

Loving Christ in All of Life  
Week 8 - Citizens, Sojourners, and Immigrants  
Deuteronomy 23:1-8

- Once we understand that religion is foundational to law order and that undermining that law order is detrimental to a nation, it follows that the magistrate is concerned with who makes up the nation - do they respect the law order?
  - Must be thoughtful in the application of biblical principles
    - No 1-1 correspondence; keep in mind potential overlap with ceremonial law
    - Discerning just principles from Scripture regarding residency in a nation
- A nation is a covenant body
  - Established by God, marked by mutual obligations defined and enforced by God, delegating headship authority under God, can only be dissolved when there are significant, specific violations of the law of the covenant
  - Magistrates are established by God (Deut. 17, Rom. 13), given headship over the people (Ex. 18, 2 Sam. 7)
  - Citizens are to submit to the magistrate under God (Rom. 13, Ex. 22:28)
  - Promised blessings (Deut. 17:18-20, 1 Ki. 2:3-4, 3:14, 1 Tim. 2:2) and threatened curses (1 Sam. 8:10-18, 13:13-14, 2 Sam. 24:10-17, 1 Ki. 11:30-35)
  - Because nations are governed by particular covenants, they are by nature not universal
- Covenant arrangement closely tied to physical territory - Acts 17:26, Josh. 14-21, Num. 20:17-18
  - “Open borders” is a contradiction
  - Everyone dwelling in the territory of the nation is treated equitably under the law - Num. 15:1-16, Lev. 24:22
  - Responsibility of the magistrate to police who is in the nation and to see that the law is enforced equitably for all
- **Citizens** - Full members of the civil covenant with full rights, duties, and privileges (the “Assembly”)
  - Ex. 30:11-16 - Israelite males 20 years and up, could be conscripted for military service
    - Basic civil tax=an acknowledgment of and submission to civil authority in exchange for civil protection
    - Represented their households (wives and children)
  - Highest responsibility - paid poll tax, served in military
  - Highest privilege - protection of property/inheritance, access to benefits funded by the tithe, could serve as judges/magistrates
  - Central to citizenship is **formal** acknowledgement of the Sovereign and full, willing submission to the law order

- **Sojourners** - Foreigners dwelling temporarily in the land
  - Not a part of the national covenant body, but were the objects of hospitality
  - Needed a reason and permission to sojourn - Gen. 47:1-6, Ruth 1:1
  - Guaranteed equal protection under the law and some provisions from the poor tithe (Deut. 14:28-29)
  - Responsibility to submit to the law - could not subvert from within
    - No right to practice their religion or worship their gods in a foreign land
  - Required to do productive work - Lev. 19:9-10
  - Probably not required to pay poll tax, exempt from military conscription, no access to temple - no *right* to the land; they were guests
- **Immigrants** - Foreigners who become full members of the civic covenant
  - Permanent, fully and publicly avowed submission to the law order of Yahweh
    - Involves actually making a covenant - Ex. 12:48, Ruth 1:16-17
    - Not about being native born, but about full genuine submission to Yahweh - Egyptians who came out with Israel, Rahab, Uriah the Hittite(?)
      - Receive full privileges and responsibilities of native born citizens
  - Simply converting to Israelite religion did not make one a citizen of Israel - distinction between ecclesiastical and civil covenants
    - Deut. 23:1-8 lays out standards regarding who could be granted full citizenship
      - Those who had made covenants with other gods, even if they had converted to Yahweh (v. 1)
      - Marrying outside the faith was a forfeiture of civil inheritance (v. 2)
      - Ammonites and Moabites were known to subvert and pervert Israel stealthily from within - untrustworthy for citizenship
      - Edomites and Egyptians needed a track record of faithfulness over 3 generations before they could be admitted into the civic covenant
    - **General principle** - civil governments must have a standard as to who may be admitted into the national covenant based on allegiance and trustworthiness to uphold the law order - it is within the purview of civil government to determine who can and cannot reside in a given nation