

# Cities Of Refuge



***Numbers 35:9-13***

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- 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan;
- 11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.
- 12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.
- 13 And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge.

## *Some Preliminary Observations...*

- The cities of refuge were an integral part of Israel's possession and settlement of the promise land. Also a manifestation of God's grace.
- The provision of six cities provides evidence that God did give to Israel all the land promised to Abraham:
  - Gen. 12:1-7; esp. 7 → The Promises
  - Deut. 19:1-13; esp. 8-9 → Three cities...if God give all land...three more
  - Josh. 20:1-9; esp. 7-8 → Six cities named.
  - Josh. 21:43 → God gave to Israel all the land.

# Genesis 12:2-7

- 2 And I will make of thee **a great nation**, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
- 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed**.
- 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.
- 7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, **Unto thy seed will I give this land**: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

## Deuteronomy 19:8-9

- 8 And if the LORD thy God enlarge thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers;
- 9 If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and to walk ever in his ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three:

## Joshua 20:7-8

- 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 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.

### LEVITICAL CITIES AND CITIES OF REFUGE

*NUM. 20-24*

- Levitical city
- Levitical city (general location)
- City of refuge
- Other city
- ▲ Mountain peak



## ***Joshua 21:43***

- 43 And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.



# *Some Preliminary Observations...*

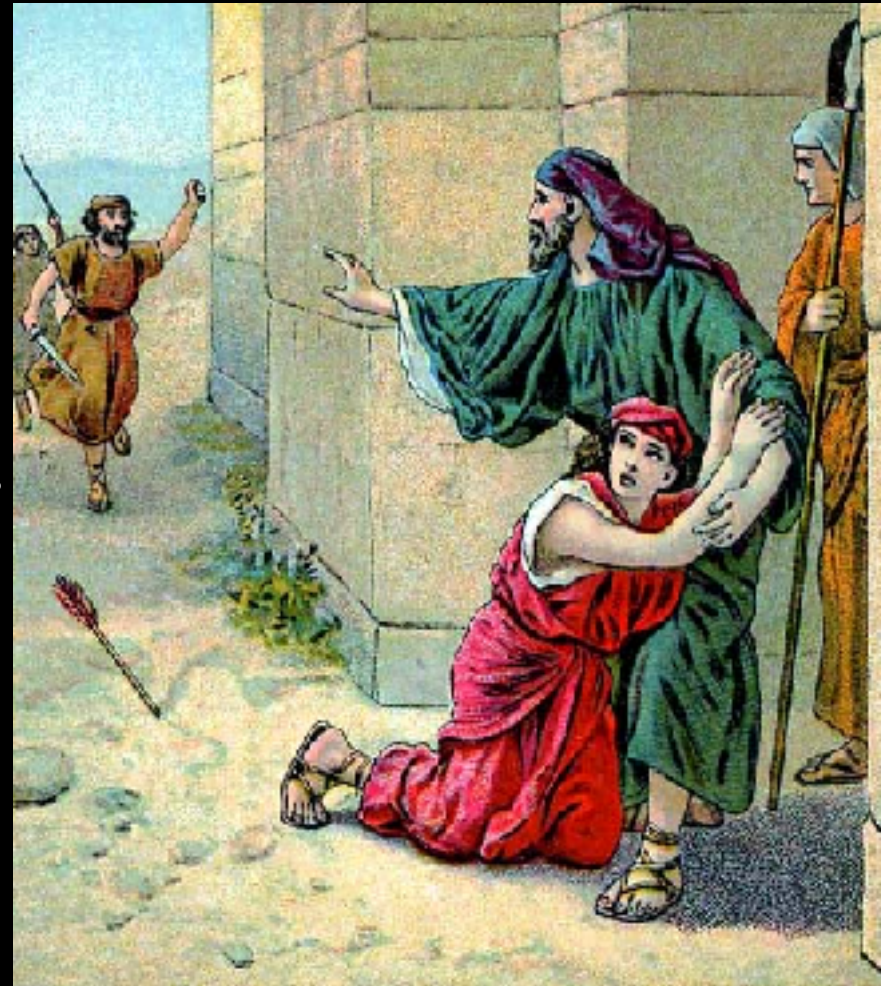
- God regards life as precious:
  - Gen. 1:26-27 → Made in God's image.
  - Gen. 4:10 → Blood of Abel cries from the ground.
  - Gen. 6:5, 11-12 → The violence of the earth before the flood.
  - Gen. 9:6 → The penalty for murder -- death
  - Prov. 6:17 → God hates hands that shed innocent blood.

# Some Preliminary Observations...

- God drew a distinction between accidental killing and murder.
  - Both very serious matters, but treated differently.
  - Thou shalt do no murder. (Ex. 20:13)
- God recognized a difference between murder, accidental death and capital punishment. (Ex. 21:12-13; Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11)
- God provided a place of safety for those who accidentally took a life.
- Lesson: A look at these cities of refuge and some lesson we learn regarding the mercy of God.

# *The Cities of Refuge (Num. 35)*

- Six cities to be appointed among the 48 Levitical cities. (Num. 35:1-8)
  - Ex. 21:13 → first mention
  - Dt. 19:1-3 → a way to be provided; cities to be accessible.
- To provide refuge for the manslayer. (Num. 35:9-15; Dt. 19:6)
  - Had to seek refuge in city.
  - To stand in judgment before the elders at the gate.
  - If found innocent of murder, to be delivered from avenger of blood.



Must remain till death of the high priest. Was subject to death if he failed to do so.

## Lessons

- We need refuge. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23)
- God by His grace has mercifully provided refuge. (Jn. 3:16; Titus 3:3-5)
- One must flee to that refuge. (Matt. 11:28-30; Matt. 23:37)
- That refuge is His Son, Jesus Christ. In Him there is safety. (Rom. 8:1; Eph. 1:3; 2:13)
- He is the only option. (Acts 4:12; Jn. 14:6; Matt. 7:13-14)
- The refuge is accessible and clearly marked. (Rom. 1:16-17; Rom. 10:6-17; Acts 17:27)
- Conditions must be met to receive that refuge. (Rom. 10:9-10; Mk. 16:15-16)
- One must remain in that refuge to be secure. (Heb. 3:12-14)
- Ps. 46:1 → God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.