

Lesson 150 – God Our Refuge

1. What was set up for those that killed another person? **Numbers 35:13**

EGW: Six of the cities assigned to the Levites--three on each side the Jordan--were appointed as cities of refuge, to which the manslayer might flee for safety. The appointment of these cities had been commanded by Moses, "that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge," he said, "that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment." Numbers 35:11, 12. This merciful provision was rendered necessary by the ancient custom of private vengeance, by which the punishment of the murderer devolved on the nearest relative or the next heir of the deceased. In cases where guilt was clearly evident it was not necessary to wait for a trial by the magistrates. The avenger might pursue the criminal anywhere and put him to death wherever he should be found. The Lord did not see fit to abolish this custom at that time, but He made provision to ensure the safety of those who should take life unintentionally. {PP 515.2}

2. What type of manslayer was to find refuge? **Numbers 35:11**

EGW: The blood of the victim, like the blood of Abel, will cry to God for vengeance on the murderer and on all who shield him from the punishment of his crime. Whosoever,--be it individual or city,--will excuse the crime of the murderer, when convinced of his guilt, is a partaker of his sin, and will surely suffer the wrath of God. The Lord designed to impress upon his people the terrible guilt of murder, while he would make the most thorough and merciful provision for the acquittal of the innocent. {ST, January 20, 1881 par. 8}

3. Who was the manslayer to be protected from? **Beginning of Numbers 35:12**

EGW: The case of the fugitive was to be fairly tried by the proper authorities, and if found guiltless of intended murder he was to be protected in the city of refuge. Should he carelessly wander away beyond the prescribed limits, and the avenger of blood find him, his life would pay the penalty of his disregard for the Lord's provision. {ST, January 20, 1881 par. 6}

4. What was the manslayer still to face? **End of Numbers 35:12**

EGW: The cities of refuge were so distributed as to be within a half day's journey of every part of the land. The roads leading to them were always to be kept in good repair; all along the way signposts were to be erected bearing the word "Refuge" in plain, bold characters, that the fleeing one might not be delayed for a moment. Any person--Hebrew, stranger, or sojourner--might avail himself of this provision. But while the guiltless were not to be rashly slain, neither were the guilty to escape punishment. The case of the fugitive was to be fairly tried by the proper authorities, and only when found innocent of intentional murder was he to be protected in the city of refuge. The guilty were given up to the avenger. And those who were entitled to protection could receive it only on condition of remaining within the appointed refuge. Should one wander away beyond the prescribed limits, and be found by the avenger of blood, his life would pay the penalty of his disregard of the Lord's provision. At the death of the high priest, however, all who had sought shelter in the cities of refuge were at liberty to return to their possessions. {PP 515.3}

5. Who were these cities set up for? **Numbers 35:15 (3 answers)**

EGW: The roads to these cities were always to be kept in good repair; all along the way, sign-posts were to be erected bearing the word Refuge in plain, bold characters, that the fleeing one might not hesitate for a moment. Any person,--Hebrew, stranger, or sojourner,--might avail himself of this provision. {ST, January 20, 1881 par. 6}

6. What did the accidental manslayer have to wait for? **Numbers 35:25-28**

EGW: Those who remained within the city until the death of the high-priest were then at liberty to return to their possessions. {ST, January 20, 1881 par. 6}

7. What does the physical city of refuge symbolize? **Deuteronomy 33:27**

EGW: Again the Spirit of God rested upon his servant, and in the most sublime and touching language he pronounced a blessing upon the tribes individually. He then closed with a general benediction, in which he set forth God's care for Israel, and the exalted position which they might occupy, if they would live in obedience to his law. "The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them. Israel, then, shall dwell in safety alone. The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." {ST, March 24, 1881 par. 13}

8. When are we to seek refuge? **Psalms 9:9, Psalms 46:1, Psalms 59:16**

EGW: Through a rift in the clouds there beams a star whose brilliancy is increased fourfold in contrast with the darkness. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law. Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Psalm 46:1-3. {4SP 456.1}

9. What specific day of trouble will we be facing that we need to seek refuge? **Daniel 12:1, Jeremiah 30:7**

EGW: There will be . . . great destruction of human life. But as in the days of the great deluge Noah was preserved in the ark that God had prepared for him, so in these days of destruction and calamity, God will be the refuge of His believing ones. Through the psalmist He declares, "Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." "For in the time of trouble he shall hide

me in his pavilion...." Then shall we not make the Lord our surety and our defense? {Mar 283.6}

10. What big event will we most certainly want to be seeking refuge from? **Isaiah 25:4**

EGW: Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 8}

The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for "when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall," God will be to his church "a refuge from the storm." Isaiah 25:4. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 9}

In that day the righteous only are promised deliverance. "The sinners in Zion are afraid," the prophet declares; "fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:14-16. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 10}

The word of the Lord to his faithful ones is: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isaiah 26:20, 21. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 11}

11. What do we associate that event to be that will come at us so strongly? **Revelation 13:17**

EGW: As we approach the last crisis it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head--the papal power--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate.--7T 182 (1902). {LDE 131.5}

Laws enforcing the observance of Sunday as the Sabbath will bring about a national apostasy from the principles of republicanism upon which the government has been founded. The religion of the

papacy will be accepted by the rulers, and the law of God will be made void.--7MR 192 (1906). {LDE 132.1}

12. What type of day may we also seek refuge? **Jeremiah 16:19**

EGW: The work of overcoming is a great work. Shall we take hold of it with energy and perseverance? Unless we do, our "filthy garments" will not be taken from us. We need never expect that these will be torn from us violently; we must first show a desire to rid ourselves of them. We must seek to separate sin from us, relying upon the merits of the blood of Christ; and then in the day of affliction, when the enemy presses us, we shall walk among the angels. They will be like a wall of fire about us; and we shall one day walk with them in the city of God. {HS 158.2}

13. What are we saved from? **2 Samuel 22:3**

EGW: How carefully God protects the rights of men! He has attached a penalty to wilful murder. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). If one murderer were permitted to go unpunished, he would by his evil influence and cruel violence subvert others. This would result in a condition of things similar to that which existed before the flood. God must punish murderers. He gives life, and He will take life, if that life becomes a terror and a menace. Mercy shown to a wilful murderer is cruelty to his fellow men. If a wilful murderer thinks that he will find protection by fleeing to the altar of God, he may find that he will be forced from that altar and be slain. But if a man takes life unintentionally, then God declares that He will provide a place of refuge, to which he can flee. {2SAT 186.4}

14. Who wants to do that to us? **Hebrews 2:14**

EGW: The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death-knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." [Hebrews 2:14.] Lucifer's desire for self-exaltation had led him to say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of

God.... I will be like the Most High." God declares, "I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, . . . and never shalt thou be any more." [Isaiah 14:13, 14; Ezekiel 28:18, 19.] When "the day cometh that shall burn as an oven," "all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." [Malachi 4:1.] {GC88 503.3}

15. What do we become that we need to seek refuge for? **James 2:11**

EGW: Shall we not teach our children that willing obedience to the will of God proves whether those claiming to be Christians are Christian indeed? The Lord means every word He says. Christ died that the transgressor of the law of God might be brought back to His loyalty, that He might keep the commandments of God, and His law as the apple of His eye, and live. God cannot take rebels into His kingdom; therefore He makes obedience to His requirements a special requirement. Parents should diligently teach their children what saith the Lord. Then God will show to angels and to men that He will build a safeguard round about His people. Fathers and mothers should feel that there is most sacred missionary work to be done in their own home, in their own family, that the members of the family may become missionaries in every sense of the word. Ms 64, 1899, pp. 3, 4. ("Words to Parents," April 25, 1899.) {1MR 112.2}

16. What are we considered by breaking any of God's commandments? **James 2:10**

EGW: God has given us specific directions so that no one need err. "Man shall not live by bread alone," He says, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The truth given by inspiration "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Not by one word, not by many words, but by every word that God has spoken, shall man live. You cannot disregard one word, a single injunction that He has given, however trifling it may seem to you, and be safe. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Whosoever will willfully break one command cannot in spirit and in truth keep any of them. He may claim that, with the exception of what he may regard as slight deviations, he keeps them all; yet if he willingly offends in one point he is guilty of all. {5T 434.1}

17. How do we flee for refuge? **1 John 1:9**

EGW: It is not safe for us to close our eyes and harden our conscience so that we shall not see or realize our sins. We need to cherish the instruction we have had in regard to the hateful character of sin, in order that we may truly confess and forsake our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Are you willing to be cleansed from all unrighteousness? Is it your purpose to press forward, but not in your own human strength, toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus? Keep the fear of the Lord always before you. Your only hope is in making Jesus your counselor. {YI, July 5, 1894 par. 2}

18. As our Refuge, how are we presented before God? **Jude 1:24**

EGW: We need to be constantly on our guard, to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. The indulgence of spiritual pride, of unholy desires, of evil thoughts, of anything that separates us from an intimate and sacred association with Jesus, imperils our souls. We must have living faith in God. We must "fight the good fight of faith," if we would "lay hold on eternal life." We are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." If the thought of apostasy is grievous to you, and you do not desire to become the enemies of the truth, the accusers of the brethren, then "abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good;" and believe in Him who is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. {RH, May 8, 1888 par. 11}

19. What does Satan try to do when we seek God as our refuge? **Zechariah 3:1**

EGW: He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." Zechariah 3:1. {SW, September 25, 1906 par. 1}

The third chapter of Zechariah contains truths that afford a profitable lesson for all. The people of God, in the person of Joshua, are represented as a criminal on trial. Joshua, as high priest, is seeking a blessing for them. While he is thus pleading before God, Satan is standing at his right hand as his adversary. {SW, September 25, 1906 par. 2}

Satan is an accuser, and is making the case of Israel appear as desperate as possible. He presents before the Lord their faults and failures, hoping that they will appear so dark in the eyes of Christ that he will render them no help in their great need. Joshua, aware of the imperfections of Israel,

stands under condemnation, clothed with the filthy garments of sin, while Satan is pressing upon his soul a sense of guilt that makes him almost hopeless. {SW, September 25, 1906 par. 3}

20. What happens to the avenger, Satan? **Zechariah 3:2, Jude 1:9 [Take note that this matches what the accidental slayer may say of the avenger]**

EGW: How does Christ look upon the case? What position does he take toward Joshua and the accuser? "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Thus Christ replies to the accuser. {SW, September 25, 1906 par. 4}

Satan would ruin the people of God, covering them with the blackness of guilt, but Jesus interposes. The people had sinned; but he took the guilt of their sins upon his own soul. He snatched the race as a brand from the fire. With his human arm he encircles humanity, while with his divine arm he grasps the throne of the infinite God. Thus the adversary is rebuked, and help is brought within reach of perishing souls. {SW, September 25, 1906 par. 5}

21. What happens in the process of having our guilt removed? **Zechariah 3:3-5 [Answer in verse 4]**

EGW: As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be the "accuser of our brethren," "which accused them before our God day and night." The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. Satan's accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God's law can he obtain power over them. His accusations arise solely from his enmity to Christ. Through the plan of salvation, Jesus is breaking Satan's hold upon the human family and rescuing souls from his power. All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ's supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning he works to wrest from Him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted His salvation. {5T 470.1}

He leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from His love; he tempts them to break His law, and then he claims them as his captives and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will

obtain it; therefore he presents their sins before them to discourage them. He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation. Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him. He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary. His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth, and He claims of His Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man. To the accuser of His people He declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' These are the purchase of My blood, brands plucked from the burning." Those who rely upon Him in faith receive the comforting assurance: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. Not one soul that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. His word is pledged: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." The promise given to Joshua is made to all: "If thou wilt keep My charge, ... I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Angels of God will walk on either side of them, even in this world, and they will stand at last among the angels that surround the throne of God. {5T 470.2}

22. How long shall we seek refuge? **Psalms 57:1**

EGW: (no comment)

23. When we seek refuge from God, what two things is He towards us? **Psalms 62:7-8 [Answer is at the beginning of verse 7]**

EGW: (no comment)

24. When we seek God as our refuge, what is He also? **Psalms 91:9 [Answer is at the end of the verse, but take note that this matches what is done in the city of refuge after the judgment but prior to the death of the high priest]**

EGW: There are troublous times before us; the judgments of God are coming upon our world. The nations of the earth are to tremble. There will be trials and perplexities on every hand; men's hearts will fail them for fear. And what shall we do in that day? Though the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage, if we have made God our trust, he will deliver us. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee.... For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." {RH, March 15, 1887 par. 15}

25. What high priest needed to die for us? **Hebrews 4:14-16**

EGW: Jesus sees his true church on the earth, whose greatest ambition is to co-operate with him in the grand work of saving souls. He hears their prayers, presented in contrition and power, and Omnipotence cannot resist their plea for the salvation of any tried, tempted member of Christ body. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us. Through our Redeemer what blessings may not the true believer receive? The church, soon to enter upon her most severe conflict, will be the object most dear to God upon earth. The confederacy of evil will be stirred with power from beneath, and Satan will cast all the reproach possible upon the chosen ones whom he cannot deceive and delude with his Satanic inventions and falsehoods. But exalted "to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins," will Christ our representative and head, close his heart, or withdraw his hand, or falsify his promise?--No; never, never. {RH, October 17, 1893 par. 2}

God has a church, a chosen people, and could all see as I have seen, how closely Christ identifies himself with his people, no such message would be heard as the one that denounces the church as Babylon. God has a people who are laborers together with him, and they have gone straightforward, having his glory in view. Listen to the prayer of our representative in heaven: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." O, how the divine Head longed to have his church with him! They had fellowship with him in his suffering and humiliation, and it is his highest joy to have them with him to be partakers of his glory. Christ claims the privilege of having his church with him. "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." To have them with him is according to covenant promise and agreement with his

Father. He reverently presents at the mercyseat his finished redemption for his people. The bow of promise encircles our substitute and surety as he pours out his petition of love, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." We shall behold the King in his beauty, and the church will be glorified. {RH, October 17, 1893 par. 3}