

Respect
Deuteronomy 12:4-7
Dr. Paul Cannings

A. My House (v. 4):

1. You shall not – The Lord God is not saying don't do this. He is saying that He has factual proof that worshiping other gods is not something He has ever supported.

a) The command for the destruction of the Canaanite cultic centers (12:2–4) was designed both to punish the sinful inhabitants of Canaan (Lev. 18:25) and to protect the Israelites from false gods (Deut. 7:25–26). The centralization of Israel's worship was to prevent the worship of the Lord, Yahweh, from being contaminated with idolatrous practices (12:13–14).[\[1\]](#)

2. Act like this - After tearing down all the idols of the Gentiles in the Promise Land, Israel must never feel ethically obligated to provide any idol respect.

3. You shall not act like this - The Lord tells His people they should never ever labor or toil over religious practices that violate His Word.

4. Act like this - When we worship the Lord God, nothing or no one must hinder us from providing our undivided time, services, or gifts to Him. God bluntly states that He is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5). He even calls Himself jealous (Exodus 34:14).

5. Lord your God – Based on the covenant the Lord has with Israel and that He has proven to be the one true God who is all-powerful, supreme, and the only creator, there is no way Israel should ever worship another God. There is way too much history for that ever to take place.

6. Lord your God – The Lord God who has all authority and power and is supreme over all is disrespected when we give more time, service, and money (worship) to something or someone else. We must always remember that He is a jealous God.

7. Lord your God – Until the Lord our God is provided the highest esteem over everything in our lives, respecting Him with our gifts will be challenging.

8. Lord your God – Until the Lord our God is viewed as consistently faithful to His covenant with us and will never leave us nor forsake us, it will be hard to trust Him alone and not have a tendency to lean to other methods to survive.

9. Seek the Lord – Because there are so many distractions with foreign gods, we must be decisive and careful to put together well-thought-out plans to have an acceptable worship before the One who has all authority and power. He must be provided undistracted devotion.

10. Seek the Lord – They are to endlessly demonstrate a sincere respect for God and His covenant relationship by consistently inquiring of the Lord.

a) Whatever one seeks is the object of one's desire and devotion (Ps. 122:9). A place where the Lord your God chooses: The central place of worship was God's to choose (Ps. 132:13, 14). [2]

11. A place the Lord God has chosen - Whatever place the Lord designates for worship, as we can see in Revelation 2-3, is carefully and distinctively organized as His ordained place of worship.

12. Establish His name – The place that the Lord God has carefully chosen is the established place He will inaugurate his reputation and fame throughout the earth.

a) When the Israelites are called on to wipe out the names of the Canaanites and their gods, the command is to wipe them from the pages of history. In a world tied to the service of named persons and gods, utter destruction could only come if all memory of these names was obliterated. Once that was done, only one name would remain, and there would be no reason or desire to worship any other (see Is 42:8). [3]

13. To establish – God decides where His altar will be fixed and be unmovable. No one can adjust it.

14. For His dwelling – His dwelling is the place where the Lord God is present. It is the place He inhabits and establishes Himself for worship.

a) In contrast with the many places of pagan worship that had to be destroyed (12:1–4), Israel was to worship only at the place God would choose for her and where He would dwell; it would ultimately be Jerusalem (12:5, 11, 14). The place of sacrifice would indicate whether or not the true God was being served. [4]

15. There for His dwelling – The place that the Lord places Himself is going to be where He plans to settle down and remain forever. This is the same mindset we see with the churches of Revelation.

16. Shall come – This is the only place to which the nation of Israel must be completely committed. They are not to go to any other place where they had torn down all the gods of the Gentiles.

a) Moses stresses the importance of centralizing the place of worship as he prepares the people for settlement in the Promise Land, where the Canaanites had established many places of worship (vv. 11,14,18,21,26; 14:23-24; 16:2,6,11; 26:2).

17. Shall come – Worship is completely accepted only in the place where the Lord God has been careful to establish His presence.

18. Shall come – When the Lord is willfully and with purpose held high, and His place of worship has been respected, the mindset that leads to sincere worship is crystallized.

B. Acceptable Worship (v. 6):

1. You shall bring – There needs to be an intentional decision made, which completely satisfies God's Levitical laws for what offering is to be brought before God, so that it is acceptable.

2. Shall bring – What God prescribes them to do must completely be what each person is committed to doing. This is where worship begins; that is why every effort must be made for this to be faithfully obeyed.

3. Burnt offerings – A Burnt Offering demonstrates a worshiper's full surrender to the Lord God. This is where worship began.

a) The burnt offerings (Lev. 1), to be brought to the place of worship, were to be completely burned on the altar. They were given at various times to express the worshiper's total dependence on the Lord. The word translated sacrifice (*zebah*) referred to a sacrifice offered as an expression of appreciation and involved a communal meal. It may have been given as a thanks offering (Lev. 7:12–15; 22:29–30) for something God had done for a worshiper. Or it may have been offered as a votive offering to fulfill a vow made to the Lord (Lev. 7:16–17; 22:18–23). It may have been offered as a freewill offering in which the person thanked God (Lev. 7:16–17; 22:18–23) but not necessarily for anything specific. (On tithes, see comments on Lev. 27:30–32 and Deut. 14:28. On the law of the firstborn, see comments on 15:19–23.) The special gifts (lit., "what is lifted up in hand ") were for the priests.[\[5\]](#)

4. Burnt offerings – The Lord God expects His worshipers to give their full attention, especially on His day of worship. He is in no way willing to share this time with anyone.

5. Your sacrifices – They were expected to bring an offering. A burnt offering or a peace offering, which is the sprinkling of blood on the altar, demonstrated respect for their covenant relationship with the Lord God.
6. Your sacrifices - Because we are expected to come fully surrendered, what we bring will be a sacrifice to God. It is not a convenient gift (the attitude of Cain compared to Abel; Genesis 4:1-8). It is respectful of all that He means to us. He sacrificed and sacrificed for us, so we must come with a mindset to give Him honor.
7. Tithe – A tithe is holy to God (Leviticus 27:30-33). This is why it is an acceptable gift. Even though Abraham did what was the custom in his day, when he gave a tithe, God still accepted it as holy. He did this by faith, not the law (Genesis 14:17-24; Hebrews 7:4-10). Abraham is the father of us all (Romans 4:13-17) because of His faith in God.
8. Tithe – When a person is fully surrendered to God, and the tithe serves as their sacrifice to God, it demonstrates a serious commitment that the Lord is our sustainer. We are seriously committed to ensuring that His agenda is completed for His glory.
10. Contribution of your hand – A contribution was a tax that those who were twenty and above had to pay for the upkeep of the temple. By saying "of your hand", it means this was a decisive, deliberate decision for each person to execute responsibly. The Building Fund is not outside the will of God.

a) All sacrifices are to be brought by the hands of the people. It is on their initiative, in their control, and it is left up to them to join God where He decides to dwell.

11. Votive offering - This was an offering that was made as a part of a vow to God. Once I commit to providing the Lord an offering sacrificially, He obligates me to that commitment.
12. Freewill offering – "of your hand" is to willfully obligate oneself to spontaneously and not sparingly bring a volunteering offering to the Lord. This offering is provided with such liberality that the giver does not stop until the need is thoroughly fulfilled (Ex 35:19, 29; 36:3; Lev 7:16; 22:18, 21, 23; 23:38; Nu 15:3; 29:39; Dt 12:6, 17; 16:10; 23:24[EB 23]; 2Ch 31:14; 35:8; Ezra 1:4; 3:5; 8:28; Ps 54:8[EB 6]; 119:108; Ps. 20:3; Eze 46:12; Am 4:5+).
13. Offering – The Jews were obligated to bring a peace offering, burnt offering, trespass offering, sin offering, a meal offering, votive offering, and freewill offering before the Lord. God asks for us to bring a tithe, and we are upset. What would we have done? Would we have become like the Jews who felt it convenient to rob God by the time of Malachi?
14. First born of your herd or flock - God also expected them to bring the choicest or highest priced animal from among their flock.
15. Firstborn of the herd – God expects to be first when we give. He does not like leftovers. We can start with what we have (2 Corinthians 8:12), but it must be first. By the time of

Malachi, they brought their leftovers, and it caused God to fire the priest for taking unwanted offerings (Malachi 1:6-14).

a) First-Fruits – The primary meaning is "first" or "beginning" of a series. This term may refer to the initiation of a series of historical events (Genesis 10:10; Jeremiah 26:1), but it also refers to a foundational or necessary condition as the reverence or fear of God - the choicest "fruits" were so distinguished, particularly about items to be set aside for God's service or sacrifice. It is used frequently in the special sense of the choicest or best of a group or class of things, particularly in reference to items to be set aside for God's service or sacrifice. The "first fruits" (Leviticus 2:12; 23:10; Nehemiah 12:44) and "choicest" (Numbers 18:12) fruits are very distinguished (Ex 22:29–30; Gen. 49:3; Rev.3:14).

C. Rejoice: His Rewards (v. 7):

1. You and your household – Even though men were the prominent persons engaged in worship, God told them to bring their entire household.
2. Eat before the Lord – A faithful giver experiences true fellowship with the Lord God.
3. Before the Lord your God – A faithful giver is allowed to experience the abiding favor of the Lord because they demonstrated a willful, purposeful respect for him.
4. Rejoice – When everyone's household is brought into the presence of God to eat, upon eating, they are to spontaneously, with high emotion and extreme happiness, festively express their joy entirely to God for everything they have been able to accomplish.

a) To "rejoice" means to celebrate in assembled worship with a sacrificial meal, together with "your households." Though 16:18 specifies only males, it is clear that the expression "you and your households" includes women and children as well. [\[6\]](#)

5. Rejoice — These worshippers can now worship in a spirited, festive manner because they are guaranteed God's favor regardless of their experiences.
6. The Lord, your God, has blessed you – The Lord God will fulfill His promises because of their commitment to worship Him. He will cause them to prosper because of His divine favor that He has the power to institute so that they live happily and wealthy.
7. In the undertaking, the Lord has blessed – Whatever we set our minds to do, the Lord's favor will guide and prosper us so that we experience His goodwill. The same is provided to cheerful givers in 2 Corinthians 9:6-10.

a) An Israelite "worship service" would be characterized by joy (you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice) if they lived faithfully in the new land, for they could count on the Lord's abundant blessing. "Rejoicing" in the Lord's presence occurs several times in Deuteronomy (vv. 7, 12, 18; 14:26; 16:11; also note 16:14–15).^[7]

[1] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary* (p. 74). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

[2] Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary* (p. 248). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.

[3] Matthews, V. H., Chavalas, M. W., & Walton, J. H. (2000). *The IVP Bible background commentary: Old Testament* (electronic ed., Dt 12:5). InterVarsity Press.

[4] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). *Tyndale concise Bible commentary* (p. 74). Tyndale House Publishers.

[5] Deere, J. S. (1985). [Deuteronomy](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 284). Victor Books.

[6] Christensen, D. L. (2001). *Deuteronomy 1–21:9, Revised* (Vol. 6A, p. 244). Dallas: Thomas Nelson.

[7] Deere, J. S. (1985). [Deuteronomy](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 284). Victor Books.

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