

**Context**

- 1] Jacob and his 12 sons, including Joseph, went to Egypt where they became a great nation (c 1 m),
- 2] over 400 years they were enslaved by Pharaoh.
- 2] Moses then led them out towards the promised land and God gave them His Law at Sinai.
- 3] The people rebelled against Him and that generation died during 40 years in the wilderness.
- 4] Moses led them back to the edge of the promised land and gave them a copy of the Law
- 5] Here Moses speaks about God's leadership in His Kingdom; the promised land.

**The principle - justice (16:18-20)**

- 1] Appoint people as righteous judges. (18)
- 2] Don't pervert justice (19)

Nb meaning of justice (*heb 'mishpat'*)

a) punishing all wrong doers - regardless of race social status etc

b) give people their rights - esp widows orphans immigrants and the poor

*nb don't be greedy – On BBC last week, Dawn Bilborough a critical care nurse came off an extended shift and found 'empty shelves. Weeping, she begged the public; 'just take what you need'*

- 3] Justice only justice ----

*Nb justice justice*

*Cf Be holy as I am holy (Lev 11:44; 1 Pet 1:16) (cf Be perfect ... (Mt 5:48))*

- 4] Inherit land God is giving you

*Nb inherit – not something that you have earned but that God has promised) cf Eph 2:8,9)*

GRACE The Lord gives towns and land

**The aim – purge the evil from your midst (16:21- 17:8)**

- 1] God forbids (16:21-17:1)

a) No Asherah pillars (16:21)

*Nb feminine Canaan goddess*

*Nb Pillar speaks of worship cf pillar of cloud by day and fire by night in wilderness (Ex 13:21)*

*Cf 10 commandments 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> – Have no other Gods before me & do not make idols (5:7,8)*

\*The Lord **hates** idol worship\*

\*Do not try and worship anyone alongside God. \*

b) A blemished sacrifice = an abomination (17:1)

*Cf abomination = the Canaanites practices eg sacrifice children (12:31)*

*ie blemished sacrifice means keep the best one for yourselves*

*Nb God will not accept 1/2 hearted worship*

\*Lord counts an inferior offering as (worse than?) none – abominable\*

\*Do not try and 'shortchange' God – better do nothing? \*

- 2] If evil / transgression of God's covenant found among you (7:2-7)

a) diligent (be careful) investigating an abomination (an offense to the Lord) (2-4)

\*The Lord counts it as evil to transgress his covenant\*

\*If involved in an accusation enquire diligently, act collaboratively and take responsibility. \*

b) stone the man or woman to death (5)

*cf stoning at city gate Stephen (Acts 7:58); Jesus – (Hebrews 13:12)*

c) witnesses / accusers (6,7)

1) 2 or 3 (6)

*Is more than 1 cf Jesus' instruction - two or three witnesses (Matt 18:16)*

2) Witness throw the first stone (7)

*Is it is a grave and personal responsibility to accuse another – be very careful*

*Cf Jesus - those without sin cast the first stone (John 8:7)*

*\*Purge evil from your midst.\**

### **The authority – God / his priests (17:8-13)**

1] A situation / case too difficult for you – take it to Lord / His chosen place (8)

*Cf Decision too difficult for you – work, family, relationship - 'take it to the Lord in prayer'.*

*Dang Xio Ping, Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin vs coronavirus! (a sub mic, non-living, lump of chemical*

2] Come to Priest / Levites – (Lord's 'go betweens') (9,10)

*Nb we have a great High priest Jesus (Heb 4:14; 10:11)*

*\*GRACE The Lord chooses how He is worshipped\**

3] Act according to their ruling (11,12)

*? Harsh? God the Son - crucified – 'Father forgive them as they don't know what they are doing' (Lk 23:34)*

*\*The Lord considers dishonouring his priest as a capital offence (nb **NOT** church leader) \**

4] All the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again (13)

*\*Fear acting presumptuously before the Lord your God\**

### **The fulfilment (17:14-20)**

1] When in the land 'I will set a king over me' ... The Lord "you may indeed" (14, 15a)

*! presumptuously!*

*Cf a king like all the nations around me (1 Sam 8:5)*

*\*Be careful – the Lord may give you what you ask for\**

2] The Lord stipulations (15b)

a) a brother – not a foreigner(15b)

*nb Herod the Great (Mt 2:3) was a Jew by religion but an Edomite by descent*

*cf ' ... your king' – (of line of David) --- we have no king but Caesar (Jn 19:15)*

b) not many horses, wives, excessive gold (16, 17a, 17b)

*cf Solomon, David's son - 666 talent of Gold pa, 700 wives, 12k horsemen (1 Kings 10:26-29 11:1-8)*

c) On the throne of his kingdom (ie when he rules) (18-20)

1) devoted to / obedient to 'this Law' - fear the Lord. (18,19)

*Cf Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom (Prov 1:7)*

*Cf 'It is written ...' The final Word when Jesus tempted by the Devil (Lk 4:4,8,10)*

*Nb You are my beloved son with whom I am well pleased (Lk 3:22)*

2) his heart (mind) not be lifted up above his brothers (20a)

*Nb Hebrew the heart was the centre of the mind*

*Cf JESUS, humble, though equal to God – humbled himself, became nothing, took on the form of a servant (Phil 2:8)*

3) Obedient – not turning aside to the right or left. (20b)

*Cf JESUS The son can do nothing of his own accord but only what he sees His Father doing (Jn5:19)*

*\*JESUS was such a devoted, faithful, obedient King\**

### **Conclusion**

1] acknowledge the Lord's justice – He is in charge.

2] If you do this be thankful -

*Nb even sinful stupidity He uses for good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose  
(Rmns 8:28)*

**MP** *Obey and apply God's justice alone in your inheritance*

**KV** *Justice and only justice you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you (16:20)*