

## Satan, Savior, Muse, Messiah Prometheus' Many Afterlives in Metal Music

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Hesiod's Theogony tells a short account of a titan named Prometheus who tricks Zeus into accepting bones and fat instead of meat as sacrifice from mortals. Enraged, Zeus punishes humanity by robbing them of fire, which Prometheus then steals back for the sake of helping the mortals. This rebel against divine authority, a bearer of flame and knowledge unjustly punished in scenes of iron and blood, has inspired a range of retellings and mixtures with other myths. Metal music has proven an especially fertile ground for Promethean reception in several distinct ways. In this presentation, I explore four interconnected models of how the myth of Prometheus has found modern lyrical expression.

The first of these receptions is premised on the syncretism of Prometheus and Lucifer as rebels against an unjust god. One such parallel can be seen in Aleph's "Gift of Prometheus" (2000). The second, drawing on Prometheus's gift of fire from humanity, portrays Prometheus delivering some kind of salvation, be it fire, knowledge, or individuality; this Prometheus as prophet may not always be successful. This is the reading of Prometheus I find in *Emperor's Prometheus: The Discipline of Fire and Demise* (2001). The third is an homage to Prometheus's gift of artifice and knowledge, presenting the titan as a vehicle of divine inspiration that uplifts humanity; Luca Turilli's "Prometheus" and its album *Prometheus: Symphonia Ignis Divinus* (2015) are one example. The final form, while the least common of these, looks with pity upon the suffering of the titan and may go so far as to see parallels between Prometheus's torment by the eagle and the crucifixion of Christ. The most prominent example of this is Trivium's "Of Prometheus and the Crucifix" (2008).