

## **WELCOMING THE FOREIGNER**

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-22**

Sometimes we think of Deuteronomy as a book of old, outdated laws, but a deeper look reveals important teaching on how to live as the people of God. Deuteronomy 10 says everything belongs to the Lord, and because God loves the foreigner, and the people of God were once foreigners in a strange land, the people of God are to love the foreigner among them. Deuteronomy 23 bans Ammonites and Moabites, specific foreigners, from the Temple and from acceptance as friends. Why is there a difference within the same book of the Bible? We aren't the first to have conversations about immigrants and foreigners. There seems to be a conversation in the Old Testament that is also happening in Exodus, Leviticus, Ezra, and Nehemiah. In the context of an imminent threat, God's people are to protect themselves. In the context of peace, God's people are to love the foreigner among them.

#### ☐ **Monday: Read Deuteronomy 10:12-16.**

How does "walking in God's ways" shape how we treat people? In your current relationships, where is God inviting you to deeper love, reverence, or justice?

#### ☐ **Tuesday: Read Deuteronomy 10:17-18.**

What does it say to you that God defends the cause of the fatherless, the widow, and the foreigner? Who are the "foreigners" in your life or community today, those who feel out of place, excluded, or vulnerable?

#### ☐ **Wednesday: Read Deuteronomy 10:19.**

Why does God remind the Israelites of their own past as outsiders? Can you remember a time when you felt like an outsider—socially, spiritually, or culturally?

#### ☐ **Thursday: Read Deuteronomy 10:20-22.**

How can remembering your own feeling as an outsider shape the way you treat others? How does knowing you belong to God influence how you welcome others into your life?

#### ☐ **Friday: Read Leviticus 19:33-34.**

Why do you think God's command to welcome and care for the foreigner is repeated throughout God's Torah, or teaching, and echoed by Jesus in Matthew 25? What does caring for the foreigner look like today?

#### ☐ **Saturday: Read Luke 10:25-37.**

Why do you think Jesus chose a Samaritan, a "foreigner" in Jewish eyes, to be the hero of the "Good Samaritan" story? What does the story of the Good Samaritan teach us about loving our neighbor, especially when they are different from us?

Leviticus, like Deuteronomy and Exodus, reminds the people of God that they were once oppressed immigrants in a foreign land. With this memory, God's people are encouraged to show empathy toward foreigners fleeing persecution and famine and now residing among them. Leviticus later teaches that all the land belongs to God, and thus we are all

immigrants on land that does not belong to us. All of us, no matter where we are born, are beloved children of God and invited to be loving neighbors. As people of God, we are encouraged to welcome foreigners, embracing every person with God's love.

**The Bible invites us to view others through the lens of shared experience and God's love for all people.**