

Deuteronomy 12:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:

Analysis

The command restated: 'Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you.' The phrase 'to cause his name to dwell there' (לְשַׁחַן שְׁמָךְ, leshaken shemo sham) uses Tabernacle language—God's Name/Presence dwells at the chosen sanctuary. The comprehensive 'all that I command you' (repeated from v.6) emphasizes total obedience. Worship isn't à la carte; all prescribed elements must be brought. This creates accountability—the central sanctuary makes worship public, not private or hidden, preventing illicit practices.

Historical Context

The theology of God's Name dwelling at the sanctuary pervades Deuteronomy (12:11, 21; 14:23-24; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2). This balances transcendence (God doesn't literally dwell in buildings) with immanence (God meets His people at the sanctuary). Solomon's dedication prayer acknowledges God dwells in heaven, yet 'his eyes and heart' are toward the temple (1 Kings 8:27-29; 9:3). Jesus later declares Himself the ultimate temple where God meets humanity (John 2:19-21).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does God causing 'his name to dwell' at a chosen place teach about divine presence and authorized worship?
2. How does New Testament teaching about believers as God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19) transform this concept?
3. Why does God regulate worship practices rather than allowing spontaneous human expression?

Interlinear Text

לִיהְיוֹן: יִבְחַר אֲשֶׁר פֶּקֶד וּמִתְּבִּיאָה
H1961 Then there shall be a place H4725 H834 H977 H3068

שְׁמָה שְׁמָה לְשִׁכְנָה בְּאֱלֹהִים מֶלֶךְ
your God H0 to dwell to cause his name H430 H7931 H8033 H8034

מְצַוְּה אַתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר כָּל אֶת תְּבִיא
there thither shall ye bring H935 H853 H3605 H834 H595 H6680

מַעֲשָׂרָתֵיכֶם אַתָּךְ מְעַלְתִּיכֶם יִזְבְּחַיכֶם
H853 you your burnt offerings H5930 H2077 H4643

נְדִירִיכֶם מִבְּמַרְאֵת יְדֵיכֶם וְתַרְמֵת
and the heave offering of your hand H8641 H3027 H3605 H4005 H5088

לִיהְיוֹן: תְּמִדְרָר וְאַשְׁר
H834 which ye vow H5087 H3068

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 15:20 (References God): Thou shalt eat it before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

Deuteronomy 12:5 (References God): But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

Deuteronomy 18:6 (References Lord): And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the LORD shall choose;

Deuteronomy 17:8 (References God): If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;

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