### Deuteronomy

## Chapter 12

1‘Now, these are the rules and decisions that you must be sure to follow in the land that Jehovah the God of your ancestors is giving to you as your inheritance and during the entire time that you’ll live in the land:  
  
  
 2‘You must destroy all the places where they serve their gods, whether on high mountains, on hills, or under the trees. 3You must destroy their altars, break their [sacred] columns into pieces, then cut down their sacred poles and burn the carved images of their gods with fire… You must erase their names from the land!  
  
 4‘However, you must never do that to [the Name of] your God.  
  
 5‘For your God Jehovah will choose one of your cities where He will put His Name… And that’s where He’ll call for you, and where you must go to search for Him.  
  
 6‘That’s where you’ll carry:  
  
 • Your whole burnt offerings,  
 • Your sacrifices,  
 • Your first fruitage,  
 • Your vow offerings,  
 • Your freewill offerings,  
 • Your thanksgiving offerings, and  
 • The firstborn of your herds and flocks.  
  
 7‘Then you must eat [the sacrifices] there before Jehovah your God, as you rejoice over all the things that Jehovah your God has touched and with which He’s blest you and your families.  
  
 8‘At that time, you won’t be doing the same things as we’re doing here today… Where every man does as he wishes. 9For until now, you haven’t arrived at the resting place and the inheritance that Jehovah our God is giving to you. 10But soon you’ll cross the JorDan to live in the land that Jehovah our God is taking as an inheritance for you. And soon He will provide you with rest from all your enemies round about you, and you’ll live in security.  
  
 11‘So, there’s going to be a place where Jehovah your God will choose to be called by His Name. And it’s there that you must bring all the things that I’m telling you to bring today… Your whole burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the first fruitage of your hands, and any gifts that you choose to offer as a freewill vow to Jehovah your God.  
  
 12‘And it’s there that you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites who live outside of your [city] gates (since they won’t have their own inheritance among you) must rejoice before Jehovah your God.  
  
 13‘So, pay attention to yourselves and make sure that you don’t offer your whole burnt offerings in just any place that you may see fit to choose… 14Only in the place that Jehovah your God will choose from among one of your tribes! That’s [the only place] where you may offer your whole burnt offerings, and that’s where you must do all the things that I’m telling you today.’  
  
  
[Editor note: Moses now begins to summarize and paraphrase the laws given earlier by God. The main subjects of these will be marked in bold. The story resumes in Deuteronomy 27:1.]  
   
  
15‘Now, you may kill and eat any flesh (which has the blessings of your God Jehovah) that you may desire (such as male and female antelope) in any city that you may wish; both the clean and the unclean may eat it there.  
  
 16‘But – you may not eat its blood… You must pour it out on the ground like water!’  
  
  
 17‘And you may not eat any tithes of grain, wine, oil, or the firstborn of your herd or flock that you’ve offered as a vow, or as offerings of thanks, or as the first fruitage of your hands, in your own cities. 18You, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the strangers who are staying inside your [city] gates may only eat such things before Jehovah your God in the place that He will choose for Himself; and it’s there that you must rejoice before Jehovah your God with whatever you’re bringing to Him.’  
  
  
 19‘Also, be sure that you never abandon the Levites for as long as you live on the ground!’  
  
  
 20‘Now, when Jehovah your God enlarges your borders, as He told you He would do, and you desire to eat flesh, you may eat all the flesh that your soul desires.  
  
 21‘And if the place that Jehovah your God chooses for Himself (where His Name will be called) is far away from you; you may slaughter any [animals] from your herd or flock that God has given to you (just as I’ve told you), and you may eat as much of it as you want in your own cities.’  
  
  
 22‘Also, everyone among you may eat male and female antelope, whether you’re clean or unclean. 23Just make sure that you don’t eat any of their blood, because their blood is their life, and the life can’t be eaten with the flesh. 24You must not eat it… You must pour it out on the ground like water!  
  
 25‘No, you must not eat it if you want things to go well for you and for your descendants. Always do what’s good and pleasing before Jehovah your God!’  
  
  
 26‘But whenever you have holy things, you must take them and your vow offerings to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His Name. 27It’s there that you must sacrifice the flesh of your whole burnt offerings on the Altar of your God Jehovah.  
  
 ‘The blood of your sacrifices must be poured out at the foot of the Altar of your God Jehovah, and then you may eat the flesh.’  
  
  
 28‘Be careful!  
  
 ‘Listen to and obey all the Commandments that I’m telling you, and then things will go well for you and for your descendants throughout the ages… That is, as long as you do all that’s pleasing and good before Jehovah your God.’  
  
  
 29‘Now, after Jehovah your God destroys the nations where you’re going and you inherit their land and start living there, 30be careful not to become like them after you’ve destroyed them and then say:  
  
 ‘How did those nations worship their gods? I think I’ll start doing the same thing!’  
  
 31‘No, don’t do this to your God!  
  
 ‘For the things that they sacrifice to their gods are disgusting to Jehovah, and He hates those who offer their sons and daughters to their gods in fires!  
  
 32‘So, obey every word that I’m commanding you today, and don’t add anything to them or take anything away from them!’