

# Joshua 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

## Analysis

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**And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly—**

The go'el ha-dam (גֹּאֵל לַדָּם, 'avenger of blood') was the victim's nearest kinsman, obligated to exact justice. But cities of refuge protect those who killed **unwittingly** (bishgagah, בִּשְׁגָגָה, 'in error/without intent'). **And hated him not beforetime** proves no malice existed.

Intent matters to God. Accidental sin differs from presumptuous sin (Numbers 15:27-31). Christ's blood provides refuge from the consequences we deserve, but we must flee to Him. The avenger cannot breach the refuge—Satan cannot pluck believers from Christ's hand (John 10:28-29).

## Historical Context

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The go'el (redeemer/avenger) had dual roles: redeeming family property and avenging family blood. This kinsman-redeemer concept prefigures Christ who redeems us from sin's slavery and death's penalty (Ephesians 1:7, Galatians 3:13).

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

- ## Interlinear Text

## Additional Cross-References

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