

## **220202-4 Deu 17, The Abominable Sacrifice & Idolater; The Highest Court & Office—CThurman**

Again, remember that Deu.12.1-26.19 is a reiteration of the statutes and the judgments which the LORD gave to Israel at Sinai.

*De 12:1 These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.*

The major features of the things that have come under this heading are:

- Chapter 12, that the LORD would have Israel not to worship Him as the Gentiles worshipped their gods; upon every high mountain and hill, and under every green tree. but, that He would choose from among one of their tribes a place to put His name there.
- Chapter 13, that Israel was to cut off the apostate and apostasy in the land; an effort which was both a national and personal obligation.
- Chapter 14 that Israel was commanded against disfiguring their bodies.
- Chapter 15, that at the year of release, in the beginning all debts were forgiven, and at the end all servants liberated.
- Chapter 16, that three times in a year all the males of Israel were to appear before the LORD in the place that He has chosen to put His name.

This chapter touches on four major points that divide into two categories. First, abominable sacrifices & idolaters. And, second, the highest court and office in the land. In the previous chapter Moses' narrative ended with the altar of the LORD, and now chapter 17 begins with a statement about those sacrifices offered upon the LORD's altars.

### **Chapter 17**

The Abominable Sacrifices (v.1)

**1 ¶ Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God any bullock, or sheep,**

sheep, **שֶׂה**, seh, tss. *lamb* (marg. or 'kid'), *sheep, ewe, cattle, small cattle*; cf. Ez.37.4, *small cattle and cattle*, lit. means *lambs and lambs*, perhaps the differences there are in flock animals.

The bullock and sheep represent all sacrificial animals that Israel offered upon the altar of the Lord. The bullock represents the bulls, cows and calves; sheep represents rams, lambs, kids, he and she goat. (cf. J-F-B Bible Commentary, vol.1, p.660) Here is a general rule to be applied to all animal sacrifices.

***wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness: for that is an abomination***

lit. evil thing

defect

*abomination*, **תּוֹעֵבָה**, to-[g]eh-vah, a fem. noun tss. *abomination, abominable, abominable thing*, so to be despicable, rejected, abhorrent; the verb **תֵּעַב**, *to be abominable, to abhor*, and so despise; like lies, false weights and measurements, wicked works, false worship or, as it is here, to purposely worship the LORD with *corrupted* sacrifices.

***unto the LORD thy God.***

*Le.22. 17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,  
18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel,  
and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the  
strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his  
freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;  
19 Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of  
the sheep, or of the goats.  
20 But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be  
acceptable for you.  
21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to  
accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be  
perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.*

22 *Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.*

23 *Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.*

24 *Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.*

25 *Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes be in them: they shall not be accepted for you.*

Sacrifices of perfect specimens were to be offered upon the altar of the LORD to atone for the sins of His people. The LORD abhorred sacrifices that were offered with their corruptions in them. These sacrifices atoned, covered, or reconciled the offender back to God. When Adam and Eve sinned against the LORD they knew that they were naked. That knowledge evidenced their shameful standing before God and the reality of death working in them. They died that day. The LORD provided for them a remedy that day by making them coats of skins to cover their nakedness. (cf. Ge.3.21) Thus is pictured the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

*He.10.10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

...

*12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;*

*He.9.26 ... he [hath] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

Animal sacrifices were only a temporal covering for sin.

*Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

...

*11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins ...*

These sacrifices represented the coming of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of Himself upon the cross at Golgotha for our sins. Therefore, though Israel did not know this at the time, the LORD insisted on animals being offered without having their corruptions in them because they all picture the sinless, blameless, spotless, uncorruptible Lamb of God.

So, verse one is a general truth that applies to all sacrifices.

The Abominable Idolaters (vss. 2-7)

**2 If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee,**

*gate* is the Hebrew masc. noun שַׁעַר, tss. *gate* (361), *door* (2), *porter* (2), *city* (33).

	יַעֲשֶׂה	אֶת־הָרַע	בְּעֵינַי
<b>man or woman, that hath</b>	<b>wrought</b>	<b>wickedness</b>	<b>in the sight</b>
	done	the wicked thing	before the eyes

**of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant,**

**transgressing his covenant** – in the very first commandment of it:

*Deu.6.4 ¶ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:  
5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

Working wickedness in the sight of the LORD is described ...

**3 And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;**

In Deu.13.1-11 the issue of heathen or pagan worship was discussed. There, it should be remembered that of those apostates which showed

some wonderful, prophetic oracle or vision which came true, but because they were attempting to lead them away and after the worship of other gods they were to be rejected and put to death. This is the major point: it was through these wicked people, prophets, visionaries, which would arise of their own brothers, sons, daughters, wives, or friends that the LORD proved their love for Him.

*Due.13.3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Sometimes these kinds of things hit very close to home for the children of God today. There are folks like this that arise from among our family and friends that we should reject and have no fellowship with them. The Lord proves by them the depth of our love for Him.

***And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;  
4 And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it,***

If you get *wind* of the report of one that has apostatized from the faith of Israel it is to be proved whether true or false. This should have been a most serious matter to every person in Israel.

***and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel:***

*enquired, the verb שָׁרַח, dah-rash, tss. to seek, to enquire, to make inquisition, to require; v.9.*

*diligently, יָטַב, yah-tav, a verb tss. to do well, to be pleased, to be content, to be merry, to be accepted, to find favor, to be very small, diligently, thoroughly.*

**5 Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die.**

**6 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.**

*Deu.19.15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.*

**7 The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.** eradicate the evil

*So thou shalt put away, Piel (Intensive act.) pret. verb of בָּעַר, bah-[g]ar, tss. to burn, to kindle, to heat (and the idea is to consume as with a fire), to feed, to waste, to eat, to eat up, to take away, to put away; so, 'to eradicate'; Deu.13.5; 17.7, 12; 19.13, 19; 21.9, 21; 22.21, 22, 24; 24.7; 26.13, 14.*

The entire community was to be actively involved in maintaining the true worship of God. They were to be unanimous *to hate every false way.* (Ps.119.104, 128, *I hate every false way.*)

The Highest Court in the Land (vss.8-13)

**8 ¶ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment,**

*hard, פֶּלֶא, pa-lah, Niphal (simple pass.) fut. verb tss. wonderful, marvelous, too hard, wonders, wondrous work, miracle; the adj. פֶּלִיאַי, pil-ee, secret (Jud.13.18), too wonderful (Ps.139.6).*

**between blood and blood, between plea and plea,**  
(i.e., fatal blows) (i.e., disputes)

*plea*, דָּיַן, deen, masc. noun tss. *plea, judgment, cause, strife*; the verb דָּיַן, deen, is tss. *to judge, to contend, to plead a cause, to miister judgment, to be at strife*.

Blood is the life of the flesh. (Gen.9.4-6) Blood and blood involve capital crimes; crimes that resulted in death.

Plea and plea are contested issues that need to be resolved; (i.e., theft, embezzlement, trespass, payments for restitution, [cf. Ex.22.1-15]).

***and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates:***  
(i.e., injury, harm) (contentions matters that arise in your towns)  
(cf. Ex.21.20-27; 30-36)

*stroke*, נָגַע, neh-ga[g], a masc. noun, tss. *plague, sore, stoke, stripe, wound*; so the verb נָגַע, nah-ga[g], is tss. *to touch, to smite, to reach, to get up, to come, to strike, to plague*.

*controversy*, רִיב, reev, a masc. noun, tss *a strife, a controversy, a cause, a suit, a pleading, a contention, an adversary*; the verb רִיב, reev, *to strive, to plead, to contend, to debate, to rebuke, to be an adversary*.

***then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;***

In instances when contention cannot be resolved locally then they were to brought up to Jerusalem and to this highest court for judgment. Until the LORD reveals where He will put His name the local courts judge Israel as well as a judge which the LORD raises up for this purpose. (i.e., the books of Judges & the prophet Samuel)

***9 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire;***

enquired, the verb שָׁרַשׁ, dah-rash, tss. *to seek, to enquire, to make inquisition, to require; v.4.*

Note the singular *judge*.

**and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:**  
report [to] matter [the]

*shall shew, נָגַד, Hiphil (causative act.) verb tss. to tell, to shew, to profess, to denounce, to declare, to utter, to report.*

This expands upon the idea introduced in Deu.16.18-20, where Israel was instructed to appoint local judges and officers. Now there will be a 'higher court' composed of Levites, and a judge, so a civil-ecclesiastical body.

**10 And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they**  
matter [Levites and judges]

**of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou**

שָׁמַר  
**shalt observe** to do according to all that they inform thee:  
mark, keep, watch, preserve, heed direct

*they inform thee, יָרָה, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. verb tss. to cast, to shoot, to lay, to teach, to instruct, to direct, to shew, to inform; 17.10 inform, 11, teach; 24.8; 33.10*

פֶּה  
תּוֹרָה  
**11 According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee,**  
By the mouth direct

אָמַר  
**and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do:**  
by - say to you



In other words after the judge and the Levites have considered the Law of God, His word, the תּוֹרָה, Torah, and weighed the issues involved and they deliver their verdict, it is final.

**thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee,**  
turn matter

*thou shalt ... decline, סוּר, soor, a verb tss. to turn aside, to depart, to go, to be past, to remove, to take away, to turn away; Deu.17.11, thou shalt ... decline, 17, turn ... away; 20, that he turn ... aside; Deu.21.13, And she shall put; Deu.28.14, thou shalt ... go aside; Deu.31.29*

**to the right hand, nor to the left.**

**12 And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the**  
acts with pride listen

*presumptuously, זָדוֹן, zah-dohn, a masc. noun (having also the prefixed preposition בְּ, with) tss. presumptuously, pride, proud; the verb זָדַן, zood, or זָדַד, zeed is tss. to deal proudly, to be proud, presumptuously, to presume (cf. 17.13, do presumptuously; 18.20, shall presume;)*

**priest that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God,**  
[Levite] serve or wait

*to minister, שָׁרַת, shah-rath, a Piel (intensive act.) infin. verb tss. to minister, to serve, to wait; Deu.17.12; 18.5; 21.5, to minister; Due.18.7, Then he shall minister.*

**or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil**  
from Israel. eradicate, v.7

**13 And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.**  
listen proudly

The issue of false witnesses will be addressed in Deu.19.16-21. There was to be subjection to the ruling of these men. Right or wrong, these men stood in the place of God. Their judgment was considered the judgment of God.

Deu.1.17 ... *for the judgment is God's ...*; Ex.21.6; 22.9, see the Hebrew for judges is אֱלֹהִים, Elohim. The term 'gods' sometimes refers to the *rulers, or judges* of the people. (cf. Ex.12.12; 15.11; Nu.33.4; Deu.10.17; 1Sa.28.17; Ps.82.1; Jer.46.25)

*Ex 22:28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.*

*Ps 82:6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.*

*7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*

*8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.*

*Jn.10.34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?*

*35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;*

*36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?*

This is why the LORD directed Israel to appoint just men, because they stood in the place of God in judgment. (cf. Lev.19.15; Deu.16.19, 20) And yes, later, because of the corruptions of the men in these places of authority, Israel would desire a king.

*1Sa.8.1 ¶ And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.*

...

3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4 ¶ Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

It does appear that after the times of the *judges*, the king then assumed the role of judging Israel. (cf. Solomon, 1Ki.3.16-28)

1Ki.3.16 Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him.

...

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.

1Ki.10.24 And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

It was after Solomon's reign, and under the divided kingdom which followed, that King Jehoshaphat applied to the southern kingdom of Judah the regulations contained in Deu.16.18-20; 17.8-13. (cf. 2Chron.19.4-11) The main point here is, that after coming to this highest court there is no appeal, 'thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. (cf. Deu.17.11b) Doing so was punishable by death.

The Highest Office in the Land (vss.14-20)

**14 ¶ When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God**

[not if]

יָשַׁב

**giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein,**

and shalt possess it, the verb יָרַשׁ, yah-rash, tss. to possess, to succeed, to enjoy, to inherit, etc.; cf. **Deu.17.14, and shalt possess it; Deu.19.1, and thou succeedest; Deu. 26.1, and possesses it;**

**Deu.30.5, possessed, and though shalt possess it; Deu.31.3, and thou shalt possess them.**

אָמַר

**and shalt say, I will set a king over me,**  
make, put

*I will set, אָשִׁימָה, Qal fut. of שָׁם, soom or שִׁים, seem, tss. to make, to put, to set, to lay, to bring, etc. (Deu.17.14, 15, three times [in any wise + set + shalt thou set]; 22.8, 14, 17; 26.2; 27.15; 31.19, 26; 32.46; 33.10)*

**like as all the nations that are about me;**

**15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose:**

*shall choose, בָּחַר, bah-char, tss. to choose (20 times with reference to the place where the LORD will put his name.)*

נָתַן

**one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.**  
give

In Jer.30.21 all Israel's nobles shall only be men of the nation.

*Jer 30:21 And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them ...*

**16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt,**

*shall ... multiply, רָבַה, rah-vah, a verb tss. to multiply, increase, to make great, to enlarge, to make in abundance, to be much, to be great, to make more.*

*cause ... to return, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. verb שׁוּב, tss. to return, to turn away, to turn, to come again, to bring again, to retire, to turn back, etc.*

***to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.***

This concerns trusting in the strength of horses for battle. It is not about agriculture. Multiplying horses to give a sense of national security, is to turn to trusting in things rather than in the LORD. This is the warning.

Mention of Egypt seems to indicate that this nation shall once again become a place to acquire horses. If so, Israel by multiplying horses would become confederate with Egypt and thereby turn to them as a means for defense rather than turning to and trusting in the LORD.

*Ps.20.7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*

*8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.*

*9 Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.*

*Ps.33.16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.*

*17 An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.*

*Ps.147.10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.*

*11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.*

***17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away:***

Marriage was originally between one man and one woman. (cf. Ge.2.24) As a reminder, because the Scriptures acknowledge and regulate polygamy does not mean that the Lord approves of it. (cf. polygamy, Ge.4.19; Ge.11.29; 29.9; 30.26, etc; regulation, Deu.21.15-17) The same may be said about divorce and remarriage. That divorce and remarriage are facts of life and the Scriptures regulate these is not to be interpreted that the Lord approves of it. (cf. Mt.19.8; Deu.24.4; Mt.5.31, 32; 19.7-12)

The major point here is especially upon taking wives of other nations. It was these wives which all of Israel was warned against marrying. (also, cf. Jos.23.11-13)

*Ex.34.16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.*

*Deu.7.3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.*

*4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.*

And now the king that will rule over the nation of Israel is also warned. For marrying wives of the nations he also could be turned away from the LORD to serve other gods.

*1Ki.11.1 ¶ But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;*

*2 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.*

***neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.***

It isn't the silver and gold that is the problem, but the downward bent of the will of man to put his trust in them is the snare.

*1Ti 6:6 ¶ But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

*7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

*8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

...

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

With multiplied silver and gold the king is prone to look at the national treasury and think the nation is secure because the coffers are full. But that is a misplaced trust. He must, as with all Israel, put his confidence in the LORD.

**18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall**

*throne, כִּסֵּא, a masc. noun tss. throne, seat, and stool.*

תּוֹרָה

**write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:**

*that he shall write, the verb כָּתַב, to write, to describe, to subscribe, to prescribe.*

*copy, מִשְׁנֵה, a masc. noun, tss. second, double, twice as much, a copy, next, second order, etc.*

**19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life:**

שָׁמַר

תּוֹרָה

**that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law**

observe

**and these statutes, to do them:**

**20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren,**

*lifted up, the verb רוּם, room, tss. to be lifted up, to be exalted, to be high, to be lofty, to mount up, to lift, to set up, to heave, to promote.*

**and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom,**

lengthen

*he may prolong, אָרַךְ, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. verb tss. to be long, to prolong, to lengthen, to draw out (the staves)*

**he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.**

So Israel's king is not to trust in his munitions, turn from his devotion to the LORD, or lean on his wealth as a means for security, but he is to remember that he is as his brethren are, subject to the same law, the same statutes and the same judgments as is his Israeli brethren. The difference between him and his brethren is in the throne.

*Ge 41:40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*

Four major points were presented in this chapter.

- It was an abomination to the LORD to offer corrupted animals for sacrifices.
- It was an abomination for anyone of Israel to go serve other gods.
- The ruling of the high court was final.
- Israel's king must be of the people of Israel.