

## IT'S TIME TO TEAR THEM DOWN!

In this week's Torah portion, I would like to focus on chapter *12 of Deuteronomy*. The Creator 'opened His chest' to explain how important it is to worship Him only as He prescribed. He began by telling Israel that they should "be careful to observe" all of His commandments when they came into the land He was giving them. Their relationship with Him and His presence in their midst was predicated upon this command—following His ways. Then, in verse 2, He told them to "utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree." Before anything else, before they even attempted to worship Him, Yahweh made it clear that He needed them to destroy the high places of the enemy. This commandment was not just for the Israelites 3000 years ago. It is alive and still speaks to us today.



Too many Believers who come to the knowledge of the one true God through Christ do not realize how many high places they tolerate in their lives. We need to audit our hearts to

determine what these high places actually are because they compete with the one true Elohim (Mighty Judge) of our lives. Perhaps the high place is smoking or anger. Maybe it's a sexual sin or being sarcastic or demeaning to others. Each one of us knows deep down what our weaknesses are and what prevents us from hitting our full potential in Him. No matter what you struggle with, you **MUST** tear down those high places, refusing to allow them to enslave you and prevent you from your full blessing in Him. I can't say it better than Him in verse 4: "You shall not worship Yahweh your Elohim with such things."

### **Deuteronomy 12:8**

*"You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes."*

The nature of man is to do what we think is the right thing in a given situation instead of consulting the Scriptures—"**seeking the place where the LORD your GOD chooses** (vs. 4)." This means that before we make a move, we should find out exactly what He would have us do and how we should do it. Yahweh filled the Scriptures with illustrations and instructions covering every situation you can think of to give us a pattern—a blueprint of how to handle whatever we are going through. I have seen people, some even in ministry, who are faced with very difficult and weighty decisions mistakenly take all kinds of counsel from all kinds of people, including attorneys and professionals, while completely ignoring the Word of God on the issue they face. Ironically, it seems that the larger and more dramatic the issue, the less we actually follow the plain reading of the Scripture and the more we go with our own human nature or, worse, pagan advice from non-believers. This is defined as 'doing whatever is right in your own eyes and it always leads to destruction. The Scriptures are not just for Church. They are instructions for life—**all of it**. We have no right to do what we want to do. We can't just say, "Well, I've been addicted to cigarettes my whole life" or "This is just the way I am." If you are bought with a price by the Most High, then you don't have the right to make excuses for not tearing down those high places and for doing whatever is right in your own eyes. We were made to be holy and set apart. Any characteristics that are not like Yeshua flat out have to go.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time to go to the *next level*. It's time to grow up in Christ and start living by this Book that we say we love. It's time that we take a hard look at our lives and write down the things that we know are not of Him and start telling them to leave. Why do we let idols live in our pockets while proclaiming with our lips that we only serve Yahweh? When will we get serious and stop living for ourselves, making excuses for ourselves, and giving ourselves passes on what the Bible calls sin and idolatry? If you have an anger problem, it's not everyone else. It is **YOU**. Find out what you are really angry about and forgive and let it go. It's affecting and destroying the ones you love. If you have an addiction, why do you choose to be a slave to something that is forbidden to be in your temple? Was the blood of Yeshua not enough to free you from your selfish carnal nature? Yes, living holy is hard. But we put to death the deeds of the flesh by the **SPIRIT** and not by ourselves.

Recently a 28-year-old young man who has been smoking since he was ten got saved and I have been discipling him every day since then. About a month after learning about covenant and the Bible, he decided to go all in and clean his temple. He has decided to stop smoking, change his music and clean up his mouth. He finished his last four cigarettes and that was it. Cold turkey.

He understood what it meant to be holy, to be in full covenant, and to tear down the high places. He didn't want to be a slave to anything and he truly wanted Yahweh to be the only King of his mountain.

No matter what your struggle or deficiency, we are commanded to be holy as He is holy. We are commanded to "tear down that wall" as the famous Ronald Reagan statement goes. Any high places prevent us from coming closer to the Most High. High places prevent us from receiving the fullness of the blessings that He has prepared. You may not realize it but **YOUR** life matters and is connected to every other life in the body. Is there a part of the body that doesn't affect the rest of the body? **YOUR LIFE MATTERS!**

The message of Deuteronomy 12 is a battle cry message. It's a message of taking our weaknesses seriously, attacking them by faith, and eliminating their ugly influence in our lives. It's about being people of the Book. It's about endurance in our pressing onward until we are formed into His image.

What do you have in your life that you know needs to go? What are the parts of your character that need to be eradicated and changed into the image of Christ? How far are you willing to go to prove that you love Him and to present a clean and holy temple before Him? Everything we say and do is worship. So if there are any high places, He says, ***"You shall not worship the LORD your GOD in that way."*** Let's tighten it up, brethren. He's looking for an army of well-trained soldiers to take back this land. Every weakness will be exploited. After He shed His blood for you, isn't He worth finally tearing down those long-standing high places? You can do it! Live your life with intention and let's get this body in shape!

Shalom,

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