

Deuteronomy 13:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

Analysis

And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them. The Hebrew *ot* (sign) and *mofet* (wonder) refer to miraculous attestation—yet Deuteronomy 13:1-5 warns that fulfilled predictions and supernatural signs do not automatically validate a prophet's message. A prophet whose signs come to pass but who leads toward *elohim akherim* (other gods) must be rejected and executed (13:5).

This sobering passage establishes that miracle-working power can coexist with false teaching. Satan can produce counterfeit signs (Exodus 7:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:13-14). The test of true prophecy isn't merely predictive accuracy or supernatural power but conformity to previous revelation and loyalty to Yahweh. Jesus warned that false prophets would perform great signs (Matthew 24:24). The ultimate criterion is covenant fidelity—does the message lead toward God or away from Him?

Historical Context

This law protected Israel from charismatic deceivers who might use genuine supernatural phenomena to promote apostasy. Ancient Near Eastern cultures relied heavily on omens, signs, and divination. Israel's prophets sometimes performed signs (Isaiah 7:14; 1 Kings 17-18), but signs alone never established

prophetic authority—agreement with Torah and promotion of Yahweh worship were essential. The New Testament applies this test: any gospel contradicting apostolic teaching is accursed, even if preached by angels (Galatians 1:8-9).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How can you discern between genuine spiritual power and counterfeit signs that lead away from biblical truth?
2. What safeguards do you have against being misled by charismatic teachers whose miracles seem to validate their message?

Interlinear Text

וְּבָא	הָאוֹת	וְהַמוֹפֵת	אֲשֶׁר	דִּבֶּר	אֵל יְיָ
come to pass	And the sign	or the wonder	H834	whereof he spake	H413
H935	H226	H4159		H1696	
לְאֵמֹר	נִלְכֶּה	אַחֲרַי	אֱלֹהֵי יָם	אַחֲרֵי יָם	אֲשֶׁר רָאָה
unto thee saying	H1980	after	gods	other	H834 H3808
H559		H310	H430	H312	
וְלֹא יָדַעְתָּ	וְנִשְׁבַּדְדָם:				
which thou hast not known	and let us serve				
H3045	H5647				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 28:9 (Parallel theme): The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

Matthew 24:24 (Parallel theme): For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Deuteronomy 18:22 (Parallel theme): When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 13:6 (References God): If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;