



NUMBERS 35-36

BIBLE STUDY

MT. ZION FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH

105 LANKFORD AVENUE

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902

VISION

The vision of the Mt. Zion First African Baptist Church of Charlottesville, Virginia will reach and reproduce within its surrounding community, a people inspired and equipped with a passion for the truth of God's Word and His compassion for others who will be enablers of change.



NUMBERS 35

More instructions about the promised land's rules and regulations are given in this chapter. [Numbers 35](#) may be divided into three major parts as follows:

1. The Levites Residences ([Numbers 35:1-8](#))
2. The Legal Refuges ([Numbers 35:9-29](#))
3. The Law of Retribution ([Numbers 35:16-19](#), [30-34](#))



NUMBERS 35:1-8

The Levites Residence

The first part of the chapter focuses on the inheritance for the Levites. They were not given a section of land like the other tribes so they needed some places to reside.

1. The Precept for the Residences (Number [35:1, 2](#))

The residences for the Levites were decreed by a command.



NUMBERS 35:1-8

The Levites Residence

- ***The source of the precept.*** *"Then GOD spoke to Moses on the Plains of Moab at Jordan-Jericho: "Command the People of Israel to give the Levites as their part of the total inheritance towns to live in."* (35:1-3, MSG) The source determines the authority of the command. If the source is God, as it is here, the command supersedes all human laws.



NUMBERS 35:1-8

The Levites Residence

- ***The site for the precept.*** “Command the People of Israel to give the Levites as their part of the total inheritance towns to live in. ([Num. 35:2](#)). The precept was about cities for the Levites which were to be throughout all of Israel.



NUMBERS 35:2-5

The Pastures in the Residences

"Make sure there is plenty of pasture around the towns. Then they will be well taken care of with towns to live in and pastures for their cattle, flocks, and other livestock."



NUMBERS 35:2-5

The Pastures in the Residences

... the city wall. The outside borders of the pasture are to measure three thousand feet on each of the four sides—east, south, west, and north—with the town at the center. Each city will be supplied with pasture.



NUMBERS 35:2-5

The Pastures in the Residences

The Levites were not only given cities in which to dwell but also surrounding land in which to pasture their livestock and grow some crops. The last measurement was the total distance which not only included the land for the pastures but additional land for any other needs.



NUMBERS 35:6

The Protection in the Residences


"Six of these towns that you give the Levites will be asylum cities to which anyone who accidentally kills another person may flee for asylum. Six cities of refuge (which will be spoken of in more detail shortly) were to be added to the cities for the Levites.



NUMBERS 35:6, 7

The Plenitude in the Residences

"In addition, you will give them forty-two other towns—forty-eight towns in all, together with their pastures."

(Num. 35:6, 7). A total of forty-eight cities were given to the Levites. This total included the six cities of refuge. 

NUMBERS 35:8

The Principle for the Residences

"The towns that you give the Levites from the common inheritance of the People of Israel are to be taken in proportion to the size of each tribe—many towns from a tribe that has many, few from a tribe that has few."
(35:8).



NUMBERS 35:8

The Principle for the Residences

The same principle for the Levites' land was the same principle that was to guide the land for all the tribes (cp. [Numbers 33:54](#)). God is practical and orderly. Where these attributes are missing, God is missing.



NUMBERS 35:9-29

The Legal Refuges

The "*cities for refuge*" or "*asylum cities*" ([Numbers 35:6](#)) instructions are expanded in this section of the chapter.

1. The Precept for the Refuges ([Numbers 35:9-15, 29](#)). The instructions for the cities of refuge came as an order, a precept, a command. They were not optional.



NUMBERS 35:9-29

The Legal Refuges

The source of the precept. "GOD spoke to Moses:" ([Num. 35:9](#)). The city of refuge idea was God's idea. It was not thought up by mankind.



NUMBERS 35:9-29

The Legal Refuges

- ***The start in the precept.*** "Tell them, When you cross the River Jordan into the country of Canaan" ([Num. 35:10](#)). The precept was to start once the Israelites got across the Jordan into Canaan.



NUMBERS 35:9-29

The Legal Refugees

- ***The stipulation in the precept.***
“...designate your asylum-cities, towns to which a person who accidentally kills someone can flee for asylum.” ([Num. 35:12](#)). Protection at the first was so the manslayer could have his day in court



NUMBERS 35:9–29

The Legal Refuges

- ***The season in the precept.*** *"These are the procedures for making judgments from now on, wherever you live."* ([Num. 35:29](#)).
The precept was to be permanent. There were always to be cities of refuge in Israel.



NUMBERS 35:13

2. The Provision for the Refuges (Numbers 35:13). "Provide six asylum-cities. Designate three of the towns to the east side of the Jordan, the other three in Canaan proper—asylum-cities for the People of Israel, for the foreigner, and for



NUMBERS 35:13

... any occasional visitors or guests—six asylum-cities to run to for anyone who accidentally kills another.” ([Num. 35:13](#)). This would be an adequate number to handle any crime problem in Israel.



NUMBERS 35:12-14

3. The Places of the Refuges

([Num. 35:12-14](#)). "Designate three of the towns to the east side of the Jordan, the other three in Canaan proper—asylum-cities for the People of Israel ... ([Num. 35:14](#)).



NUMBERS 35:12-14

Three cities of refuge were on the west of Jordan and three were to be on the east side of Jordan.



NUMBERS 35:15

4. The Purpose of the Refuges ([Num. 35:15](#)). “...*asylum-cities for the People of Israel, for the foreigner, and for any occasional visitors or guests—six asylum-cities to run to for anyone who accidentally kills another.*” The purpose of the cities of refuge was to protect the innocent in death cases.



NUMBERS 35:16-28

5. ... The policies for residence in the city are stated here.

• *The rejected in the policies.*

"But if the killer has used an iron object, that's just plain murder; he's obviously a murderer and must be put to death.



NUMBERS 35:16-28

5. “... a murderer and must be put to death. ¹⁷ “Or if he has a rock in his hand big enough to kill and the man dies, that’s murder; he’s a murderer and must be put to death.” The man who commits murder is not protected by the city of refuge. He is to be executed.



NUMBERS 35:16-28

5. The received in the policies.

“It’s the task of the community to save the killer from the hand of the avenger—the community is to return him to his asylum-city to which he fled. He must stay there until the death of the High Priest who was anointed with the holy oil.”

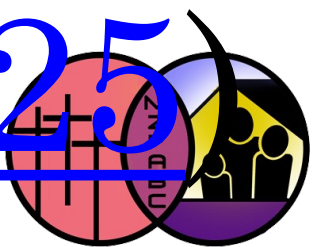


NUMBERS 35:16-28

The Provision for the Refugees

- ***The requirement in the policies.***

Two requirements for protection are noted here. First, the duration requirement. *“He must stay there until the death of the High Priest who was anointed with the holy oil.”* ([Num.35:25](#))



NUMBERS 35:16-28

The Provision for the Refuges

The innocent could not leave the city until the high priest, at the time, had died. **Second**, the dwelling requirement. "*But if the murderer leaves the asylum-city to which he has fled, and the avenger finds him outside*



NUMBERS 35:16-28

The Provision for the Refuges

... the borders of his asylum-city, the avenger has a right to kill the murderer. And he's not considered guilty of murder.”



NUMBERS 35:16-28

The Provision for the Refugees

The innocent's protection was in the city. If he left the city before the high priest passed away, he lost his protection.



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

This chapter speaks much about the murderer, since the city of refuge involves the death of an individual and the protection of one not guilty of murder though he caused a death.



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

1. **The Penalty for Murder** *"The murderer shall surely be put to death... ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer... he shall be surely put to death"* ([Num. 35:16-18, 30, 31](#)).



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

The murderer was to be put to death; no other punishment was acceptable.

2. The Prohibiting for Murder: *“Don’t accept bribe money in exchange for the life of a murderer. He’s guilty and deserves the death penalty. Put him to death.*



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

³² *“And don’t accept bribe money for anyone who has fled to an asylum-city so as to permit him to go back and live in his own place before the death of the High Priest.”* (*Num. 35:31, 32*).



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

In application, his sentence could not be commuted, shortened in any way. He was to be executed, not given a life sentence.

3. The Pollution by Murder

(Numbers 35:33, 34)



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

³³ *“Don’t pollute the land in which you live. Murder pollutes the land. The land can’t be cleaned up of the blood of murder except through the blood of the murderer.”*



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

³⁴ *“Don’t desecrate the land in which you live. I live here, too—I, GOD, live in the same neighborhood with the People of Israel.”* ([Num. 35:33, 34](#)).



NUMBERS 35:16-19, 30-31

C. The Law of Retribution

Murder pollutes a land and failure to execute the murderer leaves the pollution in the land. Is it true that the only way a land can be cleansed of the defilement of murder is by the execution of the murderer?



NUMBERS 36

This last chapter of Numbers gives more instructions about how to live in the promised land. The last few chapters of Numbers are summed up in the last verse of Numbers.



NUMBERS 36

"These are the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses unto... Israel in the plains of Moab" ([Numbers 36:13](#)).

[Numbers 36](#) may be divided into two major parts as follows:



NUMBERS 36

1. *The Concern About Inheritances* ([Numbers 36:1-4](#))
2. *The Command About Inheritances* ([Numbers 36:5-12](#))



NUMBERS 36:1-4

A. The Concern About Inheritances. One's land inheritance was very important to the Israelites. Therefore, if anything threatened that inheritance it became a major concern. Such was the case in our text.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

1. The Expressing of the Concern ([Num. 36:1, 2](#)). A problem regarding inheritance was expressed in detail.

- *The men in the expressing. "The heads of the ancestral clan of Gilead son of Makir, the son of Manasseh—they were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph—approached Moses and the leaders who were heads of the families in the People of Israel?"*



NUMBERS 36:1-4

Chief men from half the tribe of Manasseh (the half that would inherit property on the west side of the Jordan, the other half inherited property on the east side of Jordan—many of the descendants of Machir settled east of Jordan but some did not) were the ones to express the problem.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

- *The manner of the expressing.*
"Came near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel" ([Numbers 36:1](#)). The people to whom the leaders of Manasseh expressed their concern displayed some very good manners.



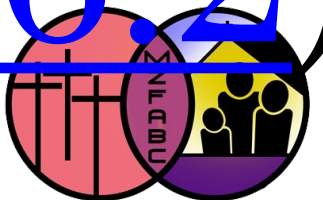
NUMBERS 36:1-4

They did not grumble and gripe to members of the congregation, but rather they went to the officials of Israel and gave their complaint and concern in a very commendable manner. Troublemakers seldom if ever practice proper procedure in their complaints but grumble to anyone stupid enough to listen to them. Such folk are not looking for a solution but are trying to upset things.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

- *The mandate in the expressing. "They said, "When GOD commanded my master to hand over the inheritance-lands by lot to the People of Israel, my master was also commanded by GOD to hand over the inheritance land of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters. " (Num. 36:2)*



NUMBERS 36:1-4

The leaders of the half tribe of Manasseh laid out their case with the support of the command of the Lord. This gives their concern some weight.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

2. The Essence of the Concern (Numbers 36:3, 4)

Loss of inheritance for a tribe was the concern of the leaders of the half tribe of Manasseh.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

The potential for the loss of inheritance. "But what happens if they marry into another tribe in the People of Israel? Their inheritance-land will be taken out of our ancestral tribe and get added into the tribe into which they married.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

• *The potential for the loss of inheritance....And then when the year of Jubilee comes for the People of Israel their inheritance will be lumped in with the inheritance of the tribe into which they married—their land will be removed from our ancestors' inheritance!”*



NUMBERS 36:1-4

Marriage could cause a transfer of inheritances to other tribes. Men had precedence over women, and if a woman married outside her tribe, the husband would gain her inheritance which meant a loss of inheritance for the woman's tribe.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

This potential was very real, for there would be many unscrupulous men who would marry for the estate of the women more than for the excellence of the woman. Marrying for riches is not the way to marry, and in this case, it would jeopardize the inheritance of a tribe.



NUMBERS 36:1-4

• *The permanence of the loss of inheritance. " Their inheritance-land will be taken out of our ancestral tribe and get added into the tribe into which they married. And then when the year of Jubilee comes for the People of Israel their inheritance will be lumped in with the inheritance of the*



NUMBERS 36:1-4

• *The permanence of the loss of inheritance.....tribe into which they married—their land will be removed from our ancestors' inheritance!”* ([Numbers 36:4](#)).



NUMBERS 36:1-4

The rules of the year of Jubilee would make the transfer of inheritance permanent. This makes the problem even worse and the concern greater.



NUMBERS 36:5-12

The Command About Inheritances

Moses and the leaders responded ardently to the concern of the people of Manasseh.

1. The Recognition Before the Command ([Numbers 36:5](#))



NUMBERS 36:5-12

Moses, at GOD's command, issued this order to the People of Israel: "What the tribe of the sons of Joseph says is right. ([Num. 36:5](#)). Both in the manner and the message of the concern the leaders of the half-tribe of Manasseh are commended



NUMBERS 36:5-12

...here for the expression of their concern. They had a legitimate concern and expressed it in a honorable manner. Thus Moses and the leaders of Israel will give it good attention.



NUMBERS 36:5-12

2. *The Restriction in the Command* ([Num. 36:6-8](#))

"Moses commanded the children of Israel... This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad... Let them marry to whom they think best;



NUMBERS 36:5-12

2. The Restriction ...only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry. So shall not the inheritance, of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe... every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe... shall be



NUMBERS 36:5-12

2. The Restriction ...wife unto one of the family of the tribe" ([Numbers 36:6-8](#)). The command said those women who had received an inheritance because no male descendants were available, these women were restricted to marriage within their tribe.



NUMBERS 36:5-12

3. *The Remedy in the Command (Numbers 36:9)*

"No inheritance-land may be passed from tribe to tribe; each tribe of the People of Israel must hold tight to its own land." Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe



NUMBERS 36:5-12

3. *The Remedy... to another"*

([Numbers 36:9](#)). This command would remedy a problem of inheritances moving from one tribe to another because of marriage.



NUMBERS 36:5-12

4. *The Respect of the Command*

(Numbers 36:10-12)

"Zelophehad's daughters did just as GOD commanded Moses. Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, Zelophehad's daughters, all married their cousins on their father's side. They



NUMBERS 36:5-12

4. *The Respect of the*

Command (Numbers 36:10-12)

...married within the families of Manasseh son of Joseph and their inheritance-lands stayed in their father's family.”



NUMBERS 36:5-12

The daughters of Zelophehad obeyed the command of Moses which would set a good example for any other daughters who would in the future come into an inheritance in the same manner as did the daughters of Zelophehad.



The End

Analytical Bible
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