

Question: Who was Chemosh, and what spiritual lesson can we learn from him?

Answer:

Let's begin with Scripture:

Jeremiah 48:46

“Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh perish; For your sons have been taken captive, And your daughters captive.”

From this verse, we learn that Chemosh was not a human being but a pagan god worshiped by the Moabites. In ancient times, it was common for each nation to have its own national deity. These deities were considered protectors or spiritual rulers of those lands:

- Israel worshiped the one true God, Yahweh (JEHOVAH) – the Creator of heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14).

- Tyre worshiped Baal.
- Sidon worshiped Ashtoreth.
- The Ammonites worshiped Milcom (also known as Molech).
- And the Moabites worshiped Chemosh.

These were not just cultural symbols—they were considered divine beings, though in truth, they were demons masquerading as gods. As the Apostle Paul later writes:

1 Corinthians 10:20

“Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.”

Similarly, in the Old Testament, God also confirms that idol worship is actually the worship of demons:

Deuteronomy 32:17

“They sacrificed to demons, not to God, To gods they did not know, To new gods, new arrivals That your fathers did not fear.”

God had clearly commanded His people, Israel, not to worship other gods:

Exodus 20:3-5

“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image... you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...”

But despite this command, many Israelites—including kings—fell into idolatry. One of the most heartbreaking examples is King Solomon, who turned away from God in his later years and began to worship these foreign gods because of the influence of his foreign wives:

1 Kings 11:7

“Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.”

Though Solomon eventually repented, his compromise had lasting consequences. His disobedience opened the door for idolatry in Israel, and even many generations later, the nation suffered for it.

Years later, King Josiah brought reform by destroying the pagan altars Solomon had built:

2 Kings 23:13

“Then the king defiled the high places... which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon.”

What Does This Teach Us Today?

Although Chemosh and other idols of the ancient world are not commonly mentioned today, idolatry still exists—but often in more subtle forms. In many cultures, especially across parts of Africa, certain ancestral or tribal rituals closely resemble the idolatrous practices mentioned in the Bible. These often include:

- Worshiping carved images,

- Making sacrifices to spirits or ancestors,
- Offering libations,
- Bowing down to objects or shrines.

In some places, these practices have been blended with Christianity, leading many to unknowingly participate in forms of modern idolatry. This is spiritually dangerous, as Scripture teaches that true worship must be directed only to the Father, through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; John 4:24).

Jesus said:

John 4:24

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

And the Apostle John warned believers:

1 John 5:21

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”

Other Bible References Mentioning Chemosh:

- Numbers 21:29 – *“Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, O people of Chemosh!”*
- Judges 11:24 – Jephthah acknowledges Chemosh as Moab’s god in debate.
- 1 Kings 11:7 – Solomon builds a high place for Chemosh.
- 1 Kings 11:33 – God expresses anger at Solomon’s idolatry.
- Jeremiah 48:7 & 13 – God pronounces judgment on Chemosh and Moab’s misplaced trust.

The story of Chemosh is not just ancient history. It’s a clear reminder of the dangers of idolatry, compromise, and mixing truth with error. Whether it’s a statue, ritual, tradition, or even money and fame—anything that takes God’s place in our lives becomes an idol.

Let us return to the Lord in pure and undivided worship, guided by His Word and the Holy Spirit.

The Lord is coming soon. (Revelation 22:20)

Who Was Chemosh? (Jeremiah 48:46)

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