

Deuteronomy 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

The positive command contrasts with verse 2-3's destruction: 'unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there...shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come.' This introduces worship centralization—one authorized sanctuary where God places His Name. The Hebrew maqom (מָקוֹם, place) will be specified later as first Shiloh, then Jerusalem. The phrase 'to put his name there' indicates divine presence and authorized worship. Unlike Canaanite worship at multiple sites wherever deemed sacred, Israelite worship must occur at God's chosen location. This centralization would unify the nation and prevent syncretistic corruption.

Historical Context

During wilderness period, the Tabernacle moved with Israel. After conquest, it rested at Shiloh (Joshua 18:1; Judges 18:31; 1 Samuel 1-4) for approximately 300 years. After Philistines captured the ark and destroyed Shiloh (Jeremiah 7:12-14; Psalm 78:60), David brought the ark to Jerusalem, and Solomon built the Temple there (2 Chronicles 6:5-6). Jerusalem became the permanent 'place which the LORD chose.' This centralized worship prevented tribal fragmentation and maintained covenant purity (mostly—high places persisted despite Jerusalem Temple).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does worship centralization (one authorized location/means) differ from modern religious pluralism?
2. What does God 'choosing' the worship location teach about divine prerogative versus human religious innovation?
3. How does Jerusalem Temple typology point to Christ as the ultimate 'place' where God meets His people?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמָה: וְאַתָּה תַּדְרֹשׁ וְלֹשֶׁבֶת יְהוָה
there even unto his habitation shall ye seek and thither thou shalt come H8033 H1875 H935

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 12:11 (References God): 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:

Deuteronomy 26:2 (References God): That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

Deuteronomy 16:2 (References God): Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.

2 Chronicles 7:12 (References Lord): And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.

1 Kings 8:29 (Parallel theme): That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

Psalms 78:68 (Parallel theme): But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

Deuteronomy 12:13 (Parallel theme): Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest:

Colossians 2:9 (References God): For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

1 Kings 8:20 (References God): And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

1 Kings 8:16 (Parallel theme): Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.

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