

# Deuteronomy 12:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day,  
every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.

## Analysis

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The contrast with current practice: 'Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.' In the wilderness, decentralized worship was permitted by necessity. But Canaan requires centralized, regulated worship. The phrase 'whatsoever is right in his own eyes' (הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינָיו, hayashar be'enav) describes subjectivism and individualism in worship. This refrain reappears in Judges 17:6; 21:25, characterizing apostasy periods. God regulates worship; humans don't invent it. The phrase condemns autonomous worship that ignores divine prescription. Will-worship, however sincere, is disobedience.

## Historical Context

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During wilderness wanderings, some decentralization was necessary given the camp's size and mobility. But this was transitional. Once settled in the land, worship must be unified at the chosen sanctuary. The book of Judges demonstrates the chaos of 'every man doing what was right in his own eyes'—culminating in tribal civil war and near-extinction of Benjamin (Judges 19-21). The Micah narrative (Judges 17-18) specifically illustrates illicit personal worship rejected by God. Regulated worship prevents such disorder.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## 1 John 4:8 — God is love

### Study Questions

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1. How does 'whatever is right in his own eyes' characterize modern worship innovations and church practices?
2. What is the difference between Spirit-led worship and humanly-devised will-worship?
3. How do we discern biblical warrant for worship practices versus mere tradition or innovation?

### Interlinear Text

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ל א	עֲשֵׂי יָם	כָּ כָל	אֲשֶׁר	אֲנִי חָנוּ	עֲשֵׂי יָם	פֹּה
H3808	Ye shall not do	H3605	H834	H587	Ye shall not do	H6311
	H6213				H6213	
הֵי יוֹם	אֵשׁ יֵשׁ	כָּל	הַיֵּשׁ ר	בְּעֵינָיו:		
here this day	every man	H3605	whatsoever is right	in his own eyes		
H3117	H376		H3477	H5869		

### Additional Cross-References

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**Judges 21:25** (Parallel theme): In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

**Judges 17:6** (Parallel theme): In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

**Proverbs 21:2** (Parallel theme): Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.