

# Deuteronomy 18:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

## Analysis

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**For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners**—Me'onenim (observers of times) likely refers to those who interpreted omens from clouds or practiced astrology. Qosemim (diviners) encompasses various techniques for discerning the future or the will of deities—examining animal entrails, casting lots, observing bird flight patterns. These practices assumed that hidden knowledge could be obtained through manipulation of supernatural forces.

**But as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do**—The Hebrew natan (suffered/permitted) indicates God's sovereign prohibition. Israel's distinctiveness wasn't cultural preference but divine command. Why? Because occultism represents humanity's attempt to control the future and manipulate divine will rather than submitting in faith to God's revealed word. It's the epistemological arrogance of the Fall—seeking forbidden knowledge apart from God. Israel's alternative: trust the prophetic word God provides (vv. 15-22).

## Historical Context

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Canaanite religion was profoundly divinatory. Clay liver models for haruspicy (divination by examining animal organs), astral observation texts, and dream interpretation manuals have been discovered throughout the ancient Near East. Israel entered a culture saturated with these practices. Later biblical history

shows Israel's chronic failure—Saul consulting the witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28), Manasseh practicing divination (2 Kings 21:6), and the prophets condemning Israel's reliance on diviners rather than God's word (Isaiah 8:19-20; Jeremiah 27:9-10).

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do modern forms of seeking control over the future (fortune-telling, astrology, manifestation techniques) parallel ancient divination?
2. What does your reaction to uncertainty reveal about whether you trust God's sovereign provision or seek to manipulate outcomes through spiritual techniques?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי יִ	הַגּוֹיִם	הָאֵלֶּה	אֲשֶׁר	אֶתָּה	יֹרֶשׁ
H3588	<b>For these nations</b>	H428	H834	H859	<b>which thou shalt possess</b>
	H1471				H3423
אֶל	אֹתָם	מֵעַתָּה	וְאֶל	קִסְמֵי יִ	יִשְׁמָעוּ
H853	H413	<b>unto observers of times</b>	H413	<b>and unto diviners</b>	<b>hearkened</b>
		H6049		H7080	H8085
וְאֶתָּה	לֹא	כִּי יִ	נִתְּן	לְּ	יְהוָה
H859	H3808	H3651	<b>hath not suffered</b>	H0	<b>but as for thee the LORD</b>
			H5414		H3068
					<b>thy God</b>
					H430

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 14:16** (Parallel theme): Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

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