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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

601 NW 2nd Street, Gainesville, FL 32601; 352.336.7602

Web Site: [www.Refugegainesville.com](http://www.Refugegainesville.com)

**Elder Michael J. Williams, Pastor**

**Bishop Dr. M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**“YE SHALL NOT EAT THE BLOOD”**

**Deuteronomy 12:15-32**

***Deuteronomy 12:15-16***

***15 "Notwithstanding thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roebuck, and as of the hart."***

***16 "Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water."***

With all animal sacrifices to be offered at one designated location, Moses elaborated on the killing of animals, whether for food or worship. Animals, whether wild game or domesticated, could be slaughtered for meat within any of their communities without any regard for who could eat it. Though animals could only be sacrificed in one place, this did not prevent Israelite fathers from hunting animals for family meals. Animals could be eaten freely without needing to be brought to the central sanctuary. It appears from this, that they could eat or drink anything God had blessed them with, and they were thankful for.

***1 Timothy 4:4-5***

***4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:***

***5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.***

There was only one restriction to this. The LORD specifically forbids the eating, or drinking, of blood. Life is in the blood. The blood of the animal was to be poured upon the ground and covered with the dirt. Consuming blood was strictly prohibited “because the life of every creature is its blood” and “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness”.

***Leviticus 17:11-12***

***11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.***

***12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.***

The New Testament commandments given to the Christians forbid the eating and drinking of blood.

***Acts 21:25 "As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written [and] concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from [things] offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."***

This prohibition pointed to the ultimate blood sacrifice, “for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” By Jesus’s own blood, he has “obtained eternal redemption.”

***Hebrews 9:22 “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”***

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

***Hebrews 9:12 “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”***

***Deuteronomy 12:17-18***

***17 "Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand:"***

***18 "But thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that [is] within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto."***

These are things dedicated to the LORD, that must be eaten in the tabernacle. These are not to stay as part of the wealth of the person offering. They belong to the altar of God. Some of the offerings may be shared with the altar and the Levites. They must first be offered in the temple. Then, the priests give back to the people the portion they are allowed to eat. All things offered to God are holy. They must eat it in the order prescribed by God. This tithe had to be taken to the central sanctuary and is known as the second tithe. The first went to the Levites; and this one was brought to Jerusalem for the Lord’s feast. Possibly every third year, the second tithe was kept at home and used for the poor. Any animals and produce to be presented to God in sacrifice had to be brought to the tabernacle to be offered and eaten in the presence of the Lord. They were also prohibited from eating anything at home that was to be offered as a sacrifice, because the only designated place to eat those offerings before the LORD was in the central sanctuary.

***Deuteronomy 12:19-20***

***19 "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth."***

***20 "When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after."***

The instructions that follow here may strike us as unnecessary repetition. But we must remember Moses’s purpose for both his immediate audience and future readers of driving home the absolute necessity of fearing and obeying God. The Levite lives of the offerings brought to the church. To forsake them, would leave them without food to sustain them. They will be blessed with abundant land. God will allow them to eat flesh, as long as they do not eat the blood. Given the sinful human tendency to forget, any good teacher of God’s Word knows the value of repetition, as illustrated by the apostle Peter.

***2 Peter 1:12-13***

***12Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.***

***13Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;***

***Deuteronomy 12:21-23***

***21 "If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after."***

***22 "Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat [of] them alike."***

***23 "Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood [is] the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh."***

The temple in Jerusalem, perhaps, might be too far for them to come. This is a provision made for that instance. Under no circumstances, are they to eat, or drink, blood. This seems to allow the eating of the unclean animal, as long as the blood is completely drained, and not eaten. Throughout Scripture, the life is spoken of as being in the blood. Abel's blood cried out from the earth, after Cain slew him. Somehow, the blood atones for sin. Perhaps, it is like a life for a life. It was the blood of Jesus which did away with our sin. His blood atoned for our sin. He was our substitute on the cross.

***Deuteronomy 12:24-26***

***24 "Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water."***

***25 "Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do [that which is] right in the sight of the LORD."***

***26 "Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose."***

Even blood that is shed for the killing of an animal to eat, should not be eaten. It must soak into the earth as water does. This is an ordinance that brings blessings to the person who obeys the ordinance. Those, who want to be in the will of the LORD, will observe this. A vow, and the holy things, must not be taken lightly. They must go to the place God has designated for this purpose.

***Deuteronomy 12:27-28***

***27 "And thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh."***

***28 "Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest [that which is] good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God."***

The burnt offerings must be at the brazen altar in the tabernacle, or temple, that God has designated for this purpose. The blood must be poured on the altar of the LORD. The person offering can eat of the flesh of the animal, however. To be blessed of God, is conditional. They must be obedient to God, to receive of His blessings. To keep the commandments of God, brings abundant blessings. To break the commandments of God, brings curses.

***Deuteronomy 12:29 "When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;"***

When the ark of the covenant went with them into battles that the Lord had sent them into, God blessed them. The enemies fled before them, or were killed. God removes nations before Israel, so that Israel can receive the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

***Deuteronomy 12:30 "Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise."***

We see Moses is warning the people not to take any interest at all in the false gods of these Canaanites. Usually, it is not good to delve into other religions. It seems, we forget which is real, and pick up some of the false religion, when we inquire. Christianity is like a marriage to one husband. Being interested in someone else, brings problems.

***Deuteronomy 12:31 "Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods."***

It appears, their evil worship had included human sacrifice. The things that were an abomination before God were some of the very things, they were involved in. The worship of false gods is spiritual adultery. This practice was forbidden in Israel’s law, since it was tantamount to murder regardless of the supposedly religious reason for it. Both Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:3) and Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6) were guilty of child sacrifice. As verse 30 depicts, this could lead to expulsion from the land, as in fact it did in the case of the northern kingdom.

***2 Kings 17:17-18***

***17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.***

***18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.***

***Deuteronomy 12:32 "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."***

One of the terrible mistakes these Israelites made, just before their Babylonian captivity, was the addition of the worship of false gods to their worship of the One True God. To add to, or take away from God's teachings, is as if we are saying God made a mistake. We, as well as these Israelites, must do exactly as God has commanded, if we are to be blessed of God. Moses’s concern over the Israelites’ vulnerability to idolatry also led him to repeat the warning he had given them at the beginning of this chapter. He knew that once the people became curious and asked, how did these nations worship their gods? they would be hooked into thinking, I’ll also do the same. Therefore, Moses warned them that false worship is no harmless sin. What we worship drives how we live: as part of their idolatry, the Canaanites burned their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Worldview matters. Ideas have consequences.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Is it alright for them to kill and eat their animals?
2. What is forbidden to them to eat or drink?
3. Life is in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. In verse 19, they are warned not to forsake the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Abel's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ cried out from the earth.
6. Blood should be poured upon the earth as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Where were the burnt offerings burned?
8. Who cuts off the nations before them?
9. When the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ went with them into battle, they won.
10. What is Israel not to inquire of from these people?
11. What was one of the terrible practices of their worship?