

The altar of God is not going to protect a murderer.

Ordinarily somebody would say, “Oh, my! what can we do? Here is this murderer. He has his arms around the altar of God. We cannot hurt him when he is there!” Then his friend should say, “That is true; we certainly cannot touch him when he is there. Let us go back fifty yards and wait. You can be sure that inside of three days he will go away from there!”

Suppose that two persons became very angry at each other, and one killed the other. He would naturally look for the nearest protection he could find. If he happened to be near the altar, that would be a natural thing to think of. But Scripture nowhere says that God ever appointed an altar as a place of refuge. It only said that God would appoint a place. It does not say anything about altars scattered through the land. The idea that the statement, “Thou shalt take him away from my altar” shows development had occurred is entirely fictitious! It is read into the statement, and that is the case with most of the alleged developments within the documents. In most cases the differences among them are easily explained when we think of the situation under which they were given. Thus, a simple and brief presentation is natural at the time of the first presentation of God’s law. At the very beginning of the covenant, it is simply necessary to drive home to their minds a few commands that they need to observe then, and a few important principles to follow permanently, without it being necessary to go into detail so far ahead of entering Canaan. Then in Deuteronomy as they neared the promised land, it was reasonable to go more into detail. Soon they will not all be together as they have been in the past, where they could immediately be reached. They will be scattered through the land, so it is good to go into more detail and drive the commands into their minds.

What the critics call the P document, is really the law for the priests. This detailed law is written in a book. People do not have to remember it; they can refer to it when it is necessary. Therefore it is naturally more detailed.

Actually you find little differences among the laws, and these little