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Have No Other Gods

5: 6-7

Have no other gods DIG: Why was it very difficult to practice monotheism for the Israelites in the midst of other pagan nations? What is the temptation today? What does the Bible describe as the greatest, unforgivable sin? What are some examples of other gods not made out of wood or stone? Can you love and serve more than one God? Why or why not?

REFLECT: Has God's reign in your life been replaced by another object or person you would rather serve? Do you love other things more than you love ADONAI? Does it matter who the God of your life is? What is at stake? So, who is your God? And where is your God? On the throne? Or do you have a divided loyalty?

God does not deliver His covenantal demands to Isra'el in a vacuum, but in the context of an intimate relationship, clearly seen by His character and activity of Isra'el's behalf.



I am ADONAI your God, who brought you out (His historical act of saving grace) from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. The phrase **I am ADONAI your God** announces the originator of the covenant, and corresponds to the preamble of the Near Eastern treaty. The demands of the statutes (Hebrew: *hachukkim*, meaning *to write into law permanently*) and ordinances (Hebrew:

hammishpatim, meaning a judgment of the court) are based on what **God** had already done. This is a crucial perspective and is commonly overlooked or perverted in Christian attitudes toward **the Torah** – at least at a popular level. The simplistic view is taken that salvation in the TaNaKh is achieved by works, whereas in the B’rit Chadashah salvation is achieved through faith. The very first sentence of **the Ten Words** contradicts such a view. The statutes and ordinances were given to **Isra’el**, not so **they** could perhaps gain salvation by keeping them, but because **ADOANI** had already redeemed **them**, this was how **they** were to live in light of that fact.¹⁴⁵
You shall have no other gods beside Me (Deuteronomy 5:6-7).

You shall have no other gods in addition to **Me (Exodus 20:3).**

For even if there are so called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom we have our being (First Corinthians 8:5-6).

God condemns polytheism, which is the worship of more than one god. In that day this was a very difficult teaching because it was popular to worship many **gods**. Indeed, Isra’el had just escaped from Egypt, where thousands of gods were worshiped. Surprisingly, we learn that even the Israelites had worshiped false **gods** while living in Egypt (**Ezeki’el 20:5-8**). Unfortunately, Isra’el often disobeyed this very first command by worshiping the idols of other nations.¹⁴⁶ This resulted in the northern Kingdom being taken over by Assyria and the southern Kingdom taken into exile in Babylon.

Today, the temptation is to worship no god at all. But the decision before us is not between atheism or **God**. It is not the issue of **God** or no **God**. That is not our choice. The question is which deity we will worship – the true and living **God** who came to us as Jesus Christ or a substitute god? Inevitably we must look to *something* beyond ourselves. This *something* helps us make choices in life. It gives us a set of values or priorities that serve as a reference point. It becomes the determining factor in our lives so that gradually and perhaps without knowing it, we *become like the God or god we worship*.

Dear Heavenly **Father**, What an Awesome **God You** are! Praise **You** that **You** are **holy (Leviticus 11:45), Wonderful (Isaiah 9:6)** and so Awesome that there is no way that **You** could ever get better for **You** are totally perfect in everything – in

*wisdom, character, love, and mercy. We choose to spend our time, money and thoughts on choices that please **You**, for we love **You** and want to grow to be more like **You** each day. **You** are **wonderful!** In the holy name of **Your Son** and the power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

Every deity stamps his worshiper with his trademark (see the commentary on **Revelation, to see link click [Dp - The Mark is the Name of the Beast or the Number of His Name](#)**), and your god could be leaving his mark upon your life today. Martin Luther said it beautifully, “Whatever the heart clings to, whatever the heart relies on, that is your god.” We must let **ADONAI** be **God**, the true and living **God**. That’s why the Bible opposes every form of idolatry. The greatest sin described in the Bible is not breaking the mitzvot but rejecting **God**, or idolatry. Idolatry is misplaced allegiance, making a commitment, having a love, a priority, to a god that displeases and dethrones the true and living **God**.¹⁴⁷ There is only room for one king on the throne of your heart.

But there are other **gods** besides idols of wood and stone. Money, pleasure, sex, drugs, science, fashion, fame, music, gluttony, sports and a score of other things can take the rightful place of **God** in our lives. We can even take good things and make **gods** out of them. For example, Buzz Aldrin, the second man on the moon did that very thing. For years he studied, earned a doctorate, worked hard, dreamt, and disciplined himself. Finally, he was chosen to go with Neil Armstrong on the historic mission to the moon. But after the mission he had an emotional breakdown. It didn’t have anything to do with the mission. He became very disillusioned after working hard and attained every goal along the way. But he found it all empty when it was over, he had taken a good thing and made a god out of it. And it did what all false **gods** do, it turned around and destroyed him. That’s what always happens when we turn **God’s** gifts into false **gods**.

So, does it matter who the **God** of your life is? It certainly does! It is the difference between eternal life and eternal death. **You shall have no other gods before Me** (also see **John 14:6; Acts 4:12**). Let **ADONAI** be **God** in your life. **Yeshua** restated the first mitzvah when **He** said: **No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other (Matthew 6:24)**. We cannot **love** and **serve** more than one **God**. If we do, we become fragmented. Polytheism in one’s heart will produce polytheism in one’s personality and emotions. The Bible calls it idolatry. Psychiatry calls it neurosis. The point is that we were built for only one **God**.

People might say we are narrow minded. But truth is narrow minded. One plus one, always equals two.

So, who is your **God**? And where is your **God**? On the throne? Or do you have a divided loyalty? There is only room for only one person on the throne at a time. Who is on yours? The first mitzvot is basically saying: **I am the Lord your God. I am your Savior. I am your Deliverer.** You belong to **Me. I am** sovereign over you. **I am** yours and you are mine. This mitzvah will be the only mitzvah because **I am** the only **God**. Therefore, **you shall have no other gods** in addition to **Me**.¹⁴⁸