

JOSHUA: *presence. courage. action.*

Establishing Order in the Land - Joshua 20:1-21:45

May 14, 2017

Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

- Joshua 21:45

I. A HOME FOR THE LEVITES (21:1-42)

- The Levites had been set apart by God for consecrated work based upon their obedience and passion for God and his holiness (Ex. 32:25-29).
- Joshua and Eleazar make good on the command of God through Moses (Num. 35:1-3; Josh. 13:14; 18:7).
- The distribution is broken down according to Levi's three sons - Gershon, Kohath, and Merari - 48 cities in all (21:41; Gen. 46:11).
- God scatters his priests to judge sin and offer grace throughout the land of Israel (Gen. 49:5-7).

II. THE CITIES OF REFUGE (20:1-9)

- God provides sanctuary cities so that justice will not be miscarried in the land. They are distributed amongst the Levitical towns (Num. 35:6-34; Deut. 19:1-13).
- The cities of refuge:
 1. Were distributed so that they were accessible.
 2. Were of no help to a genuine murderer.
 3. Were to save the innocent from the Kinsman-redeemer.
 4. Were available to all, not just Israelites (vs. 9).
 5. Were to be doubled if Israel expanded (Deut. 19:8-10).
 6. Were of no help to those who refused to flee.
 7. Were of no help to those who left their refuge.
- Jesus is our city of refuge (Heb. 6:13-20).
- Order, mercy and justice matter to God (Deut. 16:19-21; Micah 6:8; Matt. 23:23; 1 Cor. 14:33).

III. NOT ONE PROMISE FAILED (21:43-45)

- God is faithful, just, and orderly. His promises never fail. We are called to reflect his nature and his glory (2 Cor. 1:20; Eph. 5:1).

KNOW: Order, justice, and mercy matter to God. We are called to live rightly in this world.

DO: Be imitators of God in justice, mercy, and order.

Recommended Reading:

Generous Justice by Tim Keller (LifePoint Library #261 KEL)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Joshua 20:1-21:3

1. Why are the Levites separated out in Israel?
2. The cities of refuge are distributed among the Levitical towns. Why, do you think?
3. Why does the Bible talk so much about these cities of refuge? (see Num. 35; Deut. 4:41-43; Deut. 19; Josh. 20)
4. Talk about God's concept of justice. How does it relate to us, both on the receiving end and how we are to give justice?
5. Our text tells us that all of God's promises had been fulfilled. What does it mean to you that God is both just and a giver and fulfiller of great promises?
6. What are some of your takeaways from Sunday's message?