

Numbers 35 Bible Study Notes

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

Clarke Lee's Commentary: According to: *Nu 13:25-26; 25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. 26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.*

As established by scripture in: *De 1:2 (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadeshbarnea.)*

And in: *De 9:23 Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.*; the place, that Israel is right now, is a 11 day journey, from where they were originally told to go in to possess the land of promise.

This certainly should serve as a lesson to us that; disobedience to God can certainly take us, and others, far away from our Land of Promise, and on long wilderness journey, to die without receiving the joys of the fruits of the Promised Land. We can rob ourselves of much joy, blessing, and peace with God, by living in the strength of our own will and not according to "**thus saith the Lord**", as demonstrated by what we see transpired, in the lives of Israel, from Numbers chapter 13 until now.

Vernon McGee points out (having actually visited the place); from where they are at present, Israel can actually see Jerusalem, where King Solomon will build the temple of the Lord.

A prophetic picture, of the born again sinner who refuses to unite with and walk in faithfulness to the Church of Salvation by Grace. Oh, what great horrors, and bitter trials and tribulations, they will have to endure, by not being obedient and trusting God and Christ, and then to die in the wilderness of sin never getting to enjoy the fruit of the Promised Land.

A prophetic picture, of what we see by spiritual eyes, as we sojourn here in time and look for the eternal day, when the New Jerusalem will be revealed, and we shall enter our final abode. We see it afar off and long for the accepted day to come.

2 Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them. 3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts. 4 And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about. 5 And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities. 6 And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities. 7 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs. 8 And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.

Clarke Lee's Commentary:

In the disposition of property, we understand that God has appointed to the tribe of Levi the service of sacrifice and all the necessary things to accomplish the worship of God. Therefore, they do not get a possession of land as the other tribes.

However, we see that God is here making provision for them throughout all the land of Israel. God has appointed that they be given 6 cities, for cities of refuge (We shall see more about the cities of refuge as we go on in the chapter) and 42 cities for their possession. The cities and the tribe of Levi will be dispersed among the tribes of Israel, on a prorata distribution. We remember when the people were numbered, the tribes vary in size. The land is apportioned according to the size, and need, of each tribe, and the Levites are apportioned accordingly.

Why this proportioning of the tribe of Levi? Upon occupation of the Land of Promise; Israel will no longer be following the tabernacle and ark of God as a group. God is now setting in place the effect of the change in the lives of Israel. They will need this distribution of Levi to help them stay focused upon God. It could be compared to the churches of Salvation by the Grace of God being scattered throughout the world today.

God also makes provision, outside the city walls, for there to be place for the flocks and herds of the Levites. This then gives us the picture of the tribe of Levi as a picture of the Church of Salvation by Grace in the world today. How? Can't you see; each city of Levi and its suburbs is a place of worship set apart from the rest of the world. This then demonstrates that every Church of Salvation by Grace, where people come to worship God, should not only be a place of worship but the effects thereof should reach out into the community around it. Places set apart, designated by God, to be places of worship, and places of organized religion, to remind the world around them of the handiwork of God.

9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan; 11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. 12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment. 13 And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge. 14 Ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see that God makes provision for all of Israel, even the ones who do not take possession in Canaan. Here, God appoints 3 cities of refuge on each side the Jordan River. Since the bulk of the people will be in Canaan and only 2-1/2 tribes on this side Jordan; why would God appoint 3 cities of refuge on each side Jordan? When you look at a map, showing the borders of the possession given on each side Jordan, we discover that the property on this side Jordan is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ as large as that possession given in Canaan.

- Occupation this side (east of) Jordan River from the last census taken: 110,580
- Occupation in Canaan Land (west side of Jordan River) from the last census taken: 491,150

We see that the population comparison is about a 1:5 ratio, where the land ratio is about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$:1. Howbeit; all the tribes would be able to cross, back and forth across the Jordan River, and use the cities of refuge on either side of Jordan, as was most convenient.

15 These six cities shall be a refuge, both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them: that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither. 16 And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. 17 And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. 18 Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. 19 The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay

him. 20 But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die; 21 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: In verses 15-21 we see; God declares plainly that if one person kills another person, by deliberate action, they are guilty of murder and are to be slain by the revenger of blood.

If one person kills another person out of hatred or from ambush; that person is a murderer is to be slain by the revenger of blood.

We understand from this that God, who has already declared in commandment 6 "***Thou shalt not kill***" is reinforcing His commandment, and establishing in more detail what is murder, and what is not classified as murder.

22 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him anything without laying of wait, 23 Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him, that he die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm: 24 Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments: 25 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see in verses 22-25 that God makes provision for those who kill someone by accident. Their sentence is not the death penalty but rather confinement to the city of refuge. He is to be judged by Israel and they shall escort him to the city of refuge that is nearest his home, as I understand it, and he is to live there until the one who is High Priest, when the event happened, dies. Then he is free to return to his own possession in the land, without fear of being slain for the event.

"and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil." In this phrases we see a prophetic picture of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ. The manslayer was to remain in the city of refuge until the high priest died and then he was free to return to his home. Jesus Christ has come into the world and died the death upon the cross, which was the requirement for our relief from the bondage and debt of sin. Our High Priest having died has opened the way of Salvation by Grace and entrance to our long eternal home, the New Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

26 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; 27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood: 28 Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: We see in verses 26-28; if the one who killed another on accident leaves the city of refuge, before the high priest dies, and is found by the revenger of blood, the revenger of blood may slay him and will not be guilty of murder. Why? Because the man slayer knew; he was to be confined in the city of refuge until the high priest died. He took his own life by being disobedient to God's commandment.

29 So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die. 31 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put

to death. 32 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest. 33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. 34 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel.

Clarke Lee's Commentary: God's purpose in the death of the murderer, and the one who has fled to the city of refuge as a man slayer, is to purge the land and keep it clean. It reminds us that there is always a consequence for sin, even if it is a forgivable sin. It reminds us that even if it is a forgivable sin, there is the price of time and displacement to be suffered. We remember that even in Genesis when Cain slew Able, Able's blood cried to God from the earth where it was spilled seen in: **Ge 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**

In conclusion of this chapter; we need to see Jesus Christ revealed in some way, and see some application to our own lives.

I believe we can see in the cities of refuge, the mercy and grace of our Saviour and Lord. How? Who is it we must turn to when we fall in sin? There is no one but Jesus Christ to intercede for us before God the Father when we commit sins. This is a picture of; the Church of Salvation by Grace (cities of refuge) scattered throughout the world, to which God's people resort and seek refuge, from a world of sin that would rather kill you than see you saved.

It is easy for men to say "I am not guilty of murder and therefore I am not in condemnation of the death sentence" However, we find in the New Testament scripture, in this age of salvation by grace, these words of God: **1Jo 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.** Can you truly say, you have never had hatred in your heart for another person? I doubt that there are very many people who are not guilty of this, at one time or another in their life.

In application to ourselves, we see that there is an established place to which we should resort, the Church of Salvation by Grace. In the church we have refuge and protection from our sins, and the death penalty attached thereto, because of the shed blood of Christ for us.

Praise and glory, to the name of God, for our cities of refuge in this world of sin and sorrow. Praise God for Salvation by Grace, and for Eternal life through Christ Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!

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