

SERIES: LESSONS FOR LIFE FROM GOD'S SERVANT, JOSHUA

Lesson #8: "God Establishes Justice"

Joshua 20

Announcements and opening prayer



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** If you were suddenly assigned the task of making sure everyone has a fair chance at receiving justice, how would you do it?

Question: Have you ever sat on a jury? How did the experience affect you? Would you volunteer? Are you glad we have a court system?

Transition: The people of Joshua's day were at the mercy of the lynch mob. There needed to be a system of justice. God uses Joshua to be sure the innocent are free to live and the guilty get their day of justice.

The Bottom Line: God provides for justice on earth.

LESSON PLAN



Denotes "Apply"

Read Joshua 20:1-3

I want us to back up just a little bit to understand the process of God's communication to Joshua. When Moses was told to select Joshua as his successor, he instructed him to set Joshua before Eleazar, the priest. God said Joshua would regularly stand before Eleazar and the priest would inquire of God for Joshua through the use of the Urim of the Lord. The Urim and Thummim were a part of the high priest's garments and were instruments God used to make His will known (Exodus 28:30). Joshua normally must have asked Eleazar to inquire for him concerning God's will. This is probably what was taking place as God spoke to Joshua about the cities of refuge.

1. Where did the idea of a city of refuge begin?
2. *Read Exodus 21:12-13 and Numbers 35:9-15. The concept that would be created by God was well known. God would implement the justice through the cities set apart for the Levites. They were to receive 48 cities in the conquest and 6 of them were to be designated*

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as cities of refuge when the time came for God to implement the plan.

3. For whom were the cities of refuge first designed?

The roads leading to the cities were always kept in good shape and according to tradition were required to be built at least 32 cubits broad. Nothing was to be there that would slow the fugitive's pace. Posts were set up like road signs saying "refuge." While the man was there he was to be taught some trade to support himself in the city.

4. Who were the cities of refuge designed to protect?

5. What are acts people might commit today that would cause them to need justice and protection?



Interactive Teaching Ideas: ideas for learner-focused teaching. Ask the class to discuss at each table the following assignment and then share the results from each table. If you don't have tables, simply divide into groups for this part of the lesson. (List the results on the board) Read Romans 13 and discuss the various ways this relates to how God still has His hand in protecting the innocent.

Read Joshua 20:4-6

5. What did God require the person to do if they were running for refuge?
6. If the elders believed he had a case, what did they do?

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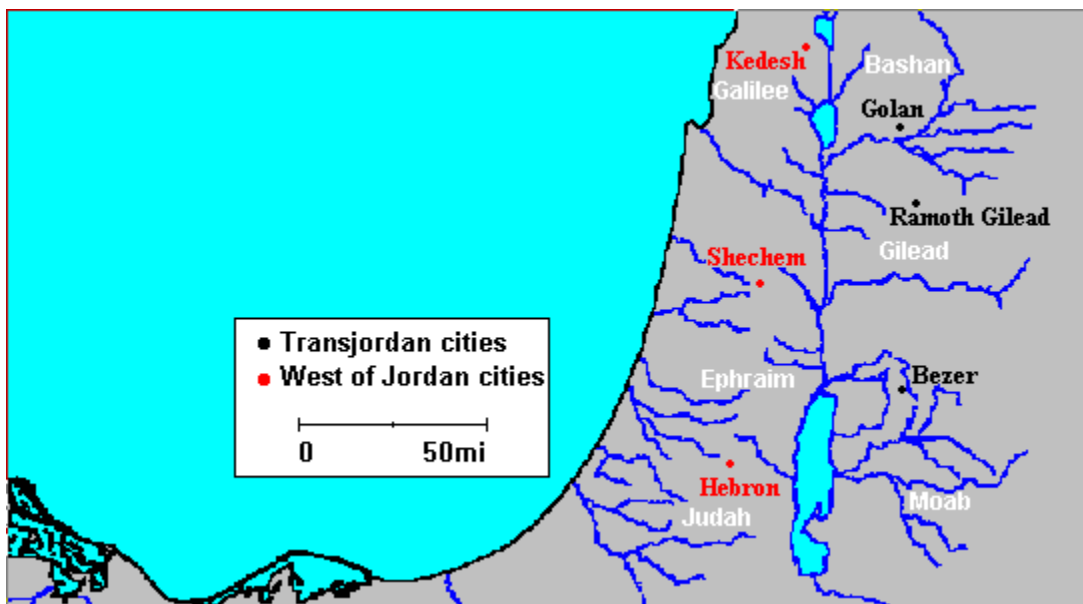
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7. What if the avenger follows him to the city?
8. What happens in the city?
9. If someone commits an accidental crime involving someone's death, how does it still have repercussions?

Read Joshua 20:4-6

9. List the towns that were selected to be cities of refuge.



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10. What happened if the trial found the one guilty who had fled to the city?

11. Who were the strangers or aliens that would have been traveling with them?

When the children of Israel left Egypt, a mixed multitude of people left with them. These would have been natives of Egypt and other countries taken captive who joined the exodus. These people were given the opportunity to become proselyte Jews, non-Jews who accept Yahweh as Lord and obey all His Law.

🕒 Notice that the instructions of God were to protect the accused until they stood trial before the Elders of the city. How has that carried over in our court systems?

🕒 How has that carried over into the church?



Going Deeper/Homework:

Memory Verse: "Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent—the Lord detests them both" (Proverbs 17:15).