

## **Day 194 - THURSDAY: June 29th**

### Deuteronomy 12

#### Deuteronomy 12:1-32 NKJV

"These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served 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 shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things. "But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn 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 households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you. "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. 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, 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 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; 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 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. Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it 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 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. 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. Take heed to yourself that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land. "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 shall not eat it; you shall pour it on the earth like water. You shall 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. Only the holy things which you have, and your vowed offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the LORD chooses. And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the 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. "When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to 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 also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the LORD 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 daughters in the fire to their gods. "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Here is today's UCG reading plan: "Moses announces to the Israelites that when they have entered the Promised Land, there will have to be one specific place to bring their sacrifices, lest they be tempted to adopt the worship customs of the pagans, who sacrifice to their gods in every place they choose (verses 2–8, 13–14, 18). God is very concerned that Israel's worship practices not incorporate pagan elements in any way. He specifically warns them to "take heed to yourself that you...do not inquire after their gods, saying, *'How did these nations serve their gods? I will also do likewise.'* You shall not worship the Lord your God *in that way*; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods.... Whatever I command you, be

careful to observe *it*; you shall not *add to* it nor *take away from it*" (verses 30–32).

Today, the nominal Christian world celebrates religious holidays whose origin and customs are steeped in paganism, while refusing to keep God's weekly seventh-day Sabbath or His annual Holy Days. For example, Sunday, the first day of the week, was the day on which pagans worshiped the sun god since ancient times. "Easter" was a feast of the fertility goddess Astarte or Ashtoreth, also called Ishtar, Ostara or Eostre—which helps explain why the holiday bears that unusual name and is celebrated with such fertility symbols as bunny rabbits and eggs. And "Christmas" was originally the holy day of Mithras, Attis and other pagan gods. It is also remarkable that many such pagan "saviors" were supposedly born on December 25, killed on a Friday and "resurrected" on a Sunday during the "Easter" season—while the Scriptures show that the true Christ was neither born in December nor killed on a Friday nor resurrected on a Sunday.

Evergreen trees were employed as idols of Ashtoreth—such trees being referred to as *asherah* in the Hebrew Bible. God forbade them from being placed near His altar, as if to honor Him, as He did not want His worship system

corrupted by them (Deuteronomy 16:21). Setting them up and decorating them as part of a religious observance is clearly condemned in Jeremiah 10:1–4—showing what God thinks of Christmas trees, which are in part derived from this ancient custom. Easter cakes (cakes to the "queen of heaven") and sunrise services (in honor of Tammuz) are clearly condemned in the Bible (compare Jeremiah 7:18; Jeremiah 44:17–27; Ezekiel 8:13–17). According to the *Ryrie Study Bible*, the "queen of heaven" is a reference to "the Assyro-Babylonian goddess Ishtar"—i.e., Easter. And in regard to "Tammuz," the same source identifies him as "a Babylonian deity, husband of Ishtar, who *after his death* supposedly became god of the underworld. Some have understood him as a vegetation-deity, dying in the heat of the summer and *rising in the spring.*"

It is no secret that the early Roman church absorbed pagan elements into its worship to accommodate new converts and make the new faith attractive to the pagan world, attaching "Christian" significance to these elements. Thus, many customs of traditional Christianity, following ancient Israel's bad example, clearly violate God's commands to avoid heathen practices in worshiping the true God. And not only have they *added* pagan elements to the worship of

God—they have *deleted* godly elements that *should* be observed today. (To learn more, request or download our free booklet [\*Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Keep?\*](#))

In verse 31, Moses warned Israel to avoid one of the most hideous worship rites practiced by the Canaanites, that of infant sacrifice. Archeologists have discovered in a number of locations the grisly remains of burned infant skeletons buried in large jars. Sadly, however, Israel did descend to this despicable practice too (2 Kings 21:1–9; 2 Chronicles 28:1–4).” [END]

Verse 2 – They weren’t just to abandon and not use these locations, they were to be completely destroyed so it would not be a temptation or easy to begin following those practices.

Verse 15 – Previously, we have spent a considerable amount of time talking about God’s commands regarding when who, and how an individual could eat of Holy sacrifices to God. Here God makes sure the people understand that when they kill an animal for food that is not offered to God and is therefore common and unholy, they may kill it

anywhere and both the clean and unclean individuals may eat of it.

Verse 19 – Multiple times God has commanded the nation of Israel to remember to care for those who offer their lives in service to God and God’s people (the Levites). Levites while having homes and even land designated for the Levites to use, they were not able to pursue business opportunities, careers, etc...for the opportunity to gain wealth, acquire new lands (until the Jubilee), be industrious, etc... Because they worked for God, they were limited in this capacity and relied on both the obedience and generosity of the people of God.

Verses 29 – 32: This scripture is so heavily referenced by God’s church that I believe this would be worth your time to commit to memory. Even if you don’t memorize it word for word, the location and general sense of the scripture would be useful.