

Deuteronomy 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. Passover required blood sacrifice, foreshadowing that redemption necessitates substitutionary death. The lamb dies so the firstborn lives - this is the gospel in type.

Specification of the flock and the herd likely refers to the Passover lamb plus additional peace offerings during the festival week. The central Passover sacrifice came from the flock (sheep or goats), while additional offerings could include cattle.

The phrase in the place which the LORD shall choose centralizes worship at the tabernacle (later temple). This prevented proliferation of unauthorized shrines and maintained purity of worship according to God's prescribed pattern. True worship occurs where and how God designates, not according to human preference.

God's choosing to place his name there indicates His special presence and ownership. The sanctuary was not generic sacred space but the specific location where God manifested Himself to His people.

Historical Context

Initially, Passover could be observed in individual homes (Exodus 12). Deuteronomy's centralization requirement mandated observance at the central sanctuary once Israel settled in Canaan. This promoted national unity and prevented syncretistic worship at local shrines.

Jerusalem became the permanent location where God placed His name when Solomon built the temple. Jews traveled there for Passover throughout biblical history.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the requirement of blood sacrifice teach about the cost of redemption?
2. Why did God centralize worship rather than permitting local observance?
3. How does God's choice of specific worship location demonstrate His sovereignty over proper worship?
4. What dangers does unauthorized worship at human-chosen locations present?
5. How does Old Testament centralized worship relate to New Testament worship in spirit and truth?

Interlinear Text

וְזָבַחְתָּ	פֶּסַח	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	צֶאֱן		
Thou shalt therefore sacrifice	the passover	unto the LORD	thy God	of the flock		
H2076	H6453	H3068	H430	H6629		
וּבָקָר	בַּמָּקוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	יִבְחַר	יְהוָה	לָשֵׁב	שְׁמוֹ
and the herd	in the place	H834	shall choose	unto the LORD	to place	his name
H1241	H4725		H977	H3068	H7931	H8034
שָׁם:						
H8033						

Additional Cross-References

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 12:26 (References Lord): Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose: