

THE PLACE OF REFUGE

Int.

1. Aim: To show that men today have a place of refuge as they have had in the years before.
2. Numbers 35:6 "And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities."
3. In times of war - trouble - danger - we need a place of safety a place of refuge !
4. God has the power to bless mankind in any place and under any circumstances
 - a. But God has the right to say where and how His blessings may be obtained
 - b. Man must accept the blessings of God on God's terms.
5. God is no respecter of persons in blessing man
 - a. He makes his sun shine and rain fall on the just and the unjust - Matt. 5:45
 - b. But God's spiritual blessings have always been given carefully and on certain terms of acceptance.
6. Notice 3 examples in the O.T. History and 1 in the N.T. which illustrate this principle

Discussion

I. ARK - a Place of refuge and safety

- A. Because of wickedness God had decided to destroy the earth and its people with a flood
 1. But God offered Noah a way of salvation from the flood !
 2. Gen. 7:1, 7, 23

B. Salvation was offered only in the ark !

1. God could easily have placed salvation in a cave, or high mountain. Gen. 7:19
2. It was God's choice !
3. Once God made His choice man could either go along with it or be destroyed.

C. Noah believed in God

1. He was saved by faith
2. Heb. 11:7a "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house;"
3. This would not have been true if he had not entered the place where there was refuge !

D. There was only one place of refuge - - that was the one chosen by God.

II. HOUSE - - Refuge and safety in the house - Exodus 12

A. Passover

1. Last plague to free children of Israel from Egyptian bondage
2. God wanted to save the 1st born of Israel and destroy the 1st born of Egypt
3. God sets his terms for deliverance:
 - a. Kill a lamb - Apply blood to door posts where Passover meal was to be eaten
 - b. God promised "and when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Ex. 12:13
 - c. And He stated "And none of you shall go out at the door of the house until morning." Ex. 12:22-23

B. Saved in the house

1. Where did God promise to save them ? Where could they expect to be saved?
2. God could have spared the 1st born in some other way - sleep on stomach that night
- sleep on floor - wear a certain color of clothing
3. It is not a question of what God has the power to do.
4. But the question is what God has promised to do !

C. There was one place of refuge - the House - the Israelites would have suffered the same fate as the Egyptians if they had not obeyed by staying in the place of refuge.

III. CITY - Place of refuge and safety

A. In the land of Israel God made a provision for a man who unintentionally committed man-slaughter

1. There were 6 cities selected as cities of refuge - Josh. 20:7-8 - an asylum
 - a. 3 on the West of Jordan - Kedesh, Shechem and Hebron
 - b. 3 on the East of Jordan - Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan
2. In these cities the man was safe from the avenger of his blood
3. He had to stay there until the death of the high priest
4. If he left the avenger could legally kill him
5. **Numbers 35:25-28**

B. Safety was in the city

1. God could have provided refuge in the mountains, fields or valleys
2. But God said his place of safety was in the city !
3. Refuge was only on God's terms - death stalked on the outside !

IV. SHIP - SAFETY was in the Ship - Acts 27

A. Dangerous voyage to Rome

1. Paul had a vision from God - purpose was to save his life and all those aboard ship
2. Demanded definite action on part of the others on the boat
3. Acts 27:21-26 - 276 passengers
 - a. Storm - life was in danger
 - b. He reassured them that God had promised to spare all of them
 - c. But Paul told them: "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Acts 27:31

B. Safety was in the ship - not in the life boats

1. God could have spared their lives in a life boat.
2. God could have spared them on floating wood or even in the water.
3. But God set forth the place of their safety and they couldn't find it anywhere else!
!
4. Once God set forth the place of safety their life could be saved only in the place - the SHIP !!

V. THE CHURCH is the only place of safety today !

A. God has placed spiritual salvation in Christ

1. Acts 4:12 " Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
2. To be in Christ, in the church, in the body - refers to the same thing
 - a. Eph. 1:22-23
 - b. Col. 1:18, 24

3. God could have saved men out of Christ but he promised to save us in Christ !
4. God could have saved men in some other way, such as requiring every person to journey to Jerusalem at least one time in their lifetime.

B. All spiritual blessings are in Christ

1. Paul says that God "Hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ." Eph.1:3
2. God does not save outside the church or outside of Christ.
3. There is no promise of the salvation of our soul outside of Christ.
4. The place of refuge for all men today is in the Christ or in His Church

C. God planned this way of salvation

1. Gen. 12:3 promised Abraham that "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
2. The Old Testament traces the development of the seed of Abraham. The seed through whom all would be blessed was Christ.
3. Matt. 1:1-6 - V. 18-21
4. God's plan of Salvation was that Christ the seed of Abraham was our saviour.

D. The church is not a denomination !

1. The church which is the place of refuge or safety is not a denomination
 - a. Jesus promised to build his church - Matt. 16:18
 - b. He said nothing about denominations
2. In the N.T. the church was never called a denomination

- E. How can you determine the place of refuge from a false shelter ?
1. Learn how the Bible describes the N.T. Church
 2. Illustration - Bankers are taught by the FBI how to identify counterfeit currency. They are drilled in how to distinguish genuine money. They were not shown a single piece of counterfeit money. The theory was that if you know the real thing, you can detect the unreal or the false.
 3. If we know what the Bible teaches then we can tell that something is false
- F. God has promised that the place of refuge or place of Salvation today is in the church
- !! There is no other way !

Conclusion

1. God has always provided a place of refuge for his people
 - a. Ark = in the days of Noah
 - b. House = in the time of the Passover
 - c. City = place of refuge under Law of Moses for unintentional killing
 - d. Boat = in the journey of Paul to Rome
 - e. Church = for all people today
2. God's plan for getting into the church is -F.R.C.B = Salvation
3. If you will obey the Gospel then God will add you to his Church - Acts 2:47
4. Are you ready to enter the place of refuge? The Church
5. If you have left the place of refuge then will you return ?