

Cities for Justice, People for Worship

Worship: Blessed, WayMaker

Word: Joshua 20:1 – 21:45

Chapter 21:43-45

⁴³ So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ⁴⁴ The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

Overview

Joshua 20–21 gives us a closer look at life in the land for Israel in two areas—criminal justice and worship—based on what Moses had said they should do when they entered the land. At first glance, as with other parts of Joshua, it may appear there isn't much here for the New Testament Christian. But with some reflection, there is much to learn. This section closes with a God-exalting summary of all that has happened to this point in the narrative.

Questions for discussion

1. This chapter opens with a command from the Lord to appoint cities of refuge according to Moses' instruction. Read the background to this in Numbers 35:9–34. What factors distinguish murder from manslaughter?
2. What does this arrangement teach us about God? What does this passage teach us about mankind?
3. With the land now divided, the last three verses of this chapter summarize all that the Lord has done for his people. What three things has the Lord given to Israel? What key verb is repeated?
4. Take time to reflect on the implications of Joshua 20:1–21:45 for your life. How does this passage lead you to praise God, repent of sin, and trust in his gracious promises? What response should this evoke from us as we reflect on our own salvation?