

AFTER CHURCH DEVO

BY REBUILD

Topic: Refuge and Redemption

Opening Prayer:

Psalm 34:22 (ESV): "The Lord redeems the life of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned."

Lord, we thank You for being our Redeemer and Refuge. As we look into Your Word, open our hearts to see Your saving grace and the depth of Your mercy. Guide us into a fuller understanding of Your redemption through Christ. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Read: Joshua 20

Do you ever wonder where to turn when you've made a mistake, when guilt seems to weigh heavily on your heart? Joshua 20 reveals God's provision of cities of refuge for the Israelites, which points us to a far greater reality: God's redemptive plan in Jesus Christ.

The cities of refuge were set apart by God for those who had accidentally taken a life. Under the Law, the family of the deceased had the right to seek justice through an avenger of blood, but these cities provided a safe haven until a fair trial could take place. This system ensured that justice was tempered with mercy, providing the innocent with a second chance—a place to be protected from judgment.

However, these cities do more than provide legal protection—they point forward to Jesus, the ultimate refuge. While the cities were for those who committed accidental manslaughter, we all stand guilty before God because of sin. Romans 3:23 reminds us, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Yet, like those who fled to the cities of refuge, we can flee to Christ for protection from the judgment we deserve.

What makes the story of the cities of refuge deeply redemptive is the picture of grace. We are not just spared from punishment; we are given life. In the same way, Jesus doesn't just shield us from wrath—He redeems us. Through His sacrifice, He takes the

guilt of our sin upon Himself and offers us forgiveness and new life. The cities of refuge were a temporary solution, but Christ offers us eternal safety. Hebrews 6:18-20 tells us that Jesus is our "strong encouragement" to take hold of the hope set before us, a hope that anchors our souls.

Consider this: The city of refuge was available to anyone who needed it, and they could run to it at any time. No one was turned away, and the doors were always open. This is the heart of the gospel. Jesus is our ever-available refuge, always ready to receive those who turn to Him in faith. We don't have to earn our way into His protection—He offers it freely because of His great love and sacrifice.

In our lives today, redemption means more than just escape from judgment. It means restoration, healing, and a new identity in Christ. Just as the Israelites found safety within the city walls, we find redemption in the arms of our Savior. Our sins are forgiven, and we are no longer under the weight of condemnation. As Romans 8:1 declares, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Conclusion:

Joshua 20 reminds us that God's heart is both just and merciful. Through the cities of refuge, He provided safety for those in desperate need. Today, Christ is our eternal refuge, offering redemption for every soul that seeks Him. No matter the guilt or mistakes of our past, we can run to Him and find not only protection but full redemption.

Discussion Questions:

For Students:

1. How does knowing Jesus is your refuge help when you feel guilty or ashamed?
2. Why is it important to understand that Jesus doesn't just protect us but also redeems us?
3. How can you share this message of refuge and redemption with a friend in need?

For Parents:

1. How can you demonstrate to your children that Christ is their refuge when they make mistakes?
2. In what ways has God shown you His redemption in your own life?
3. How can your family cultivate a deeper trust in Christ as your Redeemer?

For Professionals:

1. How does the concept of Christ as your refuge impact your daily work and relationships?
2. Have you ever experienced God's redemption in a situation where you felt undeserving?
3. How can you extend grace and offer a "place of refuge" for others in your workplace?

This week, take a moment to reflect on an area of your life where you need God's redemption. Run to Him in prayer, confessing your need for His grace and protection. Rest in the truth that He is not only your refuge but your Redeemer, ready to restore and renew you.