

Our Hiding Place

It is very Rewarding

- We are in a series on the words, hiding place; in scripture it uses: **refuge**

God is our hiding place.

Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

- Last week, we said we all **need** a hiding place and we all **have** a hiding place.
- There are many things trying to **replace** God and His presence in our lives.
- We found scripture tells us the hiding place is what we are to turn to **first**.

Conclusion last week – if you are turning to the wrong hiding place, it will not give you **strength**.

- God is the only **legitimate** hiding place; He is the only one that can give you strength, and is the only ever present help in trouble.

The purpose of this series is to help us make God our hiding place **every day**.

Numbers 35 – gives us a picture of the cities of refuge / or hiding place

Numbers 35:9-11

⁹ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹ then you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there.

Numbers 35:12-15

¹² They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment. ¹³ And of the cities which you give, you shall have six cities of refuge. ¹⁴ You shall appoint three cities on this side of the Jordan, and three cities you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, *which* will be cities of refuge. ¹⁵ These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.

Let me explain why there were 6 cities of refuge or a hiding place.

- Israel is long and narrow, and the Jordan River in the **middle**.
- **9 ½** tribes went across the Jordan of the 12.
- **2 ½** tribes stayed and did not cross the Jordan.

3 cities on **each** side totaling 6 (3 in the north and 3 in the south)

1. No matter where you lived in Israel, you could get to a city of refuge / hiding place within **12** hours.

Numbers 35:16-19

¹⁶ 'But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁷ And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁸ Or if he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁹ The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death.

Numbers 35:20-21 – premeditated murder

²⁰ If he pushes him out of hatred or, while lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies, ²¹ or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck *him* shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.

Numbers 35:22-28 - back to manslaughter

²² 'However, if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, ²³ or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing *it* at him without seeing *him*, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm, ²⁴ then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these judgments. ²⁵ So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil. ²⁶ But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, ²⁷ and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood, ²⁸ because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.

Question: Why was God so detailed about peace and security?

Answer: God was concerned about a society learning to live in **harmony** even though it was filled with evil men.

2. God cares about every **detail** of our lives and He cares about your lives today.

God is not bound by **time**. God is already in **tomorrow** developing the details.

Numbers 35 speaks of "the Avenger of blood"

The avenger of blood is the **nearest** family member.

3. God was concerned about the victim's **family** as well as the **perpetrator**.

Watch the way God works:

- If the city judged him innocent?
- He could not go home to his family.

4. Every person has **equal** access to the city of the hiding place and has access to God.

Here is the problem: There are many people who don't attend church because they are **angry** at God – they're **bitter** towards God – thinking God didn't come through when I went to the hiding place.

5. We must understand, we are not on the same time table with God – you know the timetable we **want** or **desire**.

Story years ago

Folks – God will never be **second** – the story in Numbers gives us the 2 rules of the hiding place which is our refuge:

A. Refuge is for the **righteous** / a hiding place.

6. The cities of refuge were not for the **guilty**, they were for the **righteous**.

A hiding place is not a place for sin or sinner, but the **righteous**.

Righteous – means **right**-standing with God.

Question: What's the difference between a saint and a sinner?

- A saint is a sinner that is **washed** with the blood; someone who will turn to God, someone who admits it and **quits** it.

The hiding place is for the righteous and the way you become righteous is you take responsibility for your sin.

7. God cannot be your hiding place when you are walking in **rebellion**.

Again: refuge / hiding place for the righteous doesn't mean I don't do wrong, but when I do wrong, I **acknowledge** it and **repent**.

- I **deal with** the issues of life.

Let's now see how good the hiding place is:

Psalm 91:1-16

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

²I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." ³Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler *and* from the perilous pestilence.

⁴He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth *shall be your* shield and buckler. ⁵You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, *nor* of the arrow *that* flies by day, ⁶*Nor* of the pestilence *that* walks in darkness, *nor* of the destruction *that* lays waste at noonday. ⁷A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; *but* it shall not come near you. ⁸Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. ⁹Because you have made the Lord, *who is* my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, ¹⁰No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; ¹¹For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. ¹²In *their* hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. ¹³You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. ¹⁴"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. ¹⁵He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. ¹⁶With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation."

A. The hiding place is for the **righteous**.

Second:

B. The hiding place is not for the **rebellious**.

Question: will God forgive – of course but you won't get the prayers answered – you won't get joy and peace. It's not God's fault, it's because I was turning to someone other than **God**.

* God is saying come to **Me**. I want to be your hiding place.

Isaiah 48:22

²² "There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked."

- No **peace** for the wicked.

Question: Who is the avenger of blood?

- The word, avenger, is used **only** this time in Numbers 35.

- 104 other times, the same word is used and it's translated – **redeemed**.

* In the book of Ruth, it refers to Boaz as the near-kinsman **redeemer**.

Avenger – always refers to **God**.

Vengeance is mine says the Lord.

Satan is the **accuser**.

Jesus is the **Aquitter**.

Satan is the **condemner**.

Jesus is the **Convicter**.

The third thing I want you to see:

C. God is the **Redeemer** of all things.

- Go to God **first**.
 - Do not **rebel**.
 - In the hiding place where God's presence overwhelms you with a **redeeming** life and lifestyle.
- * You have **total victory** when your choice is “the hiding place.”