

Joshua 20:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

Analysis

And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days

—Two conditions for freedom:

1. trial before the congregation validates asylum
2. the high priest's death releases the manslayer. **Then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house.**

The high priest's death liberates—a profound type of Christ.

His death frees us from sin's penalty, restoring our true inheritance (Colossians 1:12-14). The manslayer cannot leave refuge until death occurs; likewise, we remain in Christ until His death's power fully manifests in our resurrection (Philippians 3:20-21).

Historical Context

This law prevented revenge killings while acknowledging the seriousness of taking life, even accidentally. The high priest's death marked a generation's end, allowing

societal reset. Josephus notes this prevented the manslayer's indefinite exile while honoring the victim's family.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the high priest's death releasing captives picture Christ's atoning sacrifice?
2. What does dwelling in the refuge city teach about abiding in Christ daily?

Interlinear Text

וְיָשָׁב בּוֹ	הָעִיר יִרְ	יָהּ יֵא	עַד	עֹמֵד וְ	לִפְנֵי י
And he shall dwell	in that city	H1931	H5704	until he stand	before
H3427	H5892			H5975	H6440
הָעֵדָה	לְמִשְׁפַּחַת	עַד	מוֹת	הַכֹּהֵן	הַגָּדוֹל
the congregation	for judgment	H5704	and until the death	priest	of the high
H5712	H4941		H4194	H3548	H1419
אֲשֶׁר	יְהִי הַ	בַּיָּמִים	הָהֵם	אֵז	יָשׁוּב
that	H1961	shall be in those days	H1992	H227	return
H834		H3117			H7725
הָרוֹצֵחַ	וְבָא	אֵל	הָעִיר	וְאֵל	בֵּית וְ
then shall the slayer	and come	H413	in that city	H413	and unto his own house
H7523	H935		H5892		H1004
אֵל	הָעִיר יִרְ	אֲשֶׁר	נִס	מִשָּׁם:	
H413	in that city	that	from whence he fled	H8033	
	H5892	H834	H5127		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 35:12 (Judgment): And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.

Hebrews 9:26 (Parallel theme): For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

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