



Lesson 30 – Cities of Refuge

- 1) What did God tell Noah about murderers?

Genesis 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man's _____, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

In the early history of the world, provision was made for the punishment of the murderer. **“whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,”** was the decree of Jehovah.

- 2) What provision was made by God for those who shed blood by accident?

Exodus 21:13 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall _____.

Exodus 21:14 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine _____, that he may die.

The one nearest of kin to the murdered man usually executed the murderer; but lest in the excitement of the occasion undue haste should be exercised and individuals be slain who did not deserve death, God made provision that the murderer might flee and lay hold upon His altar. None could be taken from the altar without an examination, and if it was found that the murderer had presumptuously planned to kill the man, then he was taken from the altar and slain; otherwise, his life was spared.

- 3) How were the Children of Israel to prepare roads to the Cities of Refuge?

Deuteronomy 19:3 Thou shalt prepare thee a _____, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

After the children of Israel entered the promised land, six cities were set apart as cities of refuge. These were conveniently located, three on each side of the river Jordan. The roads leading to these cities were always to be kept in good repair, that the one fleeing before the avenger of blood might not be hindered in his flight. The cities were on elevated ground and could be seen at a distance.

- 4) What was the accused supposed to do when he arrived in the city?

Joshua 20:4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall _____ 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.

- 5) What were the Elders of that city to do?

Numbers 35:12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he _____ before the congregation in _____.

Numbers 35:24 Then the congregation shall _____ between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments:



Numbers 35:25 And the congregation shall _____ the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall _____ in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.

When the murderer reached the gate of the city of refuge, he declared **“his cause in the ears of the elders of that city,”** before he was given a place within. His case was also tried by the judges of the city near where the murder was committed, and if it was not premeditated murder, but the deed had been done accidentally or unintentionally, then the guilty man was restored again to the city of refuge whither he had fled.

The Saviour refers to this judgment in **Matt. 5:21**. If at any time the slayer passed outside of the limit of his city of refuge, his life could be taken by the avenger of blood, **“because he should have remained in the city of his refuge.”** If the decree was, **“He shall dwell in that city, . . . until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return . . . unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled. ”**

Cities of refuge in Israel were far different from the asylum of the Greeks and Romans, which often served as a protection for the most profligate characters. The cities of refuge served as a protection for only those who had slain a person without enmity. The cities of refuge were cities belonging to the Levites, thus those confined within were under the best influence. They were associated with the religious teachers of Israel and had every opportunity to reform their lives and establish righteous characters.

6) What does Jesus do for us?

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to _____ us our sins, and to _____ us from all unrighteousness.

Satan, the accuser, is upon the track of everyone; he as **“a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”**(**1 Peter 5:8**) But the person who forsakes sin and seeks righteousness stands securely sheltered by the atoning blood of Christ.

7) Where should we flee when we sin?

Hebrews 6:17-18 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for _____ to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

There could be no delay in seeking a city of refuge. As soon as the murder was committed, the murderer must flee at once; no family ties could hold him; his life depended upon his speedy flight to the city. O' that all might learn the lesson, and instead of delaying and trying to quiet our accusing conscience, when we know we have sinned, flee at once to Christ, confess our sins



and dwell in the refuge Christ has prepared. He has made ample provision that all may **“have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”**

8) What do we have when we have Jesus?

1 John 5:11-12 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath _____; and he that hath not the Son of God hath _____ life.

Anciently the one who had fled to the city found life within its walls, but death awaited him if he passed beyond its boundary. The beloved disciple was familiar with this truth when he wrote, **“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”** *It is not sufficient simply to believe in Christ; we must abide in Him if we ever hope to obtain life.*

9) What promise did God give us?

Isaiah 41:13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, _____ not; I will _____ thee.

The one who abides Within the refuge will feel and know His sheltering care, and when assailed by the enemy, may hear the Saviour saying, **“Fear not, I will help thee.”**

10) Where should we dwell?

Psalms 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the _____.

In ancient Israel, the one who had fled for refuge could not spend part of his time outside the city, and the remainder within its sheltering walls. There was no safety at any time outside the city. Likewise, our only safety is to dwell **“in the secret place of the Most High,”** and **“abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”** No man can serve two masters. We can not give the world and its pleasures the best of our time and thought, and hope to be sheltered from the final consequences of sin. We will receive our **“wages,”** or final reward, from the master we serve.

11) What are the wages of sin?

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is _____; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

If the best of our life is spent in the service of the world, we place ourselves outside the antitypical city of refuge and will finally receive the **“wages,”**—death, which will be given everyone who takes the world as his master.



12) When could the guilty leave the protection of the City of Refuge?

Numbers 35:25 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the _____ of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.

When the high priest died, those who had fled to the cities of refuge during his term of office could return to their homes. They were free forever from the avenger of blood, and he could no longer harm them lawfully. Every high priest was a type of Christ, our High Priest. The earthly priest ceased to be High Priest when he died. Our High Priest never dies; but the time will come when He will lay aside His priestly robes and clothe Himself in a vesture upon which will be written the name, "**King of kings, and Lord of Lords**".

No longer will He (**Jesus**) plead the cause of His people before the throne of God, for each case will have been decided for eternity. To those who have confessed every sin and remained cleansed by the blood of Christ, He will say, "**Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**" They will then go to their own inheritance with no fear of the avenger of blood, for the righteous will be forever beyond the power of Satan.

Can you see that God is protecting you? _____

Are you interested in abiding in Him? _____

Will you now ask Him now to cover you with His Life? _____