

## 06-Joshua-20-Transcript

0:40: Well, greetings, brethren.

0:41: Welcome to another line upon line Bible study, where together we study the scriptures line upon line.

0:48: This, evening, God willing, I want to get into Joshua chapter 20.

0:52: It's a short, chapter.

0:54: It only has 9 verses, but there's a lot here, so we'll get into it right away.

0:59: Let me open with a word of prayer.

1:01: Our loving Heavenly Father, we bow before you.

1:03: Just thank you so much, Lord, for your gracious kindness toward us.

1:07: Thank you, God, of all the billions of people alive now, the billions of people who have ever lived, that we are among those.

1:15: who love you, who know you, who have been grafted into the covenant.

1:22: Who are in the body of Christ with this precious knowledge growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.

1:30: Thank you, God, for the kindness you've shown to us.

1:32: We pray God you'll continue to bless our studies, that you'll continue to deepen our faith, and that you'll continue to deepen our love for you and for each other.

1:43: Thank you, Lord.

1:44: We thank you for Jesus Christ.

1:45: Thank you for everything that He has done for us, that he is doing for us, and that He has made us a part of this covenant community, and that we have a purpose in Him.

1:55: Thank you, Lord.

1:55: We ask your blessing now in Jesus' holy name.

1:58: Amen.

1:59: So, brethren, I'm not live tonight, so usually, Pastor Murray will tell me that I'm coming through loudly and clearly.

2:06: I'm going to hope that I am.

2:08: I'm on the road and I'm, I'm recording.

2:10: Hopefully, the recording will go well.

2:13: And you are still able to live chat with each other cause I don't intend to be more than an hour here, probably about 45 minutes.

2:21: Let me get into it before I do, do, make a note of thanking Pastor Murray and Pastor Gary.

2:28: he might not be live, but Pastor Murray, I think will be, just for their service and helping us with the count.

2:34: To Pentecost and just keeping us in that right frame of mind and taking time to think about the characteristics that are required for us to be successful in Christ.

2:46: Let me go ahead and share my screen.

2:52: Very, very good.

2:55: OK.

2:56: Joshua chapter 20.

2:58: The Lord.

2:59: Jehovah Also spoke unto Joshua, saying, so, we covered chapter 19 last week.  
3:11: Joshua was the last person, after he took care of everybody to receive his portion of land.  
3:18: So now all the tribes have received their land.  
3:22: Joshua has received his.  
3:24: all that's left now are this chapter, the cities of refuge.  
3:29: And then God willing, the chapter will cover next week, which is the cities of the Levites.  
3:35: Well, both of these chapters are cities of the Levites.  
3:38: They're gonna get 48 cities, but 6 of the 48 are to be cities of refuge.  
3:43: So, we'll deal with the cities of refuge today, and then God willing, next week, we'll deal with the, other cities that are to be given to, so the Levites don't get land.  
3:53: All the land has been distributed, but they do get cities.  
3:56: So we'll cover that next week.  
3:58: OK.  
3:59: So the Lord, also spoken to Joshua, saying, speak to the children of Israel, saying, I'll point out for you cities of refuge.  
4:08: Whereof I spoke unto you by the hand of Moses.  
4:11: So, today we hear a lot about sanctuary cities and asylum seekers.  
4:17: this is coming from the Torah.  
4:18: You hear that in Western countries, Western civilization.  
4:23: Because it's influenced by the Torah.  
4:25: Well, I think we have no idea how much the Bible has influenced Western civilization and the blessings that we've received as a result.  
4:33: If it were not for oil, If it were not for oil.  
4:37: Everyone who follows Muhammad would be in poverty and disaster.  
4:43: But God is moving his hand.  
4:46: And through oil, the followers of the the Muhammedans have become very powerful.  
4:52: And that's where that has everything to do with what we're studying now.  
4:57: And and how Israel has not obeyed what Moses and Joshua taught them.  
5:03: And so, the covenant is, is active, the covenant curses have been activated, and they're, they're in play.  
5:11: Anyway, what he says, you know, I spoke unto you by the hand of Moses.  
5:16: So Joshua has heard this already through Moses.  
5:20: And there's a number of places in in the Torah, where God is talking to Moses about sanctuary cities, and then Joshua is the one who carries it out.  
5:29: Joshua is all about execution.  
5:31: So what's the Moses is, here's the plan.  
5:33: Joshua is, let's execute.  
5:36: So, they, they paired well together.  
5:39: Numbers 35 and 6, and among the cities, which you shall give unto the Levites, there shall be 6 cities for refuge.  
5:47: So the, the Levites don't get land, but they get cities, but 6 of the cities that the Levites get need, need to be or get need to be cities of refuge, which you shall appoint for the manslayer.  
5:59: That he may flee there.  
6:01: So there's, you, you shall not murder.

6:04: But manslaughter is not murder.

6:06: Murder is premeditated.

6:07: And so in the case of some, so once you're setting up the, taking up, taking over the promised land and you're setting up the covenant community, we have to make an accommodation for manslaughter.

6:19: So set up these cities of refuge for the man, for manslaughter, the manslayer, that he may flee there.

6:25: And to them He shall add 40 and 2 cities.

6:29: So, 6 cities for refuge and then 42 other cities.

6:33: So, 48 cities in all for the Levites.

6:36: So, all the cities which you shall give to the Levites shall be 48 cities.

6:42: The shall you give with their suburbs.

6:44: So, there's always these sort of surrounding suburbs with the cities, and we, we, we read that last week when we were hearing how the rest of the land.

6:52: was being given to the tribes, but all the tribes, from beginning with Judah and Caleb, to all the tribes, they get their cities, plus they get the suburbs, surrounding areas.

7:01: That's gonna be really important for the Levites.

7:05: Cause they have to look after their cattle, but it's important for all of them that there's a buffer zone between the cities.

7:12: So, it's not like there's a border and you look over the fence and there's the other tribe.

7:16: There's gonna be these suburbs in between just as a buffer zone between the cities.

7:23: And going back to Joshua verse 3, so God's reminding Joshua what's the purpose of these cities of refuge, that the slayer that kills any person unaware and unwittingly may flee there.

7:36: And they shall be for your refuge from the from the avenger of blood.

7:41: So, when somebody is killed, then a relative can go and avenge that, that blood.

7:51: Going back to Numbers 35:11, then you shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the slayer may flee there, which kills any person at unawares.

8:04: 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.

8:15: So only if he's guilty of murder should he be put to death, but manslaughter is not punishable by death.

8:23: And of these cities which you shall give, 6 cities shall you have for refuge.

8:30: So that's how Moses was instructed.

8:32: That's what Joshua is being told to carry out.

8:34: Verse 4, Joshua 20.

8:37: And when he that does flee onto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, so all these cities were fortified and had walls and a gate to get in and out, but the elders are going to be at the gate, and the, the, the person who's running for their life, and the Avengers after them is going to get to the gate and explain to the elders what happened.

9:00: When he flee onto one of those cities, he shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city.

9:08: They shall take him into the city unto them and give him a place that he may dwell among them.

9:14: So there, it's not just an open border where anybody can just come in and, you know, we'll use the tax money of the people who live here and we'll put you up in a four-star, five-star hotel.

9:24: We'll give you all your meals.

9:26: We'll give you a card so you can.

9:27: , buy whatever you need and, and they will finance you.

9:32: You just come and live like a king among us.

9:34: No, this is about something that you're worthy of death, but it's a misunderstanding.

9:42: And so we're gonna hear, say, OK, yes, that sounds like a misunderstanding.

9:46: Come in.

9:47: And we're gonna look after you, but for how long?

9:52: And if the avenger of Blood pursues after him, so the, he saw that he went into that city, so the Avenger of Blood now comes to the gate.

10:01: If the Avenger of Blood pursue after him, Then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand.

10:09: So no, you cannot have him.

10:12: Because he smote his neighbor unwittingly and hated him not before time.

10:17: It was not premeditated.

10:18: It's a horrible thing.

10:19: It's a tragedy what has happened, but it was not premeditated.

10:23: Listen to what God says to Moses in Deuteronomy 19:6.

10:28: Lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer while his heart is hot, people are furious that this happened.

10:35: While his heart is hot and overtake him, so he's fleeing to the city of refuge, he catches up with him because the way is long and he slays him, whereas he was not worthy of death inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.

10:51: So that would just be a double tragedy.

10:54: So, somebody, something happened, someone died, that's tragic.

10:57: It wasn't premeditated.

11:00: Now, the Avenger catches up and kills the person that was, so now there's a double tragedy.

11:04: So this must not happen.

11:07: He that smites a man, Exodus 21:12, if you kill him, if you smite a man so that he dies, you shall surely be put to death.

11:18: So this is, it's eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life.

11:21: So you kill somebody, you die.

11:23: But if a man lie not in wait.

11:27: But God delivers him into his hand, then I will appoint you a place where he shall flee.

11:32: So, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life.

11:37: But if it wasn't preplanned.

11:40: But not even a hair can fall from our head.

11:44: A sparrow can't even fall to the ground.

11:46: Without God's permission.

11:48: If by God's will.

11:51: The person dies, but it wasn't premeditated.  
11:55: God is saying, I'll set up a place where he can flee.  
12:00: But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor to slay him with guile, you shall take him from mine altar that he may die.  
12:08: So, that's the situation.  
12:10: We're just making a determination or a separation between murder and manslaughter.  
12:16: So if manslaughter is not a a a crime worthy of death.  
12:26: Joshua 20:6, a very interesting verse 6.  
12:29: And he shall dwell in that city, so the elders have let him in.  
12:34: He shall dwell in that city until he stand before the congregation for judgment.  
12:40: So this is sort of the, the buffer zone.  
12:42: There will be a trial.  
12:44: And a jury is going to determine whether or not it's murder or manslaughter.  
12:52: But until that trial, he can stay in the city of refuge.  
12:56: And then if he's found not guilty of murder, that it was in fact manslaughter, then he'll stay in that city of refuge until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days.  
13:08: So whoever the high priest is when the manslaughter happened, he's got to stay in the city of city of refuge.  
13:16: first of all, he's got to be found not guilty of murder, and then he stays in the city of refuge until the high priest dies.  
13:24: When the high priest dies, then shall he shall the slayer return and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.  
13:36: So these, these, the cities have all been inherited by the different tribes.  
13:42: And if somebody happens to be in one of the cities of Judah.  
13:47: But an accident occurs and somebody dies, they may have to flee to Ephraim or wherever they can get the city of refuge.  
13:55: And they're gonna stay there and they're found not guilty of murder.  
14:00: They're going to stay there until the high priest dies.  
14:03: When the high priest dies, and a new high priest is put in place, when that high priest dies, he can now go back to his home and back to his family, and the avenger of blood cannot touch him.  
14:19: Now, I want to just deal with two parts.  
14:22: This is a very, very dense verse here, verse 6.  
14:25: There's two things here.  
14:27: The first part I want to deal with is that he has to stand before the congregation for judgment, and then the second part I want to deal with is the death of the high priest.  
14:37: Let's deal with the first one, the standing before the congregation for judgment.  
14:42: This again is coming from Numbers 35.  
14:44: Let's pick it up this time in verse 24.  
14:47: Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments.  
14:56: So, the judgments have been given to them.  
14:58: They're to be informed of the Torah.  
15:01: The Avenger of Blood.

15:05: will make their case.  
15:07: The manslayer.  
15:09: will make their case.  
15:12: The congregation's gonna listen.  
15:14: They know the judgments.  
15:15: They know how to judge this.  
15:16: They're going to make a determination.  
15:18: I want to spend some time here.  
15:21: Because I want you to notice that the elders make the initial determination.  
15:27: Is there a potential case here?  
15:29: And if there is, it's the elders that led him into the city until trial time.  
15:35: But notice when trial time comes, it's the congregation.  
15:40: That makes the judgment.  
15:42: And I want to emphasize this because in my history in the Church of God, I think CGI is an exception.  
15:53: To most, but and, and not that big of an exception, but it's, it's better than most, I'll say.  
15:59: That in most Christian churches, And churches of God.  
16:04: Congregations are powerless.  
16:07: They, information is kept from them.  
16:12: They are not asked to make any judgments or any determinations.  
16:16: they used to just say, what was the saying, pray and pay.  
16:21: You just pray and pay.  
16:23: That's all, that's your role.  
16:24: Nothing else.  
16:26: But when we look at the Torah, Congregations had a lot of power.  
16:31: And so we're going back to the city where this occurred, and we're going to the congregation.  
16:38: And You state your case to the congregation, not to the elders, to the congregation.  
16:45: And they're informed by the Torah.  
16:49: So that they can make a judgment.  
16:51: And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, not the elders.  
16:59: The congregation will do this, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge.  
17:07: OK, so he fled to the city of refuge until trial time.  
17:10: Now we go back to the scene of the crime.  
17:12: The congregation makes a determination.  
17:14: They determine that this was manslaughter.  
17:17: This really was not premeditated.  
17:19: So now the congregation says you can go back now to the city of refuge where you were hanging out until trial time.  
17:26: You can go back there and live free from harm.  
17:30: The congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, where he was fled.

17:38: And he shall abide in it until the death of the high priest, which was appointed with the holy oil.

17:45: So we'll come back to the death of the high priest, but I want to just stay focused right now on the empowerment of the congregation, just how empowered the congregation was.

17:58: And This empowerment of the concrete, these are Torah informed.

18:06: People Who are familiar with the judgments of the Torah, there to make the determination.

18:12: Christian congregations, our Holy Spirit endowed.

18:19: And Holy Spirit informed.

18:22: And you know, in 1 Corinthians 6, Paul is like, isn't there a wise man among you?

18:26: Why are you going to the courts?

18:27: You guys decide.

18:29: So you can hear from Paul's impatience with Corinth.

18:34: That he's expecting them to be empowered.

18:37: And so it just begs the question, how empowered are our congregations?

18:43: And I'm speaking to our elders now, fellow elders.

18:46: Do we keep our congregations in the dark?

18:50: So that they have no clue what's going on.

18:52: It's just everything's about privacy, privacy, privacy, and the congregation has no clue what's going on, and, and they're just rendered powerless.

19:00: Or do we take a page from the Torah to say, well, wait a minute, congregations are to make judgments, and I think if we understand this.

19:09: I think it just makes it clearer now.

19:11: Let me just finish on the Torah, and then I want to go to, the teachings of Christ, which, of course, are based on the Torah and the teachings of Paul, so that we, and even, yeah, but we'll look at Christ and Paul, so we can see how they were expecting the congregation to be empowered, to have wisdom, to, to be able to, to be adults and to be able to make judgments.

19:36: And if he smites him, so the numbers 35:16, just to show now the determination, the judgments that they're using, so they're gonna listen to this.

19:45: If he smites him with an instrument of iron, so that he dies, he is a murderer.

19:51: The murderer shall surely be put to death.

19:53: It's the congregation.

19:56: That has in their hands life and death.

19:59: They're listening, the Avengers saying one thing, the, the, Manslayer saying something else, maybe there's some other witnesses.

20:06: They're listening to all of this, and they hold within their judgment, life and death.

20:14: The revenger of Blood himself, verse 19, Numbers 35:19.

20:19: If he is found guilty, the revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer.

20:25: When he meets him, he shall slay him.

20:28: So the congregations listening say, no, this is, this is murder.

20:31: And so they give the green light.

20:34: To the revenger of blood, go ahead, you can kill him.

20:37: And that's how this works.

20:39: So I just want you to just think about the, the power.

20:43: The authority That's in the hands of the congregation.  
20:47: And when you think about that now, let's read Matthew 18.  
20:51: Which, again, I've taught on this several times.  
20:55: I have not seen this carried out.  
20:57: People play with Matthew 18.  
21:00: They think I'll just take the principle of I'll go to my brother.  
21:02: My brother said something to offend me.  
21:05: I'm gonna go to him face to face and talk about it.  
21:07: And this, this is a legal process.  
21:11: That Christ is laying down, except we're not going to put someone to death, but we are going to put them out of the congregation if they're guilty, which is like a spiritual death.  
21:21: So this is very, very serious.  
21:22: This, let's let's now view this in the, in the light of the Torah.  
21:26: Matthew 18:16.  
21:28: So you, you've gone, so this is sin.  
21:32: This is sin.  
21:33: Somebody has done something that is sin.  
21:37: And you've been damaged by it.  
21:39: You go to them 1 to 1, they repent.  
21:43: That's the end of it.  
21:44: You don't need to broadcast it.  
21:46: Tell everybody.  
21:47: It's gonna be painful because humans, we want to talk about how we've been offended and hurt.  
21:51: This is the consequences of sin we've been damaged by.  
21:55: We go to our brother, he totally repents.  
21:57: It's over.  
21:59: But if he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.  
22:12: This verse is chilling.  
22:15: You will never hear.  
22:18: The language of two witnesses without death involved.  
22:22: Somebody's being put to death when there are two witnesses.  
22:26: And so this is really serious.  
22:29: Make sure that there are at least 2 witnesses, hopefully 3.  
22:33: That can establish what has happened here.  
22:37: Then If he shall neglect to hear them.  
22:42: Tell it to the congregation.  
22:46: The congregation is to be informed.  
22:49: Tell it to the, just say, tell it to the elders and we, oh, this means talk to the minister.  
22:54: Where do you get that?  
22:56: I, I, I don't see that.  
22:58: it says tell it to the congregation.  
23:00: Tell it to the eli, tell it to the church.



23:02: But if he neglect to hear the congregation, the church, the assembly.  
23:10: Let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.  
23:14: He's done.  
23:16: He's done.  
23:16: He's not part of the covenant community anymore.  
23:18: He's out.  
23:20: But it can't be done without two witnesses, and the decision.  
23:25: To do this, to eject, to excommunicate.  
23:30: To disfellowship, that decision is not with the minister or not with the minister alone.  
23:36: Or the ministry alone, it's the congregation, just as what we saw in the Torah.  
23:44: Truly I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, the you here being plural, is the congregation.  
23:55: The congregation is making the judgment.  
23:58: For life and death.  
24:00: And God is backing it up, shall be bound in heaven, and what we shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.  
24:06: And the congregation, obviously we're speaking of the Holy Spirit endowed and the Holy Spirit empowered, and the Holy Spirit informed brethren.  
24:17: We are to be mature spiritual adults here.  
24:20: And this is a very serious matter, just as in ancient Israel, putting somebody to death.  
24:27: What matter could be more serious than that, or allowing somebody to live?  
24:33: The, let's say they're a murderer and we're gonna say, yes, OK, they can live, or they're innocent, but we say, yeah, they should be put to death.  
24:39: These judgments matter.  
24:40: They're very weighty judgments, and the congregation is expected to have the maturity and the wisdom and the Torah knowledge to make the right judgment.  
24:50: And we are, our congregations must be mature.  
24:55: Let's stop acting like children.  
24:58: Let's be children in malice, but let's be adults in wisdom.  
25:03: And as elders, let's develop.  
25:07: The judgment, the giftedness, the wisdom.  
25:12: Of our, the empowerment of our congregations.  
25:16: So that when weighty matters like this come up, we know we can count on a congregation that's mature enough to deal with it.  
25:22: We don't hide this information.  
25:24: There's all kinds of sexual impropriety going on, bizarre things happening.  
25:30: And our judgment is don't tell anybody.  
25:32: Don't tell the congregation accusations.  
25:35: And it will just handle this secretly.  
25:37: That's not.  
25:39: What the Torah said, and that's not what Christ taught.  
25:42: Look now at 1 Corinthians 5.  
25:47: And verse 4.  
25:50: Paul says this to Corinth.

25:52: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you, the congregation, he's not talking to the elders, he's talking to the congregation.

26:02: When you, the congregation are gathered together and my spirit.

26:06: With the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to make a determination to make a judgment.

26:12: Oh, I can't judge.

26:13: You better make a judgment.

26:15: To deliver such a one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus.

26:26: Oh, I can't judge, can't judge, you're gonna save the flesh and destroy the spirit, and, and violate.

26:33: The way a healthy congregation should operate.

26:37: In 2 Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 6, the brother is put out, he repents, now he comes back.

26:47: Paul is not talking to the elders, he's talking to the congregation.

26:51: And he says, sufficient to such a man is this punishment.

26:56: Which was afflict inflicted of many.

26:59: The judgment to punish this man and put him out, it was inflicted of many, i.e., the congregation made this determination.

27:09: So that contrariwise, You plural, the congregation, ought rather to forgive him.

27:17: And comfort him.

27:19: Now you as a congregation, make the determination to let him back in.

27:24: Ancient Israel had to make a determination, life or death.

27:30: The congregation has to make a determination, life or death.

27:36: First it was death, put him out, deliver the flesh to Satan.

27:40: Now it's a determination, judgment, life, bring him back in.

27:44: The congregation.

27:45: So that contrariwise you ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

27:56: Wherefore, I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him.

28:01: He's not speaking to one person.

28:02: He's not.

28:03: Oh, so Mister Minister, you, Mister Minister, can you please confirm your love toward him?

28:09: He's talking about the congregation.

28:10: When he comes back, he's fully part of the congregation now.

28:14: And you need to affirm your love and confirm your love toward him.

28:18: No.

28:21: We run the risk, and it's just human nature of Swinging the pendulum from one extreme to the other.

28:32: So you go into most of these churches of God.

28:35: And Congregation is powerless.

28:40: The minister has all the power and authority, puts people out at will.

28:45: Everyone else just has to suck it up, and it's unbalanced.

28:51: I think on the other hand, I've seen congregations where they run the minister.

28:58: You know, the minister starts trying to preach something and they let it, they let the minister know in no uncertain terms, we do not like that message.

29:05: You will not preach like that again.

29:08: You, you, that's not, you don't have the authority to talk like that.

29:11: And there's no correction.

29:13: The minister really has been stripped and emasculated.

29:18: And has no authority whatsoever, and the congregation is just running amok.

29:24: We, we, we have to be mature brethren.

29:27: Can can we be mature?

29:29: Can we operate by the Holy Spirit?

29:32: And build a community.

29:36: Of spirit informed and spirit led brethren.

29:41: Where we understand everyone that has the Holy Spirit has the power of God, the Creator within them.

29:48: And needs to be treated with utmost esteem.

29:53: For that reason.

29:55: At the same time, Can we appreciate the fact that there is structure in the body of Christ?

30:04: There's power in the body of Christ, and there's structure in the body of Christ.

30:08: In fact, I'll go further and say the structure that's in the body of Christ is there to protect, develop, and facilitate the exercise of power.

30:19: Of the Holy Spirit.

30:21: Within the body of Christ.

30:24: And, and when I say structure, I don't mean this deep hierarchical structure where we've got, you know, pastor rank and evangelical ran ramp and regional and, and global and national directors.

30:38: None of that comes from the Bible.

30:40: The only hierarchy in the Bible, there's 3 levels.

30:45: There is the lay member.

30:47: And, and I've had brethren offended that I would dare refer to them as a lay member.

30:54: But that's the truth.

30:55: There are lay members and there are ordained members.

31:00: Of the ordained members, there are only 2 levels.

31:03: The diaconate.

31:05: And the ministry.

31:08: That's it.

31:09: You've got pastors.

31:12: You've got deacons.

31:14: And you've got members.

31:16: And that is the only hierarchical structure in the Bible, and Christ is over all of that.

31:22: The pastors are really under shepherds, under Christ.

31:26: And then we've got the diaconate helping, like the way the Levites would help the priesthood, and then we've got the members who are being served by this structure.

31:35: And under this structure, they are being developed, they are being encouraged, they're being edified and educated, and they are growing into their gift.

31:46: In their true spiritual identity.

31:49: And nobody's getting in the way.

31:51: We, we are recognizing, developing, celebrating the Holy Spirit power in the congregation.

31:58: But Conversely, Holy Spirit empowered people are not out of control.

32:09: This is not an anarchy.

32:11: We're like, oh, no, I just, I'll run, I'll run the, the show.

32:16: And I'll have no regard, no respect for anything the minister says.

32:20: The minister can't even ask the smallest request.

32:24: Without me saying, I, I, I don't know if I approve of this.

32:28: This is insanity.

32:30: Can we be wise?

32:32: Can we be mature?

32:34: And have this beautiful balance.

32:37: This beautiful balance.

32:39: Of an empowered, a Holy Spirit empowered congregation, where everyone is flourishing and thriving.

32:46: And at the same time, incredible respect and honor.

32:50: For the structure that God puts in place.

32:53: And so that's why you see Paul, who's telling the congregation to be empowered.

32:59: At the same time telling this congregation.

33:02: With to use their empowerment to ensure structure is in place.

33:08: To ensure that the structure is respected.

33:10: And so the very same apostle.

33:13: An elder who's saying to the congregations, be empowered, now says, here's how to use your empowerment.

33:20: Now, we command you.

33:22: There's a strong authority.

33:23: We have the authority to command you, brethren, lay members.

33:28: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

33:31: That you withdraw yourself from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us.

33:41: So there is order.

33:43: Disorder comes from the devil.

33:45: There is order and structure within the body.

33:49: It's a beautiful order and flow and structure and very organic, and it, it's, it's beautiful.

33:54: It's like a a beautiful marriage.

33:56: There's order.

33:56: You can't have chaos in a marriage and think that it's gonna be successful.

34:00: You can't have chaos in a garden and just let the weeds do it and choke out the, the, the healthy plants.

34:06: You, you have to weed the garden.

34:08: There has to be structure in order in order to have beauty.  
34:13: And he says, And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.  
34:25: Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.  
34:29: And then he says this in 1 Thessalonians 5:14.  
34:33: So this is, you can see the, the empowerment protects order.  
34:38: The empowerment doesn't throw off order.  
34:41: The empowerment doesn't throw off authority.  
34:44: It's like this empowerment is protected by the authority, but the empowerment also protects the authority.  
34:52: 1 Thessalonians 5:14.  
34:54: Now we exhort you, brethren, we're exhorting you.  
34:57: This, this matters.  
34:58: This is serious.  
34:59: We exhort you, brethren, warn them.  
35:03: That are unruly, ungovernable.  
35:05: They can't be told what to do.  
35:06: Warn them.  
35:08: It matters.  
35:09: The the this something, their life is at stake.  
35:13: They don't see it.  
35:15: But hopefully we have the spiritual wisdom to see it.  
35:18: And if we see people unruly, ungovernable, we better warn them.  
35:23: Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient to all men.  
35:28: Again, you're empowered.  
35:29: Do, you're at the congregation.  
35:30: Do these things.  
35:32: But in all of your empowerment, protect structure.  
35:37: Protect the biblical structure and protect the biblical authority, so that we can have order.  
35:42: So, that was The first part that I wanted to explore here in these cities of refuge.  
35:49: That the judgment Does not belong to the elders.  
35:54: The judgment belongs to the congregation.  
35:57: They're the ones that will say, hey, he's innocent.  
36:01: They're the ones that will say he's guilty and must be put to death, the congregation, and we see that same level of empowerment and authority in the church.  
36:12: The, the, so how do we get to a church that's flaccid?  
36:15: How do we come to a congregations that are just so, they show up, they sit passively.  
36:21: Oh, that was a nice sermon, and then they go home.  
36:25: Is, is that what God wants?  
36:28: So, let's, let's have robust, vibrant, flourishing congregations.  
36:34: But let's not have congregations that are out of Satan would love to have congregations that are out of control.

36:40: And unless there's structural authority, biblical structural authority in the congregation, it will die.

36:47: It might not die overnight, but it will die.

36:51: It's a cancer.

36:55: Now, In addition To the empowerment of the congregation.

37:02: What this verse also shows is there's something special about the death of the high priest.

37:09: That the manslayer is to stay in the city of refuge.

37:16: Until the high priest dies.

37:19: When the high priest dies, whoever the high priest is at that time.

37:22: When he finally comes to death.

37:26: Then the man slayer can go home.

37:28: He's free.

37:29: He can go back to his home.

37:30: He can go back to his city, go back to his brethren, and, and live out the rest of his life free.

37:36: Free of guilt If that's not symbolic of Jesus Christ, wow, this is amazing.

37:44: Let's read a few passages here just to reinforce this.

37:47: Hebrews 6 and verse 18.

37:50: That by two immutable things in which it's impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

38:03: So just like the manslayer has to flee to the city of refuge, we with all of our guilt and sin, we have to flee for refuge.

38:13: In Christ.

38:16: Which hope we have.

38:19: As an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entered into that within the veil.

38:27: So, we have our high priest.

38:30: Where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

38:40: And so that's this very same thing we see here in, in the Torah, Numbers 35, that That he shall abide in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest.

38:53: So, our high priest, his death, and the blood that was shed frees us.

39:01: It frees us from guilt.

39:03: We are now innocent because of the death of the high priest.

39:07: Which was anointed with the holy oil.

39:11: I'll just continue to read here in Numbers 35:28, because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest.

39:19: But after the death of the high priest, the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.

39:26: So he can go back to the land of Judah, he can go back to the land of Zebulun, he can go back to the land of Naphthali.

39:33: Hebrews 7:23.

39:36: And they truly were many priests because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death.

39:43: But this man, because he continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.

39:48: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he lives, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.

40:00: This high priest is different.

40:02: He lives forever.

40:04: And his death, he's now able to make intercession for us as long as we are repentant.

40:11: Romans 8 and verse 33, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?

40:19: It is God that justifies.

40:22: Who is He that condemns?

40:23: Where, where is the accuser?

40:24: Where, where is the avenger of blood?

40:27: It is Christ that died, yes, rather, that is risen again, our high priest, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

40:40: So through the death of the high priest, we're innocent.

40:43: We can go back to our cities.

40:45: We can, we can have our lives restored.

40:48: And, and in the case of the high priest in ancient Israel, he could only deal with one thing.

40:56: In in this particular city of refuge, and that was manslaughter.

41:02: In the case of our high priest, he can deal with everything except unrepentant sin, except blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

41:11: But anything else that once we repent, First John 1 and verse 7, but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of our High Priest Jesus Christ, His Son.

41:26: Cleanses us from all sin.

41:29: So we see just a beautiful metaphor in Joshua 20 that just scratches at the surface.

41:36: Of how powerful our high priest is.

41:39: And, and the, the extent of his covenant love.

41:43: I just found, so that's quite amazing.

41:44: That one verse was very rich.

41:46: It's kind of a whole sermon in that one verse.

41:49: Let's continue then Joshua 20 verse 7.

41:53: And they appointed Kadesh in Galilee, in Mount Naftali.

41:58: And Shechem in Mount Ephraim.

42:01: And Kerjaarba, which is Hebron, that's the Was it Caleb who got, no, I think it was Caleb or Joshua got Hebron.

42:12: in the mount of Judah, that was Caleb, Caleb, who got Hebron.

42:17: And so it's what, how many cities is that?

42:18: So, we got Galilee, Shechem, Kerjathaba.

42:25: That's 3.

42:27: And on the other side, Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad.

42:39: And Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

42:43: So both sides of the Jordan, they've identified 6 cities of refuge that if you, if somebody slaughters a man accidentally, you've got to get to the closest city while the Avengers are coming after you.

42:55: Once you get there, you explain to the elders, they let you in, you wait for your trial.

43:01: We go back to the location, the scene of the crime.

43:07: We gather the congregation.

43:09: They listen.

43:10: They, they know the Torah.

43:12: They make their judgment.

43:13: No, sorry, this was murder.

43:15: The Avenger can kill you.

43:17: No, sorry, Avenger, this was manslaughter.

43:20: You go back to the city of refuge and live there until the high priest dies, then you're free.

43:24: Come back.

43:27: These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger that sojourns among them.

43:33: That whosoever kills any person at unawares might flee there and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.

43:45: And again, just the congregation.

43:49: I want to, just emphasize just how important the congregation and just how empowered the congregation is.

43:58: And if we were to have happy, healthy, flourishing congregations, we must treat the brethren with the utmost of esteem, the utmost of respect, but that has to go both ways.

44:11: Very, very good.

44:12: So that is Joshua chapter 20.

44:15: God willing, we will get into chapter 21 next week, where we'll see the other 42 cities that have been assigned to the Levites.

44:25: What a wise God we serve.

44:27: It's amazing to see how everything was thought through to create this wonderful civilization in the promised land.

44:35: What a shame.

44:36: That God's people were unfaithful, and now look where we are.

44:40: But because of God's covenant faithfulness, everything that Moses laid out will eventually be restored.

44:47: What a faithful God we serve.

44:49: God bless you, brethren.