

Jeremiah 25:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. The phrase 'aḥrê 'ēlōhīm 'āḥērīm (אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, after other gods) describes spiritual adultery—pursuing foreign deities rather than remaining faithful to Yahweh. The verbs lē'ābēdām (לְעַבְדָּם, to serve) and lēhishtaḥwōt lāhem (לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לָהֶם, to worship/bow down to them) indicate comprehensive devotion—both practical service and religious worship directed toward false gods.

The phrase ma'āsê yēdêkem (מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם, works of your hands) refers to idols—human-crafted objects elevated to divine status. This is ultimate folly: worshipping what we ourselves made. Isaiah mocked this absurdity—using half a tree for firewood and bowing to the other half as god (Isaiah 44:9-20). The promise 'I will do you no hurt' reveals God's desire: He takes no pleasure in punishing His people but judges only when persistent rebellion leaves no alternative. As Paul wrote, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself' (2 Corinthians 5:19)—His heart seeks restoration, not destruction.

Historical Context

Archaeological discoveries reveal the extent of Judah's idolatry. Excavations have uncovered figurines of Asherah (Canaanite fertility goddess), inscriptions invoking 'Yahweh and his Asherah' (syncretism), and evidence of child sacrifice to Molech in

the Valley of Hinnom. Manasseh's reign (697-642 BC) entrenched pagan worship in the temple itself (2 Kings 21:1-18). Though Josiah attempted reform, the people's hearts remained unchanged. They participated in idolatry not from ignorance but deliberate choice, preferring tangible idols to the invisible Yahweh.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What 'works of our hands' might we be tempted to worship today—things we create or control rather than the Creator?
2. How does idolatry 'provoke God to anger,' and what does this reveal about the exclusive nature of true worship?
3. In what ways does God's statement 'I will do you no hurt' reveal His heart toward His people, and how should this shape our understanding of divine judgment?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵל	תִּלְכּוּ	אַחֲרֵי	אֱלֹהֵי יָם	אַחֲרֵי יָם	לְעַבְדָּם	וּלְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹתָם
H408	H1980	not after	gods	other	to serve	them and to worship
		H310	H430	H312	H5647	H7812
וְלֹא	תִּכְעֹר יָסוּ	אֹתִי	בְּמַעֲשֵׂי הַ			
H0	H3808	them and provoke me not to anger	H854	with the works		
		H3707		H4639		
יְדֵיכֶם	וְלֹא	אֶרְעַ	לָכֶם:			
of your hands	H3808	and I will do you no hurt	H0			
H3027		H7489				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 8:19 (Worship): 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.

Jeremiah 35:15 (References God): I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

Jeremiah 7:6 (References God): If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

Deuteronomy 6:14 (References God): Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

2 Kings 17:35 (References God): With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: