

“Special Boundaries in Canaan!”

I. **INTRO:**

A. **Brushing up on Basics Series!** - Starts Next Wed.

1. Sept 23 – **Why should I trust the Bible is Accurate?** (What are the Scriptures? How did we get the 66 books? Manuscript Evidence; How we got our English Bible? Why so many different Bible translations?)

II. **SPECIAL BOUNDARIES & OFFICIALS IN CANAAN! (Ch.34)**

A. **SPECIAL BOUNDARIES!** (1-15)

B. **Read** 1-3,6,7,10.

1. **South!**(1-5)[Wilderness of Zin & Kadesh-Barnea]; **West!**(6)[Med Sea];
2. **North!**(7-9)[Mount Hor]; **East!**(10-15)[Jordan River].

C. **See slide** - 3 maps of Israel’s Boundaries.

D. **Everyone needs boundaries!** - children; adults; at work; at play/sports;

1. **Vinedressers use to dig a ditch around their vineyard & throw the dirt on the inner side. Carmel (sticks, stones, dirt)**
2. **Jesus said, There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about... (Mt.21:33).**
3. **A Garden Enclosed is my sister, my spouse.** (S.of S.4:12) {protected from outsiders}
4. **Prov. 25:28 Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.**
 - a) **Q:** Do you have walls/boundaries over your own spirit? - What are they?

E. **SPECIAL OFFICIALS!** (16-29)

F. **Read** 16-18, 22.

G. **Application:**

H. **God assigned** the tribes their **inheritance** & set their **boundaries**, **but** he used **human** leaders to do it.¹

1. What a privilege it is to help people claim their inheritance from God.
2. **We must accept** what God assigns to us & **not complain** or **covet** what others possess.

¹ Warren Wiersbe; With the Word; pg.104

3. **Some** land bordered the **Wilderness**(3) **other** portions faced the **Great Sea**(6) **Some** tribes had **Mountains** in their territory.
 - a) Like Canaan, the Christian life is a land of hills & valleys; but our God is a God of both hills & valleys.
 - b) He knows what is best for us & is always with us.
4. When you are **tempted to complain** about what God has assigned to you, ponder Jn3:27 **A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.** And, 1 Cor.4:7 **For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?**

III. **SPECIAL CITIES IN CANAAN!** (Ch.35)

- A. **CITIES FOR THE LEVITES!** (1-8)
- B. **See slide** - Town Dimensions for Levites. In feet [cubit = 18"]
- C. **CITIES OF REFUGE!** (9-34)
- D. 6 of the 48 cities were designated cities of refuge.
- E. **See slide** - 6 Cities of Refuge.
 1. The law provided for the innocent 6 cities of refuge scattered at **convenient locations** throughout the land. (Names listed in Joshua 20)
 2. **Bezer** = Salvation/fortress; **Kedesh** = Sanctuary/holy; **Shechem** = Our Strength/shoulder; **Hebron** = Our Fellowship; **Ramoth** = Our Elevation/heights; **Golan** = Our Joy/circle/complete.
- F. God makes a distinction between **murder & manslaughter**; the **intentional** & the **accidental**. **Murder** by deliberate intent, **manslaughter** by accident.
 1. **We follow this distinction in modern law.** (**Intent to kill?**)
 2. In that day, the nation had **no police force to investigate crimes & prosecute criminals**, so the innocent had to be protected from angry family members who might want to take justice into their own hands.
 - a) **Story:** Almost night fall, driving with Bill Ros in mountain area above Bacold, P.I., ran over a chicken. "Drive, Drive!" Locals would have *Bolo'd* us!
 3. **In the city of refuge**, the fugitive was **safe** until the **elders** held court & decided whether he was guilty of murder **or not**.
- G. (19) **The Avenger of blood** - The **next of kin** to the slain person was obliged to take up arms against him & put him to death.
 1. He had full sanction of the law behind him. [**Gen.9:6** established this]

- H. It was not fitting that **Israel and the Lord**, who lived in Israel's midst, should occupy a **polluted** land. So blood vengeance was not an **option** but a **theological necessity**.
1. This law provided for the protection of the innocent & the condemnation of the guilty. It was a just law.
 2. *It's **unfortunate** that our laws today often are **misapplied** so that it is easy for the guilty to go free.*
- I. Jesus Christ is **our** "city of refuge"! (see Heb.6:18)
1. **No avenger following the track of past sin can hurt the soul that shelters in Him**
 - a) Only we must never venture beyond the precincts of His salvation.
 2. **When we trust Him, our sins are all forgiven & judgment is past.**
 - a) If the fugitive *left the city*, he was in danger of death.
 3. **In Jesus we have eternal life. Our High Priest will never die; therefore we are saved eternally!**
- J. These 6 cities of refuge are beautiful types of Christ:
1. **They were Appointed by God!** (An act of **grace**, for all men are sinners & deserve to die)
 2. **They were Announced to the world!** (Named in **Joshua 20:7,8** & they could never be changed)
 - a) There were **many other more prominent cities**, but none could shelter the sinner.
 - b) There are **many religions** but there is only 1 way of salv as announced in Gods word
 3. **They were Accessible to all!** (Arranged so that no tribe was too far from the place of safety)
 - a) *Tradition tells us: the priest* made sure the **roads** were in **good repair**;
That regular **landmarks** were put up **to guide** the fleeing person;
The **gates** of the cities were **never closed!**
 - b) What a picture of Christ, the way to the city is **clear!!!**
 4. **They were Adequate to meet the need!** (As long as the slayer remained in the city, he was safe)
- K. **These 48 cities** must have been *centers of religious influence* throughout the land.
1. **As cities set on a hill** that could not be hid; **As salt staying corruption**;
As lights along a rock-bound coast - **so must they** have stood in the Holy Land.
 2. **So should our homes** be in our neighborhood, our city, our land.
- L. Note it says "Flee!" - Such a person could not afford to delay!
1. Same for lost sinners today. **Don't delay! Run to Jesus your city of refuge!**

IV. **SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF INHERITANCE!** (Ch.36)

A. **MARRIAGE OF FEMALE HEIRS!** (1-13)

B. **Read** 1-6.

C. **The Daughters of Zelophehad!** (*Recap* Ch.27:1-11)

D. **New problems** give us **new opportunities** to seek God's wisdom & learn new truths.

1. **Supremely confident** that God would give them the land, they ask if they could inherit their father's land since they had no brothers. (usually got dowry if married)
 - a) The 5 daughters had the courage to ask for their fathers inheritance, & they got it.
2. God rules & says, "yes" & instructs Moses to grant this request.
3. They also had a part in **establishing a law** that helped other families get their inheritance.

E. Some men of the tribe of Manasseh had discussed & pondered the matter & were concerned about the distribution of their tribal land.

1. What if the daughters married into other tribes?
2. Would the inheritance eventually be confused or even lost?
 - a) **Appl:** It is good to **think about decisions** & see their **practical ramifications** in everyday life.

F. **The simple solution:** The daughters must marry men within their tribe of Manasseh.

G. Wrap up with last verse.

1. **Across from Jericho** sets up the next scene. Entrance into the land at Jericho, described in the book of **Joshua**(esp. ch.6).

H. **Conclusion to Numbers:**

I. Numbers holds a bitter-sweet place in the bible!

1. **On the one hand** **Hope**(ch.1-10) & **Victory**(21-36);
2. **On the other hand**, ch.13-20 hold many negative comments in the rest of the bible.
 - a) Israel's 1st generation is remembered for *squandering opportunities, rebellion, & unbelief*. It illustrates their *greed, faithlessness, & idolatry*.
 - b) It becomes a *sober warning* to all persons of faith.

J. Still when Numbers closes, **Hope** springs anew!

1. A **new generation** is hungry for the Lord & the fulfillment of His promises.
2. A 2nd **high priest** & **Moses's replacement** stand ready to serve.
3. **God's grace** has overcome all obstacles & continues to do so in Israel's history, right through the crucifixion & resurrection of Jesus Christ.