

## Cities of Refuge: Joshua 20

- *Kedesh* (righteousness), *Shechem* (shoulder), *Hebron* (fellowship), *Bezer* (fortress), *Ramoth* (heights), *Golan* (joy)
- (6) cities equally spaced, (3) on west side of Jordan, (3) on east side of Jordan
- Positioned for equal access to the entire nation, all within a day's journey from anywhere in Israel
- Primarily located on a hill and constructed from white limestone for increased visibility day or night (Jesus referred to us as a "city on a hill" or a place of refuge)
- Each city had clear signs marking the direction to the city
- The priests were tasked with keeping the roadways clear of obstructions
- The gates of these cities were never closed
- Offering refuge for any person who had accidentally killed someone
- The accused would flee the "avenger of blood", the next closest male kinsman of the deceased
- Entrance was based upon your confession and the trial took place in the city
- If guilty, the accused was turned over to the "avenger of blood"
- If innocent, the accused would remain a citizen under the protection of the city until the death of the high priest (in which case, the high priest's death was counted as his own)

## The Baptism of Jesus: Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3

- Jesus comes to John the Baptist for baptism – why? "To fulfill all righteousness" according to Jesus
- When the current High Priest was nearing death or some incapacity to serve, a new candidate (often his son) was selected
- As part of the coronation into the office of High Priest, the candidate was taken into the baptismal pool at the temple for a ceremonial washing, he was then anointed with oil over his head (anointing is often symbolic of the Holy Spirit), and when presented to the congregation, the acting High Priest announced, "this is my son and I am pleased in him"
- Jesus enters the Jordan where John is Baptizing, the Holy Spirit descends on Him in the form of a dove, and the Father announces "this is my Son in whom I am well pleased"
- Jesus was entering the office of High Priest

## Review of 2 Samuel 14: If redemption was left to a man

- Because of David's sin with Bathsheba, several "woes" would come into his family (the death of the child, David's wives given to his neighbor, violence would forever take place in David's lineage)
- David's oldest son, Amnon (the crown prince and next in line for the throne) would rape his half-sister, Tamar
- Tamar's brother, Absalom, would take the law into his own hands and kill Amnon
- Absalom would flee to his grandfather's kingdom of Geshur (not a city of refuge, but hiding) for three years
- According to the law, David as the next closest male relative, would be responsible in ensuring justice is carried out against the murderer (not accidental manslaughter as Absalom planned this for two years)
- Joab would formulate a plan to encourage David to return his son from "exile" and overlook the consequences of the law by hiring a con artist from Tekoah to present the king with her own sad moral dilemma
- As David's emotions draw him into a place of sympathy for the woman, the true reason for the story is exposed and David agrees to bring Absalom "home", however, for two additional years the king and his son are estranged
- Absalom will force Joab to announce him before the king and they outwardly embrace, but inwardly, the separation remains
- Absalom will eventually steal the throne from his father, David will flee, and a battle will follow leading to the death of Absalom by Joab
- Man overlooked sin, ignored the requirement of the law, outwardly welcomed his son home while inwardly despising him, and the son, to whom a pardon had been extended, furthered his rebellion and eventually was killed because of it
- That is why redemption was not left to a man