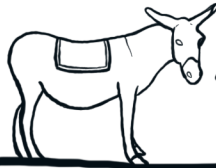


NUMBERS

CHAPTER

35



CHARACTERS

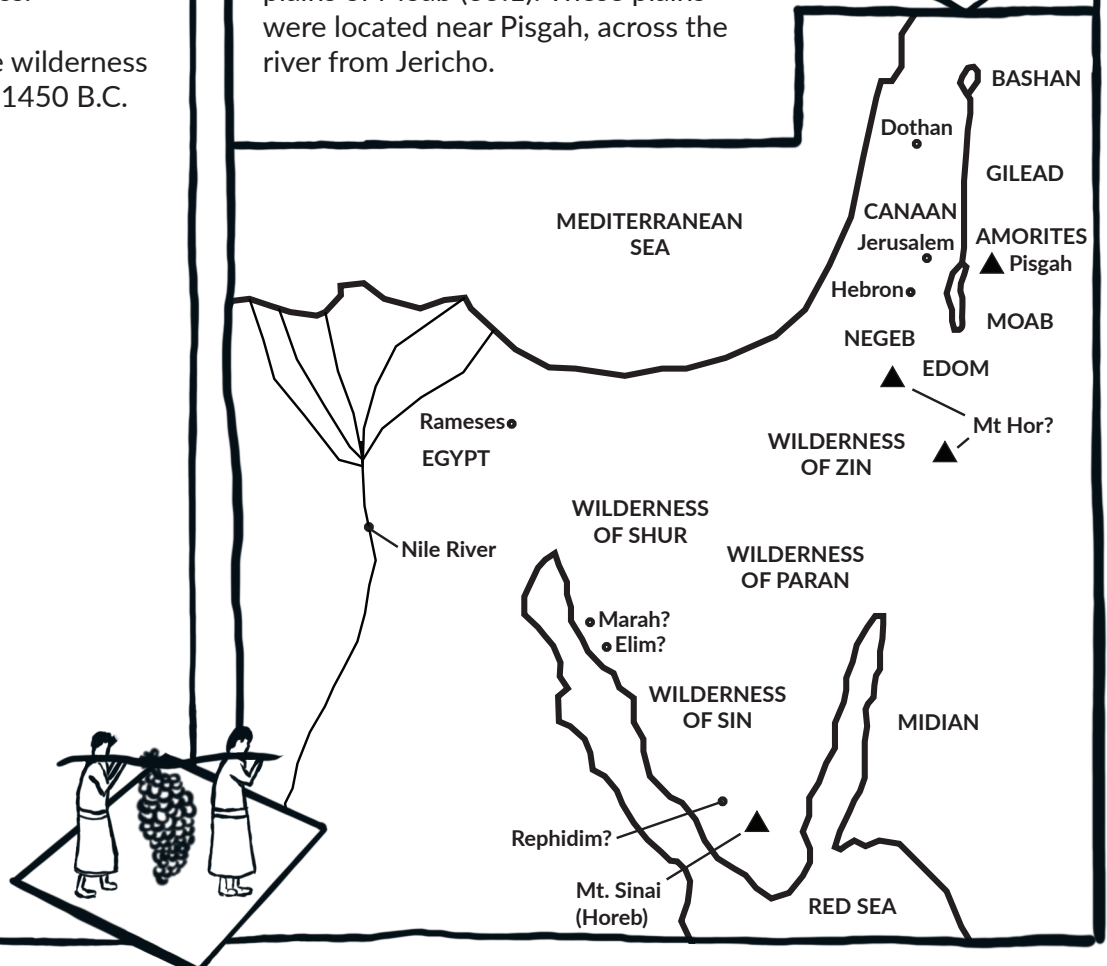
- **Moses** – God selected Moses to lead the Israelite nation from Egypt to Canaan.
- **Manslayer** – A person who accidentally killed another person.
- **Avenger of Blood** – A person seeking vengeance against a person for killing their relative or friend.

WHEN

- These events occurred towards the end of the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.
- The Israelites were in the wilderness from approximately 1490-1450 B.C.

WHERE

- The Israelites were camped on the east side of the Jordan River at the plains of Moab (35:1). These plains were located near Pisgah, across the river from Jericho.





OUTLINE

- CITIES FOR THE LEVITES (35:1-8):
 - + On the plains of Moab, God and Moses discussed the inheritance of the Levites.
 - + When the Israelites inhabited Canaan, each tribe was to give some of the cities within their territory to the people from the tribe of Levi (because they didn't receive a land inheritance).
 - + Along with the city, the Levites were to receive 1000 cubits of pastureland on each side of the city for their livestock.
 - + The Levites were to receive 48 cities total, 6 of which were designated cities of refuge.
- CITIES OF REFUGE (35:9-34):
 - + When the Israelites conquered Canaan, they were to designate 6 cities as "cities of refuge."
 - + If a man killed another man by accident, he could flee to a city of refuge and receive protection from anyone who wanted to avenge the dead man's blood.
 - + If a person accidentally killed someone (manslaughter), they would be safe in the city of refuge until the elders had an opportunity to hear their case.
 - + The cities were not designed to protect murderers. Murderers were to be put to death. Innocent bloodshed polluted the land (35:33).
 - + More than one witness was required to convict someone of murder.
 - + If the death was ruled accidental, the manslayer had to remain in the city of refuge until the death of the High Priest, at which point he could return to his home.
 - + If the manslayer left the city before the death of the high priest, the "avenger of blood" could kill him without legal consequences.

APPLICATION

- Capital punishment (execution for crimes) has always been a subject of debate in western law.
- Modern disciples don't follow the Mosaic laws, but these verses can give us some insights into God's position on capital punishment.
- God demanded capital punishment for murderers and prohibited anyone from ransoming them from that fate (35:31).
- Earlier commands, found in the book of Genesis, appear to have an even more universal application.
- Genesis 9:6 - "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image."
- God gave this command to Noah after his family got off the ark. It was not exclusive to one nation, but to be applied to all of Noah's descendants (i.e., the whole world).