

City Of Refuge, When are we saved?

The Book of Numbers and The Book of Ezekiel Comparison.

Eze. 33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. 9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. 10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? 11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, ***I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked;*** but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Num. 35:15 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.*** . . . 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.

Eze. 33:14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; ***if he turn from his sin,*** and do that which is lawful and right; 15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; ***he shall surely live, he shall not die.*** 16 ***None*** of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: ***he hath done*** that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live. . . 19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and ***do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.***

Eze. 33:13 When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. . . 18

When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

Num. 35:26 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.

Who was the City of Refuge.

In the early history of the world, provision was made for the punishment of the murderer. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," was the decree of Jehovah. 1 {1914 SNH, CIS 258.1}

The one nearest of kin to the murdered man, usually executed the murderer; but lest in the excitement of the occasion undue haste should be exercised and individuals be slain ***who did not deserve death, God made provision*** that the murderer might flee and lay hold upon his altar. None could be taken from the altar without an examination, and if it was found that the murderer had presumptuously planned to kill the man, then he was taken from the altar and slain; otherwise his life was spared. 2 {1914 SNH, CIS 258.2}

After the children of Israel entered the promised land, six cities were set apart as cities of refuge. These were conveniently located, three on each side of the river Jordan. 3 The roads leading to these cities were always to be kept in good repair, that the one fleeing before the avenger of blood might not be hindered in his flight. 4 The cities were on elevated ground, and could be seen at a distance. {1914 SNH, CIS 258.3}

When the murderer reached the gate of the city of refuge, he declared "his cause in the ears of the elders of that city," before he was given a place within. 5 His case was also tried by the judges of the city near where the murder was committed, and if it was not a premeditated murder, but the deed had been done accidentally or unintentionally, then the guilty man was restored again to the city of refuge whither he had fled. 6 {1914 SNH, CIS 259.1}

The Saviour refers to this judgment in Matt. 5:21. ***If at any time the slayer passed outside of the limit of his city of refuge, his life could be taken by the avenger of blood, "because he should have remained in the city of his refuge."*** 7

The decree was, "He shall dwell in that city until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled." 8 Cities of refuge in Israel were far different from the asylums of the Greeks and Romans, which often served as a protection for the most profligate characters. The cities of refuge served as a protection for only those who had slain a person without enmity. The cities of refuge were cities belonging to the Levites, thus those confined within were *under the best influence. They were associated with the religious teachers of Israel, and had every opportunity to reform their lives and establish righteous characters.* {1914 SNH, CIS 259.2}

The instruction in regard to the cities of refuge was but a part of the great system of Levitical laws and ceremonies which *taught the simple truths of the gospel of Christ.* Tyndale says that "while there is a 'starlight of Christ' in all the Levitical ceremonies, there is in some so truly the 'light of the broad day,' that he can not but believe that God had showed Moses *the secrets of Christ* and the very manner of His death beforehand." Dr. Adam Clarke says *the whole gospel could be preached* from the particulars given of the cities of refuge, {1914 SNH, CIS 259.3}

Every time an Israelite looked upon one of the cities of refuge, God designed he should *be reminded of Christ*, the "tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion," 9 to whom every sin-burdened soul could flee for shelter. {1914 SNH, CIS 260.1}

Satan, the accuser, is upon the track of every one; he is "a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 10 But the person who forsakes sin and seeks righteousness stands securely sheltered by the atoning blood of Christ. 11 {1914 SNH, CIS 260.2}

Solomon, who was beset by temptations and sin, understood this when he wrote, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." 12 David knew what it was to dwell in the antitypical city of refuge when he said: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust." 13 {1914 SNH, CIS 260.3}

There could be no delay in seeking a city of refuge. As soon as the murder was committed, the murderer must flee at once; no family ties could hold him; his life depended upon his speedy flight to the city. O that all might learn the lesson, and instead of delaying and trying to quiet our accusing conscience, when we know we have sinned, flee at once to Christ, confess our sins, and dwell in the refuge Christ has prepared. He has made ample provision that all may "have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." 14 {1914 SNH, CIS 260.4}

Anciently the one who had fled to the city found life within its walls, but death awaited him if he passed beyond its boundary. The beloved disciple was familiar with this truth when he wrote, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in Jesus His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life," 15 **it is not Sufficient simply to believe in Christ. we must abide in Him if we ever hope to obtain life.** God has promised to "hold thy right hand." The one who abides within the refuge will feel and know his sheltering care and when assailed by the enemy, may hear the Saviour saying, "Fear not, I will help thee." 16 {1914 SNH, CIS 261.1}

In ancient Israel the one who had fled for refuge ***could not spend part of his time outside the City*** and the remainder within its sheltering walls. There was no safety at any time outside the city. Likewise our only safety is to dwell "in the secret place of the Most High," and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty" 17 No man ***can serve two Masters***. 18 We can not give the world and its pleasures the best of our time and thought, and hope to be sheltered from the final consequences of sin. We will receive our "wages", or final reward, from the master we serve. If the best of our life is spent in the service of the world, we place ourselves outside the antitypical city of refuge, and will finally receive the death, which will be given every one who takes the world as his master. 19 {1914 SNH, CIS 261.2}

When the high priest died, those who had fled to the cities of refuge during His term of office return to their homes. They were free forever from the avenger of blood, and he could no longer harm them lawfully. 20 {1914 SNH, CIS 262.1}

Every high priest was a ***type of Christ***, our High Priest. The earthly priest ceased to be high priest when he died. Our High Priest never dies; ***but the time will come when he will lay aside His priestly robes***, and clothe Himself in a vesture upon which will be written the name, "King of Kings, and Lord of lords." 21 {1914 SNH, CIS 262.2}

No longer will He plead the cause of His people before the throne of God, for each case ***will have been*** decided for eternity. To those who have confessed every sin ***and remained cleansed*** by the blood of Christ, He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." They will then go to their own inheritance with no fear of the avenger of blood, for the righteous will be forever beyond the power of Satan. 22 {1914 SNH, CIS 262.3}

Satan has usurped authority over this world. He haunts the steps of every son and daughter of Adam. But God always has had a refuge in the earth. Abel dwelt securely within its sacred precincts, 23 and Job realized its sheltering power when

Satan assailed him with his fiercest temptations. 24 {1914 SNH, CIS 262.4}

The weakest child of God, who *lives continually within this refuge*, can never be overthrown by the enemy of souls; for the angels of God encamp around such a one to deliver him. 25 {1914 SNH, CIS 263.1}

This refuge is illustrated by many symbols throughout the Bible, each one revealing some special feature of God's protecting care. Jesus, as He wept over those who had refused His love said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" 26 {1914 SNH, CIS 263.2}

Happy is the soul who can say in every, time of temptation, "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." 27 {1914 SNH, CIS 263.3}

Notes for:—

Rev. 22: 16, 17; John 7:37; 1 John 1:7. Christ is the only refuge in this world from sin and destruction.

1 Cor. 11: 1; Mal. 2: 8. God designs that his people should be examples for the world *to copy*; but when they sin, they become stumbling blocks in the way of others.

1 John 1: 9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Matt 7: 21-23; Heb. 10: 26-29; 12: 16, 17 Some may through fear of punishment come with only lip service, while in their hearts they are cherishing sin; such will not be accepted.

Let mercy set forth the situation in the following colloquy with the law: "O Law, we know that to your claims are justly forfeited the lives of all men; for all have sinned; and the righteous sentence of the Judge of all is that the wages of sin is death. But if man is left to pay that penalty himself, he must perish; and we wish to save him. Therefore provision has been made *by the Lord Jesus* to meet these demands you have upon the lives of all transgressors. You are not asked to relax your claims; but you are asked to let them *fall upon a substitute*, who takes their place, in the case of all who will accept him as such. The Lord offers himself. He will be the sacrifice on man's behalf, for against him on his own behalf you have

no claims. For the love wherewith he has loved them, freely this Saviour gives his life and death to all who will receive the gift. He permits them to identify themselves with him. **He gives himself as a 'city of refuge' into which whosoever will may run and be safe.** To all such Christ's life and death become their own. From the standpoint of sacrifice, ***their death in him offers a surrender of life*** for transgression; from the standpoint of life, the robe of righteousness wrought out in Christ's spotless life, covers all their own, in that they have the fair garments they would have had, if they had never been transgressors. In Christ, O Law, for every penitent man, behold your claims all satisfied." {1898 US, LUJ 39.1}

"Enough," responds the Law. "My claims are honored, my demands are met. The sinner may go free." {1898 US, LUJ 39.2}

And to secure this blessed privilege, the sinner has but to take Christ by faith, as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." {1898 US, LUJ 40.1}

Thus the great problem, not how the righteous may be justified, but how the sinner may be justified, his sin be canceled, and he be saved, without any relaxing of the law, without infringing upon the claims of justice, without any disparagement to the honor, dignity, and safety of the government of God, is gloriously solved. ***A right disposition on the part of the penitent to safeguard the future, is secured; for he must come under the control of a spirit of obedience and submission.*** But this alone is not sufficient for a basis of pardon to the offender. There must be in God's own nature a sense of satisfied justice; and the sufferings and death of Christ for sin, furnish just such a basis for his pardoning love. And all man has to do, all that he can do, is just to accept the atonement so freely provided for him. When he confesses his sin, and is forgiven, his pardon comes not from anything that he has done, but only from what has been done for him by another. Is it not the wonder of wonders that any one should refuse to be reconciled to God? Is it not the amazement of all heaven that any in the sore need of sinful men, should reject the "unspeakable gift"? Does not the appalling spectacle of refusal justify the saying that "there is only one miracle greater than faith, and that is the miracle of unbelief"? {1898 US, LUJ 40.2}

By the plan of salvation which was then revealed, God and Christ graciously ***granted man another trial. Adam was placed upon a new probation;*** but this did not affect in the least the sentence of death passed upon him for his failure under his first probation. But now he had only a mortal, dying nature, and he could entail nothing better than this upon his posterity; therefore they all must die as well as himself. But there was this difference: when Adam died, it was in his case the penalty of his own personal sin under his first probation; when his posterity die, it

is not to them a penalty for their own personal sins, but a result to them of Adam's sin, by which he acquired a mortal nature and transmitted it to them. When Adam was placed upon a new probation, of course it gave to all his posterity ***a probation for themselves***; for he begat them to the same condition with himself. Being on probation, they are of course subject to all the conditions of a probation; namely, life and death set before them, a judgment to decide upon their actions, and sentence to be rendered and executed according to their works,—death for disobedience, and life for righteousness through repentance and faith. {1897 UrS, HHMLD 248.1}

The temptations to which Christ was subjected were a terrible reality. As a free agent, ***He was placed on probation***, with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross-purposes with God. ***If this were not so***, if it had not been possible for Him to fall, ***He could not have been tempted in all points as the human family is tempted***. (YI Oct. 26, 1899). {5BC 1082.5} Rev. 3:21.

see study Begotten

Are we Saved Now?

We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, "I am saved." When this idea is entertained, ***the motives for watchfulness, for prayer, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist***. No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God. Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance. As long as man is full of weakness--for of himself he cannot save his soul--he should never dare to say, "I am saved." {1SM 314}

It is not he that putteth on the armor that can boast of the victory; for he has the battle to fight and victory to win. It is he that endureth unto the end that shall be saved. The Lord says, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Hebrews 10:38). If we do not go forward from victory to victory, the soul will draw back to perdition. We should raise no human standard whereby to measure character. We have seen enough of what men call perfection here below. God's holy law is the only thing by which we can determine whether we are keeping His way or not. If we are disobedient, our characters are out of harmony with God's moral rule of government, and it is stating a falsehood to say, "I am saved." No one is saved who is a transgressor of the law of God, which is the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth. {1SM 315.1}

1 Kings 20:11 And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, ***Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off***.

Several times during our conversation, in which you become very much in earnest, you repeated the sentence, "O consistency, thou art a jewel!" I repeat the same with decided force to you. You say that Anna's visions place the forming of the image of the beast after probation closes. This is not so. You claim to believe the testimonies; let them set you right on this point. The Lord has shown me clearly that ***the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided.*** Your position is such a jumble of inconsistencies that but few will be deceived. {15MR 15.1}

In Revelation 13 this subject is plainly presented; [Revelation 13:11-17, quoted]. {15MR 15.2}

This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who ***yield the truth of heavenly origin***, and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast. **What need will there be of the solemn warning**, not to receive the mark of the beast, when all the saints of God are sealed and ticketed for the New Jerusalem? "O consistency, thou art a jewel!" {15MR 15.3}

Matt. 24:13 But he that shall ***endure unto the end***, the same shall be saved.

Note: End of what? ones life or mankind. Both, for since the judgment began, ones own life—all things done are subject to investigation and the judgment held in suspension until all the cases of humanity have been decided. Then comes the end and with it the execution of judgement for those who are found ***RIGHTEOUS***. Those that are found ***UNRIGHTEOUS*** theirs to be excited at a latter time. Rev. 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and ***my reward is with me***, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

City of refuge. Num. 35 ; Ez. 33; Seed sower etc., Luke 9:62; Matt. 10:37; Matt. 24:13-Heb. 3:14; 6:11-Rev 2:26.

David Wrote of the City of Refuge, Christ.

Josh 21:13 Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest **Hebron** with her suburbs, *to be a city of refuge* for the slayer; and Libnah with her suburbs,

2Sam. 2:1 And it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, *Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.*

Ps. 9:8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. 9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

Ps. 14:6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because *the Lord is his refuge.*

Ps. 46:1 *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* 2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; See verse 7 and 11; and 48:3;57:1;59:16;62:7,8;71:7;91:2,9;94:22;104:18;142:4,5.

Ps. 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. 3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. 4 One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that *I may dwell* in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to *enquire* in his temple. 5 For in the time of trouble *he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;* he shall set me up upon a rock. 6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord. 7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. 8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. 9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. 11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. 12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen

up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed

to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. 14 Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.

Ps. 34:1 I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. 4 ***I sought the Lord***, and he heard me, and ***delivered*** me from all my fears. 5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and ***saved him*** out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. 8 O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. 9 O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. 10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. 11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12 What man is he that ***desireth life***, and loveth many days, that he may see good? 13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. 14 ***Depart from evil, and do good;*** seek peace, and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. 16 The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and ***delivereth*** them out of all their troubles. 18 The Lord is ***nigh*** unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: ***but the Lord delivereth him out of them all***. 20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. 21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. 22 The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.