

Joshua 20 - Cities of Refuge

II. Division of Canaan (Joshua 13:1—21:45)

(4) Important cities (Joshua 20:1—21:42)

(A) Cities of refuge (20:1-9)

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1 Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying,

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1 Then the LORD told Joshua,

1 The LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'Designate the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses,

2 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'Designate the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses,

2 "Tell the people of Israel to set apart cities of refuge about which I spoke to you through Moses,

2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

- God instructed Joshua to allocate six Levite cities as Cities of Refuge, per the instructions God previously gave to Moses (Num 35)

— These cities demonstrate how precious God considers every human life

— The accidental taking of the life of another (not murder) often sets in motion an unstoppable cycle of revenge. The cities of refuge prevented revenge against those who unintentionally took another's life.

3 so that one who commits manslaughter *by* killing a person unintentionally, without premeditation, may flee there, and they shall become your refuge from the avenger of blood.

3 that the manslayer who kills any person unintentionally, without premeditation, may flee there, and they shall become your refuge from the avenger of blood.

3 so that anyone who kills a person unintentionally and without premeditation may run there and be protected from closely related avengers.

3 That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 Then he shall flee to one of these cities, and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and state his case in the presence of the elders of that city; and they shall receive him into the city to them and give him a place, so that he may remain among them.

4 He shall flee to one of these cities, and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and state his case in the hearing of the elders of that city; and they shall take him into the city to them and give him a place, so that he may dwell among them.

4 He may run to one of those cities, stand at the entrance to the city gate, and tell his side of the story to the elders of the city. They are to bring him inside the city with them and provide him a place to live among them.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

- The Levites were especially equipped to decide each person's case, according to God's law

5 Now if the avenger of blood pursues him, then they are not to hand the one who committed manslaughter over to him, since he struck his neighbor without premeditation and did not hate him previously.

5 Now if the avenger of blood pursues him, then they shall not deliver the manslayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor without premeditation and did not hate him beforehand.

5 Now if the closely related avenger pursues him, then they are not to hand the killer over to him, because he killed his neighbor without premeditation and without hating him beforehand.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall remain in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then he shall return to his own city and to his own house, to the city from which he fled."

6 He shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the manslayer shall return to his own city and to his own house, to the city from which he fled."

6 He is to live in that city until he stands trial before the community, until the death of the one who is high priest at that time. Then the killer may return to his own city and to his own

home, that is, to the city from which he fled.”

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

- These cities displayed God’s intent to rescue His people from judgment

— They are a foreshadow of our Great High Priest, who provides eternal safety for all who take refuge in Him

7 So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.

7 So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali and Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.

7 So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (also known as Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.

7 And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjatharba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.

8 And beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they designated Bezer in the wilderness on the plain from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh.

8 Beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they designated Bezer in the wilderness on the plain from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh.

8 East of Jericho beyond the Jordan River, they reserved Bezer in the wilderness on the plain from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh.

8 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 These were the designated cities for all the sons of Israel and for the stranger who resides among them, so that whoever kills a person unintentionally may flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stands before the congregation.

9 These were the appointed cities for all the sons of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them, that whoever kills any person unintentionally may flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stands before the congregation.

9 These were appointed to be cities for all the Israelis and for the foreigner who lives among them, so that whoever kills anyone unintentionally may run there and not die at the

hands of a closely related avenger until he stands for trial before the community.

9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.