



For use in Small Groups and Personal Reflection

Question for Week following service March 17th 2024

LENT 5

City of Refuge

Joshua 20:1-9

Preparation

1. Watch the sermon from your church YouTube channel
2. Begin with a time of prayer – asking God to help you learn something new
3. Read the passages below and reflect on the questions, if meeting with a group share your answers together.

Reading:

Joshua 20:1-9

Cities of refuge

20 Then the LORD said to Joshua: ² 'Tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed you through Moses, ³ so that anyone who kills a person accidentally and unintentionally may flee there and find protection from the avenger of blood. ⁴ When they flee to one of these cities, they are to stand in the entrance of the city gate and state their case before the elders of that city. Then the elders are to admit the fugitive into their city and provide a place to live among them. ⁵ If the avenger of blood comes in pursuit, the elders must not surrender the fugitive, because the fugitive killed their neighbour unintentionally and without malice aforethought. ⁶ They are to stay in that city until they have stood trial before the assembly and until the death of the high priest who is serving at that time. Then they may go back to their own home in the town from which they fled.'

⁷ So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. ⁸ East of the Jordan (on the other side from Jericho) they designated Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau in the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead in the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan in the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹ Any of the Israelites or any foreigner residing among them who killed someone accidentally could flee to these designated cities and not be killed by the avenger of blood prior to standing trial before the assembly.

Questions for discussion

Reflect on the message of the sermon using the following questions. Take time at the end to ask what is God teaching you this week to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus?

1. What is one thing that stood out to you from this week's message?
2. Do you feel that establishing these cities was fair and just?
3. How does the establishment of the cities of refuge reflect God's justice and mercy?
4. Why do you think these specific cities were chosen as cities of refuge?
5. What significance does the equal treatment of Israelites and foreigners in these cities carry for us today?
6. What do you tend to run to for refuge (control, comfort, approval or power) and how could focusing on God's goodness, greatness, graciousness or gloriousness help you to combat that?
7. How can you see Christ as your refuge on a daily basis; in what ways can you spend more time walking with Jesus?
8. How do the cities of Refuge cast a shadow or point towards the cross to help us understand more about what Jesus came to do?

Prayer

Take some time to pray for the church, our local community and for you to know more of God in your daily walking with him.