

# OpenTheo

## Deuteronomy 10 - 12



### Deuteronomy - Steve Gregg

In this commentary on Deuteronomy 10-12, Steve Gregg examines the Israelites' rebellious behavior against God and the consequences that followed. Gregg emphasizes the importance of following God's commands and worshiping Him in ways that do not resemble pagan rituals. He also notes the significance of the Abrahamic covenant and the need for the Israelites to destroy idol worship in the land of Canaan. Ultimately, Gregg highlights the importance of heeding God's word and putting it into practice.

### Transcript

All right, we're resuming the second discourse of Moses in Deuteronomy. This is chapter 10, and in chapter 9, he has been rehearsing some of their history of the past 40 years, especially a catalog of their rebellions and the times that they really tempted God to destroy them. And he's emphasized that God almost was going to destroy them, if not for Moses intercession, which cost Moses a great deal of fasting, at least 80 days altogether without food or water.

And the point he's trying to make here is that they shouldn't ever start thinking that they are better than other people and that that is why God has treated them better than he treats other people. It's easy to get the impression that because we have certain privileges that we somehow deserve them. That's kind of the definition of being spoiled, isn't it? I mean, a child, no one's ever said no to him.

Everyone's given them everything they wanted, and they just kind of think they deserve everything they want. Then they can't be happy unless they get everything they want because they feel like there's some injustice. Because when a person becomes accustomed to certain benefits and blessings and comforts and things like that, they just forget that they don't necessarily deserve them.

And they begin to think that they deserve them. And they begin to feel like an injustice if they don't have them. And so this is that tendency that Moses was trying to guard against in Israel, that once they had all these blessings, they should not think that they had somehow done something to deserve those blessings.

And so to emphasize the fact that they don't, that they're not deserving, he points out all the ways that they have been behaving, they and their fathers before them for the past 40 years, all of which has been pretty grim. It's not a pretty picture of their righteousness. It's actually their stubborn, stiff-necked, rebellious behavior against God, which almost got them wiped out on many occasions.

By God. So chapter 10 picks it up. At that time, the Lord said to me, Hew for yourself two tablets of stone like the first and come up to me on the mountain and make yourself an arc of wood.

Now, the first time God gave Moses ready-made tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments inscribed on them, Moses broke them. And so you break it, you got to replace it. So he had to make his own stone tablets after that.

And then God would write the laws on them again. He had to bring up some fresh tablets. And it says, make yourself an arc of wood and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke, and you should put them in the arc.

Verse 3 says, So I made an arc of acacia wood, hewed two tablets of stone like the first and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand. And so then he wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And the Lord gave them to me.

Then I turned and came down the mountain and put the tablets in the arc, which I had made. And there they are, just as the Lord commanded me. Now, the children of Israel journeyed from the wells of Ben E. Jekin to Moserra.

That was the place where Aaron died later. It was also called Mount Horeb and where he was buried. And Eliezer, his son, ministered as priest in his stead.

From there, they journeyed to Gad Gadah and from Gad Gadah to Japhethah, a land of rivers of water. So part of the time, the wilderness, they actually were in a place where there were some rivers. At that time, the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the arc of the covenant of the Lord to stand before the Lord, to minister to him and to bless his name to this day.

Therefore, Levi has no portion or inheritance with his brethren. The Lord is his inheritance, just as the Lord your God promised him. Now, this section, verses six through nine, mentions certain things out of chronological order.

It is a parenthesis. As you can see, verse six has a parenthesis at the beginning and verse nine closes the parenthesis. It is a parenthesis and who wrote it, we're not sure.

It's possible that Moses did or someone else added it later. But he, it talks about them journeying to a certain place. And then there's a parenthesis within the parenthesis.

They moved, they came to a place called Ajachan and Moserah. And it says in parenthesis, it says that's where Aaron later died. That's where Eliezer took over Aaron's position.

But that's all in parenthesis. That didn't happen at this particular time in the narrative. He's still at Mount Horeb here.

He's still at Mount Sinai in his narrative. He's just saying that they later traveled to this place where Aaron died. But we see that in verse 10, when the parenthesis closes, it says, as at the first time I stayed in the mountain 40 days and 49.

So we're Moses is still talking about being on the mountain. Why this parenthesis is given about when they traveled elsewhere and when they went to the place where Aaron died and why the Levites were chosen there at Mount Horeb, really to replace the firstborn. All of that is mentioned here in verses six through nine.

All of it is known to us. But what's not clear is why it's mentioned parenthetically. It does interrupt the narrative because verse 10 would ordinarily follow verse five.

So it says he stayed up in the mountain 40 days and 49 as he had the first time. He said, the Lord also heard me at that time and the Lord chose not to destroy you. Then the Lord said to me, arise, begin your journey before the people.

That they may go in to possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. So at this point, he's been talking in chapters nine and 10 almost entirely about what took place at Mount Sinai in the latter part of Chapter nine anyway, and 10. But now they leave.

And now Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? But to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways and to love him and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command you today for your good. Now, that sounds like a long list, actually, but it's really quite simple. Just fear God, love him and obey him.

That's really what it comes down to. Now, the same question, you know, was asked in Hosea. I mean, in Micah in Micah, six, eight, same question.

What does the Lord require of you? He showed you a man what is good, what does the Lord require of you, he said, and he answers it to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. And here there's very similar things to walk in all his ways is to walk with your God, to love him and serve the Lord and to keep his commandments is going to include doing justly and so forth. But it's somewhat more expanded in this

statement of what's required in verses 12 through 13.

It's shorter in Micah, six, eight. Verse 14. Indeed, heaven and the highest heavens belong to the Lord your God.

Also, the earth with all that is in it. Now, it's interesting that he'd say this. Of course, it is true.

Heaven and earth belong to God, but maybe that's not what's so interesting. What's interesting is what Psalm 115 says, which seems to begin the same way, but ends differently and makes a different point in Psalm 115, verse 16. The psalmist says.

The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's. But the earth is given to the children of men. Now, Deuteronomy says heaven, even the highest heaven of the Lord's and so is the earth.

But here it says he's given the earth to the children of men. That doesn't change the fact that it's his. Just like he gave the land of Israel to the people of Israel that didn't change the fact it was his land and they were squatters on his property, as he told them in Leviticus.

God in giving things to people does not relinquish his own ownership of them. He might lay aside his immediate control of them. And delegate that to other parties.

But he does not give up his in his claim upon it. God had claim on the land of Israel even after he gave the control of it over to Israel. God has claim on the whole earth.

Even though he has given the control of it over to man. So man only imagines that he is really the Lord of the earth. He is kind of the Lord of the earth because God has put him in that position, but he doesn't own it.

God owns it. Psalm 24, verse one says the earth is the Lord's and its fullness, the world and all those who dwell in it. They all belong to the Lord.

Psalm 24, one says. But he has given the earth to the sons of men to manage for him and to run for him. And yet, as it says here in Deuteronomy 10, 14, it really belongs to God as heaven does.

In verse 15, the Lord delighted only in your fathers to love them, and he chose their descendants after them. You above all peoples, as it is this day, therefore circumcised the foreskin of your heart and be stiff neck no longer. Now, their hearts have to change from being rebellious and stiff necked, obviously.

Now, by the way, in case you're not aware, why is it called stiff necked? Why would rebellion of their sort be called being stiff necked? Well, the idea is. If you humbly set before God, you bow and your neck bends. If you stiffen your neck, it's like you're

refusing to bow.

You're refusing to submit. And that's what stiff neck means. It's that rebellion is stiff neckness.

You're refusing to bow your head. You're refusing to give up your position of your own rule over your life. You're not submitting.

He says there circumcised the foreskin of your heart and be stiff neck no longer. So becoming submissive to God is changing your heart in a way that is likened to being circumcised. Now, the idea of a circumcised heart is found also in the book of Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

But of course, it's an idea that comes to fruition in the New Testament, where Paul said in Philippians three that we are the true circumcision. Who rejoice in Christ Jesus and who put no confidence in the flesh and who worship God in the spirit that that we are the true circumcision. We have the circumcision of the heart.

In Romans 2, 28, Paul said that is not he is not a Jew who's one inwardly, nor is that circumcision, which is outward of the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly. Did I say he's not Jews on their own? He is not a Jew who's one outwardly.

So he said that is not circumcision, which is outward of the flesh. But he is a Jew who's one inwardly. And true circumcision is of the heart.

So the New Testament is emphasizing that being circumcised physically doesn't matter a great deal, but that's not just a New Testament idea. It's gone way back in the law of Moses and in the prophet Jeremiah. It's an Old Testament idea that the heart has to be clean, not just the not just the body circumcised and uncircumcised would really speak of being clean or unclean.

For the Lord, your God is God of God and Lord of Lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bride. He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore, love the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

You shall fear Yahweh, your God, you shall serve him and to him you shall hold fast and take oaths in his name. He is your praise and he is your God who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down to Egypt with 70 persons, and now the Lord, your God, has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude, which is an acknowledgement that at least one of the terms of the Abrahamic covenant was now fulfilled.

God had told Abram that he'd make his seed as numerous as the stars of heaven, and that had now had to be acknowledged to be true at this point, though they'd started out

with only 70. He gives a description of the character of God in verses 17 and 18. God doesn't take bribes, he doesn't show partiality, he administers justice, he loves strangers.

It's very clear that he intends for this to be the role model for God's people, because in verse 19, therefore, love the stranger. Why? Because God loves the stranger. Everything about the character of God is intended to be a model for his people, and that is really what true morality is based upon, is what God is like.

If God is like that, then it's the right way to be, and it's wrong to be otherwise. And therefore, God keeps making reference to his own character, partly so they will know what he is like, but also partly so that they can imitate him and be like him and therefore relate with him. You can't have a close relation with someone that you don't have much in common with.

You can like them, you can love them, but you can't really get too close to them unless you have some kind of shared interest or some kind of shared concerns or shared traits or something, shared friends. You have to have something in common with people or else you're not going to really get close to them. And I think it was, I don't know, I think it was A.W. Tozer in his book, *The Divine Conquest*, which is now called *God's Pursuit of Man*, republished under that name.

I think it's in that book that he mentioned that a man can have a relationship with a dog of sorts because the dog shares some human characteristics, but he can't have as deep a relationship with a lizard and much less so with a fish. And the reason is because the less shared experience and characteristics that someone has with another party, the less they can really get close to them. You can be fond of your goldfish, but you can't relate with it.

You don't even live in the same environment, in the same world. You don't breathe the same air. You have two eyes and that's about all you have in common with the fish.

It's got two eyes also. Nothing else is the same. Now, with a lizard, it's a little different.

At least he lives in your world. He's got four, he's got limbs like yours and things like that, but he doesn't have much else in common. You can't have much of a relationship with a lizard.

You can take him with you places you can't take your fish, but that's about it. Your dog, on the other hand, shares a lot more in common with you. It's intelligent.

It's got personality. You can have a much more fulfilling relationship with a dog than with a lower creature, but not like you can with another person, because a person can talk to you and they have that much more in common with you. But even among persons, you have more promise of being close with somebody if there are things they have in

common with you.

They speak the same language, for one thing, the important. If they share some cultural things with you, it's going to be helpful. If they have the same hobbies and interests and convictions, that's even going to be better.

The more you have in common with a being, the more you can really have a close relationship with that being. And therefore, God, who desires a relationship with his people, wants them to be as much like him as possible, because then there can be companionship, then there can be intimacy, then there can be a relationship. And so God is always telling his people what he is like and saying, now you be like that too.

But that's because he wants them to be able to relate with him. And so that is the goal, is to be like God so that you can know God, so you can be intimate with God. Nearness is likeness.

I think that was the name of a chapter in Tozer's book. Nearness is likeness, or likeness is nearness, you could say. The more like God you become, the more intimate with him, the more near to him you become.

Chapter 11. Therefore, you shall love the Lord your God and keep his charge, his statutes and his judgments and his commandments. Know today that I do not speak with your children who have not known and who have not seen the chastening of the Lord your God, his greatness and his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, his signs and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh, king of Egypt and to all his land.

What he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots, how he made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you and how the Lord has destroyed them to this day. What he did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households and their tents and all their substance that was in their possession in the midst of all Israel. But your eyes have seen every great act of the Lord, which he did now earlier in chapter five or three.

He said the Lord didn't make this covenant with our fathers, but with us. And now he says he's not speaking to your children, but to you. Of course, he's speaking to every generation of Israel, their fathers, them and their children.

But the point he's making is, you know, don't tune me out because you think this applies to your fathers and not to you. Don't tune me out because you think it relates to your children and not to you. This relates to you.

This is God is talking to you and particularly to you who saw all these things. He says in verse two, I'm not speaking to your children who have not known and have not seen. But in verse seven, but your eyes have seen any list in verses two through six, a lot of things

that they had seen God's deliverance is God's punishments and so forth.

And so he says, essentially, you need to pay attention because you are responsible for having seen and known many things your children didn't know. So it's in a sense, you're more responsible than they are to hear and obey these words and to keep them. Therefore, you should keep every commandment which I command you today.

Verse eight says that you may be strong and go in to possess the land which you cross over to possess and that you may prolong your days in the land which the Lord swore to give your fathers to them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey for the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot as a vegetable garden. But the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the Lord your God cares. The eyes of the Lord your God are always on it from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

Now, this contrast between Egypt and Israel is that, as we know, Egypt, and I mentioned this in our last session, was a land that didn't really have very much rain. They had plenty of food, plenty of crops, but that's because they had the River Nile. And even in times of famine, even in times of drought, the River Nile always had water in it.

And therefore, because the Egyptians learned how to irrigate from the River Nile, they were able to grow food without rain. But bringing the water up from the Nile was actually somewhat labor intensive. And the Egyptians had developed a pumping system that's operated with your feet.

Sort of like we might have something rigged up with bicycle pedals or something to turn a mechanism and you have somebody sitting there turning the pedals to make the machinery work. Well, the Egyptians had a foot powered pumping system that they use to pump water from the Nile. And so he says, you're going to a place that's not like Egypt, where you had to water, you had to sow your seed, then you had to water it with your feet.

Like a vegetable garden. See, a vegetable garden is a small plot of land that you will put extra labor into watering, even if there's not rain, because it's small enough to manage. And it's important because it produces your food.

But he said that the land of Israel is not like that. It's not like a small, labor intensive kind of a garden that you have to water. It drinks in the rain of heaven all the proper seasons.

And God's favor is on it all through the year. Sort of like California. The weather is good all year long, produces all kinds of food.

And it shall be that if you diligently obey my commandments, which I command you today to love the Lord your God and serve him with all your heart, with all your soul,



then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain that you may gather in your grain, your new wine and your oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock that you may eat the field and be filled. It's interesting.

He says, I will send grass, you know, like usually you send something from where you are to someplace else. Usually grass grows out of seeds. But he says, it's like I'm up here in heaven.

I've got the supply. I'll just send some grass down into your fields. And it's kind of like that.

I mean, in a sense, although grass grows from previous grass, it grows if God sends rain. If God sends the conditions that will make grass grow, then he is, in a sense, sending the grass to you for your cattle and take heed to yourselves. Lest your heart be deceived and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them.

Lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you and he shut up the heavens so that there is no rain and the land yields no produce and you perish quickly from the good land which the Lord has given you. Therefore, you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. He had said this in chapter six, which was the same discourse.

He's just coming back around to reminding them of it. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit down in your house, when you walk in the way, when you lie down and when you rise up and you should write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land in which of which the Lord swore you to brothers to give them. Like the days of the heavens above the earth.

Now, I'm not sure exactly what that means, like the days of the heavens above the earth. But the heavens would be the sky could be even where the stars and the sun and moon it may be that saying that you'll be as perpetual as the heavens are. That you'll be eternally in your land, your days prolonged there as just as long as the heavens are in the sky so that the sun and the moon and the stars in the heavens would become the indicator of permanence and that which never goes away.

If that's what he means, then it's interesting that some of the prophets actually use that very image for the downfall of Israel or the downfall of other nations. The sun goes dark. The moon does not give us light.

The stars fall from the sky. These are apocalyptic images used frequently in the Old Testament and even by Jesus in the New and in the Book of Revelation, speaking about not the end of the world, as it sounds like, but figuratively speaking, the institutions of the heavens that would seem to be absolutely permanent are coming down. And so also

a nation which otherwise would have been thought of as permanent, as permanent as the stars in the heavens are.

It's collapsing. You might as well speak of the heavens themselves collapsing because that land would have seemed to be as permanent as them. But now it's gone.

And so the imagery of the heavens being a permanent thing. And then, of course, the prophets theme of the heavens being dissolved and those kinds of things would be apocalyptic ways of speaking about the downfall of Israel in many cases or other countries that were seemingly permanent, like Babylon or Edom, lands that have been around for a long time. Verse 24 says, no, verse 22 says, for if you carefully keep all these commandments, which I command you to do to love the Lord, your God, and to walk in all his ways and to hold fast to him, then the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you and you will dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves.

Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours from the wilderness of Lebanon and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even to the Western Sea shall be your territory. Does not seem to mention the southern boundary. The wilderness of Lebanon to the north would be their northern boundary.

The great Western Sea would be the Mediterranean. That's their western boundary. And the river Euphrates presumably is considered to be eastern boundary.

Perhaps the unnamed river mentioned after Lebanon is different than the river Euphrates, maybe the brook of Egypt that makes up the southern boundary, or it may be that he's simply not mentioning a southern boundary here. It says in verse 25, no man should be able to stand against you. The Lord, your God, will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as he has said to you, behold, I set before you today blessing and a curse, a blessing and a curse.

The blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I command you and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord, your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today to go after other gods which you have not known. And it shall be when the Lord, your God, has brought you into the land which you go to possess. That you should put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

Now, putting the curse on them means that the congregation is going to stand on these two mountains. This happens in the book of Joshua, and they stand on these two mountains and they pronounce blessings, which are enumerated in a later chapter, on Mount Gerizim, and the other group pronounces curses on Mount Ebal. Why? Probably just a memory device.

I don't know. It's kind of a strange thing to have the whole congregation stand on two

mountains and one mountain they pronounce the curses, one mountain the blessings. But it certainly would be memorable to those who participated in it and no doubt would tend to cement it in their memories.

Mount Gerizim, at a much later time, became the place of a shrine for the Samaritan religion. And it was actually a competing shrine, competing with the temple in Jerusalem in the days of Jesus. But that's not its significance here, but rather than it's just a mountain with Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim had a valley between them so that two different groups of Israelites could stand on the different mountains and see and hear each other and and shout out apparently these blessings and curses that are later enumerated that we'll find in the book of Joshua.

There, speaking of these mountains, it says, are they not on the other side of the Jordan toward the setting sun that is on the west, which they haven't gone to yet? These mountains are in the promised land in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain opposite Gilgal beside the trees of Moray. For you will cross over the Jordan and go in to possess the land which the Lord your God has given you and you will possess it and dwell in it and you should be careful to observe all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today. Now, all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today probably refer to what follows, because we have now a prolonged section of statutes and judgments.

Some of them are new, but most of them are old. Most of them are repetition of the old ones with new exhortations attached to them to keep them. But up to this point, the entire focus of Moses speeches has been looking back at.

Their misbehavior in the past and God's faithfulness them in the past. At this point, Deuteronomy tends to look forward. At, you know, their land in at their life in Canaan land and in Chapter 12 and following the material changes somewhat.

It's not any longer a historical survey as Moses has been giving to teach lessons, but it really is just chapter after chapter of laws and statutes, which is probably what he's referring to at the end of verse 32. And he says, observe all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today. Let's look at Chapter 12.

I think that'll possibly be the last chapter we'll take in this session. These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which Yahweh. Your God.

Of your father's is giving you to possess all the days that you live on the earth or the land. You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess serve their gods on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars and burn their wooden images with fire.

You should cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. And you shall not worship the Lord, your God, with such things that the words with such things are in italics. It's possible that he means in those places there are certain places that they're supposed to destroy where they're not supposed to worship Yahweh.

The high places are mentioned many times in the scripture in the Old Testament. High places were just high elevations, hilltops, mounds and so forth, where the Canaanites had made shrines to their false gods. And God always intended for Israel to destroy the high places in Canaan, but they very rarely got destroyed.

Even when Joshua conquered the land, there were still high places that were not removed, even in the reforms of some of the better kings of Judah. In most cases, the high places were not removed. Some of them were removed by Josiah in his reforms, as you can see over in 2 Kings, Chapter 3, Chapter 23, 2 Kings, Chapter 23, when Josiah began to clean up things after he read the book of Deuteronomy, he began to destroy the idol worship that had taken place in Israel.

When it goes into a description of the extent of the destruction that he had to do, it just really kind of you may think, well, you mean Israel was doing all that, you know, until this time they were worshipping the sun, they were worshipping Baal, they were worshipping Moloch, they were they had these shrines everywhere. I mean, it just really is sobering to think that Israel was practicing all that adultery, though it had not been enumerated for us previously. When Josiah sets out to clean it up, you begin to find out how much compromise there was.

There's actually kind of a lesson in that, too. I mean, someone said, you never realize how far man has fallen until you start making your way back up to the place where you fell from. You know, once you start trying to get back to the place of righteousness and holiness and being like Jesus, being like God, you begin to realize how far you've fallen until you start trying to fix it.

You don't realize how damaged things are. And it's true. And so with Israel, we didn't we don't realize how far gone there until we begin to see how far they had to go to fix it.

But it says that. In verse, oh, the start, second Kings, 23, eight, it says, and he, Josiah, brought all the priests from the cities of Judah and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense from Geba to Beersheba. Also, he broke down the high places at the gates, which were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate.

Nevertheless, the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren. Apparently, these priests were maybe Levites, but they were serving at the high places instead of going into Jerusalem. And he defiled Tophet, which is the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, the

Valley of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Moloch.

That was where they did it. They had a statue of Moloch out there in the Valley of Hinnom in those days, and they burned their children to this idol there. He destroyed that.

Then he removed verse 11, the horses and that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun at the entrance of the house of the Lord. So right at the entrance to the temple, they had some horse stalls that were dedicated to the sun God right there in the Temple of Yahweh. By the chamber of Nathan Malik, the officer who was in the court, and he he burned the chariots of the sun with fire, the altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, etc.

He broke those down, pulverized them through their dust into the brook Kidron. Verse 13, then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, and it gives certain names of places. Also, in verse 15, moreover, the altar that was at Bethel and the high place which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel the sin had made in verse 19.

Then Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria and so forth. All these high places, all these shrines, all these idols. He wiped out.

That's because he read Deuteronomy and Deuteronomy 12 says to do all those things. What's amazing is that at that late time in Judah's history, all those things were still being practiced or maybe practiced again, had been introduced after the time of the judges. But it was really corrupt and God basically said to have a zero tolerance policy for everything, idolatrous, the places, the altars, the shrines, everything, destroy them all.

But verse five says of Deuteronomy 12, but you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses. Out of your tribes to put his name for his habitation and there you shall go now, it's referring to the place where the tabernacle would be set up. He doesn't name the place at this point in time.

It was, of course, in the wilderness, but when they would go into the wilderness during the time of the judges, during at least the early period of the judges, it was set up in a place called Shiloh. And then at a later time, it seems to have been set up at a place called Bethel. And then, of course, David conquered Jerusalem and Jerusalem became the place where the temple was built.

And so there were different places that served this purpose. But the thing that made them all in common was the Ark of the Covenant was there. They were every arc was the place where God set his name.

Now, this expression, verse five, the place where the Lord your God chooses is going to

be repeated a lot of times. I think if I'm not mistaken, like 18 times in the next several chapters, this expression is used something like that.

And it says there you shall take your burnt offering, verse six, your sacrifices, your tithes, your heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your free will offerings and the firstlings of your herds and flocks. And there you shall eat before the Lord your God and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your household in which you the Lord your God has blessed you. Now, he's saying, you know, you can't really offer your sacrifices just everywhere.

You have to offer them at the right place. This was also something, of course, that had been discussed in the book of Leviticus. It was necessary in Leviticus that said to in Chapter 17 that whenever you kill an animal, you have to bring it to the door of the tabernacle.

This was somewhat changed in this chapter in that they had to still sacrifice at the tabernacle, but they didn't have to eat their private food there with Israel. A lot of the meat they ate was the remnants of their sacrifices. And yet, of course, they would eat meat at other times, too, when they weren't making a sacrifice.

And so in Leviticus, it had its chapter 17. The law has been made that whenever they killed an animal, no matter what, they had to do it pretty much at the tabernacle. But here they only have to do that with their sacrifice.

He's going to say later on, for example, in verse 15, however, you may slaughter and eat meat with within your gates, whatever your heart desires. I mean, he means not not sacrifices, but if you're going to eat meat at home, you can slaughter it at home. That's changed from Leviticus.

And the reason for that change is this, that in Leviticus, the law applied to them wandering in the wilderness where they were all near the tabernacle. If you're going to kill an animal, you could just walk, you know, 100 yards or whatever from where your tent is and slay the animal at the tabernacle door. But now coming in the land of Canaan, they're gonna be all over the country.

They're gonna be dispersed. The temple's gonna be in one spot. The tabernacle's gonna be in one spot.

They can't, every time they want to have a hamburger, just, you know, travel eight days to the tabernacle to butcher the animals. So he's making the confession here that he did not make in Leviticus, that although they still have to offer all their offerings at the tabernacle, at the proper place, yet they don't have to do it with the food they eat, you know, the normal food they eat. Now, he does mention in verse 7, and there you shall eat before the Lord your God.

But he means eating those parts of the sacrifices that the worshiper ate. This would be primarily the peace offerings and even the tithes. They eat part of that, as we shall see later.

Verse 8, You shall not at all do as we are doing this day, every man doing what 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. But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around about, so that you dwell in safety, 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. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your men servants and your maidservants 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, 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. So at this point, there's no commitment as to where that's going to be. In one of your tribes, God will choose a place.

Moses doesn't know yet where that will be. God has not revealed to him where that place will be or even what tribes possessions that place will be found within. But this is one of the true evidences that this was not written after the time of David, because certainly there would be not this vagueness about the location after the time that Jerusalem had been made the center of Jewish worship, especially after Solomon built the temple there.

But here, because it is early, the decision has not yet been made where those places will be. 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 unclean may eat of it. The gazelle and of the deer alike.

Now, when it says the clean and the unclean shall eat of it, it means these are not the holy foods you bring to the temple for a sacrifice or for a time. Those could only be eaten by someone in a state of cleanness. But the food you eat at home.

Sure, you can still eat your meals, even meat when you're unclean. You don't have to fast when you're unclean or be a vegetarian. Only you shall not eat the blood.

You should pour it out on the earth like water. You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil of the first things of your herd, of your

flock or of any of your offerings, which you vow of your free will offerings or of the offerings of your hand. 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 manservant, your maidservant and the Levite who is within your gates.

And you shall rejoice before the Lord, your God, in all that which all to which you put your hands. Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land. Now, you're saying your tithe, you can't eat those at home.

You have to take those to the temple, give them to the Levites, and you'll get a portion of it back to eat. Apparently, the presentation of tithes was a feast. It was not just something where you just put money in a dish as it passes by and you never see it again.

You go and you celebrate with the Levites and with the priests. You bring your food, your tithe, grain and everything like that. And you and your whole family eat with the priest or eat with the Levites there.

Of course, you don't eat your entire tithe. That'd be impossible. It's too much grain.

You're talking about a tenth of your year's produce. You're not going to eat all that in one meal. But your family is allowed to eat, apparently a hearty meal made up of your tithe on the occasion when you present it.

And you and your whole family and the Levites participate in that too. Verse 20, when the Lord, your God enlarges your border as he has promised you and you say, let me eat meat because you long to eat meat. You may eat as much meat as your heart desires.

If the place where the Lord, your God chooses to put his name is too far from you, then you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which the Lord has given you just as I have commanded you. And you may eat within your gates as much as your heart desires, just as the gazelle and the deer are eaten. So you may eat them.

The unclean and the clean alike may eat them. Only be sure that you do not eat the blood for the blood is the life. You may not eat the life with the meat.

You should not eat it. You should pour it on the earth like water. You should not eat it, that it may go well with you and your children after you when you do what is right in the sight of the Lord.

Now, we've discussed the whole blood issue on other occasions that came up in the 17th chapter of Leviticus as a as a primary theme of the sacredness of the blood and the eating of blood. And we talked about how even in the New Testament, the apostles, when they were deciding which things that Gentiles did, should they should be asked to refrain from doing in order to avoid offending the Jews. Eating blood was one of the



things they mentioned in Acts chapter 15.

They said, we're not going to put the Gentiles under the law, but we'll ask them to abstain from things strangled and things, sacrifice idols and from blood and from fornication. And these are things that the Gentiles typically did. In the pagan world, which disgusted the Jews.

And so the Jerusalem Council didn't want to turn off the Jews by the Christian Gentile behavior. And so they asked the Gentiles to refrain from these things. However, it does not appear that these things are rules and in absolute sense for Gentiles.

The concern was that they not offend the Jews. And that was stated as the concern. And Paul seems to state that as the concern.

Also, in First Corinthians, when he talks about eating meat, sacrifice to idols, he says, you can do it. It's not a problem as far as God's concerned, but if you're going to offend your brother, don't do it. So there are as far as eating blood and things, sacrifice idols.

Apparently, the New Testament doesn't really say that these things are forbidden to Christians, but only if they're going to offend others. Now, I would think it'd be. I mean, there are there are Gentile nations that eat blood.

I mean, blood by itself, almost in Germany, they have something called blood soup. Made up of blood primarily. And that's pretty gross to me, but I don't mind a little blood in my meat.

I don't mind the meat being red. And yet the Jews were not allowed to even do that when they butchered animals. They had to drain all the blood out of the animal and the meat couldn't have any blood in it.

And so that is something that God imposed on the Jews. I don't think that's imposed on us. I believe that it's OK if you have your a little bit of blood in your meat.

And I don't really know that one could be condemned for eating blood soup either. Though I'm not sure why they'd want to. But that's a cultural thing, I'm sure.

The point is that the blood was sacred because it looked forward to the blood of Jesus, I'm sure. But now that he has come, these rituals that look forward to it are not counted to be of the same binding force for people living in the New Covenant. Verse 26, only the holy things which you have in your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the Lord chooses and you shall offer your burnt offering and meat and the blood on the altar of the Lord, your God, and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the Lord, your God, and you shall eat the meat.

Observe and obey all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you

and your children after you forever. When you do what is good and right in the sight of the Lord, your God. Now, when the Lord, your God, cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess and you displace them.

And dwell in the land, take heed yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them after they are destroyed from before you and that you do not inquire after their gods saying, how did these nations serve their gods? I will do likewise. You shall not worship Yahweh, your God, in that way for every abomination to the Lord. Which he hates, they have done to their gods, for they burn even their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.

Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it. You shall not add to it or take away from it. Now, these last instructions, verse 30 through 32, are essentially saying that God not only doesn't not only does he require them to have no other gods before him and to worship no other gods, but even in their worshiping him, he doesn't want them to worship him in the wrong way.

He wants them to worship him in the way that he commands. He demonstrated that when he destroyed Natab and Abihu with fire when they offered strange fire. They were worshiping Yahweh, but they were worshiping differently than he commanded them to do it.

And that was the lesson he was teaching. Don't worship God the way that you innovate. Worship God the way that he commands you to do.

And he says specifically, don't inquire and say, well, how do the pagans worship their gods? We'll worship Yahweh that way. Don't do that. He said the things the pagans do are abominations to God.

They're so out of touch that they even with God that they even burn their children to their gods. Now, the idea here is that Jews and by extension, Christians in worshiping God should not be borrowing techniques and methods of worship and methods of ministry and so forth, I think from pagan religions or from pagan or from secular people. How do they worship their God? Let's worship our God that way.

I mean, a rock concert is a good example of how pagans worship their gods in our society because rock stars are idols. That's why the TV show is called American Idol, because you become a rock star, you become an idol. And a rock star, a rock concert is in many cases a good example of what idolatry looks like.

It's the same kinds of frenzies, worshipping those who are on the stage that the pagans used to engage in when they worshipped Moloch. They would put their baby in the arms of the red hot statue as the baby burned. They'd have an orgy and a band played to distract them.

And they had a big party. There's a big worship frenzy in front of Moloch. Well, we have

probably the closest thing we have to that now is probably a rock concert.

And the comparison is not really that strange because a lot of rock music actually promotes demonism and Satanism and things like that. Not all of it, certainly. But we can see in some things in our culture similar ways to pagans worshipping their gods.

Now, the question is, should we do the same thing with our worship of our gods? Should we turn the church worship service into a rock concert? Because that's how our pagan neighbors worship their gods. Maybe they'll worship our god that same way. It doesn't seem to me like that would be agreeable with this principle.

We need to be careful not to adopt pagan ways, especially demonic ways, of worshipping God or serving God. I often think of the people, Christian people, who practice what's called inner healing and follow techniques that came from Carl Jung, who got them from a demon, he said. He didn't call it a demon.

He called it his spirit guide, his ghostly guru, he called him. But Carl Jung had a demon who revealed to him certain ways of therapy. These ways came into the charismatic movement through a woman named Agnes Stanford and have been perpetuated through quite a large number of charismatic teachers since then.

They have to do with guided visualization. And this is a technique that came out of shamanism into psychology through a demon that informed Carl Jung, and then into the charismatic movement through a tie-in with Agnes Stanford. And now, although we don't hear as much about it these days as we used to back in the 80s and 90s, almost every charismatic organization seemed to promote this inner healing as a means of helping people become more godlike.

That is helping people doing Christian ministry. But it was really the way the pagans do it. It's the way the demons do it.

But we worship Jesus that way. We actually, instead of visualizing the coyote like the shaman does, we visualize Jesus. Instead of visualizing another god, we'll visualize our god and we'll get the same result.

Now, we don't learn from the pagans how to serve God, how to worship God, how to get his work done, and so forth. We are to do it the way he said to do it. And we need to be careful about some of the things that come into Christian worship, because they are brought in from the culture.

And sometimes they're brought in from the culture from actual ways that the demons and pagan religions have introduced them. And that is what Israel is warned against doing when they go into the land. They're not supposed to borrow the pagan ways of doing things to worship God.

God has already made it very clear how he wants to be worshipped. And there's plenty of detail there. They don't have to wonder how to worship God if they read his word and follow his instructions.