

# Biblical References to Immigrants and Refugees

The following passages from the Bible refer to immigrants and refugees.

All quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.

**Genesis 3:22-24** – Adam and Eve are forced out of the Garden.

**Genesis 7 and 8** – Noah builds an ark and takes refuge from the flood.

**Genesis 12:1** – The call of Abram: “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.”

**Genesis 12:10** – “Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to reside there as an alien, for the famine was severe in the land.”

**Genesis 19** – Lot takes his family and flees Sodom.

**Genesis 23** – Abraham is a stranger and an alien in the land of Canaan.

**Genesis 46:1-7** – Jacob moves his family to Egypt to escape the famine and reunite with Joseph.

**Genesis 47: 1-6** – Joseph brings his brothers to Pharaoh and they are welcomed and given jobs.

**Exodus 1:8-14** – Joseph’s generation is gone, and the Egyptians oppress the Israelites. “Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor.”

**Exodus 1:15-2:10** – Pharaoh orders all the Hebrew boy babies to be killed, but Moses is hidden and is saved by Pharaoh’s daughter.

**Exodus 12:37-39** – The Israelites were driven out of Egypt so fast they had no time to make provisions and had to bake unleavened cakes of bread.

**Exodus 12:49 and Leviticus 24:22** – “There shall be one law for the native and for the alien who resides among you.”

**Exodus 22:21** – Moses gives God’s law: “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.”

**Leviticus 19:9-10 and 23:22** – Moses gives God’s law: “You shall not strip your vineyards bare...leave them for the poor and the alien.”

**Leviticus 19:33-34 and 24:22** – When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

**Leviticus 24:23** – Moses receives God’s law: “With me you are but aliens and tenants.”

**Numbers 9:14 and 15:15-16** – “...you shall have one statute for both the resident alien and the native.”

**Numbers 35 and Joshua 20** – The Lord instructs Moses to give cities of refuge to the Levites so that when the Israelites must flee into Canaan they may have cities of refuge given to them.

**Deuteronomy 1:16** – “Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien.”

**Deuteronomy 6:10-13** – The people of Israel are made aware that the land had come to them as a gift from God and they were to remember that they were once aliens.

**Deuteronomy 10:18-19** – “For the Lord your God...loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

**Deuteronomy 14:28-29 and 26:12-13** – Tithing was begun, in part, for resident aliens.

**Deuteronomy 24:14** – “You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land...”

**Deuteronomy 24:17-18** – “You shall not deprive a resident alien...of justice.”

**Deuteronomy 24:19-22** – Leave sheaf, olives, grapes for the alien.

**Deuteronomy 26:5** – A wandering Aramean was my ancestor...

**Deuteronomy 27:19** – “Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien...of justice.”

**I Chronicles 22:1-2** – Aliens were important in building the temple.

**I Chronicles 29:14-15** – David praises God: “We are aliens and transients before you...”

**II Chronicles 2:17-18** – Solomon took a census of all the aliens and assigned them work.

**Psalm 105** – Remembering their sojourn: “When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people...”

**Psalm 137:1-6** – “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept...How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?”

**Psalm 146:9** – “The Lord watches over the strangers...”

**Ecclesiastes 4:1** – “Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them.”

**Isaiah 16:4** – Be a refuge to the outcasts of Moab.

**Jeremiah 7:5-7** – “If you do not oppress the alien...then I will dwell with you in this place...”

**Jeremiah 22:3-5** – Do no wrong or violence to the alien.

**Ezekiel 47:21-22** – The aliens shall be to you as citizens, and shall also be allotted an inheritance.

**Zechariah 7:8-10** – Do no oppress the alien.

**Malachi 3:5** – The messenger will bear witness against those who thrust aside the alien.

**Matthew 2:13-15** – Jesus and parents flee Herod’s search for the child.

**Matthew 5:10-11** – “Blessed are those who are persecuted.”

**Matthew 25:31-46** – “...I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

**Luke 3:11** – “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none...”

**Luke 4:16-21** – “...Bring good news to the poor...release to the captives...sight to the blind...let the oppressed go free.”

**Romans 12:13** – “Mark of the true Christian: “...Extend hospitality to strangers...”

**II Corinthians 8:13-15** – “It is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need...”

**Ephesians 2:11-22** – “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.”

**Hebrews 11** – “By faith Abraham...set out for a place...not knowing where he was going.”

**Hebrews 13:1-2** – “...show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels...”

**James 2:5** – “Has not God chosen the poor in the world...”

**James 2:14-17** – “What good is it...if you say you have faith but do not have works?”

**I John 3:18** – “...Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.”

**I John 4:7-21** – “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God...” We love because God first loved us.”