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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- God has given the people His laws and here establishes a judicial system to administer them. 16:18-20
 - Composed of judges and officers from the towns where they would serve.
 - They are charged with righteousness as their guiding principle. The standard of righteousness was to be God's revealed law.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- God has given the people His laws and here establishes a judicial system to administer them. 16:18-20
 - They are not to pervert justice by:
 - Showing partiality
 - Taking bribes
 - Justice is to be done in all cases

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Lessons

- Interestingly in our present day one of the four principles making up the “rule of law” is Accessible Justice where:
 - Justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical and independent representatives and neutrals who are accessible, have adequate resources and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve. (World Justice Project)

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Lessons

- The sinful nature of man seeks to oppress or seek undue advantage. This is seen in the fact that even in a system as rigorous as that of the United States of America where our stated goal is liberty and justice for all, we must remain vigilant in order to make sure justice is equally applied.
- A nation that practiced the kind of justice described here would stand out in any era of history, especially the world in which these Israelites lived.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Reminder to not mix the idolatrous practices with the worship of Yahweh, the one true God. 16:21-22
 - Persistent violation of this command contributed to the judgment against God's people in the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. and the exile of the southern kingdom of Judah beginning in 605 B.C. and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 587/86 B.C. 2 Kings 17:7-18; 21:10-15 (see also 1 Kings 15:13; 16:33; 2 Kings 17:16; 21:3-7; Micah 5:10-15)

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Only unblemished animals could be sacrificed. 17:1
 - The sacrifices of the Old Testament sacrificial system pointed toward the final perfect sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The worship of anyone or anything other than Yahweh, the one true and living God was not tolerated among God's people. 17:2-7
 - The person was to be executed upon confirmation by two or three witnesses establishing the practice of idolatry by the accused.
 - The method of execution was by stoning
 - The witnesses were to be the ones to cast the first stone followed by the hand of all the people.

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Lessons

- It should be unthinkable that one would turn from the one true and living God to worship either the figment of someone's imagination or some aspect of creation.
- Idolatry had far-reaching consequences when practiced among God's people as has already been noted in the history of Israel.
- Yes, God has the right to require exclusive allegiance to Himself of those whom He had chosen and redeemed.

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Lessons

- The sacred nature of life is seen in the safeguards put in place before an execution could take place.
 - Requirement of more than one witness
 - Requirement that the witnesses participate in the execution.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The “Supreme Court” of Israel 17:8-13
 - Matters that could not be adequately resolved on a local level were to be brought to the priests and the judge residing in the place of the central sanctuary for determination.
 - This judgment was final
 - The death sentence was pronounced on one who rejected this judgment.
 - Although the term is not used here, this is the passage that the “Great Sanhedrin” of the 71 refers to as its source of authority.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Qualifications and requirements for a king 17:14-20
 - Note that the desire for a king will come from the people, not from God. (see 1 Samuel 8:4-9)
 - Must be the king of God’s choosing
 - Must be an Israelite
 - Must not trust in his own military might or enter into military alliances for the security of the nation.
 - Must not have multiple wives

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Qualifications and requirements for a king 17:14-20
 - Must personally write out a copy of the book of the law and have it approved by the priests and read it every day.
 - To learn to fear Yahweh God
 - Obey the words of the law
 - Live in humility
 - That his kingdom would be a lasting kingdom.