

Deuteronomy 12:8-19
(The Place Where the Lord Your God Chooses, Part II)
February 7, 2021

⁸ “You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes—⁹ for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰ But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, ¹¹ then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD. ¹² And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you. ¹³ Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; ¹⁴ but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

¹⁵ “However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike. ¹⁶ Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water. ¹⁷ You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand. ¹⁸ But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God chooses, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all to which you put your hands. ¹⁹ Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.

One of the things that tends to annoy me, and there are a few such things in life, is when someone says they are a part of a church that is going back to the way they did it at the beginning – the way churches were supposed to be set up.

Why is this annoying? It is because the Bible never (no really, go check) prescribes any such thing. Outside of the qualifications for elders and deacons, and a few important observances – meaning baptism and the Lord’s supper. There is nothing about the structure of the church that is ever noted as being “correct.”

And even how the Lord’s Supper and baptism are conducted is not defined other than a few warnings from Paul concerning conduct during the Lord’s Supper. We just know we are to do these things. We are given absolute freedom to set things up as we wish – elder-led, congregational, episcopal, presbyterian, and so on, are all types of churches. And yet, none of them are said to be either acceptable or unacceptable in Scripture.

There is no time of day that is prescribed for people to meet. There is no day of the week that is prescribed for people to meet. There is no order of events that must take place. There is no size or location of a church defined. And so on.

Yes, there are prohibitions on things, but that doesn’t mean all things must be done. For example, there is nothing to say that people must speak in various languages (tongues), but there are prohibitions on speaking in other languages – how many can, there must be a translator, and so on.

The same is true with giving. Israel was compelled to give certain things at certain times and for certain reasons. In the church, outside of a couple of basic principles on that subject from Paul, which we are to take as prescriptions, nothing specific is defined.

Unlike Israel, we have complete freedom to conduct our affairs in whatever way we wish. And there is a reason for this.

Text Verse: *“Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? ²⁶ You also carried Sikkuth your king And Chiun, your idols, The star of your gods, Which you made for yourselves. ²⁷ Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus,’ Says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.” Amos 5:25-27*

In today’s passage, Moses will start out by saying that the people had done whatever each thought was right in his own eyes while they were in the wilderness. Though they had the tabernacle which was surely maintained by the priests from day to day in an orderly fashion, the people did not have the ability to do what the law prescribed for them to do.

Therefore, they conducted their lives according to the way that they thought was best. However, what Moses tells them is that the time was coming when they would need to have a unity of worship in order to live properly within the land. They needed to not do what they thought was right, but what the Lord, through the law, had prescribed as acceptable or not acceptable.

The reason for this will be explained, but it begs the question, “If this is so, then why don’t we have to do such things in an orderly and prescribed manner as well?” The reason for that follows logically after the reason for the Lord prescribing these things for Israel in the first place. To help us understand some of this, we can first evaluate a chiasm I pulled out of the passage while doing this sermon.

Deuteronomy 12:12-18 (Rejoicing Before the Lord)
Allowances and Prohibitions (12/7/2020)

- a. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God.
- b. You and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who *is* within your gates.
- c. In the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings.
- d. And there you shall do all that I command you.
 - e. “However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires.
 - x. The unclean and the clean may eat of it.
 - e. Of the gazelle and the deer alike. Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it on the earth like water.
- d. (Commands) You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand.
- c. But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God chooses.
- b. You and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who *is* within your gates.
- a. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God.

Great things, such as freedom in Christ and chiasms, which help us understand passages better, are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Unity of Worship (verses 8-14)

So far, in this Chapter, Moses has been speaking of how to properly worship the Lord once they are in Canaan. He spoke of destroying the places where the inhabitants worshipped their gods (vss. 2-4). He also spoke of having a place specifically set aside for worshipping the Lord (vs. 5).

After that, he then noted that it was to this place alone that they were to bring their burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes, heave offerings, and so on. There, in the presence of the Lord, they were to rejoice in Him (vss. 6 & 7). Those things now form the basis of what he will next say...

⁸“You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—

lo taasun kekol asher anakhnu osim poh ha’yom – “No shall you (certainly) do at all which we are doing here today.” It is an interesting phrase for several reasons. First, the word translated as “shall you do” bears an emphatic mark in order to stress what is said – “You shall certainly not do.”

But what bears note is that Moses uses the word *anakhnu*, or “we.” The word is used only five times in Deuteronomy, but three of the uses are him simply quoting the people, not inclusive of him. Only in verse 5:3 does he elsewhere include himself in the narrative –

*“The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but **with us**, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.” Deuteronomy 5:3*

Now, for the only other time in the book does he include himself directly in the statement – “as we are doing here today.” Moses is contrasting what is the expected behavior of the people upon entrance, and what is happening at the present.

By saying, “You shall not do as we are doing,” it is a sad note of the surety that he will not pass over into the land. Outside of the land, the people could not – by default – do the things of the law. They could not bring offerings they did not possess, such as the tithes of grain. They could not travel on a pilgrim feast to the place where the Lord had chosen to place His name. And so on.

Instead, there were limitations placed upon them because they were in their time of exile for having not trusted the Lord, and having not entered the inheritance after leaving Sinai. It is what the Lord spoke of through Amos in our text verse –

*“Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings
In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?” Amos 5:25*

The obvious answer is, “No, they did not.” Certainly, the daily offerings of the priests were made, but the people (the house of Israel) could not do what was required of them by law. Now, Moses is stressing that those things would be required.

The sad part of this, however, is that many of the things of the law were never obeyed or observed, even after entering and having received rest. A perfect example of this is found after the first exile of Judah in Nehemiah 8 –

“So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness.” Nehemiah 8:17

Something similar is said about observance of the Passover in 2 Kings 23. Even after possession of the land, nothing changed. But Moses had instructed them differently. They were to observe the law of the Lord instead of...

8 (con't) **every man doing whatever *is* right in his own eyes—**

In the wilderness, people may have brought offerings to the Lord. If so, it was not in accord with the law of the tithe, which obviously could not be met. Or, they may have brought nothing. Some may have observed certain things of the law, or they may not have. Nobody would have been held accountable if they didn't.

For example, the law of circumcision mandated that every male child was to be circumcised on the eighth day or they were to be cut off from their people (Genesis 17:4), and yet, none of those born in the wilderness had been circumcised (Joshua 5:2-5).

People did what they did without regard to the duly established laws of the Lord. Moses includes himself in this. Understanding the typology – those in exile for the disobedience of having rejected Christ— one can see this applies to Israel now.

The people of Israel, even today, have the law. And yet, outside of the culturally expected customs, they don't observe the law at all. Every man does what is right in his own eyes. One can see the obvious parallel here –

* Israel of Moses' time is going to enter Canaan even though they have not been observing the law. Thus, it cannot be by observance of the law that they are entering the land of inheritance.

* Israel as a nation is going to enter the kingdom age even though they will not be observing the law before that occurs (Daniel 9:27). Therefore, it cannot be by observing the law that they will enter the inheritance.

The truth of this is seen in the next words...

⁹ for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you.

Here, like in verses 1, 5, and 7 from last week, the words go from the plural to the singular – “you all (plural) have not come to the rest and the inheritance which Yehovah your (singular) God is giving you (singular).” Moses goes from speaking to the people individually to referring to them as a nation. The obvious reason is because not all of the people will obtain the inheritance, but the nation assuredly will.

In this, he uses the word *menukhah*, meaning either “rest” or a place of rest. Moses is saying that they have not yet obtained such a place, or state, of rest. The main point of Moses' dialogue is that the people have the law, but they have not been observing the law, and yet,

they have been brought to the inheritance promised by the Lord. As this is so, it cannot be by the law that they will obtain it.

However, observance of the law is the anticipation once in the inheritance. And yet, they failed to observe the law in the land. And not only did they fail to observe, they were actively disobedient to it. In this, they were exiled.

They were returned apart from observance of the law, and yet they were exiled again. They are (today) in the land and yet they are not observing the law, nor will they – even after the next temple is built. And yet, they will be (as a nation) entering the kingdom age. But it is not by the law that this will occur.

The law is the expectation, and yet it is not the means of obtaining the promise. Therefore, it is the fulfillment of the law, and the imputation of that act through the New Covenant, that provides what is needed to complete the process began so long ago.

It is so clear and obvious, and yet it escapes Israel to this day, and – unfortunately – it escapes countless people who were never given this law in the first place as they bring themselves under this impossible yoke of bondage.

¹⁰ But *when* you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit,

The words go back to the plural here as Moses speaks to all of the people individually (you all). Moses again takes it as an axiom that the people there before him would cross the Jordan into Canaan, but that he would not do so. Because of this, he is providing instruction for them to not only possess the land, but to be able to continue possessing it. When they cross over...

^{10 (con't)} and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety,

Here, the idea of rest is tied in with the elimination of the enemy, and thus dwelling in safety. The idea of having obtained it is found in Joshua 23:1 –

“Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua was old, advanced in age.”

It is again seen concerning David and his kingdom in 2 Samuel 7 –

“Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ² that the king said to Nathan the prophet, ‘See

*now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.” 2
Samuel 7:1, 2*

Because of David’s efforts in defeating the enemies, it is used again by Solomon in 1 Kings 5 as the reason to build the house of the Lord, and Solomon then acknowledges that the promised rest was obtained as he prayed the invocation prayer after the temple was complete –

“Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.” 1 Kings 8:56

And yet, David, despite having subdued the enemies and provided this rest, clearly indicates that the rest that both Joshua, and he, had obtained was not the promised rest Moses speaks of now. He does this by using the word “Today” in the 95th Psalm –

“Today, if you will hear His voice: ⁸ “Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of trial in the wilderness, ⁹ When your fathers tested Me; They tried Me, though they saw My work. ¹⁰ For forty years I was grieved with that generation, And said, ‘It is a people who go astray in their hearts, And they do not know My ways.’ ¹¹ So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’” Psalm 95:7-11

The author of Hebrews then unmistakably shows that obtaining the inheritance is not of the law. He does it first by citing the 95th Psalm, and then by next saying this from Hebrews 3:16-19 –

“For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? ¹⁷ Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

With that understood, he then notes that because David said Today hundreds of years after Joshua had received his rest, it means that the rest spoken of is not merely referring to rest from the physical enemies of Israel. As he says in Hebrews 4:8, “For if Joshua had given them rest, then He [the Spirit through David] would not afterward have spoken of another day.” He then says –

“For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:10

What this is clearly telling us is that the true, final, and anticipated rest comes only when the law is fulfilled, because the law is of works. If one ceases from his works in order to enter God's rest, it means that he is no longer under law. As the author of Hebrews says, "For we who have believed do enter that rest" (Hebrews 4:3).

Moses is speaking of earthly things, but the Spirit of inspiration working through him is pointing to spiritual things. That continues with the next words...

11 then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.

The word *ha'maqom*, or "the place," is obviously speaking of whatever place where the tabernacle would rest. However, more especially, the words point prophetically to Jerusalem, where the temple would be built. At the location where the name of the Lord would abide...

11 (con't) There you shall bring all that I command you:

Moses now says that in the place where the Lord's name will abide, the people shall bring "all that I command you." The logical question is, "Does this imply works?" The answer is, "Yes." The command is of the law. It mandates something to be done.

But the author of Hebrews says that when a person enters God's rest, He has ceased from all his works, and that the way one enters into the rest is through belief, meaning faith in Christ.

Thus, the rest which is being referred to now by Moses, and the commands which Moses is giving to the people, are only symbolic representations of the true rest that only comes by faith in the One these things anticipate and point to, some of which are...

11 (con't) your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD.

This verse is very similar to verse 6 that we looked at last week. The only substantial difference is in the final clause –

**and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. 12:6*

**and all your choice offerings which you vow to the Lord. 12:11*

In verse 6, the offerings are mandatory. In verse 11, they are voluntary until the vow is made. Once the vow is made, the offering became obligatory.

In verse 6, it was seen how these things only pointed to the coming Christ. In Him is the fulfillment of them. What the people brought forward in Israel only anticipated a spiritual fulfillment.

Despite being mandatory offerings, other than in certain exceptions, only a portion of any of them was actually given away. The rest was consumed by the offeror. Hence, the next words...

¹² And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God,

This phrase was first seen in Leviticus 23:40 where it was applied to the Feast of Tabernacles. In Deuteronomy, this is the second of several times it is noted. The first being last week in verse 7. The idea here is that the offeror would often share in the offering, and thus they would feast and rejoice in the presence of the Lord for whatever the sacrifice or offering signified.

Even if they did not share in the sacrifice, such as in a whole burnt offering or a sin offering, they would still rejoice for what it signified – be it gratitude to God for His blessings, fellowship with Him, cleansing from sin, or so on. This rejoicing was to include...

^{12 (con't)} you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you.

Unlike what most scholars state, and what most teachers pass on, this is a command of Moses, not a suggestion. For example, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown incorrectly states –

“...it appears that, although males only were commanded to appear before God at the annual solemn feasts (Ex 23:17), the women were allowed to accompany them (1Sa 1:3-23).”

Rather, Moses is instructing the households to attend as well. But there is no contradiction in this and what is said about the three pilgrim feasts elsewhere, such as –

“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.”
Deuteronomy 16:16

In this passage here in Deuteronomy 12, in the surrounding passage of Deuteronomy 16, and elsewhere, it clearly instructs all of the people to come to the pilgrim feasts.

The households were not to be excluded. And, indeed, they could not be excluded – for example – from the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the Passover (that everyone was to observe) was affixed to that Feast.

The fact that all the males had to appear before the Lord in those three pilgrim feasts is given under the assumption that their households would be there as well. The command for the males, as representative of the household was all-inclusive. The command to attend was to then be considered by those males as not to exclude the household as is evidenced in this verse.

The center of this service and worship of the Lord was to be at the spot where the Lord placed His name. It is a note of unification of the worship of the people – all of them – in a single place. Hence...

¹³ Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see;

Here, the burnt offering is spoken of as the entirety of the offerings of the previous verse. Also, the words now return to the singular – you, Israel, are to take heed concerning your burnt offerings. It may also be that Moses is speaking to each person individually – “You, and you, and you: do not do this thing.” The singular will continue, with one exception, through the rest of the verses today.

The command here was to ensure unity of worship at the sanctuary. However, it is evident from the time of the judges and later that Israel failed in this, as is evidenced from Ezekiel 20 –

“When I brought them into the land concerning which I had raised My hand in an oath to give them, and they saw all the high hills and all the thick trees, there they offered their sacrifices and provoked Me with their offerings. There they also sent up their sweet aroma and poured out their drink offerings.” Ezekiel 20:28

The people did exactly what they were instructed to not do. Instead of seeking the Lord in the place where He dwelt, they searched out any place that suited their fancy and they offered to the Lord, or to other gods, according to what was right in their own eyes.

It cannot be that this is only speaking of a time after the temple was built. That would not occur for more than 400 years. It certainly was intended to mean at the place of the tabernacle, or whatever other place the Lord so chose, until a temple was erected. That is clearly evidenced in what is next said...

14 but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

He again speaks of the place which the Lord chooses. It could be argued that this only speaks of burnt offerings, but that is proven false by the words *v'sham taaseh kol asher anoki metsaveka* – “and there you shall do all that I command you.” In other words, the “burnt offering” stands as representative of everything else. This was perfectly understood from later passages, such as –

“Then they said, ‘In fact, there is a yearly feast of the LORD in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.’” Joshua 21:19

The yearly feast, one of the Leviticus 23 Feasts of the Lord, was observed at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was. That feast is a part of what Moses is speaking of right now when he says, “and all that I command you.”

Sanctuary worship did occur, but there was not a unity of it among the people of Israel – in direct violation of the words of Moses now. However, it is seen elsewhere that not having a permanent temple was used as a pretext to do whatever anyone wanted. In 1 Kings 3:2-4, it says –

“Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. ³ And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

⁴ Now the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.”

Gibeon was where the tabernacle was then located (see 2 Chronicles 1:3), along with the altar of burnt offering, even though the ark was in Jerusalem.

And even after the building of the temple, the record of the kings contains constant failures of the people by not worshiping only before the Lord in Jerusalem. Something more, something much greater, was needed to unite the people in worship – something internal, not external. The reason for this is rightly explained by Adam Clarke –

“To prevent idolatry and bring about a perfect uniformity in the Divine worship, which at that time was essentially necessary; because every rite and ceremony had a determinate meaning, and pointed out the good things which were to come, therefore one place must be established where those rites and ceremonies should be carefully and punctually observed. Had it not

been so, every man would have formed his worship according to his own mind, and the whole beauty and importance of the grand representative system would have been destroyed, and the Messiah and the glories of his kingdom could not have been seen through the medium of the Jewish ritual. For uniformity in every part of the Divine worship the same necessity does not now exist; because that which was typified is come, and the shadows have all fled away. Yet, when it can be obtained, how desirable is it that all sincere Christians should with one mouth, as well as with one heart, glorify their common Lord and Savior!" Adam Clarke

Stated a little less wordily – everything points to Jesus. The unity of worship was necessary to reveal Him. Anything else would destroy that typology. And now that He has come and fulfilled it, these shadows that only anticipated Him are no longer needed. Having said that, those things that were not relevant to that typology had no such restrictions bound to them...

*You shall do these things as I instruct you
Or not do what has been forbidden, as well
All is laid out, so you know what to do
Just be obedient to what the word does tell*

*Doing these things has a reason
And so, you are to do them as I instruct you
This will continue on for a season
But someday, the doing of them will be through*

*They only anticipate Me and those things I will do
And in My doing, those things will be done
Someday I will be the focus and hope of each one of you
That is, when the course of this law has been run*

II. Maintaining the Typology (verses 15-19)

¹⁵ "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you;

Slaughtering of animals for consumption was not considered a sacrifice or offering as long as it was not presented as such. Hence, there was no typology of Christ to mar in the act. Therefore, this was considered perfectly acceptable.

In fact, having, capturing, or buying meat here is considered a blessing of the Lord, not something offensive or wrong. Thus, it was to be accepted as such. However, in Leviticus 17, it said –

“Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘This is the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying: ³ ‘Whatever man of the house of Israel who kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills it outside the camp, ⁴ and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, the guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people, ⁵ to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them as peace offerings to the LORD.’” Leviticus 17:2-5

That was a law for the time in the wilderness. Once the people were in the land of Canaan, it would no longer apply. They would be spread out through the land and were allowed to freely do as they wished in this regard. This included...

15 (con’t) the unclean and the clean may eat of it,

This is the middle of the chiasm found in the passage. Whoever wanted could eat of such meat. This means that even those excluded from the society, such as lepers who were unclean, could be brought it to eat.

This is unlike the laws of certain animals offered to the Lord that were forbidden to be eaten by the unclean. If they did so, the law says that such were to be cut off from their people. They had violated the typology of Christ. However, no typology of Christ was violated in this. Therefore, it was considered perfectly acceptable and good. This included...

15 (con’t) of the gazelle and the deer alike.

ka-tseviy v’ka-ayal – “as of the gazelle and as of the deer.” Here, the *tsviy* or gazelle is introduced. It is a gazelle or a roebuck, but it also means “beauty,” even when referring to the beautiful Branch of the Lord in Isaiah 4:2, or the beautiful land of Israel in Ezekiel 20:6. Also, the *ayyal*, or deer is introduced. It is the intensive form of the word *ayil*, or ram. It thus signifies a stag, or a male deer.

The reason for including these is certainly to show that they were considered acceptable as food, but they bore no specific typology of Christ that must otherwise be considered.

In other words, these are not animals of the herd or flock that required the dedication of the firstborn to the Lord. Nor were they acceptable as sacrificial animals. But they were clean according to the law, they were considered clean animals and they could be hunted and eaten at will. However, the time-old prohibition, that even predates the Law of Moses, still stands...

¹⁶ Only you shall not eat the blood;

Suddenly, and only for this clause, the pronoun returns to the plural, “Only you (all) shall not eat the blood.” It was not that Israel was forbidden to eat the blood, but exceptions would be made. Rather, no exception was to be made for any person.

After the flood, animals that were previously forbidden to be eaten were granted to man as food. However, even then the Lord stated a prohibition that was expected to be adhered to in Genesis 9:2-4 –

“And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. ⁴But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”

The Lord specifically identifies the blood as the life. Thus...

¹⁶ (con') you shall pour it on the earth like water.

The pronouns return to the singular here. You, Israel, or you (each of you). This law was previously established in Leviticus 17 –

“Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; ¹⁴for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’” Leviticus 17:13, 14

The reason for this is complicated and should be supplemented by reviewing the sermon from Leviticus 17. In short, the prohibition of eating blood was given because it is the vehicle of life. For this reason, the Lord reserved all blood to Himself.

To eat the blood was to assimilate into oneself something that belonged to Him alone. It was therefore idolatrous to use it in any other way than designated by Him. If it was not used in the rites of the tabernacle, it was to be poured out and covered with earth.

In pouring out the blood like water, and then covering it with the dust, the typology points directly to Christ. From the dust, man was made. But he wasn't yet alive. Only in the breathing of the Lord into the nostrils of man did he become a *nephesh khayah*, or “soul living.” In man or animal, when the life is poured out, the dust reclaims ownership over what is left.

This is true with but one exception. It is Jesus, the Lord God who breathed life into man. And yet, He then descended from the man He breathed life into. In the shedding of His blood upon the ground from which His earthly body came, He gave up His soul, and yet the ground found no victory over Him.

The life returned, the soul reanimated, and by the power of the Lord God, He walked out of that tomb. Atonement for us was made with the pouring out of His soul. And yet, He lives. Only in Him is true and eternal life. The typology must be maintained, even when not a part of the sacrificial rites at the altar. Understanding this, Moses continues with more typological hints of Christ...

¹⁷ You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand.

The verse begins with *lo tukal l'ekol* – “no eating to eat.” In other words, you are not able to eat. This is because this stands as a legal prohibition against it. From there, Moses defines what that means with the rest of the verse.

The comparable verses in this chapter (6 & 11), with the noted exceptions, were all in the plural. This verse, however, is all in the singular. Again, as has been seen at other times, it is certainly put forth this way to avoid anyone making exceptions. There was to be no equivocating on the laws laid down here, and so Moses speaks them to all individually, and also to Israel as a whole collectively.

As has been seen in one sermon or another, each of these things anticipates Christ – the tithe, the firstborn, and the offerings. Therefore, for the sake of unity of worship, the people were told that they could not eat these things in just any place.

To do so would mar the typology. There was to be a unity of worship because all people come to Christ in the same manner. There is not one way for this person or group and another for that person or group. Thus, the corporate nature of what was to be done by Israel negates any individualized attempts at coming to Christ.

The idea here is expressed in Galatians 1:6-8 where Paul clearly says that there is one gospel, and any other is not only not a gospel, but it is – in fact – anathema. What typologically anticipates Him was to be experienced through the unity of worship at the place that bore the name of the Lord God. In order to maintain this unity, Moses next says...

18 But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God chooses,

Everything that has just been described is to be eaten by the people at the spot where the Lord chooses to place His name. To prepare you for the Deuteronomy 14 sermon, we will evaluate what this means in regard to the tithes – which are eaten by the people.

Most scholars, probably because they were also preachers wanting to not lose out on their profits, say that this refers to a “second tithe,” not the mandated tithe of Israel. That is utter rubbish. The word never speaks of a second tithe.

The source of this supposed “second tithe” comes from rabbinical writings and an apocryphal book Tobit. What is recorded there (below) doesn’t match – even closely – with what is stated in the Law of Moses

“But I alone used to go often to Jerusalem for the festivals, as was prescribed for all Israel by longstanding decree.* Bringing with me the first fruits of crops, the firstlings of the flock, the tithes of livestock, and the first shearings of sheep, I used to hasten to Jerusalem 7 and present them to the priests, Aaron’s sons, at the altar. To the Levites ministering in Jerusalem I used to give the tithe of grain, wine, olive oil, pomegranates, figs, and other fruits. Six years in a row, I used to give a second tithe in money, which each year I would go to pay in Jerusalem. 8 The third-year tithe I gave to orphans, widows, and converts who had joined the Israelites. Every third year I would bring them this offering, and we ate it in keeping with the decree laid down in the Mosaic law concerning it, and according to the commands of Deborah, the mother of my father Tobiel; for my father had died and left me an orphan.” -Tobit 1:6-8

Of this precept in Deuteronomy, the scholar Keil says –

“In the laws contained in the earlier books, nothing is said about the appropriation of any portion of the tithes to sacrificial meals. Yet in Deuteronomy this is simply assumed as a customary thing, and not introduced as a new commandment, when the law is laid down.” Keil

Like other scholars, Keil then went on to speak of the passage in Tobit, to justify his stand on a “second tithe.” But the very fact that this practice was “assumed as a customary thing,” demonstrates that what Moses says here is referring not to a “second tithe.” Rather it speaks of the one and only tithe levied upon Israel. That “customary thing” will be revealed in the coming Deuteronomy 14 sermon.

This is what is known as “progressive revelation.” A precept is introduced, and then it is later explained and expanded upon. Moses now explains that expansion in Deuteronomy. If he had

meant this was to be a second tithe, he would have said so, and any scholar with a modicum of sense would affirm it as such.

This is especially so when Israel had not even started tithing as described by Moses because they had never been in the land in order to begin to do so. Unfortunately, what is stated later in Deuteronomy 14 is so offensive to scholars, pastors, and preachers of the Bible, that they must insert something clearly indefensible into their theological bag of tricks to keep the money coming in.

18 (con't) you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates;

These words correspond to verse 12. There the pronouns were in the plural, as were the nouns (sons, daughters, male servants, and female servants). Here both the pronouns and the nouns are in the singular.

Again, this is a precept that is to be obeyed. It is incorrect to say that only the men were required to go on the pilgrim feasts. These verses clearly show that the men were to go, but they were to be accompanied by any household that dwelt with them. The use of both the plural and the singular is given to absolutely solidify this fact. And there is a reason for it...

18 (con't) and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all to which you put your hands.

Continuing in the singular, the reason is the same as before, but with a different focus on the audience. Before, it was “you all – each of you.” Now, it is “you collectively.” Each person was to rejoice before the Lord, and Israel – the united people – were to rejoice before the Lord.

They were to acknowledge that the produce of the labor of their hands was ultimately derived from His open hand of grace. But they were also to remember another precept of law...

***19 (fin) Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.**

Here, it should be more precisely translated and say, “on the earth,” rather than “in your land.” Despite that, this verse takes us back to verse 12. There, Moses spoke to the people in the plural (you all are to do this). However, here, it continues in the singular (you, Israel, are to do this). The people, individually and collectively, bore the responsibility of tending to the Levites.

As they were taken in place of the firstborn, they fit their own picture of Christ. In this, the Levites were to be tended to by the people for their ministry to the people. They had no

inheritance of land like the other tribes, and they were dependent upon the people for the meeting of their needs.

Therefore, when the people ate their own tithes, as prescribed by Moses, they were to also remember the Levites and minister to them in an appropriate manner. The precept is not unlike Paul's words to the Galatians –

*“Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.”
Galatians 6:16*

With that, the passage is complete for the week. The main two thoughts that we can take away with us from it are that 1) there was to be a unity of worship by the people toward the Lord God because that worship anticipated the Person and work of Jesus Christ, and 2) in Christ's fulfillment of these things, we now have the fulness of them in Him.

We no longer need to observe these – or any other – aspects of the law of Moses. We are to worship in Spirit and in truth because this is what Christ Jesus has ordained for His people.

In Him, we have the substance and not the shadow. In Him, we have the Antitype and not the type. In Him, we have unfettered access to God instead of a restrictive mode of worship that was ministered to by fallible people in an earthly location that has been swept clean several times in redemptive history.

Where Zion was plowed like a field, the Rock who is Christ has continued on without change. Let us remember this as we conduct our lives in His presence. Let us hold fast and not be swept back into legalism and bondage. This is the lesson of the law. Let us learn it and apply it to our walk with our Lord. May it be so.

Closing Verse: *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” Colossians 3:1-4*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 12:20-32 *It would be a problem, I must admit; and so to this precept you must commit...* (You Shall Not Add to It nor Take Away from It) (41st Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

In the Place Which the Lord Your God Chooses

“You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—
Every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes—
For as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance
Which the LORD your God is giving you, that marvelous surprise

But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land
Which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit
And He gives you rest from all your enemies round about
So that you dwell in safety – a gift to you, and not by merit

Then there will be the place where the LORD your God
Chooses to make His name abide; in that land that you trod

There you shall bring all that I command you:
Your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the whole hoard
The heave offerings of your hand
And all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD

And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God
You and your sons and your daughters too
Your male and female servants, and the Levite
-----who is within your gates
Since he has no portion nor inheritance with you

Take heed to yourself that you do not offer
Your burnt offerings in every place that you see
-----this you shall not do
But in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes
There you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there
-----you shall do all that I command you

“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates
Whatever your heart desires, according to
-----the Lord your God’s blessing
Which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it
Of the gazelle and the deer alike. And, have some salad
-----with dressing

Only you shall not eat the blood; this you shall not do

You shall pour it on the earth like water, as the Lord
-----has instructed you

You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain
Or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd
-----so please understand
Or your flock, of any of your offerings which you vow
Of your freewill offerings, or of the heave offering of your hand

But you must eat them before the LORD your God
In the place which the LORD your God chooses
-----please be observant
You and your son and your daughter
Your male servant and your female servant

And the Levite who is within your gates
And you shall rejoice, as everyone understands
Before the LORD your God
In all to which you put your hands

Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake
-----but for him have an open hand
The Levite as long as you live in your land

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...