

Sunday Night Message

March 22, 2018

Joshua 20

Series – *Joshua*

Text – Joshua 20; Numbers 35:9 – 28; 2 Samuel 2:12 – 32; 2 Samuel 3:17 – 39

Review

In chapter 14, we saw the general division of the Land of Israel, noting the two and one half tribes located on the eastern side of the Jordan River, and then the nine tribes plus two half tribes located on the western side of the river, with the half tribe of Manasseh receiving portions of land on both sides. Also, the Levites were dispersed throughout the Land on both sides in 48 cities, but receiving no specific land inheritance.

In chapter 15, we saw the land distribution of the tribe of Judah. (See Map) Judah was the largest of all of the tribes according to the census taken in Numbers 26. The numbers given there are for the men, twenty years of age and older who could go to war.

"These are the families of Judah according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred." (Numbers 26:22)

In chapters 16 and 17, we saw the land distribution for Manasseh and Ephraim, the two half-tribes within the Tribe of Joseph.

In chapter 18 & 19, we saw the land distribution for the remaining tribes, along with a special gift of land for Joshua.

Introduction

Tonight, we are going to examine the Cities of Refuge from Old Testament Israel, and see how they paint a wonderful picture of the Christian living safe and secure inside the perfect will of God.

[Read all of the texts slowly and carefully, using men from the congregation to illustrate Joab and Abner, and the platform to represent the city of refuge.]

Explain the typology represented from this story:

- 1 The City of Refuge represents the will of God for the Christian. It is a place of protection, provision, and production (fruitfulness).
- 2 Abner represents the Christian inside the will of God.
- 3 Joab represents the Devil who is trying to pull the Christian out of the will of God and cause him to fall spiritually.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (1 Peter 5:8-9)

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:10-13)

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:" (Luke 22:31)

Turn to Matthew 4:1 – 11

Satan often uses people to do his work for him.

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

Satan often tempts us with the lusts of our own flesh.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:12-15)

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us," (Hebrews 12:1)

It is easy to get pulled out of the will of God – out of the city of refuge - by the devil

It could happen to you or me, if we are not sober and vigilant.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12)

What happens to the Christian who falls prey to Satan?

1 They suffer personally.

If you are saved, you cannot lose your salvation, but you certainly will suffer some painful consequences while still on this earth. The problems that will result from your yielding to Satan's temptation will be very painful. It may affect you physically; it may affect you financially; and it may affect your family; but it will most certainly affect you.

Sin will always take you farther than you want to go.

Sin will always keep you longer than you want to stay.

Sin will always cost you more than you want to pay.

It just isn't worth it.

2 They suffer positionally.

In other words, their testimony is adversely affected in the eyes of the people around them, and sometimes, it is completely ruined.

3 They suffer practically.

They lose their ability to minister to others. They are no longer ambassadors. They make God look bad, and they give the enemies of God a victory:

"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." (2 Samuel 12:13-14)

Conclusion

Most of us have already fallen to some degree at one time or another since we have been saved, maybe we haven't fallen to the extent that David fell, but we have probably all been lured by the devil, or our flesh, out of the will of God; and we have already experienced some of the painful consequences that came with the fall.

The purpose of this message is not to beat up anybody who has already fallen prey, but to warn those who haven't.

Stay inside of the city – stay inside of the will of God

Practical Helps:

1 Keep Walking with God

Read your Bible every day

Spend some time in prayer every day

Yield to the Holy Spirit

2 Be Faithful to Church

3 Stay Away from People or Things (influences) that are outside of the will of God

Avoid critical, complaining, negative people

4 Avoid the small steps that lead you in the wrong direction; the little compromises

5 Help those who have fallen

Don't be critical

Don't be judgmental

Don't be prideful

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

Illustrate

W. R. – Pastor friend. Was lured into heavy debt, which caused him to have to work many hours outside of the church driving a truck. He was gone for days at a time. He eventually fell further into sin by committing adultery. He is now out of the ministry, divorced from his wife, estranged from his children, and living with a woman he is not married to; and he wishes he could go back.

By the way, his fall affected a lot of others. Your falling into sin does not just affect you personally, it affects those you love.

0 15 30 Miles
 0 15 30 Kilometers



LEVITICAL CITIES AND CITIES OF REFUGE

- Levitical city (Gershonite)
- Levitical city (Merarite)
- Levitical city (Kohathite)
- Levitical city (Aaronite)
- City of Refuge (*Num. 35:6; Josh. 20:7-9; 21:13, 21, 27, 32, 38; 1 Chr. 6:57,67*)