

Joshua 20:1-9 **Cities of Refuge in Promised Land**

Command to establish Cities of Refuge

¹ The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, ² "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, ³ that the slayer who kills a person accidentally or unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

Purpose of City of Refuge

⁴ And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. ⁵ Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand. ⁶ And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.' "

Cities appointed as Cities of Refuge

⁷ So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron) in the mountains of Judah. ⁸ And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh.

⁹ These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Command to establish Cities of Refuge

- ✧ The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, that the slayer who kills a person **accidentally** or **unintentionally** may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. [\[Joshua 20:1-3\]](#)
- ✧ The command to establish Cities of Refuge was from Yehowah to Moses and Joshua. [\[Numbers 35:6-15, Joshua 20:1-3\]](#)
- ✧ The purpose of the command for cities of Refuge is to protect innocent blood from being shed before the case can come to trial.

Law of City of Refuge

- ✧ And when he flees to one of those cities, and **stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city**, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, **because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand.**

And he shall dwell in that city **until he stands before the congregation for judgment**, and until the death of the one who is high priest in those days.

Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.' " [\[Joshua 20:4-6\]](#)

✧ The City of Refuge is not a haven for the wicked murderer, but for the one who killed another accidentally, the murderer shall be put to death [\[Numbers 35:6-34\]](#)

Cities appointed as Cities of Refuge

✧ So they appointed

✧ **Kedesh** in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali,

✧ **Shechem** in the mountains of Ephraim,

✧ **Kirjath Arba** (which is Hebron) in the mountains of Judah.

✧ And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned

✧ **Bezer** in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben,

✧ **Ramoth** in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad,

✧ **Golan** in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. [\[Joshua 20:7-8\]](#)

✧ These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood **until he stood before the congregation for trial.** [\[Joshua 20:9\]](#)