

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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THE 613 LAWS OF THE COVENANT

A Covenant Course in the Written Instruction of Yahweh

COURSE	The 613 Laws of the Covenant
LESSON	Lesson 23
LAW NUMBER	Law #46 (Negative Commandment)
PRIMARY TEXT	Shemot (Exodus) 23:13
SUBJECT	Make No Mention of the Names of Other Gods — Lo Tazkiru
VISUAL STANDARD	Lesson 21 Confirmed Format (EB Garamond / Cinzel Gold)
DATE	May 3, 2026
DOC NUMBER	Document 69 — Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution

AUTHORITY: THE TANAKH — THE WRITTEN WORD OF YAHWEH ALONE

Evidentiary Standard: Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15 — Two or Three Witnesses

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SECTION I — THE HEBREW TEXT AND PRIMARY LEXICAL ANALYSIS

I.A — THE PRIMARY TEXT: SHEMOT (EXODUS) 23:13

וּבְכֹל אֲשֶׁר-אָמַרְתִּי אֵלֵיכֶם תִּשְׁמְרוּ
וְשֵׁם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים לֹא תִזְכְּרוּ
לֹא יִשְׁמַע עַל-פִּיךָ

TRANSLITERATION:

U'v'khol asher amarti aleikhem tishameru — v'shem Elohim acherim lo tazkiru — lo yishama al pikha.

Shemot (Exodus) 23:13 — JPS / Robert Alter — "Pay attention to all that I have said to you. Make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips."

I.B — THE CONTEXT: THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT

Shemot 23:13 is the **closing injunction** of the **Sefer HaBrit** — the Book of the Covenant (Shemot 20:22–23:33). This entire legal section elaborates on the Ten Declarations (Aseret HaDibrot) given at Sinai. Verse 13 functions as a solemn sealing statement: having laid out civil, social, and cultic law, **Yahweh (יהוה)** closes with the most foundational demand — guard everything I have said to you, and make no mention of any other deity. This is not peripheral. **It is the capstone of the entire Book of the Covenant.**

The verse contains three distinct covenantal clauses:

- **Clause 1:** "Pay attention to all that I have said to you" — a comprehensive guard-command covering all preceding law (**tishmaeru**, from **shamar**, H8104 — to keep, guard, observe diligently).
- **Clause 2:** "Make no mention of the names of other gods" — the prohibition on **tazkiru** (H2142).
- **Clause 3:** "Nor let it be heard on your lips" — the prohibition on **yishama** (H8085) — the audible proclamation standard.

I.C — PRIMARY LEXICAL TABLE

HEBREW	TRANSLITERATION	STRONG'S	BDB/HALOT DEFINITION	COVENANT SIGNIFICANCE
תִּשְׁמְרוּ	tishameru	H8104	shamar — to keep, guard, observe diligently; to watch carefully; to protect	Active, ongoing, collective obligation. The covenant is a

			from violation. Qal imperfect 2mp — you (all) shall guard.	guarded covenant, not a passive inheritance.
שֵׁם	v'shem	H8034	Shem — name; in ancient Near Eastern thought, the name = the essence, authority, character, power, and very existence of the named entity.	"Making mention of the name" = acknowledging the essence and reality of the deity. In ANE culture, to name is to invoke existence.
אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרִים	Elohim acherim	H430 + H312	Other gods/divine beings. Acherim (H312) = others, foreign, strange. Combined: the deities of the surrounding nations — their divine names.	Not abstract concepts — named deities whose names carry religious weight in the cultures that worship them.
לֹא תִזְכְּרוּ	lo tazkiru	H2142	Zakar — to remember, to recall, to mention, to invoke, to mark so as to be recognized, to bring to remembrance in honor. BDB: "to mention, to invoke, to bring before another for acknowledgment." HALOT: "to call to mind and give verbal expression to; to bring to remembrance before another in a formal, honored sense."	Not mere silent thought — it is the act of verbalizing, honoring, bringing into regular presence and acknowledgment. The Hiphil causative sense: "to cause to be mentioned/remembered."
לֹא יִשְׁמַע	lo yishama	H8085	Shama — to hear, to be heard, to be proclaimed, to be made audible. Niphal imperfect: "shall not be caused to be heard." Passive — but the covenant person is responsible for preventing the hearing.	Sets the audibility standard: even indirect or casual regular proclamation of foreign deity names in a covenant context falls under this command.
עַל־פִּיךָ	al pikha	H6310	Peh — mouth, lip, opening, speech. "On your lips." Literally: from the organ of speech. Not restricted to formal invocation — it is what comes from the mouth habitually.	The command governs all speech patterns, not only cultic invocation. The lips are the instrument; what passes through them regularly is subject to covenant scrutiny.

1.D — THE NAME IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST: WHY THIS MATTERS

Modern Western culture has largely divorced a name from its metaphysical weight. In ancient Near Eastern covenant culture — the culture in which **Yahweh** (יהוה) gave this command — the relationship between a name and the entity it named was fundamentally different.

- **In Mesopotamia:** "To call the name" of a deity (*šuma zarû* in Akkadian) was an act of worship and invocation. Naming a deity acknowledged its power and invited its presence.
- **In Egypt:** The divine name (**ren**) was considered a component of the soul. To speak the name was to empower its owner. To erase a name (**damnatio memoriae**) was to destroy the entity.

- **In Canaan:** Calling on the name of Baal (**qara b'shem Ba'al**) was the standard formula for invoking the deity's power and presence, as recorded in 1 Melachim (Kings) 18:26.
- **In the Tanakh:** Calling on the name of **Yahweh (יהוה)** (**qara b'shem Yahweh**) is the covenant standard of proper worship (Bereshit 4:26, 12:8). The mirror prohibition is: do not call on, mention, or allow the names of other deities to be heard.

Therefore: Shemot 23:13 is not a narrow prohibition against formal cultic invocation only. It is a comprehensive covenant standard governing the **regular verbal presence** of foreign deity names in the covenant community's life — speech, commerce, calendar, and culture included.

SECTION II — WHAT THE LAW IS TEACHING

II.A — THE THREE CORE TEACHINGS OF SHEMOT 23:13

TEACHING 1: THE NAME CARRIES THE DEITY

The prohibition is not merely behavioral — it is metaphysical. A deity's name, in covenant theology, is not just a label. It is a vessel of identity, power, and presence. When **Yahweh (יהוה)** commands that the names of other gods shall not be mentioned, He is instructing His covenant people to deny those entities the verbal existence that their names confer. The command reduces foreign deities to **non-entities** — things that, in the covenant world, do not even merit naming.

Tehillim (Psalm) 16:4 — "The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips."

Note that **Tehillim 16:4** presents the same prohibition in the first person — a covenant person does not even take the names of other gods **on his own lips**. This is a personal covenant identity statement, not merely a legal rule. Second independent Tanakh witness confirming Shemot 23:13.

TEACHING 2: THE EXCLUSIVITY OF THE COVENANT CALENDAR AND IDENTITY

The command closes the Book of the Covenant — the same legal section that establishes the Sabbath (Shemot 23:12), the three pilgrimage festivals (Shemot 23:14–17), and the beginning of months. This is not a coincidence. **The placement of this prohibition at the close of the covenant legal section connects the "mention of names" to the question of whose calendar, whose seasons, and whose appointed times the covenant community observes.** To observe Saturn's festival (Saturnalia/Christmas), Thor's day (Thursday), or Eostre's spring celebration (Easter) is to give verbal and calendrical presence to those names within the covenant community's life.

TEACHING 3: CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE COVENANT STANDARD

The Hebrew construction **lo tazkiru** (do not cause to be mentioned/remembered) implies intentionality. The root **zakar** (H2142) means "to mark so as to be recognized" — it implies **conscious recognition and acknowledgment**. The law does not govern every syllable of every language in the world. It governs the **conscious, regular, honored verbal presence** of foreign deity names in the covenant person's life. This is the standard of **covenant consciousness** — and it escalates from passive linguistic inheritance to active invocation as the degree of conscious engagement increases.

II.B — THE SECOND TANAKH WITNESS: YEHOSHUA (JOSHUA) 23:7

Yehoshua (Joshua) 23:7 — "...that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them."

Yehoshua's instruction to the tribal leaders of Israel before his death establishes a critical **escalation ladder** of idolatrous involvement:

STEP 1	Make mention of the names — habitual verbal presence (tazkiru)
STEP 2	Swear by them — invoke them as authority/witness
STEP 3	Serve them — direct worship and ritual participation
STEP 4	Bow down to them — full worship prostration

The command of Shemot 23:13 addresses **Step 1 — the gateway**. Yahweh's (יהוה) concern is that habitual, regular mention is the gateway through which deeper forms of idolatrous involvement enter. This is confirmed by the consistent historical record: Israel's deepest idolatry always followed periods of casual cultural accommodation. The Devarim 19:15 standard is met: Shemot 23:13 and Yehoshua 23:7 = two independent Tanakh witnesses.

II.C — THIRD TANAKH WITNESS: TEHILLIM (PSALM) 16:4

Tehillim (Psalm) 16:4 — "The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips."

Three independent Tanakh witnesses confirming the prohibition: Shemot 23:13, Yehoshua 23:7, and Tehillim 16:4. The Devarim 19:15 standard is exceeded. The law is firmly established.

SECTION III — FOUR-SPHERE APPLICATION OF LAW #46

SPHERE	THE LAW ADDRESSES	PRACTICAL COVENANT APPLICATION TODAY
Personal Sphere	What the covenant person says habitually; what names appear on their body, clothing, and household goods; how they identify with commercial brands named for deities.	Know the origins. Use Yahweh's numbered calendar (Yom Rishon, Yom Sheni...Shabbat) internally. Avoid permanently marking the body with deity symbols. Where choices exist between deity-named and neutral brands, prefer the neutral.
Household Sphere	What names fill the household: brand names, entertainment, products, habits of speech. What the children are taught about the names around them.	Teach children the origin of the names. A child who knows "Thursday = Thor's Day" and "Nike = Greek goddess of victory" has covenant consciousness. The command of Devarim 6:7 — "teach them diligently to your children" — applies directly here.
Community Sphere	What names are embedded in the covenant community's regular speech, institutional branding, and ministry infrastructure. Whether covenant ministry is built on platforms whose names invoke foreign deities.	Ministry institutions, courses, and outreach materials should not be named for or branded with deity names. Using an "Oracle" database for covenant records or an "Apollo" platform for ministry work introduces the deity's name into the covenant community's institutional life.
Civic/Cultural Sphere	The names of days, months, and planets are embedded in all Western language. The names of the gods appear on tires, shoes, candy, financial institutions, and technology platforms across the world.	Apply the Three-Level Framework (see Section IV). Unavoidable linguistic inheritance = Level 1. Habitual brand devotion to deity-named products = Level 2. Active display, naming covenant persons/institutions, permanent body marking = Level 3. Movement is always toward covenant, not toward accommodation.

SECTION IV — THE NAMES OF THE GODS ARE ALL AROUND US: THE DOCUMENTED SURVEY

The application of Shemot 23:13 to the modern world requires an honest survey of how deeply the names of the gods of the nations are embedded in Western language, commerce, and culture. The covenant person who is not aware of these names cannot apply covenant consciousness to them. This section is that awareness.

IV.A — THE DAYS OF THE WEEK: SEVEN DAYS, SEVEN DEITY NAMES

The seven days of the modern Western week were named in the Roman and Germanic periods of European history. Every day of the week except the Seventh (Shabbat) carries the name of a deity or celestial deity-body:

SUNDAY	Sun's Day — the solar deity, worshiped as Ra/Aten (Egypt), Shamash (Babylon), Sol Invictus (Rome), whose festival underlies the December 25 Christmas date.
MONDAY	Moon's Day — Selene (Greece) / Diana (Rome) / Sin (Babylon) — the moon goddess, worshiped across the ancient Near East.
TUESDAY	Tiw's Day — Tiw (Tyr), Norse god of war and single combat.
WEDNESDAY	Woden's Day — Woden (Odin), the Norse chief deity, god of wisdom, war, and death.
THURSDAY	Thor's Day — Thor, Norse god of thunder and storms. The planet Jupiter (Jove/Zeus) also gives his name to this day in Romance languages (Jeudi, Jueves, Giovedì).
FRIDAY	Frigg's Day — Frigg (Freya), Norse goddess of love, marriage, and fertility. Venus gives her name in Romance languages (Vendredi, Viernes, Venerdì).
SATURDAY	Saturn's Day — Saturn (Saturnus), Roman god of agriculture, time, and the harvest. The same deity whose Saturnalia festival underlies the Christmas holiday (see companion study).

Covenant Alternative: Yahweh's (יהוה) own calendar names the days by number — Yom Rishon (First Day), Yom Sheni (Second Day), Yom Shlishi (Third Day), Yom Revi'i (Fourth Day), Yom Chamishi (Fifth Day), Yom Shishi (Sixth Day) — and the Seventh Day is **Shabbat**. No deity names. No pagan calendar embedded in the language.

IV.B — THE MONTHS: SIX OF TWELVE NAMED FOR DEITIES

JANUARY	Janus — Roman god of doorways, transitions, and beginnings. The month named for the two-faced deity of entering and exiting.
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MARCH	Mars — Roman god of war (Greek: Ares). The month dedicated to the war deity at the start of the Roman military campaign season.
APRIL	Disputed — possibly Aphrodite (Latin: Aphrilis) / Venus. Also linked to Latin aperire (to open). Origin is in the Greco-Roman religious sphere.
MAY	Maia — Roman goddess of growth, fertility, and spring. The Pleiades star cluster (her home) shares her name.
JUNE	Juno — Roman queen of the gods (Greek: Hera), goddess of marriage and childbirth. Still the most popular month for weddings.
JANUARY (HEB)	By contrast: Yahweh's covenant calendar begins in Aviv (H24, the month of spring barley). All months are numbered: Chodesh Rishon (First Month) through Chodesh Shnem Asar (Twelfth Month). Zero deity names.

IV.C — THE PLANETS: DEITY NAMES BUILT INTO ASTRONOMY

MERCURY	Roman messenger deity, guide of souls to the underworld (psychopomp). Greek: Hermes.
VENUS	Roman goddess of love and beauty. Greek: Aphrodite. Tanakh equivalent: Astarte/Ashtoreth — "queen of heaven" condemned in Yirmeyahu 44:17–19.
MARS	Roman god of war. Greek: Ares.
JUPITER	Roman king of the gods. Greek: Zeus. The largest planet bears the name of the chief deity of the Roman pantheon.
SATURN	Roman agricultural and time deity. His festival Saturnalia directly underlies Christmas.
URANUS	Greek primordial sky deity, one of the first divine beings in Greek cosmology.
NEPTUNE	Roman god of the sea. Greek: Poseidon.
PLUTO	Roman god of the underworld. Greek: Hades. The realm of the dead bears this deity's name in the solar system.

IV.D — COMMERCIAL BRANDS AND PRODUCTS CARRYING DEITY NAMES: THE DOCUMENTED TABLE

The following table documents major commercial brands whose names are taken directly from the deities of the nations. These names are spoken, displayed, worn, consumed, and proclaimed by covenant people daily, often without awareness.

BRAND / PRODUCT	DEITY ORIGIN	COVENANT CONSIDERATION
Nike (footwear/apparel)	Nike (Νίκη) — Greek goddess of victory. The "Swoosh" logo is the wing of the goddess. Name means "victory/triumph" in the context of divine athletic empowerment.	One of the most globally recognized brands. Name spoken and displayed billions of times daily. Brand "devotion" (collectors, identity-builders) moves toward the tazkiru threshold.
Mars (candy / confectionery)	Mars — Roman god of war. Founder Franklin Mars deliberately invoked the Roman war deity's name.	Sold in every store worldwide. Casually consumed without awareness of the deity whose name is printed on the wrapper.
Venus (Gillette razors)	Venus — Roman goddess of love (parallel to Ishtar/Astarte/Ashtoret h). The Tanakh condemns Astarte/Ashtoreth worship by name (Shoftim 2:13, Yirmeyahu 44:17–19).	The goddess most directly condemned in the Tanakh by name appears on a mass-market consumer product used daily.
Mercury (automobiles / element)	Mercury — Roman messenger deity, psychopomp (guide of souls to Hades). Greek: Hermes.	Ford Mercury vehicles named directly for the deity. The chemical element mercury shares the same deity origin.
Apollo (tires / NASA / tech)	Apollo — Greek/Roman god of the sun, music,	Apollo Tires: global brand. NASA Apollo moon program: named for the sun deity by its planners.

	prophecy, and healing. Central Olympian deity.	Apollo tech platforms. The sun-deity's name is embedded in science and commerce alike.
Hermes (luxury fashion)	Hermes — Greek messenger deity, patron of commerce, thieves, and travelers. Roman: Mercury.	Among the most prestigious luxury fashion houses on earth. Patron of commerce lends his name to high commerce.
Pandora (jewelry / streaming)	Pandora — Greek mythological figure created by the gods whose jar/box released all evil and misery into the world.	Worn as jewelry; listened to as music. The name carries the mythology of unleashed evil by divine design.
Amazon (retail / tech)	Amazons — Mythological race of warrior women from Greek tradition, associated with warfare and the goddess Artemis.	The largest retailer on earth. Alexa AI assistant is a household presence. Brand name spoken billions of times daily.
Oracle (technology / database)	Oracle — The prophetic voice of Apollo at Delphi. The Delphic Oracle was the pre-eminent pagan divination center of the ancient world.	Oracle Corporation: one of the world's largest tech companies. Literally named for the pagan divination channel of Apollo. The deity's prophetic system is embedded in enterprise technology.
Atlas (shipping / various)	Atlas — Greek Titan condemned to hold up the sky/heavens. Symbol of global reach.	Atlas Air, Atlas Copco, Atlas Van Lines, Atlas Moving. The Titan carrying the world is a pervasive commercial symbol.
Midas (auto repair)	Midas — Greek king granted the "golden touch" by Dionysus, god of wine and revelry.	"Trust the Midas touch" — the brand explicitly invokes the mythological legend tied to a deity's gift.

Olympus (cameras / medical)	Olympus — Mount Olympus, divine dwelling of all twelve Greek deities.	Olympus cameras used in professional photography and medical imaging carry the divine mountain's name.
Ajax (cleaning products)	Ajax (Aias) — Greek hero of the Trojan War. Name used for strength association.	"Stronger than dirt" — heroic strength mythology embedded in brand identity.
Vulcan (materials / chemicals)	Vulcan — Roman god of fire, the forge, and volcanoes. Patron of smiths and craftsmen.	Vulcan Materials: largest U.S. construction aggregates producer. The forge-deity's name is in the American construction industry.
Cerberus (finance)	Cerberus — The three-headed dog guarding the gates of Hades, the Greek underworld.	Cerberus Capital Management: major private equity firm. Literally named for the guardian of the realm of the dead.
Janus (pharma / finance)	Janus — Roman god of doorways and transitions. January is named for him.	Janus Henderson Investors, Janus pharma. The two-faced deity of transitions gives his name to financial and health sectors.
Bacchus (wine brands)	Bacchus — Roman god of wine and revelry (Greek: Dionysus). A dying/rising vegetation deity with direct parallels to Tammuz.	Multiple wine brands and entertainment venues carry the name of the deity whose mythology parallels the Tammuz mourning condemned in Yechezkel 8.
Saturn (automobiles)	Saturn — Roman agricultural deity. His Saturnalia festival directly underlies Christmas (see companion Holidays study).	General Motors named its Saturn division for the deity whose festival forms the foundation of the Christmas holiday.
Aurora (cannabis / healthcare)	Aurora — Roman goddess of the dawn (Greek: Eos).	Aurora Cannabis: publicly traded global cannabis company. Aurora healthcare. The dawn-goddess lends her name to healthcare.

	Personification of sunrise in Roman religion.	
Goodyear (tires)	Named after Charles Goodyear, the inventor. However, the process he invented — "vulcanization" — was named after Vulcan, the Roman god of fire and the forge.	The product Goodyear sells is manufactured through a process bearing the Roman forge-deity's name. Indirect but documented chain.
Gott (coolers)	"Gott" is the German and Old Norse/Germanic root word for "God" — carrying direct theological weight in the Germanic religious tradition (Odin, Thor, Tiw, Frigg).	Gott coolers (produced under Igloo) carry a name that is the Germanic linguistic root of deity-reference in the Norse/Germanic religious system.

SECTION V — THE THREE-LEVEL COVENANT FRAMEWORK: CALIBRATING THE APPLICATION

The Tanakh does not require complete disconnection from a world saturated in the names of foreign deities. **Yahweh (יהוה)** required His covenant people to **live in the world** while not being shaped by its worship systems. The following three-level framework — derived from the Hebrew of the text — distinguishes the types of engagement the command actually addresses.

LEVEL 1 — PASSIVE LINGUISTIC INHERITANCE (DAYS, MONTHS, PLANETS)

This is the foundation of the "you can't avoid it" objection. A covenant person who says "Thursday" to give directions to a neighbor is not formally invoking Thor. The word functions as a positional marker in modern English, not as a verbal act of worship.

The Hebrew standard for **tazkiru** (H2142) — "to mark so as to be recognized, to bring to remembrance in honored acknowledgment" — requires a degree of conscious recognition and honoring. Using the English word "Thursday" in casual speech carries far less of that quality than, for example, celebrating a "Thor's Day" feast or naming a child "Thor."

LEVEL 1 STATUS	Unavoidable linguistic inheritance — not the same as invoking the deity.
HIGHER STANDARD	Use Yahweh's numbered days and month-names (Yom Rishon, Yom Sheni...Shabbat; Chodesh Rishon, etc.) within the covenant household and community.
COVENANT PRACTICE	Know the origin of the names. Teach the children. Use covenant language internally even while using common language externally.

LEVEL 2 — COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS BEARING DEITY NAMES

This is where the genuine covenant question arises. Two distinct acts occur when a covenant person engages with a deity-named brand:

ACT 1: TRANSACTION	Purchasing a product for its practical function (shoe, tire, candy bar). Covenant-permissible at the transaction level. The product serves a functional purpose.
ACT 2: PROCLAMATION	Habitually, affectionately, publicly proclaiming the deity's name as a brand identity — collecting Nike, identifying as an "Amazon person," telling everyone about your Pandora account, displaying the Hermes logo.

Act 2 — **the habitual, affectionate, public proclamation of the deity's name as personal identity** — begins to approach the threshold of **tazkiru** (H2142): "to bring to remembrance, to honor through regular mention." This is especially true in modern consumer culture, where brand devotion is explicitly marketed as identity formation — "Just Do It" (Nike) is not about shoes, it is about adopting the deity of victory as a personal identity principle.

LEVEL 2 STATUS	Purchasing for function: permissible at the transaction level. Habitual brand devotion and identity formation around deity-named brands: approaches the tazkiru threshold.
HIGHER STANDARD	Where alternatives exist offering comparable quality without deity branding, prefer them. Where no alternative is practical, maintain covenant consciousness — know the name's origin, do not build identity around it.
SPECIAL CONCERN	Venus (= Astarte/Ashtoreth, directly condemned in the Tanakh by name) and Oracle (= the Delphic divination channel of Apollo, directly in conflict with Devarim 18:10–12 on divination) warrant heightened discernment.

LEVEL 3 — ACTIVE CELEBRATION, DISPLAY, AND INVOCATION

Level 3 is the direct application of the command and is not in dispute:

- **Tattooing a deity's symbol permanently on the body** (Nike's wing/Swoosh, Bacchus's vine, Thor's hammer) — combines the body-marking prohibition (Vayikra 19:28) with active display of a deity symbol.
- **Naming a covenant person, child, or ministry after a pagan deity** — this is direct invocation: causing the deity's name to be regularly heard from the lips of the covenant community (lo yishama al pikha).
- **Building covenant ministry on Oracle (Delphic Apollo), Apollo, or similarly named platforms** — introduces the deity's name and its associated mythology into the institutional infrastructure of covenant work.
- **Celebrating the holidays whose names and structures carry deity names** (Easter = Eostre/Astarte, Christmas = Saturnalia/Sol Invictus/Tammuz) — this is the direct convergence of the holiday study with Law #46. The companion Holidays & Birthdays Covenant Study addresses this in full.
- **Swearing, invoking, or citing foreign deities as authority** (Step 2 of the Yehoshua 23:7 escalation ladder) — including the use of oaths and exclamations invoking deity names.

LEVEL 3 STATUS	Direct application of Shemot 23:13. The command applies fully. Two or three Tanakh witnesses confirm. No exemption for sincere motivation.
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SECTION VI — ANSWERING THE FOUR COMMON OBJECTIONS

OBJECTION 1: "IT'S JUST A BRAND NAME. NO ONE THINKS ABOUT THE DEITY."

Covenant Response: "No one thinks about it" **is the precise concern.** The normalization of deity names into cultural vocabulary without covenant awareness is exactly how Yahweh's (יהוה) people throughout the Tanakh drifted from covenant. They stopped thinking about Baal. They stopped thinking about Asherah. The names became furniture in the cultural house. The command to **zakar** — to remember, to mark so as to be recognized — calls the covenant community back to consciousness. Awareness is not legalism. It is the precondition of covenant faithfulness.

OBJECTION 2: "YOU CAN'T AVOID IT. THE WHOLE LANGUAGE IS SATURATED."

Covenant Response: Correct — complete avoidance of every word with pagan origin in English is not achievable. The Tanakh does not require it. **Yahweh (יהוה)** required His covenant people to live in the world without being shaped by its worship systems. The distinction is between **unavoidable linguistic inheritance (Level 1)** and **chosen covenant devotion (Levels 2 and 3)**. The question **Yahweh (יהוה)** asks is: "When you have a choice — what do you choose?"

OBJECTION 3: "THE ORIGINAL MEANING IS LOST. NO ONE WORSHIPS THESE DEITIES ANYMORE."

Covenant Response: The historical origin does not become harmless because the culture around it has changed. Devarim 12:30 commands Israel not to inquire after the gods of the nations "**after they have been destroyed before you.**" The destruction of the original cult does not retroactively purify the name. Moreover, the etymology was intentionally invoked by the brand creators — Nike's wing is literally the design of the Swoosh; the Delphic Oracle's prophetic function is literally the reason Oracle Corporation chose that name. The original meaning was deployed by design.

OBJECTION 4: "YAHWEH UNDERSTANDS OUR HEARTS. WE'RE NOT WORSHIPPING THESE DEITIES."

Covenant Response: Yes, **Yahweh (יהוה)** does know the heart. The Tanakh says so repeatedly. But "knowing the heart" is consistently **paired with — not used as exemption from — the demand for covenant obedience.** The same argument was used by the Israelites who brought Canaanite worship forms into the Tabernacle "for Yahweh." The response of **Yahweh (יהוה)** is recorded in Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 15:22:

Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 15:22 — "Does Yahweh delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken better than the fat of rams."

SECTION VII — COMPLETE APPLICATION TABLE: LAW #46 IN DAILY LIFE

SITUATION	LEVEL	COVENANT APPLICATION
Saying "Thursday," "Friday," "January" in ordinary English speech	Level 1	Unavoidable linguistic inheritance. Not a formal invocation. Covenant awareness sufficient.
Using "Thursday," "January" in covenant community documents and ministry	Level 1–2	The higher standard: use Yahweh's numbered calendar in all covenant community documents (Yom Chamishi; Chodesh Rishon, etc.).
Purchasing Nike shoes for function	Level 2	Transaction = permissible. Building identity around Nike, collecting, displaying with devotion = approaches tazkiru threshold.
Wearing Venus razors or Mars candy as regular consumer products	Level 2	Transaction permissible. Note: Venus = Astarte/Ashtoreth, directly condemned in the Tanakh. Heightened discernment warranted. Choose alternatives where available.
Using Oracle database software for covenant ministry records	Level 2–3	Introduces the Delphic divination channel of Apollo into covenant institutional infrastructure. Choose covenant-neutral platform alternatives.
Tattooing the Nike Swoosh (goddess wing) on the body	Level 3	Direct application of Shemot 23:13 combined with Vayikra 19:28. Active, permanent display of a deity's symbol. Forbidden.

Naming a covenant ministry, institution, or child after a pagan deity	Level 3	Direct invocation — lo yishama al pikha (let it not be heard on your lips). Forbidden. Applies to naming businesses, ministries, children, and products in covenant community context.
Celebrating Easter (Eostre/Astarte/Ishtar), Christmas (Saturnalia/Sol Invictus), Halloween (Samhain)	Level 3	Directly invokes the names and structures of foreign deities through holiday calendar observance. See companion Holidays & Birthdays Covenant Study. Forbidden per Devarim 12:29–31.
Teaching children that "Thursday = Thor's Day" and "Nike = goddess of victory"	Level 1 → Positive	Covenant consciousness practice. Transforms passive linguistic inheritance into active covenant education (Devarim 6:7).
Choosing covenant-neutral brands over deity-named brands when alternatives are comparable	Level 1 → Positive	Directional movement toward covenant. The higher standard applied voluntarily.
Using Yahweh's numbered calendar (Yom Rishon...Shabbat) in household and community speech	Positive Practice	Full covenant application of the alternative to deity-named days. Honors the structure of Yahweh's creation order.

SECTION VIII — THREE-RELIGION COVENANT AUDIT

This lesson addresses the covenant people of **Yahweh (יהוה)** as understood across Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — the three traditions that trace their covenant heritage to the Tanakh. The Tanakh is the source authority for all three. The prohibition of Shemot 23:13 is addressed to all who stand in covenant with **Yahweh (יהוה)** under His written instruction.

JUDAISM / TANAKH TRADITION	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
<p>Rabbinic tradition interprets Shemot 23:13 primarily as prohibiting swearing in the name of an idol (Talmud, Sanhedrin 63a-b). The broader "no mention" standard is acknowledged. Interestingly, traditional Judaism already avoids saying many deity names and uses "Hashem" (The Name) rather than pronouncing the Tetragrammaton. However, the extensive adoption of December 25 Chanukah inflation and Christmas-adjacent practices (Hanukkah bush) represents a direct violation of this law under cultural accommodation pressure.</p>	<p>Christianity has absorbed the names of pagan deities into its liturgical calendar (Easter = Eostre/Astarte; Christmas = Saturnalia/Sol Invictus), its weekly calendar (Sunday worship = Sun's day), and its commercial culture without systematic examination. No NT text addresses this; the Tanakh command stands. Many sincere believers are unaware of the deity origins embedded in their religious vocabulary. The call of Shemot 23:13 is a call to examine the inherited calendar.</p>	<p>Classical Islamic scholarship holds that mentioning the names of other gods in invocation (du'a), oath, or prayer is forbidden. The shahadah ("There is no god but Allah") structurally parallels the Tanakh's exclusive devotion standard. However, Islamic culture in Westernized contexts has absorbed commercial brand names (Nike, Mars, etc.) without systematic examination, the same as all three traditions. The internal Islamic debate over Mawlid al-Nabi (Prophet's birthday) involves the same "mention and honor" question in the context of a human name.</p>

SECTION IX — COVENANT WITNESS TO CURRENT EVENTS (2026)

THE WORLD OF 2026: WHERE THE NAMES OF THE GODS LIVE NOW

In 2026, the names of the gods of the nations are not only on tires and candy bars. They are in the architecture of civilization itself:

- **Artificial Intelligence:** "Apollo" AI platforms, "Gemini" (the twin deities of Greek mythology — Castor and Pollux, sons of Zeus), "Grok" (named after Robert Heinlein's science fiction but used by Elon Musk's "x.AI" — Apollo and Artemis satellite systems), "Janus" AI architectures (named for the two-faced Roman deity of transitions). The AI revolution has embedded deity names into the most transformative technology of the generation.
- **Space Exploration:** NASA's Artemis program (Greek goddess of the moon and hunt) returns humans to the moon. The Apollo program established the template. Juno orbits Jupiter (king of the gods). Every major U.S. space program carries a deity name.
- **Financial Systems:** Cerberus Capital (guardian of Hades), Janus Henderson (the two-faced transition deity), Mercury payments, Apollo Global Management — the entire private equity and capital management industry has a conspicuous concentration of deity names.
- **Consumer Technology:** Oracle (Delphic Apollo), Hermes delivery systems, Amazon (warrior women/Artemis), Apollo GraphQL (web technology), Janus authentication systems. The digital infrastructure of daily life carries the names of the gods.
- **The Holidays Continue:** In 2026, Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Valentine's Day, and New Year's continue to be the primary cultural calendar of Western civilization. Each carries deity names and structures (Saturnalia, Eostre, Samhain, Lupercalia, Janus) in active, annual, community-wide proclamation. This is the single largest arena of Law #46 application in the modern world — covered in full in the companion study: "**A Covenant Witness to the Appointed Times: Holidays, Birthdays, and the Nations.**"

The covenant person who walks in 2026 with the awareness of Shemot 23:13 does not withdraw from civilization. They walk **awake** — seeing clearly what the nations have built, knowing the names, choosing covenant wherever choice is available, and teaching the next generation to do the same.

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 16:19–21 — "O Yahweh, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to You shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: 'Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit. Can man make for himself gods? Such are not gods!' Therefore, behold, I will make them know — this once I will make them know My power and My might — and they shall know that My name is Yahweh."

SECTION X — SEVEN PRACTICAL COVENANT STANDARDS FOR 2026

STANDARD 1	<p>KNOW THE NAMES. A covenant person should not be ignorant of the origins of Nike, Venus, Oracle, Mercury, Thursday, or January. Knowledge is the prerequisite of covenant consciousness. Ignorance is not innocence in covenant life (Vayikra 5:17).</p>
STANDARD 2	<p>USE YAHWEH'S CALENDAR INTERNALLY. Within the covenant household and community, use Yahweh's numbered days and month-names rather than Thor's day and Janus's month as the primary covenant calendar reference. (Yom Rishon through Shabbat; Chodesh Rishon through Chodesh Shnem Asar.)</p>
STANDARD 3	<p>WHERE ALTERNATIVES EXIST, PREFER THEM. If a comparable product or service exists without deity branding, choose it. This is the covenant principle of moving toward Yahweh in every domain where choice is available.</p>
STANDARD 4	<p>NEVER NAME COVENANT PEOPLE OR INSTITUTIONS AFTER PAGAN DEITIES. This is the clearest direct application of "let it not be heard on your lips." It belongs on the lips of the covenant community's most intimate naming practices — children, ministries, institutions, courses.</p>
STANDARD 5	<p>AVOID PERMANENT BODY MARKS WITH DEITY SYMBOLS. Vayikra 19:28 prohibits body-marking (tattoos). The body is a covenant vessel. Permanently marking it with the symbols of foreign deities (Nike's goddess wing, Thor's hammer, Bacchus's vine) compounds the prohibition.</p>
STANDARD 6	<p>DO NOT BUILD COVENANT MINISTRY ON DEITY-NAMED PLATFORMS. Oracle databases, Apollo tech systems, and similarly named platforms should not be the infrastructure of covenant institutional work where practical alternatives exist.</p>
STANDARD 7	<p>TEACH THE CHILDREN. Devarim 6:7 commands diligent teaching. The child who knows that "Thursday = Thor's Day," "Nike = Greek goddess of victory," and "Easter = Eostre/Astarte" is equipped for covenant consciousness. The child who absorbs these names unexamined inherits the very pattern the Tanakh warns against.</p>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q1	The Hebrew verb tazkiru (H2142) means "to mark so as to be recognized" and "to bring to remembered acknowledgment." How does this broader definition change the way you think about the names that appear in your daily vocabulary?
Q2	The days of the week all carry deity names except Shabbat. What would it look like practically for a covenant household to use Yahweh's numbered calendar (Yom Rishon through Shabbat) as its primary internal calendar language?
Q3	In the Yehoshua 23:7 escalation ladder (mention → swear → serve → bow down), where on the ladder would you place the modern practice of building consumer identity around Nike, collecting Hermes, or subscribing to Pandora? What does the escalation structure tell us about the function of the command to not even mention?
Q4	The objection is made: "Yahweh knows my heart — I'm not worshipping these deities." How does Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 15:22 ("to obey is better than sacrifice") address this objection? Where does good intention end and covenant instruction begin?
Q5	If a covenant ministry stores its member records in an Oracle database and its emails pass through an Apollo server, while its members celebrate Christmas and Easter — how does Law #46 address the cumulative effect of these patterns, even if none of them is "worshipful" in intent?
Q6	The companion Holidays & Birthdays study establishes that Christmas, Easter, Halloween, and Valentine's Day all carry the names and structures of foreign deities. How does Law #46 specifically address the question of observing a holiday bearing a deity's name, separate from the question of whether the holiday is "pagan"?
Q7	Tehillim 16:4 presents the prohibition in the first person: "I will not take their names on my lips." In what ways is this a personal covenant identity statement rather than merely a legal rule? How would a person's daily life look different if this were embraced as identity rather than endured as restriction?

SCRIPTURE INDEX

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION USED
Shemot (Exodus) 23:13	Primary text — Lo Tazkiru: make no mention of the names of other gods	Sections I, II, V, VII
Yehoshua (Joshua) 23:7	Second Tanakh witness — escalation ladder: mention → swear → serve → bow down	Sections II, V
Tehillim (Psalm) 16:4	Third Tanakh witness — "I will not take their names on my lips" (personal covenant identity)	Sections II, VI
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:29–31	Do not inquire after their gods to do the same — Yahweh does not accept rebranded pagan forms	Sections II, VI
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:7	Teach these things diligently to your children — covenant consciousness education	Sections III, X
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15	Evidentiary standard — two or three witnesses required	Section II (verdict)
Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:28	Prohibition against body-marking / tattoos — combined with Level 3 analysis	Sections V, X
Vayikra (Leviticus) 5:17	Unintentional sin — ignorance is not innocence in covenant life	Section X
Shemot (Exodus) 23:12	Sabbath rest — immediately preceding Shemot 23:13 in the Book of the Covenant	Section II.B
Shoftim (Judges) 2:13	Ashtoreth (Astarte/Venus) worship condemned — direct Tanakh connection to Venus brand	Section IV.D

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 44:17–19	Queen of Heaven (Astarte/Venus) worship condemned in strongest terms	Sections IV.D, VIII
Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 8:14	Women weeping for Tammuz inside the Temple — pagan deity names in covenant space	Section II
Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 15:22	"To obey is better than sacrifice" — addresses the "good intent" objection	Section VI
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 18:10–12	Prohibition of divination and oracular consultation — connects to Oracle brand	Sections IV.D, VII
Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 16:19–21	The nations will confess they inherited nothing but lies — closing covenant witness	Section IX

CLOSING COVENANT CITATIONS

Shemot (Exodus) 23:13 — The Primary Text — "Pay attention to all that I have said to you. Make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips."

Yehoshua (Joshua) 23:7 — The Second Witness — "...that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them."

Tehillim (Psalm) 16:4 — The Third Witness — "The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips."

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 16:19–21 — The Covenant Horizon — "O Yahweh, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble — to You shall the nations come and say: 'Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit. Can man make for himself gods? Such are not gods!' Therefore, behold, I will make them know My power and My might — and they shall know that My name is Yahweh."

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:6–7 — The Teaching Mandate — "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

Shemuel Aleph (1 Samuel) 15:22 — The Obedience Standard — "Does Yahweh delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken better than the fat of rams."

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