

# Deuteronomy 18:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

## Analysis

**When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations** (כִּי אֲתָה בָּא) —the verb *talmad* (learn, teach yourself) implies deliberate adoption, not accidental exposure. Israel would encounter Canaanite practices; God forbids studying them for imitation.

**Abominations** (*to'evot*) denotes what is detestable, ritually abhorrent, morally repulsive—particularly idolatrous practices. The phrase **of those nations** (*hagoyim hahem*) refers specifically to Canaan's seven nations (Deuteronomy 7:1): Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites. Their religious practices included child sacrifice, ritual prostitution, divination, and necromancy.

This transitions Deuteronomy 18 from priestly provisions (vv. 1-8) to prophetic revelation (vv. 9-22). The contrast is stark: Israel must support God's authorized ministers (priests, Levites) and reject false spiritual intermediaries (diviners, mediums, necromancers). The occult practices listed in verses 10-11 represent satanic counterfeits to legitimate prophetic revelation, which God will provide through true prophets (vv. 15-19).

## Historical Context

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Canaanite religion (circa 1400 BC) included worship of Baal, Asherah, Molech, and other deities through practices Israel found in the land. Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit (modern Syria) reveal liturgical texts describing fertility rites, sacred prostitution, and child sacrifice. These 'abominations' caused God to expel Canaan's inhabitants (Leviticus 18:24-28). Tragically, Israel later adopted these very practices, provoking the Babylonian exile (2 Kings 16:3, 21:6, Jeremiah 32:35).

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What modern 'abominations of the nations'—cultural practices contrary to God's word—are believers tempted to 'learn' and adopt?
2. How can Christians live in a pagan culture without being shaped by its spiritual assumptions and practices?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	אֲתָהּ	בָּ	אֵל	הָאֶרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר	יְהוָה
H3588	H859		H413	H776	H834	H3068
		When thou art come		into the land		which the LORD
		H935		H776		H3068
יְיָ	נִתְּנָה	לָךְ	לֹא	תִלְמַד	לַעֲשׂוֹת	זֶה
H430	H5414	H0	H3808	H3925	H6213	
thy God	giveth		thee thou shalt not learn		to do	
H430	H5414		H3925		H6213	
בְּתוֹשֵׁב	הַגּוֹיִם	הֵם:				
H8441	H1471	H1992				
after the abominations	of those nations					
H8441	H1471					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Leviticus 18:30** (References God): Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

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