

Shadows of Salvation – Hebrews 6:17-18

The Cities of Refuge – Part 2

Cities of Refuge:

Death and a Curse Becomes God's Means of Life

- The cities of refuge showed God can use *death* and a *curse* to be the means of life and refuge
 - Levi's anger was cursed for the death it brought upon Shechem – Gen. 49:5-7
 - As God's priests the Levites were scattered in cities, including cities of refuge (Shechem) – Num. 18:20; Num. 35:1-6
 - By a curse connected to anger and death, God brought mercy!
- God saving plan meant His Son had to die as one **cursed** that we might live – Gal. 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:9-10
 - Jesus became **cursed** for us – Gal. 3:13
 - By His **death** we live – 1 Thess. 5:9-10

Cities of Refuge: Expression of God's Mercy

- The cities of refuge provided mercy for the manslayer.
 - Killing another carried the penalty of death – Gen. 9:6
 - These cities meant that the manslayer could receive **mercy** and not die (according to the penalty) – Josh. 20:1-5
- Christ's church provides mercy for sinners
 - Sin carries the penalty of spiritual death – Rom. 6:23; Rev. 21:8; Rom. 3:23
 - God's great love has provided sinners refuge from death through Christ and His church – Rom. 8:1; Acts 2:47

Cities of Refuge:

Known and Easily Accessible to All

- The cities of refuge were...
 - Appointed by the people – Josh. 20:1-2, 7-9
 - Strategically placed throughout the land – Deut. 19:1-3
 - Opened to all – Num. 35:15
- God wants salvation in Christ and the church to be known to all and accessible to all
 - Sent Jesus to show us the way – Jn. 14:5-6
 - The gospel is God's power to save everyone – Rom. 1:16
 - The gospel to be taken to all people everywhere – Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16
 - Salvation available today and every day – 2 Cor. 6:2

Cities of Refuge:

Rules for Entering and Protection

- God determined the rules for the cities of refuge – Josh. 20:1-6
 - God limited refuge to those who accidentally killed another
 - The manslayer must enter one of the appointed cities
- God has determined the rules for entering salvation
 - God limits salvation to being in Christ – Acts 4:10-12
 - One must enter His church – Acts 20:28; Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23
 - One must enter by His rules – Acts 2:36-39, 40-41, 47

The Cities of Refuge:

Protection Found Only Inside

- One had to stay within the city of refuge to be protected
 - The manslayer who left gave up protection and opened himself up to vengeance – Num. 35:26-28; 2 Sam. 3:27
 - There was no “once in God’s refuge, always in God’s refuge.”
- One must stay in Christ and His church to be protected
 - One must abide in Christ or be burned – Jn. 15:5-6
 - One must faithfully serve God in the church or lose the protection of His sacrifice – Heb. 10:24-31

Cities of Refuge:

Freedom Only by the Death of the High Priest

- The manslayer had to remain in the city until the death of the current high priest – Num. 35:25, 28
 - This was true no matter how long the high priest lived
 - By God's grace through the death of another he could be freed to return home
- Only by the death of our high priest, Jesus Christ, are we freed from the penalty of sin – Heb. 9:11-14