

01-31 -26 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene – *B'Shalach* (when [Pharaoh] let go)
Torah Portion; Exodus 13:17 – 17:16
Haftarah: Judges 4:4-5 – 5:31
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: Rev 12:7-10

Demonic Deception – Part 1 – Egypt's Gods

Central question of this message: Were the Egyptian pagan gods actually demons?

This is parasha *B'Shalach*, meaning “in the sending [by Pharaoh]”. Its name comes from the sixth through eighth words in the English and the second word in the Hebrew. This is the fourth parasha in the book of Shemot (Exodus).

Ex 13:17-19

17 Now it came about when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war, and they return to Egypt." 18 Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt.

נָתַם	וְלֹא־	הָעָם	אֶת־	פַּרְעֹה	בְּשַׁלַּח	וַיְהִי	17
led them	that not	the people	Pharaoh	when had let go,	And it came to pass,		
<u>5148</u>	<u>3808</u>	<u>5971</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>6547</u>	<u>7971</u>	<u>1961</u>	
הָיָא	קָרֹב	כִּי	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	אֶרֶץ	דֶּרֶךְ	אֱלֹהִים	
that	near;	was	although the Philistines,	the land of	the way of	through	God
<u>1931</u>	<u>7138</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>6430</u>	<u>776</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>9999</u>
מִלְחָמָה	בְּרֹאֲתָם	הָעָם	יִנָּחֵם	פֶּן־	אֱלֹהִים	אָמַר	כִּי
war,	when they see	the people	repent	Lest peradventure	God	said,	for
<u>4421</u>	<u>7200</u>	<u>5971</u>	<u>5162</u>	<u>6435</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>559</u>	<u>3588</u>
					מִצְרַיִם:	וְשָׁבוּ	
					Egypt:	and they return to	
					<u>4714</u>	<u>7725</u>	
יָם־	הַמִּדְבָּר	דֶּרֶךְ	הָעָם	אֶת־	אֱלֹהִים	וַיֹּסֶב	18
sea:	the wilderness of	the way of	through the people	God	But led about,		
<u>3220</u>	<u>4057</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>5971</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>5437</u>
מִצְרַיִם:	מֵאֶרֶץ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי־	עָלוּ	וַחֲמִשִּׁים	סוּף	
Egypt.	out of the land of	Israel	the children of	went up	and harnessed	Red	the
<u>4714</u>	<u>776</u>	<u>3478</u>	<u>1121</u>	<u>5927</u>	<u>2571</u>	<u>5488</u>	<u>9999</u>

During the last few parashiot, we have seen how our G-d has interacted with the pagan culture of Egypt in a special way. Each of the successive plagues has demonstrated that the main gods of Egypt were less powerful than our G-d. One by one, they were all shown to be defeated by the decree of the G-d of the Hebrews, through the hand of Moses.

Even the decrees of Pharaoh – who was thought to be a god-in-flesh to the Egyptians – were shown to be subservient to the decrees of Moses delivered to Pharaoh. In that way a somewhat cryptic prophecy given to Moses was fulfilled.

Ex 7:1-3

7 Then the Lord said to Moses, "See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. 2 You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

In Egypt, everyone considered Pharaoh's word to be law, and they obeyed without question or hesitation. But each time Moses stood before Pharaoh and gave a command from G-d, Pharaoh resisted. And Pharaoh's serial resistance brought onto the people of the land plague after plague.

And when it became clear that the plagues did not affect the Hebrews, it was becoming very clear that Moses' authority was higher than that of Pharaoh.

As the Egyptian people saw this happening, they reached the obvious conclusion that Moses was a god to Pharaoh, and the Hebrew G-d was the true G-d, having defeated the Egyptian gods.

Before I get into greater detail on our topic for today, I wish to offer some clarity on the topic of circumcision and the Passover.

In today's parasha, the people leave Egypt – as a mixed multitude – made up of ethnic Hebrews together with all those in Egypt who saw our G-d and chose to bind themselves to Him and to the Hebrew people. They risked their lives together with ours as they entered those houses marked with the blood of the lamb, to be part of our people. Note that part of the instructions for foreigners to be permitted to celebrate the Passover was that they be fully grafted-in to the people.

Ex 12:43-51

43 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; 44 but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. 45 A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. 46 It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. 47 All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. **48 But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.** 49 The same law shall apply to the native as to the

stranger who sojourns among you." 50 Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. 51 And it came about on that same day that the Lord brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

Imagine, if you will, a foreigner coming to the house of a Hebrew and asking to enter on the horrific night of Passover. He is already stressed to the maximum, feeling that he might have only just barely escaped death. But then he is told that before he can sit down to the required meal for that night, he must undergo circumcision. He might not have even considered that such a thing is possible, much less required. Can you hear some pleading from him about this step? Can you hear the steadfast insistence of the father of the house, as he picks up a piece of flint and steps forward?

What is the meaning of the command that every foreigner who comes to the Passover table must be circumcised? Circumcision is the sign of the covenant between G-d and His people Israel. It is a sign in the flesh of all men of Israel.

Gen 17:9-14

9 God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. **10 This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. 13 A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."**

So, you can see that to be completely grafted-in to the covenant of G-d with the Hebrew people, circumcision is required. It is not to be done merely as some sort of "check box" to achieve a certain level of connection with G-d and His people. It is the sign – and the final one in

this context – of a heart which has turned its back on pagan things, and has fully embraced the G-d of the universe and His people.

For an adult to present himself for circumcision on the first night of Passover in Egypt meant more than just trying to hide from the bringer of judgment against Egypt, it meant a complete change of identity – from being a pagan worshipper to becoming a worshipper of G-d.

Need I say that the act of circumcision represents a far deeper level of commitment to G-d than would a mere “confession of faith” as that is represented by the normative church. A “confession” represents a level of commitment that can be withdrawn by a refutation of that confession. But circumcision is permanent. It represents the deepest level of commitment.

But if one accepts circumcision without the heart of being grafted-in to the covenant relationship of G-d to His people (regardless of whether you were born into the Hebrew people or not), then even that level of commitment means nothing in the spiritual realm.

Rom 2:25

25 For indeed circumcision is of value, if you practice the Law;
but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has
become uncircumcision.

It is important to note that to be in *some* of the levels of covenant relationship with G-d, one does not need to be circumcised.¹ However, the Passover meal is more than just some special food served on a special day. It is another sign of the covenant relationship between G-d and the Hebrew people for every generation, and no male person who is uncircumcised is permitted to partake of this meal. And that rule has not changed from Egypt until today.

But today I wish to focus on something that was true in Egypt, and is true today – demons and demonic powers are alive and active in the world.

Egypt at the time of Moses was the most powerful nation on the planet. It had the greatest wealth, because Joseph had fed the world for 7 years with Egyptian grain and much gold and silver had been brought to pay for food.

Egypt had the most advanced technology. The mechanism for building giant pyramids made of solid limestone blocks weighing many tons, is

¹ I have spoken extensively regarding the various levels of covenant relationship in previous messages. See those for greater clarification.

still being questioned. How the Egyptian artisans created vivid, detailed paintings deep within the corridors deep in the structures without lamps still defies explanation. The wheels of Egyptian chariots are incredibly strong and light, far advanced of the common level of engineering of that time. The precise alignment of the pyramids with the cardinal directions as well as some of the patterns of the celestial galaxies, is only now being discovered and mapped.

The Egyptian army was undefeated in that time. And after the exodus, Egypt has ceased to be a world power, even to this day. It is today maybe the most poverty-stricken societies, and the poorest country in the Arab world today.

G-d delivered to Egypt great wealth and power, because it honored G-d and gave the best land to the Hebrew people. The promise to Abraham came true in Egypt.

Gen 12:1

3 And I will bless those who bless you,

I suggest that the wealth and power of Egypt, given by the blessing of the One true G-d, led the elites in Egypt to gradually turn away from G-d and their pride made them subject to the deceptions of the demons.

Demons are focused upon deceiving people and keeping them from entering into any level of covenant relationship with G-d. One of their most effective tactics is to divert attention from the holy toward anything less – such as nature, or even the power of the occult.

These demonic forces were having quite the level of success in Egypt after the death of Joseph and after the rise of Pharaohs who did not follow the One true G-d. By the time of the exodus, Egypt was taken-over by demonic worship, and the priests of that demonic worship had supreme power.

I suggest that America might now be living-out the same pattern, and will one day soon be subject to the same great fall as that of Egypt. I believe there is a reason that America is not mentioned in Scripture as having a prominent place in the future of Israel, and the coming of Messiah as King. Although America might fall, the believers in America need not follow it into the abyss. Through education and dedication to G-d we can avoid the pit.

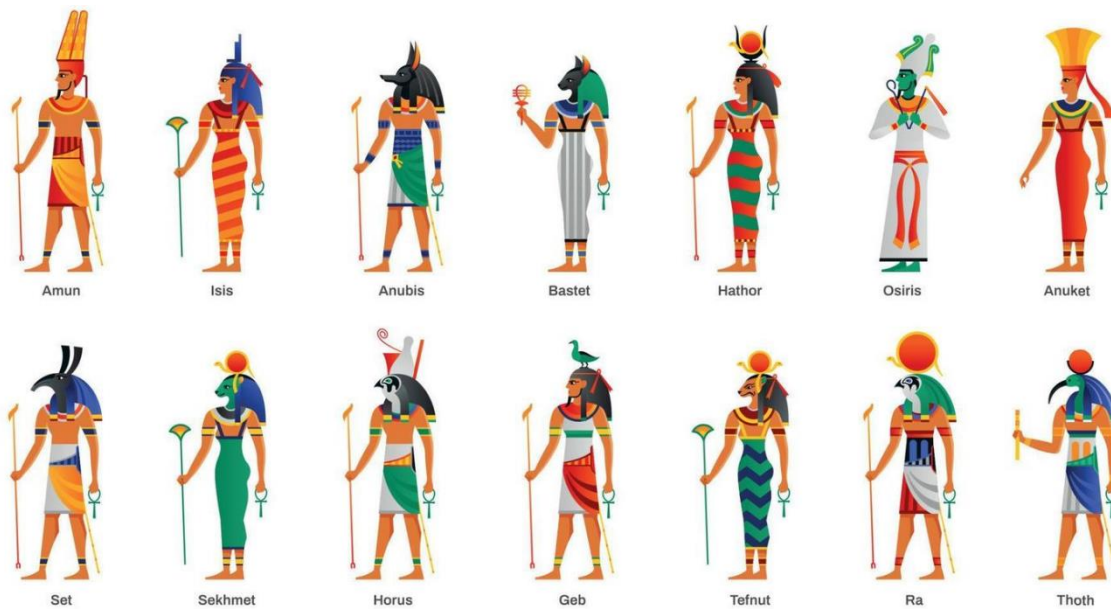
As a younger man, I could not envision any scenario where the USA would turn its back on Israel. Today, I am starting to see just how that might happen, and am convinced that it will eventually happen.

This is why I wish to now begin this series on the deception of demons which is becoming more and more active in these days. I find many in America are believing those deceptions, and are being seduced by the “dark side” to turn away from G-d and His truth.

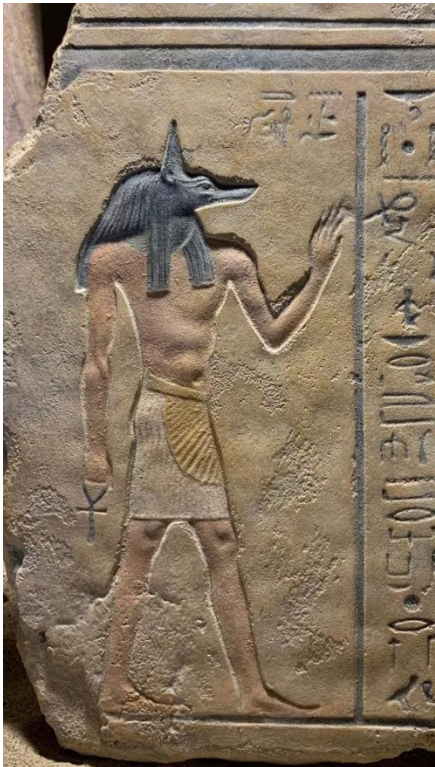
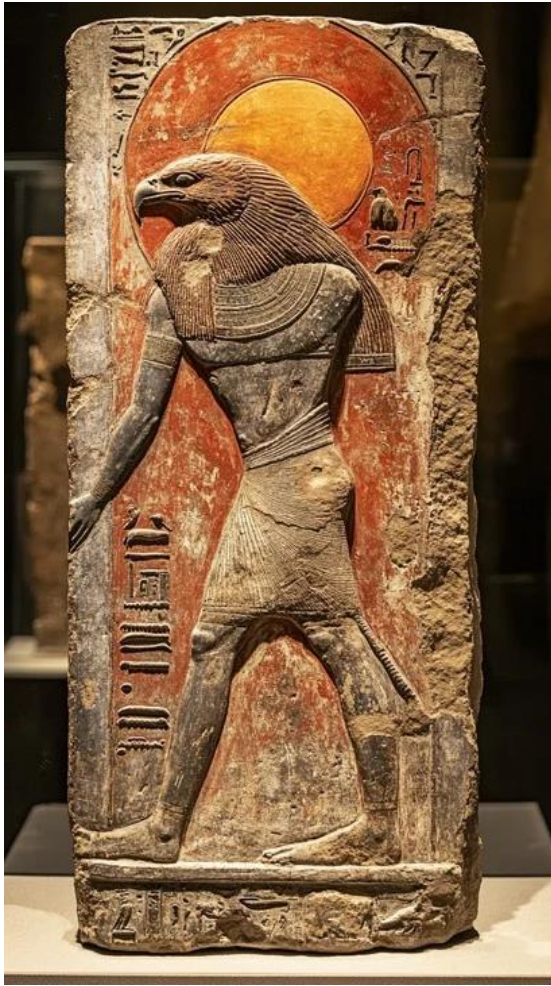
To understand demons, and their tactics, I wish to show how G-d has given us direction, and warnings, through Scriptures penned for hundreds of generations. He saw the age of deception coming, and gave us clear warning. If we do not heed it, we risk falling victim to the same forces that took Egypt from a blessed nation to a crushed nation.

Let’s begin by looking at a few of the gods of Egypt at the time of the exodus, and relating that to demons.

There were at least 9 and maybe many more, prominent gods in Egyptian pagan worship. They were featured prominently in the Egyptian writings, and in their art. Some of which is preserved even to today.



Some of the Egyptian gods were clearly portrayed in human form (male and female), but others were illustrated as human bodies with heads of other kinds of animals, such as birds, cats, dogs, and the like.



As a younger man, I considered that Egyptian deity mythology was likely generated from the imagination of men, and then simply perpetuated by the generations of adherents that followed after that particular god, to maintain some level of control.

Possibly, I thought, people donned a cleverly-designed mask or headdress, and paraded on a high place to invoke that

particular god, and instill fear. I am now rethinking those presumptions, given the benefit of a deeper study of Scripture.

I think I have found a way to explain and reconcile what I see today in demonic activity and some Scripture which seems to defy understanding, or seem more cryptic.

As believers, if we have only a cursory understanding of Scripture, we are like the scientist who lacks a deeper understating of his science. There was a time when people believed that the only elements were earth, wind, fire, and water. But as the science of geology grew more learned, we discovered layers of rock, ages of rock, depositional environments of sedimentary rock, igneous and intrusive rock, and the like. A skilled geologist can use his deeper understanding to find valuable minerals, building materials, oil and gas, and can explain why the earth shakes in certain areas at certain times. He can measure the deep rumblings of a volcano and predict eruptions far better.

And so it is with us who believe in G-d. If we are uneducated and Scripturally illiterate, we might be at a loss to understand some of the demonic things we see going on in the world right now, and we risk being swept away by the lies just like many of our friends are being swept away.

If we are Scripturally sound, we can not only see what is going on around us as demonic activity, but it will increase our faith in G-d – because we understand the satanic trick being perpetrated on the world.

If we are unsound, the “experts” we see lecturing and explaining these things will sound credible, and we will begin to question G-d’s sovereignty, and the perfection of His word. I tell you that too many believers are right now questioning their faith, because they are being seduced by the lies of demons, and those people in our society who are following the demonic influence. We trust their words to our doom.

I do not wish for you to be in the latter category. We must be strong in this age so that we can persevere to the end, to benefit from the final salvation at the end of this age.

I want to begin with the history of Satan and his demons in Scripture.

Isa 14:12-15

12 "How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!

13 "But you said in your heart,
'I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'
15 "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit.

Our Sages, in particular Rashi and Ibn Ezra have concluded that this refers directly to Lucifer, and indirectly to Nebuchadnezzar who followed in this same pattern.

There is a prophecy regarding Israel and the coming Messiah, and Lucifer plays an important role in that story.

Rev 12:1-6

12 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; 2 and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign

appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. 4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven [stars = angels], and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. 5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron [Messiah]; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne [Yeshua ascended to G-d to take His throne there]. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. [Israel has been dispersed into the nations, but has survived and has prospered in spite of the holocausts].

But before the attack on Israel and Messiah, we see that in the spiritual realm, one which we cannot see into directly, a battle occurred which resulted in Lucifer being cast out of Heaven and relegated to the Earth.

Rev 12:7-10

7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged

war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Once upon the Earth, how did Satan interact with Adam and Eve?

Gen 3:1-7

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'" 4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave

also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

There is an abundance of deep teaching to be gleaned from this passage, but I wish to focus only upon a few important points. First of all, we can find in the writings of Sage Ibn Ezra in his commentary on Gen 3 that the “serpent” was indeed Satan. And Satan had taken the form of a serpent.

But it is also clear that in the exchange with Eve in the garden, this serpent stood upright, and could speak in the language she understood. Why did Satan take the form of a standing, talking serpent? I think it is because all of the beasts which G-d had created were benign to mankind at that time, and none would harm either Adam or Eve.

And since creation was so fresh, it did not seem odd to Eve that there was an animal which could come walking up to her, and converse with her in her language. She must have thought it unremarkable. To add to that, this animal provided rational arguments to her regarding G-d and His instructions.

What do I conclude from this interaction? That Satan can take the form of something that is not at all threatening to people, and can speak to us in a way that is comforting, and even intellectually engaging.

He gave her comfort as he engaged her rational thoughts. He began by showing her that he was trying to help her understand G-d's instructions, and helping her understand what he suggested were the secret motivation behind those instructions. He urged her to use her own intellect to move to a higher level of human existence that was not yet possible given G-d's limiting instructions regarding the understanding of good and evil.

He accomplished this by "the lie." Which is "Did G-d *really* say...?" He played upon her ignorance and her insecurities regarding those instructions to motivate her to take actions inconsistent with G-d's intentions. That lie proved effective for her. It proves effective among people of this age as well. Sadly, that even includes a large number of people in the normative church today.

There is an entire theology prominent in the normative church which teaches that G-d's Torah has been done away with. This is yet another manifestation of the lie – "Did G-d really say...?"

Now that we see that Satan can take the form of something that is comforting and engaging, we can see that maybe his demons can take the form of bizarre beings that might frighten people, and cause them to declare such beings to be gods. They do this to divert attention from the One true G-d.

I cannot be certain, having not been in Egypt at that time, but it seems to me now that there is a significant probability that the Egyptian gods depicted in ancient art and literature, were demons who had taken on the appearance of humans with animal heads. And what if those beings could also do wonders? What if they spoke in the language of the Egyptians, and gave instructions that the people considered to be full of wisdom and deep science? What if they also performed great wonders in the sight of all the people so that they seemed worthy of worship?

I know that demonic forces have the power to take-on many different forms. Let me tell you a few stories I heard in Africa, related to me by a first-hand observer, regarding the power of demons.

A pastor established a church in a village in far east Zambia. That area was a hotbed of satanic worship. The satanists hated his work, and purposed to stop it. One day he and a young boy were in the church building, which had a tin roof. They heard on the roof a large animal

moving. Its large claws scratched the tin in a menacing way. They looked out of the window and saw one of the local shamans standing beside a large tree. The shaman was now maybe 30 feet tall, and he reached over to grab a large branch from the tree. He ripped that limb from the tree and threw it to the ground in a show of force as he stared at the church window.

The Pastor saw something else that caught his attention. There is a field of elephant grass at the edge of the village, visible from the church. Suspended at the top of the elephant grass he saw a giant snake. He described it as maybe being six inches thick, and very long. A snake in the top of tall elephant grass (which can't support any such weight) is remarkable, but more remarkable yet was that this snake was made of fire. It slithered around in the top of the grass.

All this was designed to frighten the Pastor and this young boy, and deter him from further service to G-d. What did that Pastor see? I believe he saw demonic manifestations taking the form of people, fiery snakes, and invisible monsters on the roof.

This same Pastor had earlier confronted his elders in that same church. They had been violating G-d's commands, and not doing good work. One of them was the ringleader of the rebellion. The Pastor commanded that elder to leave. He did leave... but not as you might have expected. That

elder rose from the ground, and turned into a bat. He then flew out the doorway of the church.

Demons take many forms, and we have some of them walking among us even now in a number of forms, I believe. I am not so certain that we don't have a number of them sitting in governmental offices today. I pray we do not have any sitting as elders in congregations.

I am becoming more and more open to the idea that what was seen in Egypt as pagan gods were manifestations of demons. Certainly, the worship of those images defies G-d's instructions. Whether they were demons taking those forms, or whether they influenced people to craft such images matters not. The end result was to draw people who were not educated in the ways and understandings of our G-d away from Him.

Let's become well-informed and fully equipped to deal wisely with those demons and those who follow them in our days.