

LESSON XI—September 15th, 1895.

The Cities of Refuge. JOSHUA 20: 1-9.

(Commit to memory verse 9.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Heb. 6: 18.

PROVE THAT—God has provided us a refuge. Prov. 18: 10.

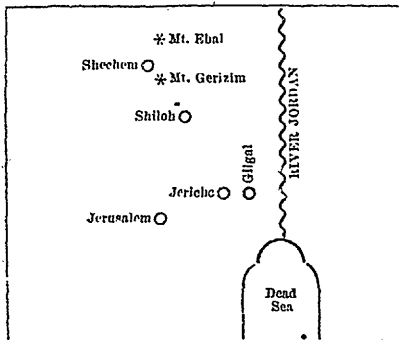
SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 161, 145, 48, 146.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The cities of refuge. Josh. 20: 1-9. *Tuesday.* Purpose explained. Deut. 19: 1-13. *Wednesday.* The law of refuge. Num. 35: 9-15. *Thursday.* God our refuge. Ps. 91. *Friday.* A safe refuge. 2 Sam. 22: 1-20. *Saturday.* True rest. Matt. 11: 25-30. *Sabbath.* Sure and steadfast. Heb. 6: 13-20. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.



INTRODUCTORY. The ark of God was now at Shiloh, where it remained for 300 years. Here the allotment of the territory was completed (18: 1). In ancient times the next of kin to a man who might be killed in any way by another, considered it his sacred duty to avenge his death. Where there was no strong government to enforce the penalty against a murderer there was some excuse for this custom, but it had become everywhere a system of bloody revenge. The law of Moses here makes a distinction between accidental and intentional killing, and cities of refuge are provided so that an innocent person may not fall a victim to hasty revengeful feelings.

LESSON PLAN. Provided in Mercy. vs. 1-3. II. Governed by Justice. vs. 4-6. III. Accessible to all. vs. 7-9.

2. Appoint out—R. V. "assign." By the hand of Moses—By the agency of Moses (Num. 35: 6, 13-34; Deut. 19: 3-9). There were to be six of them. **3. Unwittingly—**With no intention of doing so. No place could protect a wilful murderer (Ex. 21: 14). **The avenger of blood—**The nearest kinsman of the person killed. It was considered his duty to avenge the death of his relative. This is how Moses restrained a very cruel custom and prepared the way for the more humane and just treatment of innocent persons. **4. At the entering of the gate—**In the most public part of the city, where the magistrates held court (Kuth 4: 1, 2). Probably some one was always in attendance. **Declare his cause—**Give his version of the occurrence which led to his claiming an asylum there. **Take him into the city—**That is, if he seemed to be innocent of murder. **6. The congregation—**The elders of his own

city, who would put him on his trial. If he were then proved guilty of murder he would be put to death, but if not he would be returned to the city of refuge, where he had to remain until his own death or that of the high priest. If he were caught out of the prescribed bounds the avenger of blood had still a right to kill him (Num. 35: 15-34). He was still punished for his criminal carelessness although not put to death. **7. They appointed—**Consecrated. Three of these cities were on the west of Jordan; Kadesh in the north, Shechem in the centre and Hebron in the south. **8. Three were on the east of Jordan,** Golan in the north, Ramoth in the centre, and Bezer in the south. Roads were to be made to all these cities (Deut. 19: 3). Any Israelite could reach one of them in half a day or less. **9. And for the stranger—**This merciful law was extended to foreigners as well.

LESSONS. 1. The law of God justly demands the death of the sinner. 2. A refuge has been provided in Christ Jesus. 3. We should lose no time in fleeing to him. 4. He is within reach of all. 5. We are safe in him.