

JOSHUA 20-21 SAFETY AND SANCTITY 21 December 13 by Glenn Palmer

REVIEW CONQUEST

Joshua 1: *Strong in the Lord*
Joshua 2: *Spies*
Joshua 3: *Surge*
Joshua 4: *Stones*
Joshua 5: *Sacraments*
Joshua 5-6: *Supreme Commander*
Joshua 6: *Sound of the Trumpets*
Joshua 7: *Sin*

Joshua 8: *Sack*
Joshua 9: *Schemers*
Joshua 10: *Sun stands still*
Joshua 11: *Sparing no one*
Joshua 12: *So many kings*
SETTLEMENT
Joshua 13-15: *Slaying the Giants*
Joshua 16-19: *Settlements*
Joshua 20-21: *Safety and Sanctity*

JOSHUA 20 SAFETY (Cities of Refuge)

Introduction: Both Francis Schaeffer and Arthur W. Pink view this chapter as a type (forerunner) of us (the one who has sinned) and Jesus Christ (the city of refuge). In Hebrews 6:18: “God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, *WE WHO HAVE FLED TO TAKE HOLD OF THE HOPE OFFERED TO US MAY BE GREATLY ENCOURAGED.*” Since the book of Hebrews is written to the Jews, the idea of fleeing would recall two aspects. One is to flee and take hold of the horn of the altar. But this did not work out so well for Joab (I Kings 2:28-34). The other idea is to flee to the city of refuge.

Background: The cities of refuge is such an important concept that it is mentioned in four books:

Exodus 21:12-13 This was given at Mt. Sinai, before the 40 years of wandering
Deuteronomy 4:41-43; 19:1-13
Numbers 35:6-35
Joshua 20

Joshua 20:1

1. Joshua was slow to act. In Numbers 35:6 the Lord had previously commanded Moses to set apart six cities of refuge. In Joshua 20:1 he has to remind Joshua to set apart the six cities.

Practical Application: *Before we throw stones at Joshua, are there any times in your own life where the Lord has to remind you of something twice or even three times?*

Joshua 20:2 “as I instructed you through Moses”

Practical Application: *God is faithful. While we may forget, God did not forget His promise to the Israelites.*

CHRIST AS THE CITY OF REFUGE

Joshua 20:3

2. For whom is the city of refuge? *For those “who kills a person accidentally and unintentionally”*

Practical Application: *We as sinners must flee to the cities of refuge.*

3. What is the purpose of the “avenger of blood”? *To kill the one who killed.*

4. What happens if the one who committed homicide just stayed in his house or relied on his own efforts? *He would be killed.*

Practical Application: *What happens if we don’t flee to Christ? We will die.*

Deuteronomy 19:2-3 & 6

5. Where are the cities to be located? *Centrally, easy to reach; not in a remote corner*

6. What were the Israelites commanded to do? *Build roads*

Practical Application: *Christ is easily accessible and easy to reach. John 6:37*

7. From extra-Biblical resources, the Israelites repaired the roads every spring. Further, the roads were marked with a sign post that said "REFUGE" and they pointed the way to the cities. If there was a stream, a bridge was built over it so the city of refuge could be easily reached.

Practical Application: *Christ is easy to reach and there are sign posts to him. But will we flee?*

8. The cities were built on the hilltops so they were easier to see.

Practical Application: *Christ is easy to see.*

Joshua 20:9 & Numbers 35:15

9. For whom is the city of refuge? *Israelites, aliens, and any other people living among them*

Practical Application: *Who may flee to Jesus Christ? Any one.*

Joshua 20:4 "when he flees"

10. From extra-Biblical sources, the gates of the city were never closed - they were open every day, year round.

Practical Application: *When may Christ be approached? He is always approachable.*

11. To whom does he make his case? *The elders*

Joshua 20:6

12. Where does the person who commits homicide have to stay? *In the city of refuge.*

Numbers 35:26-28

13. What may happen if the accused leaves the city? *He could be killed*

Practical Application: *What happens if we leave Jesus Christ? We will die.*

Numbers 35:25

14. When is the accused free to leave the city of refuge? *When the high priest dies*

15. When are our sins forgiven? *When the great high priest, Jesus Christ, dies*

JUSTICE AND MERCY

16. What is the difference between murder and homicide?

a. Murder: *The unlawful killing of a human being by another, esp with **PREMEDITATED MALICE***

Numbers 35:16-21

Give an example.

b. Manslaughter: *The unlawful killing of a human being by another **WITHOUT EXPRESS OR IMPLIED INTENT***

Numbers 35:22-23

Give an example.

17. Is capital punishment based on the

a. Israelite ceremonial laws? (Like not eating pork)

b. the 10 Commandments?

c. on something else? *Based on God's command to Noah. Genesis 9:4-6*

18. Why is this important? *The command is for all times, like the rainbow promise*

Gen 9:6

19. Why is murder such a serious crime? *Destroys the image of God*

20. Because God is really God, destroying His image is a serious crime.

21. If we are just a by product of evolution, then we are not made in the image of God. If we are just a product of chance, then taking the life of a human being is no big deal.

22. What happens when capital punishment is banned? *It cheapens life. Murder is no different than rape or theft. Spend some time in prison and then get out.*

Numbers 35

23. What are some of the safeguards that the Lord puts to ensure justice is done?

a. Vss. 12 & 24: *Judged by an assembly*

b. Vss. 16-23

1.) *Needs intent*

2.) *Needs weapon*

c. Vs. 30 *Needs two witnesses*

d. Vss. 31-32 *Can you buy your way free? No ransoms are to be accepted.*

Exodus 21:12

24. What is the command? *Murders shall be put to death.*

Deuteronomy 19:11-13

25. "Show him no pity." Does that verse surprise you?

Practical Application: *How do we balance justice and mercy?*

Joshua 6:20

26. Even manslaughter is serious. What are the limitations that are put on the accused?

a. Joshua 20:5: *He must stay in that city until the high priest dies. So he is on a city arrest.*

b. Note that a large city may be only 15 acres in size and he would have to live there for years, in some cases even decades.

Numbers 35:15

27. Note the universality of the code. The same law, (murder-Gen. 9:6) or (manslaughter-Num. 35:15), applies to all. There is not one law for some and one law for others.

Take away: All laws are founded on God's character, not on society. God makes the laws, not man.

Joshua 20:7-8

28. How many cities are east of the Jordan? *Three*

29. How many cities are west of the Jordan? *Three*

30. Do you recognize one of the cities? *Hebron*

31. Caleb gave up the city voluntarily.

JOSHUA 21

Joshua 21:1-3

32. When do the Levites get their cities? *At the end of the line. All other tribes get their land.*

Joshua 21:4

33. Numbers 3:3: Aaron's sons were the priests.
34. The priests get thirteen cities in Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.
35. The priests are all concentrated near Jerusalem where their services were required.
36. Note that there are four lots. The priests win the first lot and win the area nearest the temple.

Practical Application: God is in charge of the lots, and of us. Not a hair from our head can fall without His providential care. We need to trust in God.

Joshua 21:5

37. Numbers 3:31: Kohathites were in charge of articles of the sanctuary.
38. The rest of the Kohathites get ten towns in Ephraim, Dan and the ½ tribe of Manasseh - all west of the Jordan

Joshua 21:6

39. Numbers 3:25-26: The Gershonites were responsible for the curtains, coverings.
40. They get thirteen towns in Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the ½ tribe of Manasseh (east of the Jordan)

Joshua 21:7

41. Numbers 3:36-37: The Merarites were responsible for the tent posts, ropes, and tent pegs.
42. They get twelve towns in Reuben and Gad, east of the Jordan River, and Zebulun (west of the Jordan River)

Joshua 21:43

43. Read this verse carefully. What are three things that are remarkable about this verse:
 - a. *The Lord **GAVE** Israel all the land He had sworn to **GIVE** to their forefathers*
 - b. *And they took possession of it*
 - c. *God's faithfulness. He swore this to Abraham in 2067 BC. 670 years later He fulfills the promise.*

Joshua 21:44

44. To enter Canaan is to enter rest.
45. Psalm 95:8-11
46. Crossing the Jordan (dying) is considered going into rest (the Promised Land).

Joshua 21:45

Practical Application: What comfort does this verse bring to you?

The Lord is faithful. The enemies were all defeated, and the Lord is faithful to his promises. Every one was fulfilled.