



Newsletter

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- Up Words # 43

ALIENS AMONG US



People are weird. Don't you know some folks who are really different. They talk different, they dress different, they come from different places, they sometimes have different religions and they may celebrate different holidays. They are weird and unusual, strange in fact. I'm sure it's not easy to be alien.

Interestingly enough the Bible talks about aliens. The word appears forty-eight times in forty-six verses. Ezra 1:14 tells us that when Israel was in captivity they lived as aliens. Acts 7:29 indicates that when Moses fled Egypt to live in the desert he became, in affect, an alien. And Hebrews 11:9 tells us that Abraham was an alien also.

There is considerable instruction given when it comes to aliens. Leviticus 23:22 commands the Israelites to leave the produce in the corners of the fields so that the aliens can glean there. We see that rule applied in the account of Ruth and Boaz in Ruth 2. In Deuteronomy 1:16 the people of God are told to provide justice for aliens and Deuteronomy 10:18-19 indicates they are to provide for their needs. Jeremiah 7:6 threatens judgment on Israelites who oppress aliens or turn them away. I wonder about our attitude toward aliens.

I wonder too about how we might react to being alien. **Afterall, aliens are not just among us, aliens is us!** If you look back to that Hebrews 11 passage that speaks of Abraham's condition as an alien you will see that he was purposely alien, not just because he had no permanent home, but because he knew he was headed elsewhere. Abraham was looking for a city whose architect and builder is God. (Hebrews 11:10). Moreover he and his family willingly confessed that they were exiles and strangers on the earth (Hebrews 11:13). These were those who desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one. (Hebrews 11:16).

The Greek word for alien is "paroikeo." It is used in Luke 24:18 of those who were visiting Jerusalem for the Passover. It always conveys the idea of being a temporary resident. This is one without rights or citizenship. I wonder how we are doing as aliens? Do we truly treat this world as temporary? Do we really act as though we're just passing through? Do we talk and dress different than the worldlings we live among? Are we willing to be weird? I'm sure it's not easy to be alien.

Looking Up!