

The Wednesday Word, September 8, 2021: Cities of Refuge 5 - Ramoth

To date, we have considered 4 of the 6 Cities of Refuge: Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron and Bezer.

These were cities to which a person guilty of manslaughter could flee and find safety. Each of the cities, in their individual name, point us towards Christ. Today we encounter a fifth city, a place named Ramoth.

We don't know a lot about Ramoth. It was, it is thought, situated in Gilead about 20 miles east of the Jordan and it is believed that it was a heavily fortified stronghold.

So, does the name RAMOTH tell us anything regarding Christ? Yes, it does. Ramoth literally means EXALTATION. Jesus, we say, without fear or contradiction, is the true Ramoth. When He came to this earth He was despised, rejected and brutally murdered. However, now He is exalted on the throne of the Universe as our glorious King.

He is exalted.
All heaven exalts Him.
The angels exalt Him.
The seraphim exalt Him.
True believers here on earth exalt Him.

It's a delight and encouragement to think of Jesus exalted to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19) ... the place of cosmic authority. The right hand, as you remember, is the place of power (see Matthew 26:64). Just to 'stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance', God is Spirit (John 4:24) and, as such, has no physical right hand. The only physical hand the Father has is that which is found on Jesus. The Father has bodily form only in the Son for "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The man Christ Jesus is exalted to the right hand i.e., the place of cosmic power and strength. In Psalm 89:13 we read, "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand." In Luke 1:51 we read "He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts."

As you can see, 'The right hand of God' is not a literal arm but it is a picture of strength. When God intervenes and rescues, it is said to be with His "right arm" or "right hand." The man Christ Jesus, therefore, is exalted to a position of ultimate strength and authority. For a full treatment of this excellent truth see, "Jesus is God: Always Was and Always Will Be" Vol 1.

For a moment, consider this lovely thought about Jesus. Though exalted, He has not forgotten any of His people. He still knows us by name and loves us (Isaiah 49:1). Not only is He all-powerful, He is also kind. Think of how, in the Book of Revelation, He spoke to the aged apostle John. I wonder if John felt that somehow or another Jesus might have changed. Did he quietly question whether Christ's exaltation in heaven had altered the Lord's love and tenderness towards His disciple? And how did John react when he looked upon the glorious Being that

stood in front of him in His radiant garments, with eyes which were like a flame of fire?" You know the story, John fell down at His feet as if dead" (see Revelation 1:14-17).

But what did the exalted Christ say to him. He said, "Fear not!" Do you hear the tenderness there? His warmth and affection towards His people has not changed.

Jesus is the Exalted One!

How about us? Is Jesus exalted in our thinking? He is not exalted in the thoughts of the un-saved. They, like the Inn Keeper of Bethlehem, have no room for Him. But how about us? Is our meditation of Him sweet (Psalm 104:34)?

He is the exalted one (Philippians 2:5-11). May we learn to exalt Him in our thoughts, in our words, in our deeds.

So, let's summarize. God left glory and took the place of a bondservant here on earth. He lived, died and rose again. Now, He sits in the most exalted place in glory. All of us who have identified with Him here on earth will, before long, have the honour of being found with Him in the highest place of glory ... forever.

And that's the Gospel Truth!