

# Jeremiah 10:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

## Analysis

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This verse warns against adopting pagan practices: 'Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen.' The Hebrew *derek haggoyim* (דֶּרֶךְ הַגּוֹיִם) means the path, conduct, or religious customs of the nations. 'And be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.' 'Signs of heaven' (*othoth hashamayim*, אוֹתוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם) refers to celestial phenomena—eclipses, comets, planetary conjunctions—interpreted as omens. *chatat* (חָתַת, dismayed, terrified) describes pagan fear of cosmic signs. God's people should not share this fear because YHWH controls the heavens; the signs pagans dread are merely YHWH's creation.

## Historical Context

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Babylonian astrology was highly developed; astronomical records and omen texts fill cuneiform tablets. Eclipses, planetary movements, and unusual celestial phenomena were interpreted as messages from gods affecting empires and individuals. Exiled Judeans living in Babylon faced constant exposure to this sophisticated astral religion. The command to not 'learn' such practices addresses the temptation to adopt Babylonian religious worldview.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What contemporary forms of pagan 'ways' might believers be tempted to learn or adopt?
2. How does knowing God controls the heavens free us from superstitious fear of signs and omens?

## Interlinear Text

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כֹּה	אָמַר	יְהוָה	אֵל	דֶּרֶךְ	הַגּוֹיִם	אֵל	תִּלְמַד דּוֹ
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	H413	not the way	for the heathen	H408	Learn
	H559	H3068		H1870	H1471		H3925
וּמֵאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵל	יִחַד	יְיָ	כִּי	יִחַד	
at the signs	of heaven	H408	and be not	dismayed	H3588	and be not	dismayed
H226	H8064		H2865			H2865	
הַגּוֹיִם	מֵהֶמָּה						
for the heathen	at them						
H1471	H1992						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Leviticus 20:23** (Parallel theme): And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.

**Leviticus 18:3** (Parallel theme): After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.

**Ezekiel 20:32** (Parallel theme): And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.

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