

UNFORGIVEN

Deuteronomy 19:1-21

What's it about? Justice and a place of refuge for the vulnerable point to the ultimate refuge we have in the forgiveness of Jesus Christ

1) A Place of Refuge (vv.1-3)

- A) Protecting the _____
- B) The church as a _____

2) The Sanctity of Life (vv.4-13)

- A) Manslaughter and _____
- B) The fruit of _____ (Matt. 5:21-23)

3) Lex Talionis (vv.15-21)

- A) The protection of multiple _____
- B) The _____ of Lex Talionis
- C) The _____ freedom of forgiveness (Matt. 5:38-42)

Answers: Vulnerable, refuge, murder, hate, witnesses, safeguard, perfect

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Small Group Questions

REFLECT

1. Read Exodus 21:12-14 and Numbers 35:9-34. These passages form the background to our text in Deuteronomy 19.
2. How does v.4 seem to set the context for the whole passage? How would you define the core principle this verse emphasizes?
3. Who was “the avenger of blood”? What prevented him from taking justice into his own hands? See numbers 35:24
4. How were the location of the cities of refuge a help to those who committed involuntary manslaughter? How were they a reflection of God’s grace?
5. What system was in place to prevent genuine murderers from taking advantage of the refuge law? See Deut. 19:11-13
6. How did the law provide a safeguard for the abuse of false testimony in vv15-21?
7. How does the context of this passage inform how we are to interpret the Lex Talionis in v.21?
8. Consider Matthew 5:38-48. What does Jesus clarify here about the purpose of the Lex Talionis? What is the higher virtue Jesus proposes in vv.39-42?
9. What does forgiveness imply in the light of proportional compensation? Who must absorb the deficit of the loss? How does this apply to forgiveness?

RESPOND

How does this passage inform us as we show mercy and provide refuge for the vulnerable?

Who can you think of that needs the church to be a place of refuge for them? Single mom’s, families in crisis, children of divorce, widows, refugees, people experiencing the stress of care, health crisis etc...

How can we show mercy to the vulnerable in practical ways?

How has this passage changed your understanding of forgiveness?

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