



"It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it."  
—Upton Sinclair

**28-Apr-06**

## **'The Alien Who Is Among You'**

Over the past several weeks, the big story has been illegal immigration. Supposedly, about twelve million illegal aliens already reside within America, and millions more are expected to stream through our porous borders in the coming years. Most of these are Hispanics from Mexico and Central America, although with them also come people of other nationalities - and the fear is that radical Islamists have and will use this route to infiltrate the country and carry out another massive terrorist strike.

To think that mass migrations of peoples are a recent phenomenon would be sheer ignorance of history. In fact, few ethnic groups remain in their lands of origin. Those familiar with the Bible are aware that the people of Israel migrated from Canaan to Egypt, and several generations later, after being redeemed from bondage, they migrated back. When Israel was conquered by Assyria about seven hundred years later, they were taken en masse to the land of the Medes, and people of Mesopotamian origin were sent to replace them in Palestine. Later, as church members know, the [descendants of Israel](#) began a many-centuries-long migration that took them from the region around the Caspian Sea to northwestern Europe and then on to the New World and beyond.

Many other groups and nations have done the same. Political and economic pressures are primary prods on peoples' movements. For instance, the Potato Famine in Ireland displaced millions of Irish to America and elsewhere in the mid-nineteenth century. More recently, the various ethnicities represented in the Balkans region have shifted due to the political unrest in that part of [the world](#). The ongoing mass-migration of Hispanics into the U. S. is primarily economic opportunism resulting from the disparity of the world's wealthiest nation sharing a border with a far-poorer developing nation.

The history of the Americas, and the United States in particular, can be organized around the concept of migration/immigration and its consequences. This land was colonized by migrants seeking both religious and/or political freedom and economic opportunity, but they clashed with the native population and eventually drove them from their traditional lands. New immigrants swelled the colonial population, expanding the territory, prospering the colonists, and inspiring the idea of liberty and nationhood. More new blood increased America's inventiveness, capacity, and dynamism, producing a confident, resourceful, and innovative people who spread across the continent, which caused further displacement of native inhabitants. Each new set of immigrants has brought both new challenges and new vigor.

Yet, there is a palpable difference between previous immigrants and the millions of non-citizens now clamoring for amnesty and citizenship. Indeed, most of the previous immigrants to these shores came here through legal channels. However, the distinctive difference between then and now is *the attitude of the immigrants*, particularly regarding becoming Americans. Previous generations of immigrants - and granted, some still today - truly desired to assimilate to this culture. They learned the history, the laws, the culture, and the language of America, leaving the lands of their birth behind them. They gladly threw themselves into the Melting Pot of America, taking on themselves the proud mantle of American citizens and patriots.

Not so today. Today's illegal immigrants want America to change to suit them. Signs must be in their native tongues, and school must be taught in them as well. They fly the flags of their native countries. They make money

under the table, put it in American banks, and wire it back to their native lands - and not necessarily to bring their loved ones across the border to join them but sometimes with the expectation of returning there to live like a king among paupers. They take advantage of our liberal welfare and healthcare systems. They find and exploit every loophole in the law. They form political action groups to lobby for separate rights for themselves. They march, not against injustice but for it! They publicly vow to "re-conquer" lands purportedly stolen from their ancestors. In sum, they do not want to be Americans at all, but merely to take advantage of America's largess.

Believe it or not, the Bible speaks in principle to this current, national problem in several places. For instance, [Exodus 12:43-49](#) concerns participation in the [Passover](#) service but can be expanded to include Israelite citizenship. Verse 43 says, "No outsider shall eat it," yet verse 48 stipulates that a "stranger" can eat it if all the males in his family are circumcised. Undergoing circumcision represented that the individual agreed to abide by Israel's laws and accepted the covenant [God](#) made with Israel. As verse 49 says, "One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you."

Simply stated, no outsider was to have any of the benefits of citizenship until he voluntarily took upon himself the responsibilities of citizenship. Once he did, he was to be treated as if he had been born and lived in Israel all his life. Other scriptural instances of this standard merely restate or refine this principle to varying degrees (for instance, Deuteronomy 23 excludes various groups due to their negative influences on Israel historically or presently).

In principle, then, America should function no differently. Illegal aliens should be given no benefits of citizenship. We should not lower the bar either for reasons of misguided compassion or higher profits. Entry quotas should be fastidiously monitored and enforced. The border should be strengthened, and all illegal immigrants who are caught - and certainly those who commit crimes - should be unceremoniously deported. Businesses and individuals that knowingly hire illegal aliens should be pursued in accordance with the law.

Unfortunately, there is no will to do any of these things politically or economically. It seems we are in the midst of the fulfillment of [Deuteronomy](#)

[28:43-44](#): "The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. He . . . shall be the head, and you shall be the tail." As this chapter plainly states, this is a result of failing to "obey the voice of God" (verse 15). How close are we to experiencing the rest of these curses?

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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## **From the Archives: Featured Sermon**

### **[Pentecost and the Book of Ruth](#)**

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Although many of the lessons allude to Old Covenant teachings, Ruth prefigures New Covenant principles also, including (1) God's mercy and mankind's loyalty to the covenant (Boaz serves as a type of Christ and Ruth serves as a type of the church), (2) God's unilateral work on our behalf (typified by Boaz's proactive watchful care for Ruth), (3) the vessels of water (Ruth 2:9) as a type of God's Holy Spirit, and (4) Boaz's acceptance of Ruth despite her gentile status indicates God's extension of His covenant or family relationship beyond Israel by means of union with Christ.

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## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[Searching for Israel \(Part Eight\): The Scattering of Ten-Tribed Israel](#)**

by Charles Whitaker

What happened to the Israelites after their captivity by Assyria? Charles Whitaker provides biblical evidence to show where they were driven and from where they will return. Includes the sidebar, "Deferred Promises are Not Forgotten Ones."

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