

Deuteronomy 12

December 27, 2023

This chapter marks a new section of Deuteronomy. Up to this point, the book has reviewed God's past dealings with the children of Israel and offered promises of blessings for obedience to His statutes and rules along with curses for disobeying them. Now Moses will start to enlarge on the ten commandments of Chapter 5 with detailed requirements of the law.

But first he lays down one more principle. It does not just matter *whether* the people follow God's laws but *where*. There is to be one place, chosen out of the allotment of one tribe, for sacrifices and offerings. Worship is not to be scattered around the land. It is not to be mixed with the practices of the surrounding peoples.

This prohibition is not without grace. In the desert,

all animals suitable for sacrifice like cattle or goats had to be slaughtered in the courtyard of the tabernacle. In the land, they can be slaughtered anywhere for an ordinary meal along with other animals like deer that are clean but not suitable for sacrifice. But any beast or other offering must be taken to the place where the Lord has set up His Name.

So the Lord will select one place in the new land for His Name and His habitation. It will be the center of the rest He promises His people (v. 9). He also promises a rest for us. "*So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his*" (Hebrews 4:9-10).

Questions:

1. What is the importance of the instructions in verse 2-4?
2. Read verse 5. Who will get to choose the place for the Lord's name?
3. According to verse 8, what had the people been doing as they wandered in the wilderness? Will they do it again in the future?

4. Can we apply verse 13 to ourselves in any way?

5. Verses 17-18 prohibit eating of what foods in unauthorized places?

6. Explain verse 19.

7. What does verse 22 say about the clean and unclean?

8. Read verse 30. What's wrong with asking curious questions?