority would be in line with testimonies of David and Paul, John and Jesus about praying and eating at the tables of rulers and being snared by those tables that should have been for our welfare.

“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” (Ephesian 5:5)

Today, we are taught that it is a good thing to apply to the authoritarian benefactors who force the contributions and sacrifices of the people, even though when Saul did that he was called “foolish” by Samuel and a violator of the commandments of the LORD thy God.<sup>25</sup>

Have we made covenants with other gods, and bowed down to them waiving our rights endowed by God the Father of our creation? Have we been snared in service to these gods who rule us and our neighbors because we desired the social welfare of their offered benefits at the expense of our neighbors? By denying the ways of God have we made gods of men?

“Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> “And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.” (1 Samuel 13:13)

<sup>26</sup> Judges 10:13-14