

Day 198 - MONDAY: July 3rd

Deuteronomy 16

Deuteronomy 16:1-22 NKJV

"Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name. You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, that is, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), that you may remember the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning. "You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you; but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. And you shall roast and eat it in the place which the LORD your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a sacred assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it. "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. And you shall

remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes. "You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates. Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice. "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. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you. "You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you. "You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the LORD your God. You shall not set up a sacred pillar, which the LORD your God hates.

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this chapter: "Here, some of God's seven annual festivals are listed and reviewed. The sacrifices that God later added to accompany these feasts are no longer in effect. The festivals themselves, however, are still to be observed. Following the Passover, God

commanded that the Israelites were not to eat leavened bread for seven days, but were to instead eat unleavened bread during that time (verses 3, 8). No leaven was to be seen among them in all their territory for those seven days (verse 4)—the Days of Unleavened Bread. Seven weeks later, the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, was to be kept (verse 9). Next would be the Feast of Trumpets followed by the Day of Atonement, but neither are mentioned here—nor is the Last Great Day. However, the Feast of Tabernacles is specifically reviewed (verses 13–15). This does not mean that Trumpets, Atonement and the Last Great Day are no longer holy. Rather, God is listing here only the three seasons of His annual festivals, as can be seen in verse 16. The first season, early spring, includes Passover and Unleavened Bread; the next season, late spring approaching summer, refers to Pentecost, and the third season, late summer and fall, includes Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles and the Last Great Day (these feasts are all to be kept within a period of less than a month).

As part of the instructions for keeping His festivals, God also commanded that we come before Him with an offering during each of the three festival seasons (verse 16).

Generally, the Israelites made three trips in order to

worship together in the three festival seasons. Many of the offerings were produce or animals, so it may have been practical for families to turn over their offerings as soon as they arrived at the place of worship. However, since offerings today are usually in the form of money (checks, cash, etc.), and since God does command that we are not to “appear before Him” empty-handed, the Church of God in modern times has instituted a tradition of taking up offerings on each Holy Day, the days on which God specifically commands us to appear before Him in assembly for worship services. Why did God specify only the males? It was assumed that each family was headed by a man, and the man presented the family’s offering. Even today, there is often just one offering from each family—though many parents encourage their children to each give a small amount in order to teach them the habit of giving to God. Finally, it should be mentioned that God does not set any amount for us to give except that it be “according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you” (verse 17). Of course, this cannot mean that we are to put a “price tag” on all that God has given us and try to pay Him that—for we could never in a million lifetimes pay that much. Rather, it must refer to the clause in the first part of

the same verse, that we are to give as we are able—or, more to the point, as God has enabled us.

In this section of Deuteronomy, Moses explains how justice is to be administered—and who is to do so. He begins by explaining that judges and officers are to be appointed in every city. If a matter proved too difficult at this level, it was to be taken to the place of God's tabernacle, to "the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days"—who, together, constituted a sort of "supreme court," whose decisions were binding (Deuteronomy 17:9–11). However, it was not, like the U.S. Supreme Court, a court of appeals wherein either side in a dispute could ask that the matter be judged again—for only the judges at the lower level could determine whether the case needed to come before the higher authorities. Later, the chief seat of judgment on the human level will be occupied by a king. None of these judges are to pervert justice by accepting bribes or showing partiality to anyone (Deuteronomy 16:18–20).” [END]

Verse 19 – Imagine for a moment a world where politicians, companies, CEOs, leaders, safety and oversight boards/members did not take any money from others in order to influence their thoughts, decisions, and opinions.

God understood that people don't make the right decisions once money has been given to them by others. This will not happen anymore in God's Kingdom.

Verse 21 – Barnes Notes on the Bible states: “A grove ... – Render, Thou shalt not plant for thee any tree as an idol: literally as an Asherah," "i. e." an image of Astarte or Ashtaroth, the Phoenician goddess (compare Deuteronomy 7:5 note, Deuteronomy 7:13 note). The word is rendered "grove" by the King James Version also in Deuteronomy 7:5; Deuteronomy 12:3; Exodus 34:13; Judges 6:25, but cannot be maintained, for the word is connected with various verbs which are quite inapplicable to a grove. The wooden idol in question was the stem of a tree, stripped of its boughs, set upright in the ground, and rudely carved with emblems.” [END]

Verse 22 – JFB commentary states: “Neither shalt thou set thee up any image—erroneously rendered so for "pillar"; pillars of various kinds, and materials of wood or stone were erected in the neighborhood of altars. Sometimes they were conical or oblong, at other times they served as pedestals for the statues of idols. A superstitious reverence

was attached to them, and hence they were forbidden.”

[END]