

# Deuteronomy 8:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

This verse presents covenant curse for forgetting God and pursuing idolatry. The conditional 'if thou do at all forget' uses emphatic Hebrew construction (shakhoach tishkach) meaning 'surely forget' or 'completely forget.' Walking after, serving, and worshiping other gods represents comprehensive apostasy—progressive departure from mild neglect to active idolatry. The phrase 'I testify against you this day' (ha'idoti) is legal language—Moses serves as witness in a covenant lawsuit. The consequence is unequivocal: 'ye shall surely perish' (avod toveidun, emphatic construction meaning certain destruction). This isn't arbitrary punishment but covenant justice—violation brings curse as surely as obedience brings blessing (Deuteronomy 28).

## Historical Context

This warning proved prophetic. The northern kingdom's persistent Baal worship led to Assyrian conquest and exile (722 BC, 2 Kings 17:7-23). Judah's apostasy resulted in Babylonian captivity (586 BC, 2 Chronicles 36:15-21). Both destructions fulfilled this warning exactly—they forgot the LORD, walked after other gods, and perished as nations. The prophets (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea) repeatedly invoked covenant curses, warning that idolatry would bring the threatened destruction. Israel's history demonstrates that God's warnings are not empty threats but certain prophecies.

## 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. What subtle forms of 'forgetting God' (practical atheism, functional idolatry) appear in your life?
2. How seriously do you take God's warnings about consequences for persistent sin and unbelief?
3. What 'other gods' (money, success, comfort, reputation) compete for the worship that belongs to God alone?

## Interlinear Text

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אָמַן וְבָנָה	תָּשַׁכַּח	תָּשַׁכַּח	אֶת
H1961      H518	<b>And it shall be if thou do at all</b>	<b>And it shall be if thou do at all</b>	H853
	H7911	H7911	
יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	אָמַן יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת
the LORD      gods      and walk      after	<b>the LORD      gods      and walk      after</b>	<b>the LORD      gods      and walk      after</b>	<b>the LORD      gods      and walk      after</b>
H3068      H430      H1980      H310	H430      H1980      H310      H430	H430      H1980      H310      H430	H312      H5647
לְבָנָה מִתְּשִׁתְּחַדֵּשׁ	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת
them and worship	<b>them I testify</b>	<b>against you this day</b>	H3588
H7812	H5749	H3117	
תִּבְדֹּל תִּבְדֹּל	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת	בְּכָמָת יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהֵינוּ וּבָלָקָת
perish	<b>perish</b>	<b>perish</b>	
H6	H6	H6	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 4:26** (Witness): I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

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