

Aliens and Strangers: How Should We Deal With Them?

How Does God View the “Stranger”, and How Should Christians Treat Them? A Study Outline

- I. Today we find a tremendous flood of illegal aliens crossing our borders, mostly from Mexico.
 - A. Though the government says there are 9 million illegals in the U.S., there may be as many as 20 million.
 - B. The total number of legalized immigrants entering the U.S. since 1990 has averaged 962,000 per year. Several credible studies indicate that the number of illegal entries has recently crept up to 3 million per year, triple the official figure.
 - C. Illegals are gaining a larger share of the job market, and hold about 12 to 15 million jobs in the U.S. (8% of the employed).
 - D. Four to six million jobs have shifted to the underground market as small businesses take advantage of the vulnerability of illegal residents.
 - E. Cell phones, the internet, and low-cost travel have allowed immigrants easier illegal access to the U.S. and increased their ability to find employment and circumvent immigration laws.
 - F. It is no wonder that downtrodden people seeking opportunities will try to enter the country any way they can. Some of the aliens, as we suspect, are seeking harm to the country.

- II. Who are aliens and strangers? [Not all scriptural instances are listed below.]
 - A. **Alien(s)**
 1. Strong 1616 = **ger** or **geyr**, “a guest; by implication a foreigner”. Translated alien, sojourner, stranger; comes from Strong 1481 = **guwr**, “to turn aside from the road (for a lodging or any other purpose); i.e. sojourn (as a guest).”
Ex. 18:3 only. I have been an alien in a strange land.
 2. Strong 5237 = **nokriy** “strange, in a variety of degrees and applications (foreign, non-relative, adulteress, different, wonderful).”
Deut. 14:21. Sell land to an alien.
Job 19:15. I am an alien in their sight.
Ps. 69:3. An alien unto my mother’s children.
Isa. 61:5. The sons of the alien shall be yours.
Lam. 5:2. ... to strangers, our houses to aliens.
 - B. **Stranger(s)**
 1. Strong 1616. See above
Gen. 15:13; 23:4; Ex. 2:22; 12:19, 21; 23:9; Lev. 17:8, 10.
 2. Strong 4033 = **maguwr** or **magur**, from Strong 1481 = **guwr**, “in the sense of lodging; a temporary abode.”
Gen. 17:8, 12, 27; 28:4; 37:1 (cited only in Genesis).
 3. Strong 2114 = **zuwr**, “to turn aside (especially for lodging); hence to be a foreigner, strange, profane, specifically to commit adultery.”
Ex. 29:33; 30:33; Lev. 22:10, 12-13.
 4. Strong 8433 = **toukechah** or **toukachath**, “chastisement; figuratively (by words) correction, refutation, proof.”
Lev. 25:6 and 47 only.
 5. Strong 5237. See above.

Deut. 23:20; 29:22; Judg. 19:12.

- III. God's laws relating to aliens and strangers: these form the basis for many of our own laws in the U.S.
- A. Strangers could be kept as slaves or bondservants. Lev. 25:44-45.
 - B. Usury could be charged to them. Deut. 15:3; 23:20.
 - C. Flesh that had died of itself could be given or sold to them. Deut. 14:21.
 - D. No alien could be a king over Israel. Deut. 17:15.
 - E. Aliens were forbidden to keep the Passover. Ex. 12:43-48.
 - F. No food of sacrifices could be eaten by them. Ex. 29:33; Lev. 22:10, 12, 25.
 - G. If an alien blasphemes God's name he must be stoned. Lev. 24:16.
 - H. A stranger that comes near the tabernacle must be killed. Num. 1:51.
 - I. God's face will be set against the stranger that eats blood. Lev. 17:10.
 - J. There is to be one law for both the Israelites and for aliens, with a few exceptions (like eating animals that die of themselves, etc.). Ex. 12:49; Lev. 24:22; Num. 15:15-16; Deut. 1:16-17.
 - K. The Sabbath was to be kept by strangers. Ex. 20:10; 23:12.
 - L. Oblations may be offered by strangers. Lev. 17:8; 22: 18-19.
 - M. Burial places of aliens are to be separate from Israelites. Matt. 27:7.
 - N. Poor aliens are to be treated with kindness. Lev. 25:35-38.
 - O. Aliens are to be loved. Deut. 10:18-19.
 - P. Aliens must not be abhorred. Deut. 23:9.
 - Q. Israelites were not to marry them. Deut. 25:5.
 - R. Strangers are to be shown hospitality and respect. Ex. 22:21; 23:5; Lev. 19:33-34; Matt. 25:35, 38, 43. Jesus required that strangers be treated hospitably.
 - S. Food and clothing were to be provided for strangers. Lev. 19:10; Deut. 10:18.
 - T. Strangers could partake of the "third year tithe". Deut. 26:12.
 - U. Justice was to be shown towards aliens. Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:33-34; Deut. 1:16; 10:19; 24:14, 17; 27:19; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Ezek. 22:29, Mal. 3:5.
 - V. Cities of refuge applied to strangers and sojourners as well as to Israelites. Num. 35:15; Josh. 20:9.
- IV. Some points in conclusion:
- A. There were many strangers in the land of Israel, in David's and Solomon's time, (II Chron. 2:17; 15:9) just as there are in the U.S. (part of modern Israel) today.
 - B. Aliens and strangers are people like we are, descendants of Adam, even if they may not be of the same race, but **THEY ARE TO ENTER THE LAND ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF THE LAND. IF THEY ENTER ILLEGALLY THEY ARE CRIMINALS AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH, AND DEPORTED AND OTHERWISE PENALIZED.**
 - C. **THEY MUST OBEY THE LAWS OF THE LAND AS LONG AS THEY REMAIN THERE.** There should be only one law — God's law — for native born and alien people. **IF THEY DECIDE TO BECOME A CITIZEN OF THE COUNTRY THEY MUST ADOPT THE LANGUAGE, LAW, AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE.**
 - D. **WE MUST TREAT STRANGERS AND ALIENS WITH RESPECT, LOVE, AND HOSPITALITY** (as long as they are legally in the land); God says much about treating the widow, orphan, and stranger with love and hospitality.
 - E. **THESE SOJOURNERS AMONGST ISRAEL ARE NOT TO INTERMARRY WITH THE PEOPLE, NOR ARE THEY TO OBTAIN ANY INHERITANCE IN THE LAND.** In the future realm, however, they will gain an inheritance alongside Israelites in Israel (Ezek. 47:22-23).
- V. Comments by Robert Justich and Betty Ng of Bear Stearns Asset Management, written January 3, 2005:

- A. ***Cross Border Flows.*** Pulitzer Prize reporters Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele recently reported for *TIME* magazine that “the number of illegal aliens flooding into the United States this year will total 3 million. It will be the largest wave since 2001 and roughly triple the number of immigrants that will come to the U.S. by legal means.” The *TIME* investigation, according to Mr. Barlett, relied not only on figures projected by the U.S. Border Patrol, but also on the report’s extensive investigations along the Mexican border at factories, local communities, and the district offices of the U.S. Border Patrol.

Though more resources have been designated to patrolling the Mexican border, *TIME* argues that “the government doesn’t want to fix it, and the politicians, as usual, are dodging the issue, even though public opinion polls show that Americans overwhelmingly favor a crackdown on illegal immigration.” It can be strongly argued that enforcement at the work place is a much more efficient way of controlling illegal flows because the primary incentive for sneaking into the United States is money and jobs. A telephone verification system was designed under the auspices of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 for employers to confirm the legal status of potential employees. As of today, this system is still not running.

- B. ***Migration is a Global Macro Trend.*** The world is undergoing the largest migration wave since the late 1800’s. Over 175 million people are in motion. The dramatic increase in human mobility has left the public sector and policy makers behind. The specific and general understanding of migration flows has not kept pace with the growth, complexity, and implications of this phenomenon. The economic implications of demographics have increased tremendously over the last 20 years. In no other time period during the last century have demographics undergone such a subcutaneous change in the United States.

The human race is on the move — human mobility is increasing drastically, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Population Division of the United Nations. It estimates the total number of international migrants is approximately 175 million, or 2.9% of the world population. The migration wave has two components — transnational, and rural to urban, and these waves are changing the dynamics of government, economics, and lifestyles more than any other driver of human behavior.

Governments are seriously behind in recording and comprehending the current phenomenon, and more importantly governments are making economic and social policy decisions based on flawed information. Like corrupt corporate accounting practices or poor national security information, the United States is struggling with its immigration policies because of false assumptions and unreliable data.

