

NUMBERS 35-36

REVIEW...

- NUMBERS 27-29 - A NEW LEADER FOR ISRAEL...
- NUMBERS 30-31 - TRUE TO YOUR WORD / WIPING OUT A NATION...
- NUMBERS 32-34 - LIVING ON THE FENCE / RECORDING THE JOURNEY / DIVIDING THE LAND...
 - The tribes of Rueben / Gad / ½ Manasseh wanted to settle on the east side of the Jordan...
 - Moses was furious with the request - thought they were afraid to enter the Land...
 - They compromised - they would build cities / but fight with Israel to conquer the west...
 - Because they did not enter the Land - they were the first to be conquered!
 - God had Moses record the Journey from Egypt to the Promised Land...
 - A recorded of every stop along their journey - to remember God's faithfulness...
 - Also a reminder of God's patience - Israel was a stubborn and rebellious people!
 - God had Moses set the boundaries of the Land for the 9-½ tribes...
 - From the Mediterranean / to Lebanon / to the Jordan / to the Dead Sea...
 - The Land was to be divided by sacred lots once they had conquered the Land!

NUMBERS 35 - CITIES OF REFUGE... (3 THINGS)

- 1ST - CITIES FOR THE LEVITES... VS. 1-8 READ: NUMBERS 35:7-29
 - The Levites did not receive any inheritance in the Promised Land...
 - Out of the 12 Tribes - God had chosen the Levites to serve Him in the Tabernacle...
 - The Priest - Aaronic line - were to serve offering the sacrifices to the Lord...
 - The 3 clans of Levi - Kohath / Gershon / Merari - ministered to the priests...
 - Because their inheritance was the Lord - they were given no 'land'...
 - **Joshua 18:7** - "The Levites will not receive any land. Their role as priests of the LORD is their inheritance..."
 - The Levites were given cities throughout the Land - scattered among the other tribes...
 - In all 48 cities were to be set aside for the tribe of Levi...
 - The Levites were not to be all gathered in one area - God wanted them spread out...
 - That way they could be a Godly influence in all the tribes / to all the people...

- Often as Christians we have the tendency to 'bunch up' - stick together in one group...
- We do this because we feel safer - we don't want the world to get us dirty...
- But we need to be interacting with those who do not know Jesus...
- If we are not out in the world - we cannot show the world the hope of Jesus!
- But though we are in the world - we should not be like the world - **John 17:15**
- The larger tribes would give more cities / the smaller tribes would give less...
 - Not only the city - but also the land extending out 100 meters from the city itself...
 - This was to be for planting crops / and for the animals to graze...
 - Most people when they give - give out of their excess - what they have left over...
 - Giving to God is not about necessity - God does not need money...
 - And it is not about the quantity - giving a lot means nothing if it costs us nothing...
 - It is about sacrifice - giving from the heart - showing our Love for God - **Mark 12:42-44**
- **2ND - CITIES OF REFUGE... VS. 9-29 (4 THINGS)**
 - 1st - More than one city...
 - Six cities of the Levites were set-aside as cities of refuge...
 - Three on the east side of the Jordan River / three on the west side of the Jordan River...
 - They were evenly placed so a city was never more than a days journey away...
 - Different cities - but all with the same purpose - a place to find refuge...
 - God has placed many different churches/denominations in the world...
 - Each with a slightly different flavor - different focus - but all under the same Lord...
 - The reason is so that the church can minister to all different kinds of people...
 - **I Corinthians 9:22** - "All things to all men, that I might by all means save some."
 - One person might be more comfortable in the traditions of the Catholic church...
 - Another might draw closer to God in the solid teaching of an Evangelical church...
 - There are many churches for many different kinds of people - but only One Body...
 - But every church has the same purpose - a place to find refuge...
 - 2nd - A place of refuge...
 - If you killed someone accidentally - you could run to one of the cities for refuge...
 - It was for anyone - Jew / foreigner / travelers - anyone who needed refuge...
 - Inside the walls of the city the 'avenger of blood' could not come and kill you...
 - According to Jewish law - if you killed someone - their family had the right to kill you
 - It did not make a difference if it was an accident or not - 'life for life' - **Exodus 21:23**...
 - Suppose you were out working in the field - and an ax head flew off a handle...
 - It struck and killed another worker - an accident - but when the family found out...

- They would be coming for you - the 'avenger of blood' would take 'life for life'!
- Your only hope would be to flee to a 'city of refuge' - in the city you would be safe!
- We all have all received a death sentence...
 - We are all sinners - **Romans 3:23** - cause of our sin we deserve death - **Romans 6:23**
 - If we stay in the world - at some our sin will catch up to us - and kill us!
 - It might be having one too many drinks one night - and not waking up...
 - Or as an old / broken man or woman - coming to the end of a bitter life...
 - We cannot run from our sin - at some point it will catches up to everyone!
 - The church - is a place where any sinner is welcome to come...
 - The one place where we can be safe from sin - is in Jesus / in His church...
 - It does not make any difference who you are - or what you have done...
 - God does not discriminate - He welcomes everyone in!
- 3rd - Guilty or innocent...
 - Once you arrived in the city - you would be put on trial...
 - A court to decide if you had murdered / or it if was an accident...
 - The family of the person killed would be the prosecutor - looking to convict you...
 - The leaders of the city would act as judge - deciding if the death was an accident...
 - It is considered murder if...
 - You struck a killed a person with a sword / an ax / or any other iron weapon...
 - You intently pushed someone over an edge / threw something at them in anger...
 - Even if you got into a fist fight - and the other person ended up dead - murder
 - If the death was ruled to be a murder - you were turned over to the family...
 - They had the responsibility of carrying out your death sentence!
 - It was found to be an accident...
 - If you accidentally pushed someone / threw something not meaning to hit them...
 - If you dropped a stone - but did not see the person below you...
 - Modern example: If a child ran out in the street and you hit them with a car...
 - Then you were allowed to safely stay in the city - you were not put to death
 - We also are all on trial - to see if we are guilty or innocent...
 - Picture a courtroom - we are on trial for our sins - God is the judge...
 - Satan is accusing us - **Revelation 12:10** - wants to see us condemned to hell...
 - He has all the 'evidence' he needs - all our sins / our immoral thoughts...
 - But Jesus - our defender - comes to our rescue - He points out one simple fact...
 - All our sins were paid for in full on the cross - we are found not guilty!
 - We have been forgiven - we are innocent...
 - There are no levels of sinners – greater or lesser sinners – we are all just sinners...
 - We have all purchased our place in eternity with the 'reward' of our sin...
 - Our hope – if we will believe – Jesus died for us so that we go instead to heaven!
 - God does not send good people to Hell – there are none!
 - What is amazing is that because of Jesus – God sends sinners to Heaven!

- 4th - The rules for living in the city...
 - 1st - You could not leave...
 - The person found innocent - was only safe as long as they stayed in the city...
 - If you left the city - and the family of the person you killed found you...
 - They could avenge the death - kill you - and they would be innocent - not murder...
 - The person should have stayed in the protection of the city...
 - Does that mean we have to stay in our refuge - stay in church...
 - It is certainly a good idea to spend a lot of time in church...
 - That is where we learn and grow - a place to strengthen our walk with Jesus!
 - But we are not required to stay - we have been set free because...
 - 2nd - The death of the High Priest...
 - All those who were confined to the cities were then set free...
 - You could leave the city of refuge without fear of reprisal from the 'Avenger'...
 - It seems strange that God would make the death of the high priest the key event...
 - But it looked forward to the most important event in all of history...
 - The death of our High Priest - Jesus...
 - Jesus is our High Priest - **Hebrews 9:11** - and He died to set us free!
 - We should be living in fear of death - the avenger coming to make us pay for our sin...
 - At best we should be stuck within the 4 walls of the church - our refuge...
 - But instead Jesus has set us completely free - given us new life!
 - **John 8:36** - "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."
- 3rd - **LAW FOR MURDERS... vs. 30-34**
 - All murderers must be executed...
 - God's establishes the Law for murder with the intent to protect/preserve life...
 - He does it through the deterrent of the death penalty for murder...
 - God here shows that nothing is more precious than human life...
 - The reason – man is created in the image of God: body / soul / spirit...
 - One of the premier characteristics of a Godly society is the 'sanctity of life'
 - Contrast – muslims walk into malls and blow themselves up – homicide bomber...
 - Jews will take any victim – muslim or Jewish into the hospital to keep them alive...
 - Because the Jews believe in the 'sanctity of life' any life – created in the image of God
 - You cannot accept a ransom for murder...
 - A murderer was not allowed to 'pay' for his crime in cash - buy his life back...
 - Every murdered had to be put to death for his crime...
 - A person in a city of refuge - could not buy his freedom - pay off the avenger...

- He had to wait till the death of the high priest before he could be free...
- There is no other way to be set free apart from Jesus...
 - You can't buy your way out of hell - you can't earn your way into heaven...
 - There is no paying the priest - to give to you the 'extra good works' of the saints...
 - You cannot read enough passages of the Bible / you cannot offer enough prayers...
 - You cannot give enough money to the poor - to make up for your sin...
 - The only way to be forgiven - the only way to be free - it is through Jesus Christ!

NUMBERS 36 - KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY...

- THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD... READ: NUMBERS 36:1-6
 - The leaders of the tribe of Manasseh came to Moses... vs. 1-5
 - God gave the daughters the right to inherit their father's land - **Numbers 27**...
 - But if those women (*from Manasseh*) married men from a different tribe...
 - That land would become the possession of their husband's tribe...
 - If land isn't redeemed before Jubilee - switched to the new owner - **Leviticus 25**...
 - When the Jubilee came - the land would be permanently lost to Manasseh...
 - I am impressed that the men of Manasseh figured this problem out...
 - They had to cross reference several different parts of God's Word...
 - Because they studied God's Word - they were able to avoid a potential problem...
 - It is so important we take the time to get into God's Word...
 - It is through God's Word we learn to avoid the pitfalls of life we are so prone to fall into!
 - Marrying within the tribe... vs. 6-13
 - Moses agreed and gave this command from the Lord...
 - If a woman was set to inherit the Land - she could only marry within her tribe...
 - That way the Land would change family - but not change tribe...
 - No land was allowed to pass from one tribe to another...
 - Each tribe was to make sure it held on to its allotted inheritance of land!
 - When we get married - we need to marry 'within our tribe'...
 - * **II Corinthians 6:14** - "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers..."
 - If someone is 'religious' and knows 'about Jesus' does not mean they are saved...
 - Don't marry someone just because they are cute - marry one who loves the Lord...
 - Be very careful whom you choose to be your spouse - it is a permanent decision...
 - Find a man/woman who loves the Lord - not just in words - but also in actions...
 - Otherwise they might end up drawing you away from your walk with Jesus...
 - You might find you lose your inheritance in the Land!