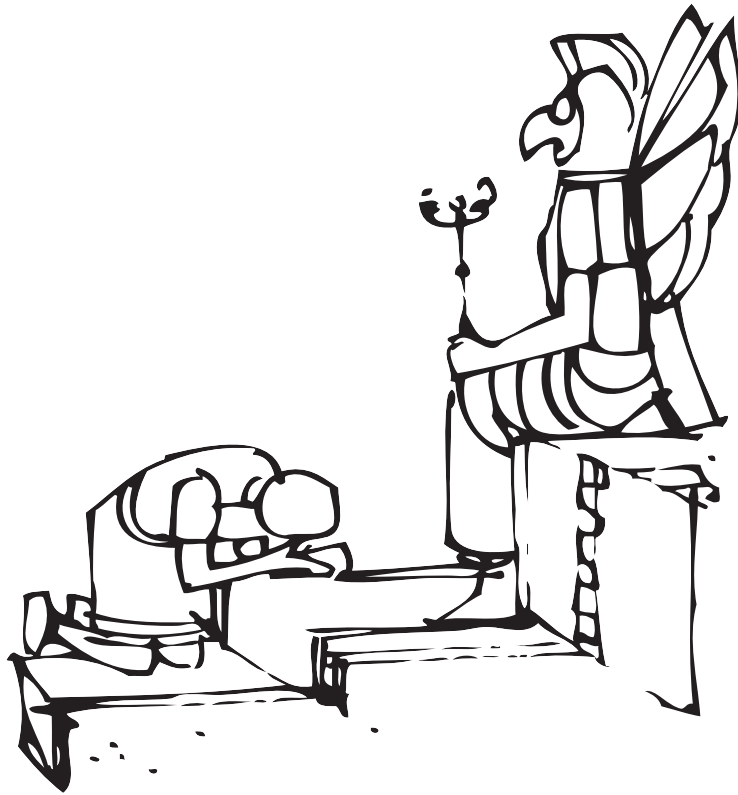


# The Abominations Of The Canaanites



*“When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations... For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you.”*  
(Deuteronomy 18:9, 12)

David Padfield

**The Abominations Of The Canaanites**

© 2023 by David Padfield  
All rights reserved

[www.padfield.com](http://www.padfield.com)

Published by the Zion Church Of Christ, Zion, Illinois, USA

Scripture taken from the New King James Version.  
Copyright ©1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

# Bible Translations Used

ASV	American Standard Version (1901)
CJB	The Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
ESV	Holy Bible: English Standard Version (2011)
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible (2003)
JPS	Jewish Publication Society Tanakh (1985)
KJV	King James Version (1611, 1769)
NAB	New American Bible (1970)
NASB20	New American Standard Bible (2020)
NET	New English Translation (2005)
NIV	Holy Bible: New International Version (2011)
NKJV	New King James Version (1982)
NLT-SE	New Living Translation, Second Edition (2015)
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (1989)
RSV	Revised Standard Version (1971)
TMC-E	Torah: A Modern Commentary (English Translation) (2006)

# The Abominations Of The Canaanites

## Introduction

- I. As the people of God were about to enter the Promised Land, God gave specific instructions concerning annihilating the Canaanites (Deut 7:1-5; 20:16-18).
  - A. The prohibition of intermarriage with the Canaanites would not be needed if Israel destroyed them!
  - B. The Israelites were not allowed to show any mercy towards the indigenous peoples of the land of Canaan, for they were being punished by God (Gen 15:16).
  - C. Israel was vulnerable to turning away from God (cf. Exod 34:12-13; 1 Kgs 11:1-8).
- II. Every vestige of the Canaanite religion was to be destroyed (Deut 7:5).
  - A. The “sacred pillars” were made of stone.
  - B. Their “wooden images” (“Asherah poles” HCSB) were wooden poles adorned with female fertility symbols.
    1. El was the supreme god of the Canaanites and head of the pantheon.
    2. Asherah was a supreme deity of the Canaanite pantheon and Baal’s female consort (cf. 1 Kgs 16:29-33).
    3. “El’s consort and counterpart was Asherah, a marine goddess who was seen as the ‘creator of creatures’ and mother of the gods (according to the texts, she bore El seventy divine sons). She is frequently seen in the position of the tree of life, giving sustenance to animals on either side of her.” (Tubb, *Canaanites*, 74)
- III. The destruction of the Canaanites was not an attack on innocent people—it was God’s judgment against their abominable sins (Lev 18:24-30).
  - A. During the days of Abraham, God implied that the Amorites would be dispossessed of their land as an act of divine punishment (Gen 15:16).
  - B. In due time, their accumulated iniquity will be so great that God will no longer tolerate their presence in the land.
  - C. “There is no indication that Canaanite gods handed down a moral code for their people to follow. Indeed, the Canaanites were apparently much more moral than were their gods, an observation that is not especially flattering to the gods. To the Canaanite, fertility was of major importance in worship, and both male and female temple prostitution was prevalent... God had had enough. The people of Canaan were wicked in Abraham’s day, but God showed mercy. The Canaanites had the witness of Abraham and his altars, and they recognized the power of the patriarch’s god, but they did not forsake their own imitations. There were other opportunities and signs of the truth, but the Canaanites ignored them as well. Finally, God’s mercy turned to judgment. Punishment was meted out to the Canaanites for their sins and to prevent them from leading Israel astray.” (Hoerth, *Archaeology & The Old Testament*, 221-222)

- D. “Canaanite worship was socially destructive. Its religious acts were pornographic and sick, seriously damaging to children, creating early impressions of deities with no interest in moral behavior. It tried to dignify, by the use of religious labels, depraved acts of bestiality and corruption. It had a low estimate of human life. It suggested that anything was permissible, promiscuity, murder or anything else, in order to guarantee a good crop at harvest. It ignored the highest values both in the family and in the wider community—love, loyalty, purity, peace and security—and encouraged the view that all these things were inferior to material prosperity, physical satisfaction and human pleasure. A society where those things matter most is self-destructive.” (Brown, *The Message Of Deuteronomy*, 147)
- E. “The lives of the gods appear to have no standard of morality whatever governing their actions. In fact, they are on an ethical level below that of the average of society as a whole, if we may judge from the ancient codes of law. In Israel, however, the opposite was true. To be religious there meant that one must also be moral, for God was a righteous God who demanded of men obedience to his laws.” (Wright, “How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?” *Bible and Spade* 3 (1974): 107)
- IV. As a result of these abominations, God would “vomit” the Canaanites out of the land (Lev 20:22–23).
- A. “These evil practices were the reason the Lord was going to drive the Canaanites out of the land. Not only adherence to the false gods of Canaan was proscribed, but also the means by which the Canaanites attempted to communicate with them. Both the objects and the methods of Canaanite religious life were to be abhorred totally and rejected completely.” (Kalland, *Deuteronomy*, comments on Deut 18:9–13)
- B. “Sorcery and potions used in the practice of magic were also banned in Hammurabi’s code and the Middle Assyrian law, suggesting that the prohibition and fear of these practices was not unique to Israel.” (Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 135)
- C. “It is no longer possible to identify precisely each of the prohibited forms of divination. Indeed, because the list is so comprehensive, it is unclear whether each term represented a distinct activity still known to the author or whether the list represents more of a scholastic compilation.” (*The Jewish Study Bible*, 387–388)
- V. In this lesson, we will study the abominations of the Canaanites and then, in the next lesson, see how Moses foretold “the prophet” who would be like him (Deut 18:9–22).

### Discussion

#### I. They Sacrificed Their Children

- A. The Canaanites made their children “pass through the fire” (Deut 18:10 NKJV).
1. “There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering...” (ESV, RSV).
  2. “Let no one be found among you who consigns his son or daughter to the fire...” (JPS).
  3. “Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire...” (NAB).

- B. This abominable practice is often mentioned in the Old Testament (cf. Lev 18:21; 2 Kgs 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; 23:10; Jer 32:35; Ezek 16:21; 20:26, 31; 23:37).
  - 1. At least three times, the practice is associated with the worship of the Ammonite god Molech (Lev 18:21; 2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 32:35).
  - 2. Twice it is linked with divination or sorcery (2 Kgs 17:17; 21:6).
- C. The purpose of making children “pass through the fire” was to obtain an oracle or avert national disaster (cf. Deut 12:29–31).
  - 1. “*One who causes his son or his daughter to be burned in the fire* the context indicates that the reference is not simply to child sacrifice, but to the offering of a child with the particular purpose of determining or discerning the course of events. That is, the sacrifice would have a magical intention.” (Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 260)
  - 2. This practice was common among the worshipers of Moloch, the national deity of Ammonites (Lev 18:21).
  - 3. The king of Moab followed this abominable practice (2 Kgs 3:26–27).
- D. The Old Testament depicts child sacrifice as utterly abhorrent (Lev 20:2–5).

## II. Witchcraft (Divination)

- A. “One who practices witchcraft” (Deut 18:10 NKJV).
  - 1. “useth divination” (KJV).
  - 2. “practice(s) divination” (HCSB, ESV, NIV, NRSV, NET).
  - 3. “a diviner” (JPS).
- B. The word translated as *witchcraft* (Heb. *qāsam*) in Deuteronomy 18:10 means “to practice divination, be a soothsayer, seek an omen” (*Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*).
- C. *Witchcraft* or *divination* involves using supernatural powers to reveal the future or know the mind of the pagan gods.
  - 1. “This was a means employed to determine the future or the outcome of events by observation of various omens and signs (cf. Num 22:7; 23:23; Josh 13:22; 1 Sam 6:2; 15:23; 28:8; etc.)” (Harris, *The NET Bible Notes*, translator’s note on Deut 18:10).
  - 2. “A variety of devices was in use in various lands, but all were designed to discern the will of the gods. The same word in Ezekiel 21:21 refers to the practice of whirling arrows in a quiver and deciding the answer to the question by the first arrow thrown out.” (Thompson, *Deuteronomy*, 5.232)
- D. Those who practiced divination had no power against Israel, for Israel received her information from God (Num 23:23).

## III. Soothsayers

- A. “A soothsayer” (Deut 18:10 NKJV, NASB20, NRSV, JPS, NET).
  - 1. “an observer of times” (KJV).
  - 2. “sorcery” (NIV).
  - 3. “tells fortunes” (HCSB, ESV).
  - 4. “omen reader” (NET).

- B. The word translated as *soothsayer* (Heb. *‘ānan*) means “to bring clouds” (*Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*).
- C. Nahmanides (aka Ramban, c. 1194—1270), the renowned Jewish rabbi, said, “The etymology of the Hebrew word shows that this refers to someone who foretells the future by observing clouds” (Carasik, *Deuteronomy*, comments on Deut 18:10).

#### IV. Interprets Omens

- A. “One who interprets omens” (Deut 18:10 NKJV, ESV, NIV, NASB20).
  - 1. “an enchanter” (KJV).
  - 2. “an augur” (NRSV, RSV, JPS).
  - 3. “an enchanter” (ASV, CJB).
  - 4. “a soothsayer” (NET).
- B. The words translated as *interprets omens* (Heb. *nāḥaš*) means “to practice divination, interpret omens and signs” (*Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*).
- C. “This involves interpreting various signs and omens, such as the pattern of birds in flight, the disposition of sticks or arrows flung on the ground, or the examination of an animal’s entrails” (Bratcher, *A Handbook on Deuteronomy*, 316).

#### V. Sorcerers

- A. “A sorcerer” (Deut 18:10 NKJV, ESV, NASB20, NRSV, NET, JPS).
  - 1. “a witch” (KJV).
  - 2. “engages in witchcraft” (NIV).
- B. The word translated as *sorcerer* (Heb. *kāšap*) means “to engage in witchcraft, be a sorcerer” (*Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*).
- C. This may denote one who cuts up herbs and brews them for magical purposes.
- D. “This has to do with magic or the casting of spells in order to manipulate the gods or the powers of nature (cf. Lev 19:26-31; 2 Kgs 17:15b-17; 21:1-7; Isa 57:3, 5; etc.)” (Harris, *The NET Bible Notes*, translator’s note on Deut 18:10).
- E. Sorcerers claimed they could gain control over someone through the help of spirits.
- F. “The OT refers to a variety of practices that can all be placed under the rubric of divination and incantation, including activities such as hexing and necromancy.. It is difficult to determine the precise nature of these activities. Some might be included in what is sometimes referred to as ‘magic,’ but that realm of activity cannot easily be distinguished from the realm of ‘religion’ in the ancient world. Activities included identifying future events through dreams, consultation with the dead, and probably the observation and interpretation of physical phenomena (e.g., stars, animal behavior). The activity of a sorceress likely involved the casting of spells or curses....” (Walton and Keener, eds., *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*, comments on Deut 18:10)

## VI. Conjures Spells

- A. “One who conjures spells” (Deut 18:11 NKJV).
  - 1. “a charmer” (KJV, ASV).
  - 2. “casts spells” (HCSB, NIV, NRSV, NET, JPS).
- B. The word translated as *spells* (Heb. *hābar*) means “to make fine speeches” (*Koblenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*).
- C. This one could cast a spell on a person to “bewitch” them.
  - 1. This would include the famous serpent-charmers of the East (Ps 58:4–5).
  - 2. This would also include those who would cast magic spells upon others.
- D. These enchanters or sorcerers are often mentioned in the Old Testament (cf. Exod 7:11; 22:18; 2 Chr 33:6; Dan 2:2; Mal 3:5).

## VII. Mediums And Spiritists

- A. “A medium, or a spiritist” (Deut 18:11 NKJV, NAS).
  - 1. “a consulter with familiar spirits” (KJV).
  - 2. “consult a medium or a familiar spirit” (HCSB).
  - 3. “who consults ghosts or spirits” (NRSV).
  - 4. “who consults ghosts or familiar spirits” (JPS).
  - 5. “who is a medium or spiritist” (NIV).
- B. *Mediums* and *spiritists* claimed to communicate with the spirit world, particularly with the spirits of the dead.
  - 1. These two occupations are often found side by side in the Scriptures (Lev 19:31; 2 Chr 33:6).
  - 2. This is the sin of *necromancy*—the practice of communicating with the dead, who are presumed to know the future.
  - 3. The Bible never says that communicating with the dead is possible, but only that its practice is obnoxious to God!
  - 4. “Those who practiced this art called up the departed from the realm of the dead, or rather, professed to do so. Greek versions translate the term by *engastrimutthoi*, i.e., ventriloquists...” (Thompson, *Deuteronomy*, 5.233).
  - 5. Manasseh reinstated many pagan practices in Jerusalem and “consulted spiritists and mediums” (2 Kgs 21:1–6).
  - 6. Isaiah spoke of this sin (Isa 29:4).
  - 7. “Although these two words, ‘ghost’ and ‘familiar spirit’ are used side by side, there was nevertheless a distinction between them. The person who was possessed of an *ob* (ghost) was evidently a ventriloquist. Like the witch at Endor he might call up the *ob* and describe what he saw. Those about him would probably hear only a muttering or twittering which seemed to come from the ground. The ‘familiar spirit’ however, was evidently a spirit that was at the beck and call of a particular person.” (Young, *My Servants The Prophets*, 23)



- C. Near the end of his life, Saul was facing a war with the Philistines (1 Sam 28:1).
  1. God would not communicate with Saul “either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets” (1 Sam 28:6).
  2. In desperation, Saul employed the services of the “medium at En Dor” to “bring up Samuel,” the prophet (1 Sam 28:7–19).
  3. The most surprised person in the room when Samuel appeared was the medium herself!

## VIII. Calling Up The Dead

- A. “One who calls up the dead” (Deut 18:11 NKJV).
  1. “a necromancer” (KJV, NET, ASV, CJB).
  2. “one who inquires of the dead” (ESV, JPS, TMC-E).
  3. “one who consults the dead” (NAS).
  4. “who seeks oracles from the dead” (NRSV).
  5. “call forth the spirits of the dead” (NLT-SE).
- B. The phrase “one who calls up the dead” is a broad term covering all spiritualism and superstition forms.
- C. “As in some contemporary religions, family religion in antiquity devoted extensive attention to communicating with the dead, especially with ancestors” (*The Jewish Study Bible*, notes on Deut 18:11).

### Conclusion

- I. “These superstitious practices which were so much in vogue among the Canaanites of ancient time are the reason why the Lord will dispossess these people of their land. Moses then advances a step. Not only are these practices in themselves abominations, he says, but also every one that doeth them is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. It is for this reason that God will drive out the Canaanites from their land. It is well that we should grasp this fact, for it has sometimes been maintained that the God of the Old Testament was an arbitrary despot, who drove out the Canaanites and brought Israel into Palestine, and this, it has been said, was a cruel, arbitrary act. Such a judgment, however, is unjust, and out of accord with the facts. God, in dispossessing the Canaanites, was doing a gracious and merciful thing to the remainder of the world. The Canaanites, through their abominations, had themselves become abominations. If there was to be any salvation for the world, Canaan must go. The cup of their iniquity had filled, and they could no longer be permitted to exist as heretofore. Let no one, then, charge God with lack of justice in His treatment of Canaan.” (Young, *My Servants The Prophets*, 24)
- II. “One of the earliest exhortations to the people of God about the dangers of occult involvement, this passage lists nine kinds of religious practices to avoid: (1) making a child sacrifice to false gods; (2) predicting the future or seeking hidden treasures through the aid of divining rods, pendulums, and other occult means; (3) guiding one’s affairs by the stars; (4) using Ouija boards, crystals, etc.; (5) practicing sorcery; (6) placing oneself into a trance or attempting to alter one’s state of consciousness; (7) attending séances; (8) mixing potions; and (9) becoming a spiritualist medium, or one who attempts to communicate with the dead. Persons involved in occultism do not entrust their lives, present or future, to God but rather seek to rule their affairs through forbidden means.” (Cabal, *The Apologetics Study Bible*, comments on Deut 18:10–12)

- III. God was going to dispossess the Canaanites of their land “because of these abominations” (Deut 18:12).
- IV. Israel would not have to resort to such means—they would not need to turn to heathen soothsayers (Deut 18:15; cf. Deut 13:1–3).
  - A. God was going to raise a body of prophets, an institution, to declare His words.
  - B. God would also raise one great prophet who alone could compare to Moses.

# God's Final Prophet

## Introduction

- I. During the days of Moses, as the Israelites prepared to enter the Promised Land, they knew they would encounter many new situations requiring divine guidance.
  - A. Canaan was a land filled with superstitions, where the inhabitants claimed detailed knowledge of the future, but God considered their *sources* to be “abominations.”
  - B. “The need to know the will of God on specific occasions (*e.g.*, in time of war) was keenly felt in ancient times, and the nations around Israel had devised various magical procedures for finding it out. These included examining the entrails of birds and animals for omens, consulting the dead and apparently even the sacrifice of children. Magic could be used to try to affect the course of events as well as simply to gain information.” (McConville, *New Bible Commentary*, 217)
  - C. Israel was prohibited from using any of the “abominations” of the Canaanites to see into the future or to know the mind of God (Deut 18:9–14).
- II. Since they could not use the Canaanite methods of discerning the future, how could they know what God wanted them to do?
  - A. In sharp contrast with the pagan fortune tellers who brought messages from false gods and the dead, God was going to raise a body of men, prophets, who would speak His will to the people (Deut 18:15–22).
  - B. This passage explains the origin of the prophetic institution.
  - C. The true prophet in Israel would be exemplified in the person of Moses, the first in a long line of prophets.
  - D. God also promised to raise up one great prophet who alone could compare to Moses.

## Discussion

### I. Moses And The Prophets

- A. The Bible makes a vivid distinction between Moses and the rest of the Old Testament prophets (Num 12:1–8).
  1. It appears that Zipporah (Exod 2:21) had died (since she is not mentioned), and Moses remarried.
  2. It is possible that this Ethiopian (Cushite) woman had accompanied Israel as they left Egypt.
  3. Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his foreign wife.
  4. God had given Miriam and Aaron exalted positions among the people (Mic 6:4).

5. “The real complaint which Miriam and Aaron discussed between themselves had to do with the relationship of their position in Israel concerning that of Moses. They did not wish to be the recipients of revelation which was subordinate to that received by Moses but rather of that which was equal to that given to him. There is truth, of course, in their statement. God had indeed spoken to them. Aaron had the exalted privilege, which was not even vouchsafed to Moses, of using the Urim and Thummim in bringing the people’s rights before God (Exodus 28:30). Miriam was called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20), and occupied an honored position among the women of Israel.” (Young, *My Servants The Prophets*, 41-42)
  6. “Miriam is grand. She preserved the life of the helpless infant who later became the great Moses, servant of Yahweh (see Exod 1). She made it possible for Moses’ true mother to become his nurse when he was adopted into the harem of Pharaoh in Egypt. She led the singing of the first psalm we find recorded in the Scriptures, the Song of Miriam (Exod 15)—the praise of the people of God celebrating their deliverance from the army of Egypt at the Sea of Reeds. Again, it is not because Miriam is a woman that she is presented in this chapter in an unfavorable light; it is precisely because she is such a magnificent person in the history of salvation that her act of rebellion is recorded.” (Allen, *Numbers*, comments on Num 12:1)
- B. God reminded Miriam and Aaron that He would speak to other prophets in dreams and visions, but “not so with my servant Moses” (Num 12:7).
1. Moses was set apart from other prophets who received their message through dreams and visions.
  2. “To other prophets God may speak in a variety of ways, some more clearly than others (see Heb 1:1; 1 Peter 1:10-11). But to Moses there is a one-on-one relationship. Only Moses could approach the holy mountain and gaze on the Divine Person. Only his face radiated following these encounters. Others might hear the words; only Moses sees God’s person ... these words speak of an unprecedented level of intimacy between God and Moses.” (Allen, *Numbers*, comments on Num 12:6-9)

3. “Through this utterance on the part of Jehovah, Moses is placed above all the prophets, in relation to God and also to the whole nation. The divine revelation to the prophets is thereby restricted to the two forms of inward intuition (vision and dream). It follows from this, that it had always a visionary character, though it might vary in intensity; and therefore that it had always more or less obscurity about it, because the clearness of self-consciousness and the distinct perception of an external world, both receded before the inward intuition, in a dream as well as in a vision. The prophets were consequently simply organs, through whom Jehovah made known His counsel and will at certain times, and in relation to special circumstances and features in the development of His kingdom. It was not so with Moses. Jehovah had placed him over all His house, had called him to be the founder and organizer of the kingdom established in Israel through his mediatorial service, and had found him faithful in His service. With this servant (θεράπων, LXX) of His, He spake mouth to mouth, without a figure or figurative cloak, with the distinctness of a human interchange of thought; so that at any time he could inquire of God and wait for the divine reply. Hence Moses was not a prophet of Jehovah, like many others, not even merely the first and highest prophet, *primus inter pares*, but stood above all the prophets, as the founder of the theocracy, and mediator of the Old Covenant.” (Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, comments on Num 12:4–10)
- C. Four phrases in Numbers 12:8 reveal the relationship between God and Moses.
1. God would speak directly and immediately to Moses, even “face to face.”
    - a) “The emphasis of the line is clear enough—it begins literally ‘mouth to mouth’ I will speak with him. In human communication this would mean equality of rank, but Moses is certainly not equal in rank with the LORD. And yet God is here stating that Moses has an immediacy and directness with communication with God. It goes beyond the idea of friendship, almost to that of a king’s confidant.” (Harris, *The NET Bible Notes*, translator’s note on Num 12:8)
    - b) It was a free, personal exchange without mediation (Exod 33:11).
    - c) After the death of Moses, we read, “But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face...” (Deut 34:10).
  2. God would speak “plainly” to Moses.
    - a) Rashi, a medieval French rabbi, wrote: “Though ‘plainly’ is translating essentially the same Hebrew word that is translated as ‘vision’ in v. 6, its meaning here is indeed different; it refers to ‘plain sight’ as a metaphor for clear speech. God is saying, ‘I explain what I am saying to him in such a way that it is obvious on the face of it what I mean. I do not obscure it with riddles’—as when Ezekiel was told, ‘O mortal, propound a riddle and relate an allegory to the House of Israel’ (Ezek. 17:2). One might go so far as to think the word refers here to actual ‘plain sight’ of the Shekhinah—but ‘man may not see Me and live’ (Exod. 33:20).” (Carasik, *Numbers*, comments on Num 12:8).
    - b) Moses’ visions would not require any interpretation, but the visions (or dreams, riddles) of other prophets would.

3. “Not in dark sayings” or riddles (cf. Ezek 17:2ff).
  - a) “The Hebrew word for *dark speech* refers to any speech that is difficult to understand or has a hidden meaning, such as ‘riddles’” (de Regt, *A Handbook on Numbers*, comments on Num 12:8).
  - b) Communication between God and Moses is direct and unmediated.
4. “He sees the form of the Lord,” not just a vision!
  - a) But this is not to say he saw God directly and unveiled (cf. Exod 33:18–23).
  - b) Moses enjoyed a much closer relationship with God than any ordinary prophet, but he saw only God’s *form*, not the very being of God.
  - c) Moses had been graced with a special relationship with the Lord!
  - d) Isaiah saw only the crude outline of God’s glory in his call to the prophetic office (Isa 6:1–2).
- D. Moses was not just one of the prophets or equal to them.
  1. Instead, all prophets are under Moses (Deut 34:9–12).
  2. The Bible compares Christ and Moses (Heb 3:1–6).

## II. The Prophet Like Moses

- A. Moses promised the Israelites that God would “raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst” (Deut 18:15).
  1. God would put His words in His mouth (Deut 18:18).
  2. “The prophet’s oracles do not originate from other deities, from dead spirits, from skilled manipulation of objects, or from the prophet’s own reflections. God instead affirms, I will put My words in his mouth. The prophet reiterates the word of Israel’s God.” (*The Jewish Study Bible*, 388)
  3. The promise that God would raise up a prophet like Moses was a promise the Jews never forgot!
  4. Throughout the centuries, they waited and longed for that prophet of prophets.
    - a) The Dead Sea Scrolls, presumably written by an Essene community at Qumran, contains one scroll titled, *The Messianic Rule* or *The Rule of the Congregation* (dated to 100–75 BC).
    - b) The Essenes looked forward to the day when three great Old Testament figures would reappear, when “there come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel” (1 QS 9:11).
  5. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God’s promise to Moses!
- B. The gospel of John often refers to Christ as “the Prophet.”
  1. The priests from Jerusalem wanted to know if John the Baptist was “the prophet” (John 1:19–23; cf. Isa 40:3).
  2. When Philip found Nathaniel, he said, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote...” (John 1:45).
  3. Jesus claimed that Moses wrote about Him (John 5:39, 46–47).
  4. After feeding the 5,000, the people said, “This is truly the Prophet, who is come into the world” (John 6:14).
    - a) The people were not looking for just any prophet but “the Prophet.”
    - b) The word “prophet” is not a common title for Jesus and is more often used by those who knew little about Him (cf. John 4:19).

5. On another occasion, on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, many people in the crowd who heard Jesus teach said, “Truly this is the Prophet” (John 7:40).
  6. Jesus claimed to have fulfilled the requirements of the prophet like Moses—He spoke what the Father commanded Him to speak (John 12:48–50).
- C. Other New Testament passages also suggest that Jesus Christ is “the Prophet.”
1. At the Mount of Transfiguration, the apostles were told not to worship Moses or Elijah but listen to God’s “beloved Son” (Matt 17:1–5).
  2. When speaking to the people at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, Peter explicitly applied Deuteronomy 18:15 to Jesus (Acts 3:19–26).
  3. Stephen saw the fulfillment of the words of Moses in Christ (Acts 7:37).

*Conclusion*

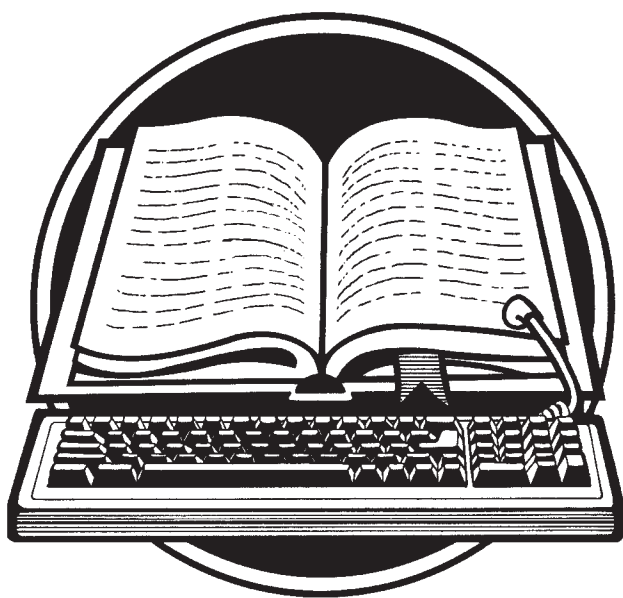
- I. Jesus Christ is God’s final spokesman (Heb 1:1–4).
- II. There are severe consequences for neglecting the message of Christ (Heb 2:1–4).
- III. Have you listened to the words of Christ, God’s final spokesman?
- IV. When you reject the words of Christ, you have rejected salvation!

# Bibliography

- Albright, William Foxwell. *Yabweh and the Gods of Canaan*. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1968.
- Allen, Ronald B. *Numbers*. The Expositor's Bible Commentary 2. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.9. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- Baez-Camargo, Gonzalo. *Archaeological Commentary On The Bible*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1984.
- Berlin, Adele and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible: Second Edition*. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Bratcher, Robert G. and Howard A. Hatton. *A Handbook on Deuteronomy*. UBS Translator's Handbooks. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.1. New York: United Bible Societies, 2000.
- Brown, Raymond. *The Message of Deuteronomy*. The Bible Speaks Today. Edited by J. A. Motyer. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.2. Nottingham: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Cabal, Ted, ed., *The Apologetics Study Bible*. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.3. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007.
- Carasik, Michael. *Deuteronomy*. The Commentators' Bible. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.2. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2015.
- . *Numbers*. The Commentators' Bible. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.3. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2011.
- Craigie, Peter C. *The Book of Deuteronomy*. NICOT. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.0. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.
- de Regt, Lénart J. and Ernst R. Wendland. *A Handbook on Numbers*. UBS Translator's Handbooks. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.1. New York: United Bible Societies, 2016.
- Gundry, Stanley N., ed. *Show Them No Mercy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Harris, W. Hall, ed., *The NET Bible Notes*. 2nd edition, version 5.8. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2019.
- Hoerth, Alfred J. *Archaeology & The Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- Hostetter, Edwin C. *Nations Mightier and More Numerous*. Birmingham: BIBAL Press, 1995.



- Kalland, Earl S. *Deuteronomy*. The Expositor's Bible Commentary 3. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.9. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch F. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.9. 10 vols. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996.
- Kohlenberger III, John R. and William D. Mounce. *Kohlenberger/Mounce Concise Hebrew–Aramaic Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Accordance electronic edition, version 3.4. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2012
- McConville, Gordon. *Deuteronomy*. New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition. Edited by D. A Carson, R. T France, J. A. Motyer, and Gordon J. Wenham. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.5. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
- Thompson, J. A. *Deuteronomy: An Introduction and Commentary*. TOTC 5. IVP/Acordance electronic edition, version 2.8. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1974.
- Tubb, Jonathan N. *Canaanites*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998.
- Walton, John H., ed., *Archaeological Study Bible*. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.6. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Walton, John H. and Craig S. Keener, eds., *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Accordance electronic edition, version 1.1. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.
- Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.3. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Wenham, G. J. *Genesis*. New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition. Edited by D. A Carson, R. T France, J. A. Motyer, and Gordon J. Wenham. Accordance electronic edition, version 2.5. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
- Wright, Ernest G. “How Did Early Israel Differ From Her Neighbors?” *Bible and Spade* 3 (1974): 97–108.
- Young, Edward J. *My Servants The Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.



**[www.padfield.com](http://www.padfield.com)**

Sermon Outlines  
Bible Class Books  
Bible Class Curriculum  
PowerPoint Backgrounds  
Bible Land Photographs  
Church Bulletin Articles

This booklet is protected by Federal Copyright Laws. Individuals and local congregations are allowed to reprint this book. No one is allowed change the contents. This book may not be placed on any other Web site, nor is it allowed to be sold.