

# Deuteronomy 13:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

## Analysis

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The judgment on false prophets: 'And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God...to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in.' Capital punishment for doctrinal heresy seems extreme but reflects false prophecy's gravity. Leading people away from God (sarah, נָשָׁר, turn aside) merits death because spiritual destruction is worse than physical death. The phrase 'thrust thee out of the way' (nadach, נָשָׁךְ, drive away, seduce) indicates active seduction, not passive error. False teaching actively murders souls. The concluding 'so shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee' shows this protects covenant community from corruption.

## Historical Context

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Old Testament capital punishment for false prophecy reflected theocracy—civil and spiritual authority united. Elijah executed 450 Baal prophets (1 Kings 18:40). Jeremiah faced death threats for true prophecy (Jeremiah 26:11). After Pentecost,

church discipline rather than civil execution addresses heresy (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; Titus 3:10-11). However, Paul invokes divine judgment on false teachers (Galatians 1:8-9), showing God's hatred of soul-destroying lies persists. Church history's tragic errors (Inquisition, burning heretics) misapplied Old Testament theocratic law to New Testament church age.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How seriously do we take false teaching's danger compared to God's assessment in this passage?
2. What is appropriate church response to teachers who lead people away from biblical truth?
3. How do we balance grace toward erring believers with protection of the flock from destructive heresies?

## Interlinear Text

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בָּהּ וְאַתָּה פָּטָל וּמְ	חֲלָם	אָז בָּהּ וְאַתָּה וּמְ	וּפְנַבְּיָה	בָּהּ וְאַתָּה
And that prophet	H1931	H176	or that dreamer	of dreams
H5030			H2492	H1931
shall be put to death	H3588	because he hath spoken	to turn	which the LORD
H4191		H1696	H5627	H3068
thy God	H430	which brought you out	H853	and redeemed
		H3318	H776	H6299
you out of the house	H1004	of bondage	H5650	to thrust
			H5080	H4480
commanded	H6680	which the LORD	H3068	thee out of the way
				H1870
the evil	H7451	from the midst	H7130	

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 5:13** (Evil): But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

**Jeremiah 14:15** (Prophecy): Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

**Deuteronomy 22:21** (Evil): Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die:

because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

**Deuteronomy 17:7** (Evil): The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

**Deuteronomy 24:7** (Evil): If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

**Deuteronomy 18:20** (Prophecy): But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

**Deuteronomy 19:19** (Evil): Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

**Deuteronomy 13:10** (References God): And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.