

# Numbers 35:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled;

## Analysis

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**But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge**—the asylum was geographically bounded. Stepping outside, even momentarily, forfeited protection. The manslayer's safety depended entirely on remaining within prescribed limits, just as our spiritual security depends on abiding in Christ (John 15:4: 'Abide in me, and I in you').

The severity of this boundary underscores the seriousness of sanctuary. The city wasn't a prison—residents could move freely within—but leaving meant facing the go'el ha-dam without legal protection. Grace has boundaries; presuming upon it brings peril.

## Historical Context

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The six cities of refuge were substantial Levitical cities (Joshua 21), not mere outposts. Residents could work, worship, and live normally—but never leave. Archaeological evidence from Hebron and Shechem shows these were thriving urban centers where manslayers could build meaningful lives while exiled.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. What does the strict boundary of the refuge city teach about the limits of God's protective grace for those who willfully stray?
2. How does the requirement to remain within the city's border illustrate Jesus's command to 'abide in Me' (John 15:4-6)?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאֵם	אֵלֶּיךָ	אֵלֶּיךָ	הַרֹצֵחַ	אֵת	גְּבוּל	עִיר
H518	come	come	But if the slayer	H853	without the border	of the city
	H3318	H3318	H7523		H1366	H5892
מִקְלָטוֹ	אֵשׁ	רָ	יָנוּס	שָׁמָּה:		
of his refuge	H834		whither he was fled	H8033		
H4733			H5127			

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