

Elemental Spirits

ELEMENTAL SPIRITS

Introduction:

- what are elemental spirits: individual spirits, spirits of corporations, peoples
- probably common to all humans and organizations.
- study what religions worship to find a few

1. **Zeus, god of power.** - Political

Power -- control, dominate, master --- biblical response is empower others, servant,

2. **Lakshi, goddess of wealth:** - Economic

Wealth -- money, assets, bank accounts, luxury, easy life with no work > GREED ---- biblical response is sharing, working for sake of others.

- high priests today: business magnates, the rich.
- world: accumulate, compete, luxury, success, self Kingdom of God: share, cooperate simple lifestyle, community

3. **###, god of social status** - Social

world: high office	Kingdom of God servant
- hierarchy	- equality
- be served	- serve
- demands honor	- loves and empowers

3. **Siva-Shakit, Baals, gods of sex:** - Social

Sex -- thrill, ecstasy > LUST --- biblical response is LOVE, being for and caring for the other
Other takes priority of my own desires and goals.

- high priests today: sex heros and stars, Hollywood,
- make a parody of Love: Love is not a feeling but to be for the other. To give up oneself for others, not build your own career but the careers of those under you.

4. **Zeus, Thore, Varuna, Quetzalcoatl: kings and warriors** - Legal

Authority--empires, reign, conquest, worship, pomp, sacrifices (great temples

Royalty, reign (often delegate power), worship, pomp, celebration, hero (MJ who rules basketball, OJ who ruled football). Heros, stars, > PRIDE ----- biblical response is humility,

- empire builders, armies, military might.
- seek legitimacy
- Great Pyramid of Cholula (P. Berger p. 4ff, Pyramids of Sacrifice) Platform for sacrifice. Toltecs, Olmec and Aztec rulers brooding over their calendars and worrying over Quetzalcoatl's feeding schedule

The theory behind the pyramid was cogent and placable: if the gods were not regularly fed with human blood, the universe would fall apart. Berger writes (19##,5), "The Aztecs distinguished themselves by realizing that theory with extreme consistency. They ravaged the region under their domination in question of victims, recruiting them through conquest, by way of tribute, and in the ceremonial combat of the 'wars of the flowers.' It is estimated that in one year, not long before the Spanish conquest, ten thousand victims were sacrificed to Quetzalcoatl in Tenochtitlan (modern Mexico City) alone. We have a description of one of the great ceremonies in that city, during which victims were lined up for the length of more than a mile, waiting for their turn on the sacrificial platform."

- church as empire--the Inquisition brought by the Spanish to the New World.
- high priests today

Christian response: God became our sacrifices, rather than taking our sacrifices.

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5. ###, ###, **gods of entertainment:** - aesthetic and play

Lila, dance, wine and gambling, entertainment, self indulgence > GLUTTONY, DEBAUCHERY --- biblical response is control,

- Entertaining Ourselves to Death

- modern day gods: our movie, T.V. and sports heroes.

6.####, ####: **gods of knowledge:** - religion

- Universities the high temples of knowledge, modernity and progress
- battle grounds between gods of progress, development, economic growth, "Free World" and gods of revolution, socialism, the Third World, oppression, solidarity,
- modern day heroes: our top scientists

TO THESE WE BOW THE KNEE

They lead to:

- hierarchy
- oppression, dominance
- self-centeredness
- violence

Biblical responses:

- hierarchy ---> inverse hierarchy (servant leaders)
- dominations ---> love
- ostentatious display ----> sharing with the needy and poor
- violence---> peace
- self-centeredness ---> God, then other centeredness.

Applied:

- in family relationships (Todd's study)
- in institutions (Grand Rapids organization)
- in churches (priesthood of all believers)
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