

Numbers 35:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge.

Analysis

Six cities shall ye have for refuge (עָרֵי מִקְלָט, arei miklat)—literally 'cities of absorption' or 'receiving.' These sanctuary cities foreshadow Christ as our refuge from divine justice. The number six (three on each side of Jordan) ensured accessibility from anywhere in Israel—no innocent manslayer should perish for lack of refuge.

The Hebrew root qalat means 'to receive' or 'take in,' picturing God's merciful provision. Like these cities, Christ is accessible to all who flee to Him (Hebrews 6:18: 'we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge')—no geographical, ethnic, or moral barrier prevents the guilty from finding safety in Him.

Historical Context

Established after Israel's conquest of Canaan (Joshua 20), these cities implemented divine justice balancing punishment with mercy. Three were appointed in Transjordan (Bezer, Ramoth, Golan) and three in Canaan proper (Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron)—all Levitical cities ensuring priestly oversight.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Christ fulfill the typology of the cities of refuge—offering asylum from the 'avenger of blood' (God's justice)?
2. What does the accessibility of six strategically-placed cities teach about God's desire that none should perish?

Interlinear Text

עַרֵי י	אֲשֶׁר	תִּתֶּנּוּ	שֵׁשׁ	עַרֵי י
And of these cities	H834	which ye shall give	six	And of these cities
H5892		H5414	H8337	H5892
מִקְלָט	תְּהִי יָנָה	לָכֶם:		
shall ye have for refuge	H1961	H0		
H4733				

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