

Isaiah 26:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

Analysis

O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us (יְהוָה / YHWH Eloheinu be'alunu adonim zulateka)—The verb בָּעַל (ba'al, "to rule, possess, marry") carries double significance. It denotes political oppression but also spiritual adultery, since Baal worship constantly seduced Israel. The confession acknowledges both foreign domination (Assyria, later Babylon) and idolatrous compromise as violations of covenant exclusivity with YHWH.

But by thee only will we make mention of thy name (לְבַדְּךָ נִזְכִּיר שִׁמְךָ / levad-beka nazkir shimeka)—The verb זָכַר (zakar, "to remember, mention") involves more than verbal acknowledgment; it means to invoke God's character and presence in worship and testimony. The exclusive particle לְבַד (levad, "only, alone") echoes Shema monotheism (Deuteronomy 6:4). True repentance returns to covenant faithfulness, acknowledging YHWH alone as rightful Lord.

Historical Context

This verse reflects Israel's recurring cycle: serving YHWH, sliding into idolatry or political dependence, experiencing oppression, and returning in repentance. The Assyrian crisis (722 BC for northern Israel, 701 BC siege of Jerusalem) demonstrated the futility of trusting Egypt or other nations. Isaiah consistently warned that only trust in YHWH brings security (7:9, 30:15). The language of

'other lords' having dominion anticipates Babylonian exile and the later need to reject pagan rulers' religious claims.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'other lords' (money, approval, comfort, politics) compete with God for dominion in your life?
2. How does recognizing past spiritual adultery deepen appreciation for God's covenant faithfulness despite our unfaithfulness?
3. What does it mean practically to 'make mention of God's name only'—how does this shape our speech, priorities, and worship?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה ה	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	בָּעָל וְנוֹ	אֲדֹנֵי יָם	זִוְלָתָּהּ	לְבַד	בְּךָ
O LORD	our God	thee have had dominion	other lords	beside	H905	H0
H3068	H430	H1166	H113	H2108		
וְנִזְכֵּר יְרָ			שְׁמִיךָ:			
over us but by thee only will we make mention			of thy name			
H2142			H8034			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 2:8 (Parallel theme): Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made:

Romans 6:22 (References God): But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

