

City of Refuge

Description

[RG AUDIO 040516](#)

Numbers 35:6-25

After Dinah had been raped, her father negotiated with the father of the perpetrator. They decided to form an alliance that would allow marriages between the two families. Dinah's brothers joined the discussion and, in a deceitful move, insisted that all males be circumcised before the alliance could be ratified. The men complied. Three days later, while the men were still in pain, two of Dinah's brothers killed every male in the city (Genesis 34). The brothers responded with vengeance.

In the Old Testament, God put limits on acts of revenge; for example, nothing beyond an eye for an eye (Exodus 21:23—25). God wanted people to be treated fairly.

In the case of causing a death, one who accidentally harmed another person could find protection in a city of refuge. There the person would be safe from retaliation, not to thwart justice, but to provide time and space to insure that the person was treated fairly. The people of God were to guarantee the safety of anyone who entered a city of refuge and to host that person as long as necessary.

We can find refuge in God.

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