

Parsha Devarim

דְּבָרִים
“Things / Words”

Deut
1-3

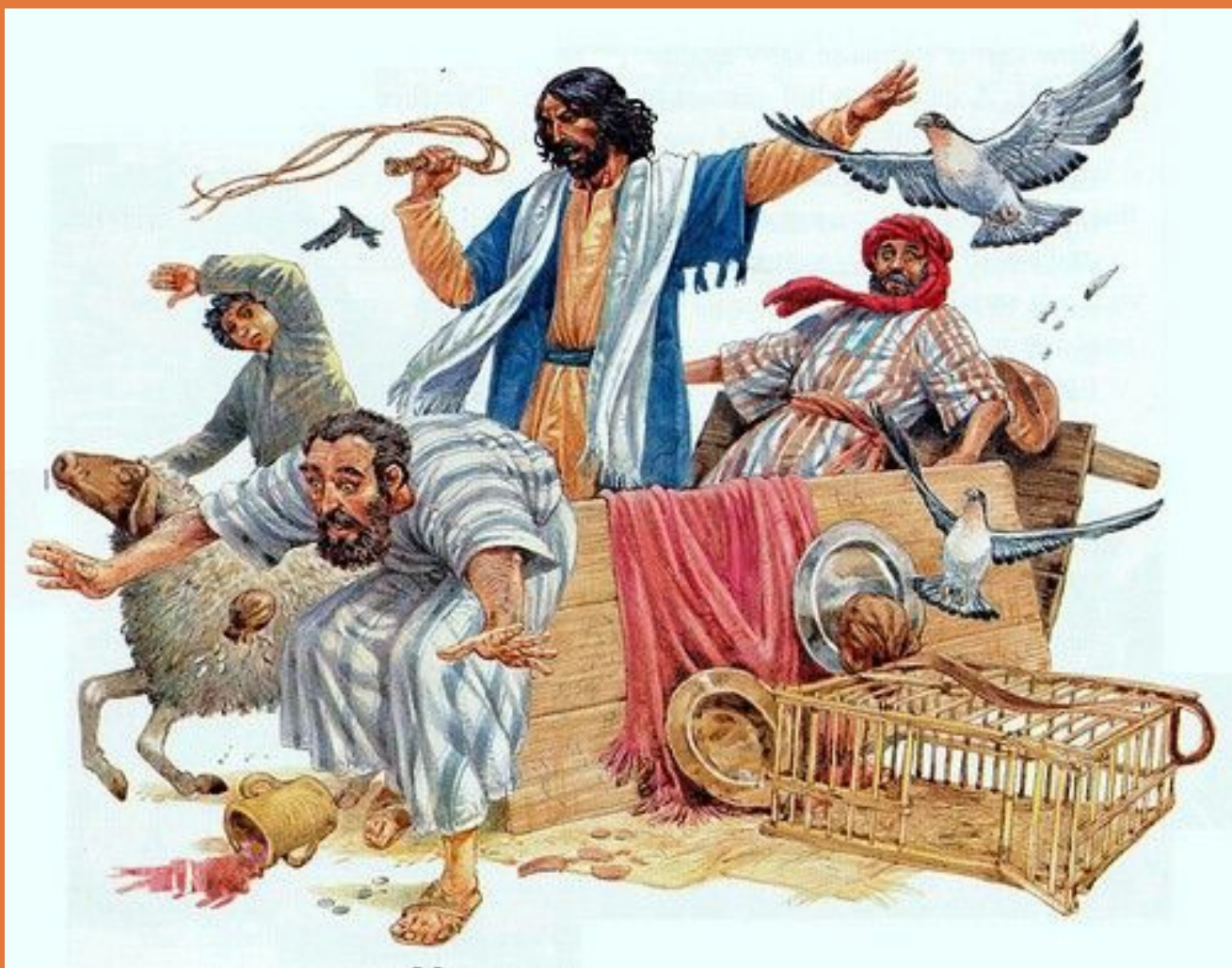


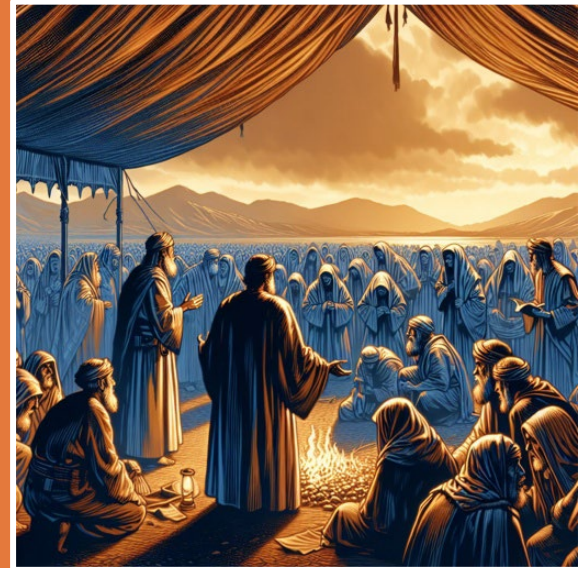
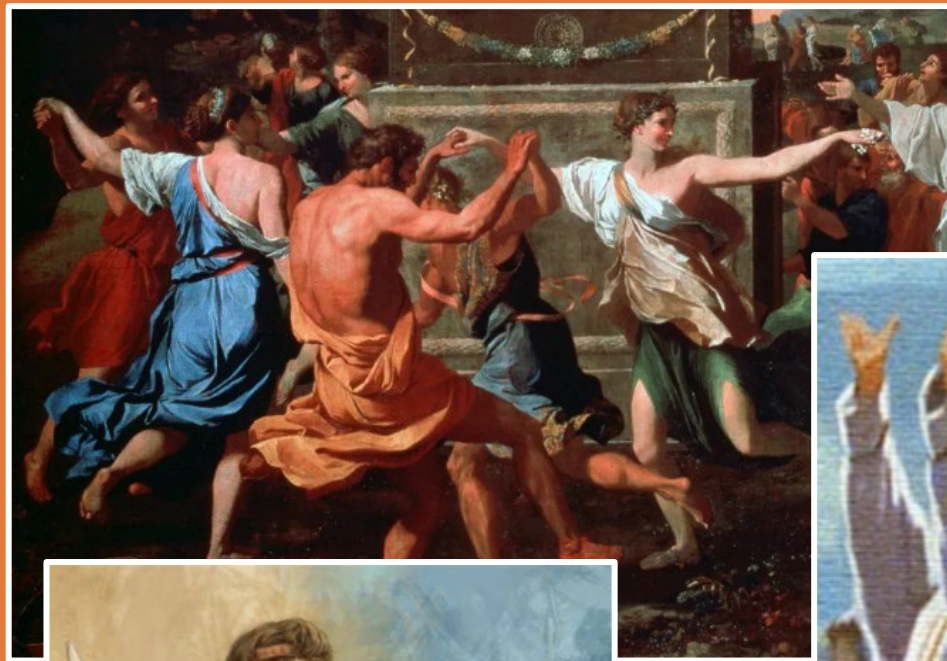
Key Questions on Phineas

Specifically - what did Phineas do right? And what did he do wrong?

When is it right to be consumed with the Lord's zeal; to take extreme action in ways that will be questioned and judged by forces of law and order?

How does this apply to us?





What did Phineas need most in his life?

Behold, **I give to him my covenant of peace**, and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel. -Numbers 25:12-13

Our mission for ~~THIS~~ next week

What connections does this passage have to what came before and after it?

In what specific ways do I need a "covenant of peace" from our Father?

What idols have I yoked myself to?



The Levite & the Simeonite

- Immediately after a spiritual victory for Jacob
- Enticement by neighboring women
- "In your face" sins of the flesh by "a prince"
- Bonding of one soul to another
- Passivity of the leader
- Deceit
- Violent slaughter
- Condoned (?) by God
- A hard stop on idol worship
- Covenant re-affirmation

Family secrets / Family shame

Genesis 33-35

Real progress - moving closer to HaShem!

Setback of violence and cruelty

A need to separate from family idols



Ensuing curse, Genesis 49: "Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. . . .Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel!"

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. . .and Rachel
stole her father's
household gods.

And Jacob
tricked Laban
the Aramean . . .

—Gen. 31:19-20



...and Rachel
stole her father's
household gods.
And Jacob **stole**
the heart of
Laban the
Aramean . . .

—Gen. 31:19-20





Teraphim

- Plural word of uncertain meaning
- Rhyming to indicate nuanced similarity --
Urim “lights, fires” /
Seraphim “fiery ones”
- **Great value** --
Genesis
31, *elohim* / Serious business!



Household gods / Teraphim

- **Worship, veneration, often in conjunction with YHWH worship** – Micah the Ephraimite (Judges 17-18) / Destroyed by Josiah (2 Kings 23:24)
- **Divination** -- For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination. He shakes the arrows; he consults the teraphim; he looks at the liver. (Ezekiel 21:21)

Household gods / Teraphim

Three ancient clay figurines of household gods (teraphim) standing side-by-side. They are small, stylized human figures with large heads, prominent eyes, and beards. They are wearing long, patterned robes. The background is dark and textured.

Life savings -- The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to YHWH your God. And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction like it. (Deuteronomy 7:25-26)

Inheritance deed -- Nuzi tablets

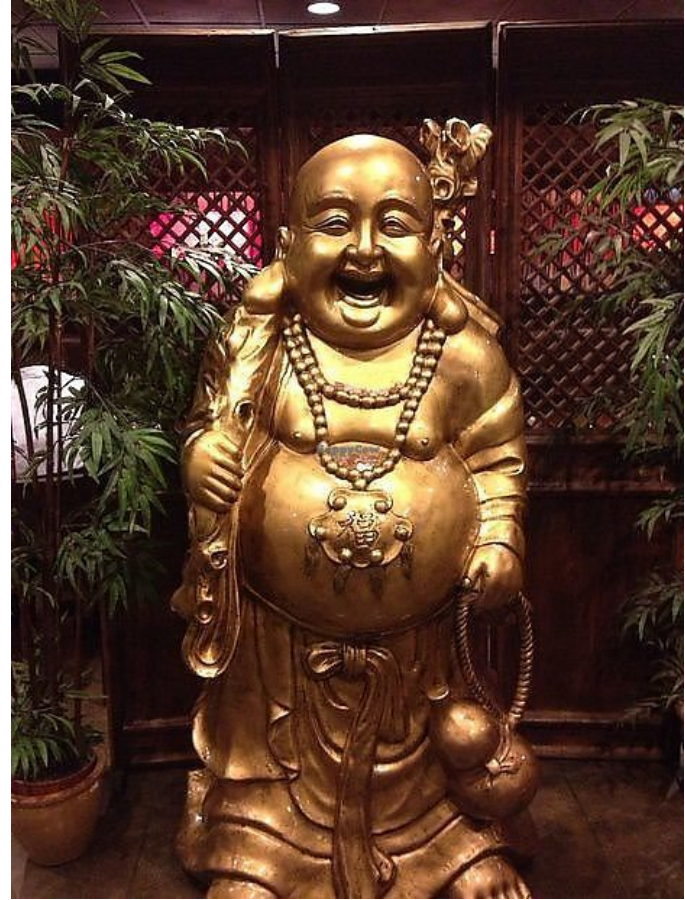
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**How have I yoked
myself to idols?**







What is idolatry?



Idolatry is the **misdirection of our worship.**

It's our hearts **clinging** and **confiding in** that which does not or cannot bring us **peace** or security.

It is the **elevation and glorification of anything other than God**, which eventually leads to personal emptiness and separation from true life.

What is idolatry?



Anything that draws my **heart** and **imagination** more than God does;

Anything I **pursue** in order to get what **God alone** can give me.

1 John 5

Love and obedience - "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments"

Overcoming Satan's world - "everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world" / "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one"

Confidence that we have life! - "I write these things to you who trust in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life"

1 John 5

Sins that do / do not lead to death - "All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death"

An end to sinning - "everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning"

Connections galore!

But what about . . .

1 John 2:15 ff

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world — the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life — is not from the Father but is from the world.

And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

The desires of the eyes

Pride of life

Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

- A mindset that gratifies the flesh more than it gratifies the spirit

Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

- A mindset that gratifies the flesh more than it gratifies the spirit
- A relational pattern that gratifies the flesh . . .

Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

- A mindset that gratifies the flesh more than it gratifies the spirit
- A relational pattern that gratifies the flesh . . .
- A behavior that gratifies the flesh . . .

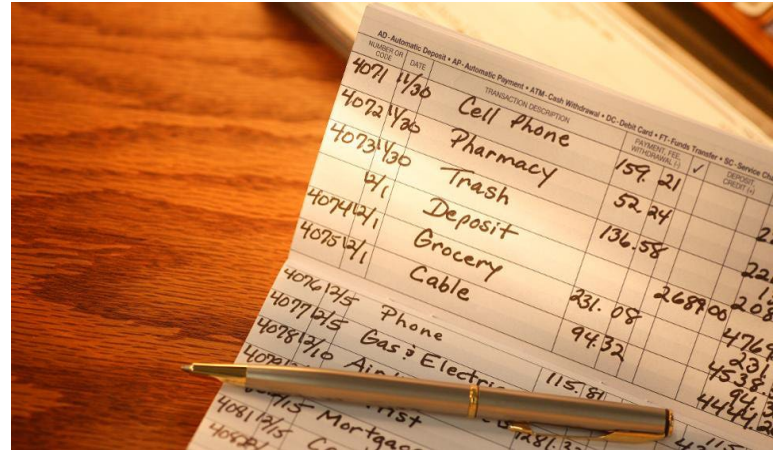
Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

- A mindset, relational pattern, or behavior that gratifies the flesh more than it gratifies the spirit

The desires of the eyes

- The life we want, rather than the one God gives us



Idolatry – 1 John 2

The desires of the flesh

- A mindset, relational pattern, or behavior that gratifies the flesh more than it gratifies the spirit

The desires of the eyes

- The life we want, rather than the one God gives us

Pride of life

- _____er than

Origins of Idolatry



Origins of Idolatry

- Ignorance
-
-
-



Origins of Idolatry

- Ignorance
- Experience
-
-



Origins of Idolatry

- Ignorance
- Experience
- Gratitude
-



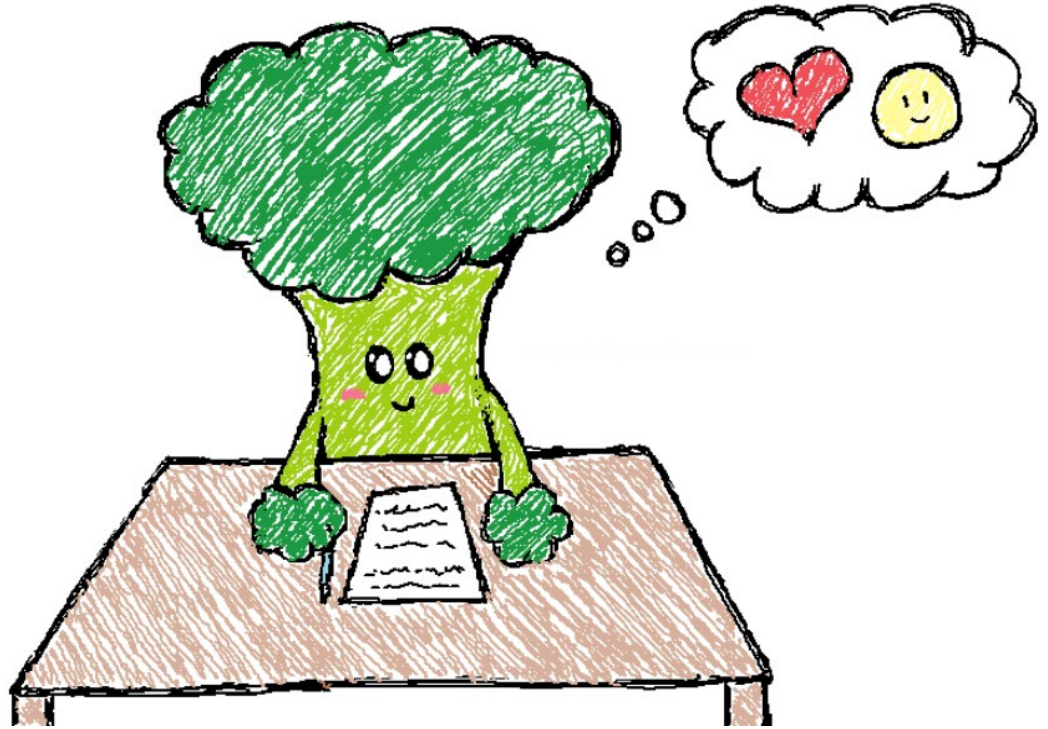
Origins of Idolatry

- Ignorance
- Experience
- Gratitude
- Devotion



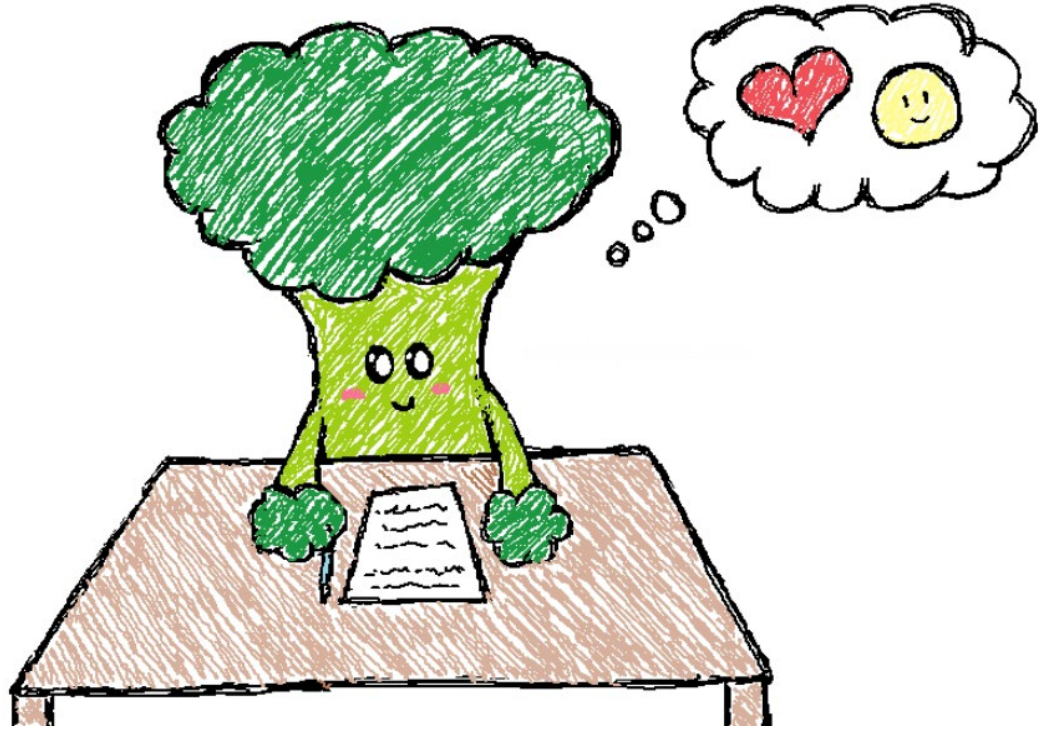
Origins of Idolatry

We have God-given
instincts to get _____
_____ !



Origins of Idolatry

We have God-given
instincts to get **our**
needs met!



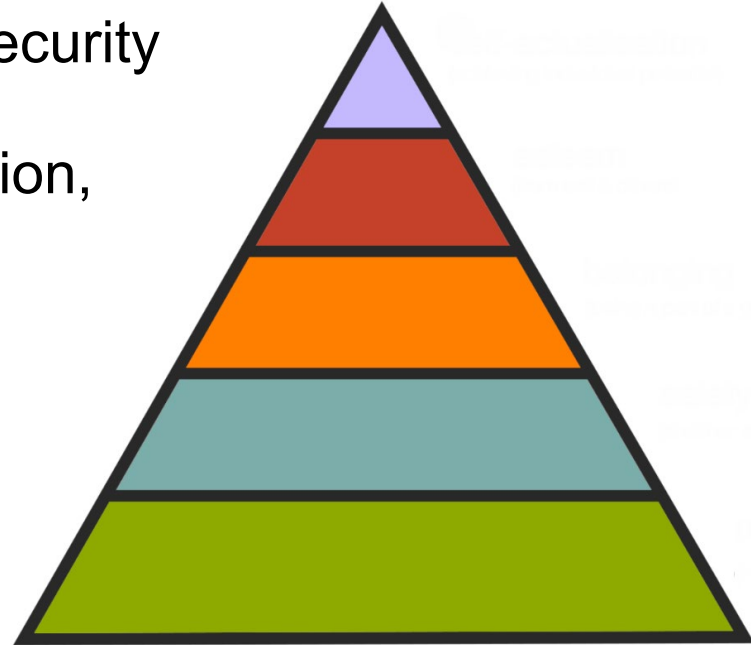
At first, idols give us everything . . .

Survival Needs: Food, water, shelter, security

Social Needs: Community, communication, worldview

Intimacy Needs: Love, respect, close connection

Spiritual Needs: Peace and purpose



What is idolatry?



“Whatever my heart clings to and confides in, that is really my God, my functional savior. ”

A misplaced obsession that directs my **thinking**, comforts my **feelings**, and hijacks my **intentions**.

Let's set aside blame for a moment

A misplaced obsession that directs my **thinking**, comforts my **feelings**, and hijacks my **intentions**.

I bound myself to this idol because once upon a time, it served me, helped me. And it still does help sometimes, or in some ways. But it's not like before -- Now I serve it!



Let's set aside blame for a moment

A misplaced obsession that directs my **thinking**, comforts my **feelings**, and hijacks my **intentions**.

I bound myself to this idol because once upon a time, it served me, helped me. And it still does help sometimes, or in some ways. But it's not like before -- Now I serve it!

“At first, idols give you everything and ask nothing. But at the end, idols ask everything and give you nothing.” -David Brooks

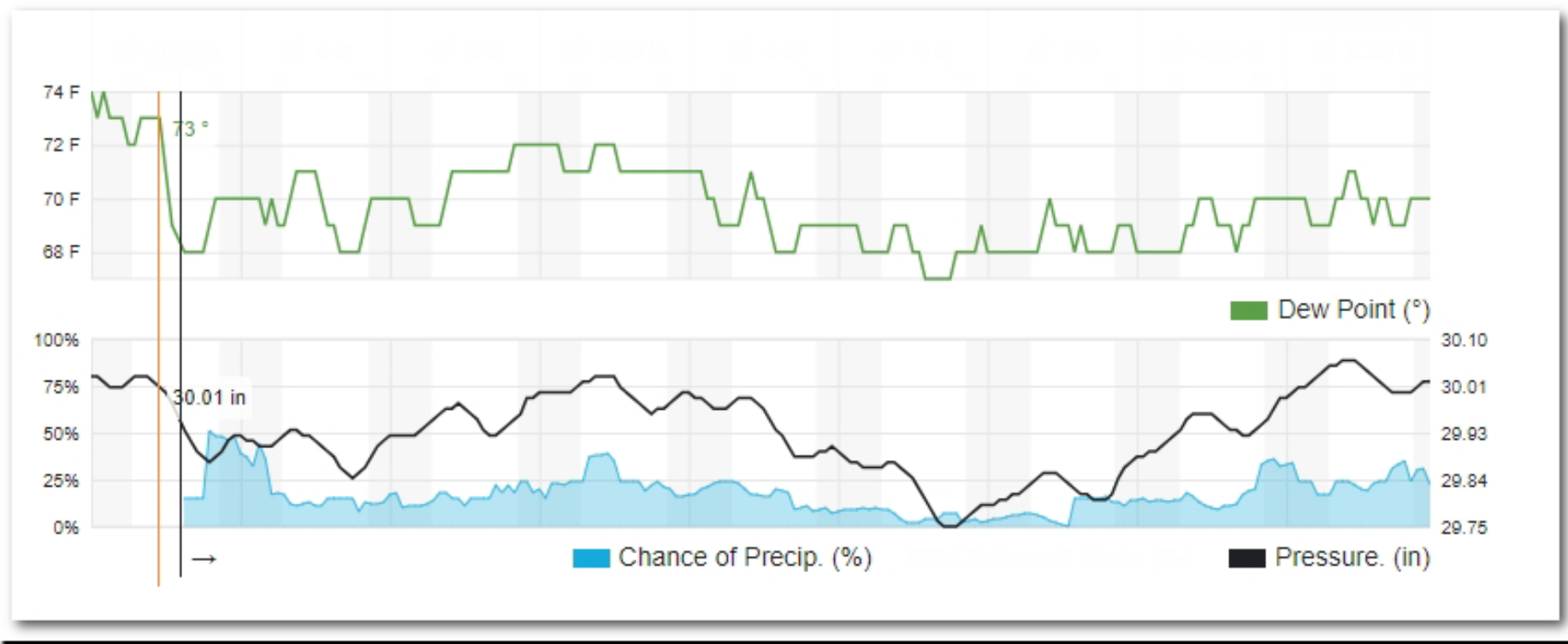
Our mission for ~~next~~ ^{THIS} week

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What idols have I yoked myself to?

In what specific ways do I need peace?



Our mission for next week

THIS

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Joshua 24:2-3

And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says YHWH, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the River [Euphrates] - Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. . . .

Joshua 24:12-14

It was not by your sword or by your bow. I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

“Now therefore fear YHWH and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve YHWH.

Joshua 24:15-16

And if it is evil in your eyes to serve YHWH, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve YHWH.”

Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake YHWH to serve other gods . . .

Joshua 24:19-22

But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve YHWH, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake YHWH and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.”

And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve YHWH.” Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen YHWH, to serve him.”

Joshua 24:22-25

And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to YHWH, the God of Israel.” And the people said to Joshua, “YHWH our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day . . .

Joshua 24:32-33

. . .As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at **Shechem** [Wait! Where did this happen?], in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of Phinehas his son, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

Joshua 24:1-3

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says YHWH, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the River [Euphrates] - Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. . . .



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Genesis 32:7-8

And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.” Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, thinking, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape.”

Genesis 32:9-10

And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O YHWH who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.

Genesis 32:11-12; 24

Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.



