

Deuteronomy 6:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

Analysis

The prohibition 'Ye shall not go after other gods' warns against spiritual adultery. The phrase 'gods of the people which are round about you' identifies the specific temptation—Canaanite polytheism. Following other gods constitutes covenant violation, spiritual adultery against the divine husband (Hosea 1-3). The comprehensive sweep 'of the people which are round about you' acknowledges external cultural pressure. This verse illustrates the Reformed understanding that the world, flesh, and devil constantly tempt believers toward idolatry. Perseverance requires vigilance against syncretism and spiritual compromise. The church must remain distinct from surrounding paganism.

Historical Context

Canaanite religion featured Baal (storm/fertility god), Asherah (mother goddess), Molech (requiring child sacrifice), and Chemosh (Moabite deity). Israel repeatedly adopted these abominations: Baal worship under Judges (Judges 2:11-13), Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 16:31-33), Manasseh filling Jerusalem with idols (2 Kings 21:1-9). This spiritual adultery provoked God's judgment through Assyrian and Babylonian exile. Only the remnant remained faithful, preserving true worship and messianic lineage.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the surrounding culture's paganism create constant pressure toward syncretism and spiritual compromise?
2. What modern equivalents to ancient idolatry threaten to draw Christians away from exclusive devotion to Christ?

Interlinear Text

אַשְׁר	רָבִיבָתִיכֶם:	אַשְׁר	רָבִיבָתִיכֶם:	לְאַ	מִלְּאַלְפִּים	אַחֲרֵי	תַּלְכֵדִים	אַחֲרֵי	מִלְּאַלְפִּים	בְּעֶמֶת	יִם
H3808	H1980	after	gods	other	gods	of the people					
		H310	H430	H312	H430						
H834	which are round about	H5439				H5971					

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 25:6 (References God): And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

1 John 5:21 (Parallel theme): Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

Deuteronomy 8:19 (References God): And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

Deuteronomy 13:7 (References God): Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;

Deuteronomy 11:28 (References God): And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

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