

**“YOU ARE FOREIGNERS AND ALIENS NO LONGER.”
THE IMMIGRANT AND MIGRATION IN THE BIBLE:
A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY VIEW**

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Introduction. The idea of not yet being where you are supposed to be, of being in exile and waiting and hoping to go back home, or of being on a journey and not yet having reached your destination, can be considered to be a great underlying theme of the Torah, that principal part of Israel’s Scriptures which Christians call the Pentateuch. Indeed, the most recent and creditable studies of the Pentateuch place its final or almost-final redaction in the Babylonian Exile, and it is thus quite understandable that the theme of being in exile but with a hope of return would be found, subtly or not so subtly, throughout these “Five Books of Moses.”

The Bible begins with the story of our human progenitors, Adam and Eve, which culminates in an expulsion from a wonderful garden as punishment for their primeval sin; Adam is to till the soil from which he was taken, Gen 3:23. Their son Cain is “cursed from the ground” for killing his brother Abel,¹ Gen 4:4:11. Ironically, he dwells (verb *yāšab*, from which will come the later noun *tôšāb*, which we herebelow translate variously as “tenant, squatter”) in the land of Nod, which literally means “wandering”!² Human arrogance built the tower of Babel (same word as “Babylon,” in Akkadian *bab-ili*= “the gate of the gods) “lest we are dispersed upon the face of the earth,” Gen 11:4.³ But this human ploy is the very reason that God does disperse them and confuses their language, 11:5-9, in effect making humans for the first time foreigners one to the other.⁴

A new turn in human (or “salvation”) history takes place with Abraham,⁵ and it begins with a migration! Terah takes his son Abram and daughter-in-law Saray and grandson Lot and leaves his homeland (Ur of the Chaldeans, designating Babylonia) to go to the land of Canaan, Gen 11:31.⁶ There they “dwell” (*yâšab*). In 12:1, it is YHWH who commands Abram to leave his native land and his father’s house,⁷ in order to make of him a great *gôy* (“nation,” but usually used of Gentiles)⁸ and a famous name, so that Abram will be a blessing by which all the families or tribes of the earth shall bless themselves, 12:2-3.⁹ In Gen 15:7, YHWH states the reason for this migration:¹⁰ in order to give Abram (or his descendants, 12:7; 15:18, or both, 13:15) the Promised Land.¹¹ YHWH predicts that Abram’s “seed” (descendants) will be a *gēr*= “a resident alien” in a land not its own, and would be enslaved and humiliated for 400 years.¹² But YHWH will judge the nation they will serve, and they will go out with much property, Gen 15:13-14.

Due to a famine, Abram and Saray travel to Egypt, Gen 12:10. In 14:13, Abram is called “the Hebrew”= “one from beyond, from the other side.”¹³ We should here note that the sin of Sodom may have been primarily lack of hospitality to a guest, 19:8.¹⁴ In 20:1, Abraham travels to the Negev, and again leaves with many gifts.¹⁵ In 24:22-24, Abraham is asked to have the same “goodness” (*hesed*) toward Abimelek and his land that Abimelek has shown him in this land where Abraham has sojourned. Abraham’s son Isaac also went abroad, to Guerar, because of a famine, 26:1-14, and there became very prosperous. It was YHWH himself who had told him where to go, and promised to be with him, 26:2-3. So Isaac “dwelt” (*yâšab*) in Guerar, 26:6.

The Patriarchs as sojourners. In Gen 17:8, God promises Abraham and his offspring the Land “of his [present] sojournings,”¹⁶ in the context (Gen 17:1-8) of the

eternal covenant between God and Abraham and the promise to make him father of a multitude of *gôyîm* (“nations,” *gentes*, the biblical word for the Gentiles). The fulfillment of this promise is formulated as a blessing of Isaac to Jacob in Gen 28:4. When God is about to liberate the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, he refers to his covenant with the patriarchs and to the promise of the Land “of their sojournings in which they sojourned in it” (Exod 6:4).¹⁷ The Hebrew for “sojourn” is here a form of the verb *gûr*, from which comes *gēr*, which we have seen above, and its plural *gērîm*.

The Promised Land is the Land where the Patriarchs merely lived as aliens,¹⁸ Gen 37:1. This is how Abraham identifies himself in Gen 23:4, when he begs the sons of Het (the Hittites) for a mere plot in which to bury Sarah.¹⁹ Indeed, Abraham here calls himself both a *gēr* and a *tôšāb*, a “resident alien” and a “dweller,”²⁰ but the latter more in the sense of mere tenant, not an owner (see Lev 25:23, 35, 47). It was a miserable existence for Jacob, who, when asked how many were his years, tells Pharaoh in Gen 47:9 that “The days of the years of my sojournings are a hundred and thirty years; few and bad have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojournings” (RSV).²¹ The same spirituality is reflected in Ps 119:54, “Your statutes have been songs for me in the house of my sojournings.”

A most significant theological statement is found in Lev 25:23, regarding the Jubilee year, the year of liberation or manumission (*děror*). The Land may not be sold in perpetuity, for it belongs to YHWH, and as far as he is concerned, the Israelites are (merely) *gērîm* and *tôšābîm* (resident aliens and tenants-at-will).²²

Joseph in Egypt. Joseph is sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, and winds up in Egypt (Gen 37:2-36).²³ Since YHWH was with Joseph, Joseph was successful and

prospered, 39:2-3, 23. Joseph is a model for the Jew in exile, surrounded by pagan temptation but covered with YHWH's *hesed*= "grace, love, mercy," 39:21. He is "a man understanding and wise," like the exile Daniel (cf. Gen 41:33; Dan 1:17, 20). Joseph's brothers and father Jacob eventually migrate also, again due to famine, and Joseph settles them and maintains them, Gen 47:12. In fact, he gives them the best land in Egypt, the land of Goshen, 45:10-11, a grant ratified by Pharaoh in 45:18-20; it is the best land in Egypt, 47:6, 11. God had told the old man Jacob not to fear to go down to Egypt, for God would not only go down with him into Egypt, but would also make him go up (out of Egypt), Gen 46:2-4.²⁴ In 48:21, Jacob himself tells Joseph that he will die, but God will be with him and his brothers, and will bring them to the Promised Land. This how Jacob's family, 70 persons, came to settle in Egypt, Exod 1:1-5. Joseph the wise provides the theological interpretation of what befell him at the hands of his brothers: they had sought to harm him, but God had other plans, to save their lives, Gen 50:20. It was really God who had sent Joseph ahead of them, 45:5-8.

The Exodus. This book begins with a Priestly statement of promise, or blessing, fulfilled: in Exod 1:7, it is said that the Israelites "were fruitful and abounded and became numerous and very, very strong, and the land/earth (Hebrew *hā-āreṣ*) was filled with them," which harkens back to God's blessing in creation in Gen 1:28, "be fruitful and become numerous and fill the land/earth (*hā-āreṣ*)."²⁵ But they are oppressed. Moses, raised in Pharaoh's house, takes their side and must go into exile because of this, Exod 2:15.²⁶ God sees the Israelites' affliction and "visits" them, 3:16; 4:31, just as Joseph had foretold in Gen 50:24-25.²⁷ He has come down to bring them up to the Promised Land, Exod 3:8, as he promised Jacob in Gen 46:4.²⁸ God is calling for his son Israel to be allowed to leave Egypt to be with him in the wilderness, Exod 3:18;

4:22-23.²⁹ YHWH is the God of the sojourning Fathers, though they knew him by other names, 6:2-3. He promised them the land of Canaan, “the land of their sojournings in which they sojourned in it, 6:4” (using forms of the verb *gûr*). He intends to liberate the Israelites and make them his people, 6:5-7.³⁰

In the New Testament. 1 Pet 1:1 is addressed to the *parepidēmois*= “temporary residents, exiles” of the Diaspora (= Dispersion, especially the Babylonian Exile, but used symbolically, or typologically, here).³¹ In 2:11, Peter likens the Christians’ existence among Gentiles as that of *paroíkoi* and *parepidēmoi*= “aliens and exiles.” Eph 2:19, however, states that Christians are no longer “foreigners and aliens,” but rather “fellow citizens of the saints and members of God’s household family.”³²

The most important text that lays out our theology of the foreigner, resident alien, immigrant and the like is in Heb 11. The author has taken with utter seriousness the theme of the Fathers’ “sojournings” in order to develop a profound theology of humanity as being on a pilgrimage to a place not yet reached. This is the whole point of Heb 11, which has “faith” (that outstanding quality of Abraham in Gen 15:6) as its topic. Faith refers to what is not yet attained, Heb 11:1, and is the quality for which our elders were testified to, 11:2. By faith Abraham, when God called him, obeyed and set out to the place that he was to inherit (though he never inherited the Promised Land himself!), even though he did not know (or “not understanding,” *mē epistimenos*) where he was going, 11:8. He was a mere pilgrim (verb *paroikeō*)³³ in the Promised Land,³⁴ the same as his son and grandson, that is, the Fathers, 11:9, because he really was waiting for the “city of God,” 11:10.³⁵ All these, and others who have preceded us in faith, “died without having received the Promises, but only seeing them from a distance,³⁶ and confessing themselves to be foreigners and transients upon the earth,”

11:13.³⁷ The author of Hebrews says that these persons of faith were seeking the real homeland (*patris*), one which God has prepared, and thus God is not ashamed to be called their God, 11:14-16.³⁸ These people suffered much, were mistreated and persecuted and went about in need and tribulation, and the world was not worthy of them!, 11:35-38. But despite being commended for their faith, they did not attain to the Promise, because God had decreed that they were not to attain the object of their desires without those of us who would come later, 11:39-40.³⁹

Theological Commentary. The Pentateuch, the fundamental part of the Hebrew Scriptures, called the Torah by Jews (“instruction,” “Law” in the Greek version), is the story of a people waiting to enter the Land God has promised. It is a story of waiting, of seeking to enter a good Land, of going home. Whatever we make of the earlier traditions, the Pentateuch in its final form addresses the concerns of the Babylonian exiles. They are told how they, or their elders, came to lose possession of the Promised Land. They are exhorted to return to the Lord, to be a holy people, for neither the Lord nor his Land can tolerate the impurity of sin, idolatry and injustice.⁴⁰ But most fundamental is God’s love for the Fathers and his sworn oath to give their descendants his Land. For the Priestly writer especially, this eternal covenant cannot be annulled, Lev 26:44-45; cf. Deut 4:29-31. Thus the exiles have great reason to hope for that new and greater Exodus proclaimed by the Second Isaiah (Isa 43:18-19; 49:8-11; also 35:1-10, which is from the same period). But the Pentateuch ends on that note of waiting; Moses dies and the people are still on the threshold of the Promised Land, Deut 1:1-5.

Thus the Fathers are depicted as sojourners, temporary residents waiting to come into possession, something only their descendants will know. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Joseph and Moses: all were *gērîm*.⁴¹ God is the God of these sojourners. YHWH

in fact does not like fixed abodes, according to 2 Sam 7:4-7.⁴² We are thus presented with a picture of being “on the way,” toward a place of final destination.

This means that we are all temporary residents and in a sense foreigners on this earth,⁴³ and if this is so, essential differences are obliterated and thus none of us is more entitled than those who are newcomers.⁴⁴ Without getting into specific proposals regarding immigration laws or policies, certainly the spirit we should have regarding the foreigner, according to the Bible, is one of openness and acceptance and protection, since he or she is at a disadvantage.⁴⁵ Describing the *gēr* as an “individual lacking the status of citizenship and the rights belonging to that status —what we would today call the *alien*,” Paul D. Hanson goes on to state

In antiquity, aliens represented a vulnerable class, as illustrated by the numerous cases of sojourning peoples becoming victims of indebtedness and falling into slavery in the host country. Without inheritance, without the protection of extended family and clan, they were easy prey for exploitation and extortion. * * * The viability of most ancient societies was predicated in part on the cheap source of labor supplied by homeless sojourners. In Israel, exploiting this class of people was forbidden, and it is noteworthy that this prohibition was not based on rational principles, or even in the first instance on Mosaic authority or theophanic verification. The law draws its motivating force concretely from Israel’s memory of its past bondage. Israel’s insight into the plight of the vulnerable *gēr* is derived from the most personal of all sources: empathy, the kind of understanding born of identification with the fellow human’s experience. “You know (*yd’*) the *népeš* of the stranger.” *Népeš* is translated as “heart” in the RSV, an acceptable translation if heart is understood as the “essential being” of the stranger, and if *yd’* is understood as the deeply personal knowledge derived from close involvement with the other person. Why Israel was capable of this

compassionate justice vis-à-vis the *gēr* is further specified . . . “for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” . . . Whenever an Israelite looked on an alien, that Israelite did so as one who had also been alienated in a foreign land —and still would be, were it not for God’s grace in delivering strangers from bondage and giving them a home.⁴⁶

Israel should be able to empathize with the foreigner, since Israel has extensive experience of exile, Exod 22:20; 23:9. We are all waiting to enter into the great Sabbath rest, and the Sabbath is to be enjoyed also by the foreigner, Exod 20:10. The reason given by Deut 5:12-15 is that Israel itself was a slave in Egypt and was liberated by God, and that is why the Lord God commands that the Sabbath be observed. We should likewise remember that each of us finds ourself where we are because our ancestors arrived there as newcomers.

Conclusion. We have seen that the theme of residing in a foreign land, waiting to go back home, or to enter a place of promise, with all the vulnerability, empathy and hope that this implies, is a very important and profound one in the Bible. Israel in exile had ample reason to ponder the stories of the Fathers as models of how to endure and behave while living in a place not one’s own. Israel also received the aliens in its midst with a compassion born of remembrance of its own origins, that is, of the common human condition. In the New Testament, the distinction between foreign and native is eliminated,⁴⁷ and the theme of sojourning and awaiting entry into the definitive place of rest and well-being is theologically developed. We thus see that we have deeply spiritual reasons for welcoming the foreigner warmly, identifying with him or her, and for working together in building a world which better reflects God’s blessings.

¹ *Biblia de Jerusalén* (1998) has “lejos de este suelo”= “far from this ground.”

² *Brown-Driver-Briggs (BDB)*, 627.

³ “Lest, so that (we be) not,” is the probable translation of the Hebrew *pen*. The Hebrew verb “to scatter, disperse” (*pûs*) is used for Israel’s punishment in such exilic texts as Ezek 11:17; 20:34, 41; cf. 34:5, 6; Jer 10:21. From the Greek version we get “Diaspora.”

⁴ In the Christian tradition, the Pentecost event, in which through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the pilgrims in Jerusalem “from all the nations under the heaven” understand the apostles’ speech, represents the eschatological reversal of the Tower of Babel’s ethnic dispersal and linguistic confusion, Acts 2:1-18.

⁵ The term “salvation history” has come to be *non gratus* because it implies an inexorable direction towards Christianity, reflecting the older, discredited view that Judaism was doomed to be superceded.

⁶ “After a Chaldean dynasty came to power over all of Babylonia in 626 B.C.E., the term Chaldea . . . became synonymous with ‘Babylonia’.” *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (David Noel Freedman, ed.) (Grand Rapids, 2000), 229.

⁷ Abram obeys, Gen 12:4-5, and this trusting faith is reckoned to him as “righteousness” (Hebrew *šēdāqâh*, which some scholars, e.g., John R. Donahue, now propose be again translated as “justice”), 15:6.

⁸ Israel is usually called an *‘âm*, “people,” but sometimes it is invectively designated as a *gôy*, e.g. in Jer 5:9, 29; 9:8 [9]; Zeph 2:1; Isa 58:2; Mal 3:9. The normal usage is reflected in the LXX and the New Testament, where we find *laós*= “people” (Israel, in the first place) and *ethnē*= “nations, Gentiles,” i.e, non-Jews.

⁹ Both the Hebrew and the Greek prepositions allow for the alternative but less likely rendering of the original Hebrew “in you” the families or tribes “shall “bless themselves” (Hebrew reflexive) or “be blessed” (Greek passive); see Acts 3:25; Gal 3:8.

¹⁰ “Migration” comes from the Latin verb for “to remove, depart.”

¹¹ The term “Promised Land” comes from Heb 11:9, “the land of the promise,” but a specific word for “promise” is not found in the Hebrew Bible, though some passages clearly must be translated thus into English and other languages, e.g., Josh 21:45; 23:14, ‘not one word (or “thing”) fell [= failed] of all the good words [= promises] which YHWH spoke’. The Torah speaks of the Land which YHWH *swore* to the Fathers because of his love for them: Gen 24:7; 26:3; Exod 6:8; 13:5, 11; Deut 6:23, etc. Clearly this oath is in the nature of an unconditional promise, especially in P texts, but also in Deut 9:5 (in the late stages of the composition of the Pentateuch, *pace* Lohfink). The concept of promise or promises figures importantly in Paul and Luke, taking great theological overtones: Gal 3:14-21; Rom 4:13-20; 9:4; 15:8; 2 Cor 1:20; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5; 2:33, 39; 7:17; 13:23, 32-33; 24:14-15; 26:4-8.

¹² This refers to the sojourn in Egypt; cf. Exod 12:40, but originally it meant the fourth generation, Gen 15:16, each patriarchal generation being 100 years. Cf. Acts 7:6, citing the LXX, which translates *gēr* with *pároikos*, “alien, exile, stranger.” “Stranger” comes from the Greek via the Latin *extra*= “being outside;” “foreign” means the same, from a more purely Latin root (from which comes the Spanish *afuera*). “Alien” means belonging to another (place, etc.; in Spanish, *ajeno*). “Sojourn” is a temporary stay.

¹³ *BDB*, 720. Or “one who crosses over,” from the Hebrew verb *‘âbar*. See the interesting turn of phrase in Deut 29:11 [12], “to cross over into the covenant,” as if this

were the real meaning of crossing the Jordan. Joseph is called a Hebrew in Gen 39:14; YHWH is the God of the Hebrews in Exod 5:3; 9:1; 10:3.

¹⁴ Contrast Abraham's hospitality in Gen 18:1-8. See Heb 13:2. "Hospitality" here in Greek is *philoxenía*, literally "love of foreigners."

¹⁵ Neither shall Israel leave Egypt empty-handed, Exod 3:21-22.

¹⁶ *měgūreykâ*= "(of) your being a *gēr*,"= living or wandering as a sojourner, alien, stranger (noun form of the verb *gūr*). The LXX uses the verb *paroikéō*= making a temporary home, living as a stranger in a place that is not your home.

¹⁷ It is in this Priestly text that YHWH identifies himself as the God of the Fathers (or "Patriarchs"). YHWH is thus a God of sojourners. In this context (Exod 6:2-8), the sufferings of the Israelites in Egyptian exile are mentioned, as well as God's remembering the (eternal) covenant, a favorite Priestly theme.

¹⁸ I capitalize "Land" because of its fundamental importance as a biblical category and concretely for the Chosen People, the Jews. What God offers or promises to Israel is inseparable from the Holy Land. The Jeremiatic New Covenant passage really begins with a divine promise to bring Israel back to the Land, Jer 30:1-3, as NORBERT LOHFINK notes in *The Covenant Never Revoked. Biblical Reflections on Christian-Jewish Dialogue* (New York – Mahwah 1991), 49. The Hebrew verb from which comes the word for "conversion" (as a change of heart and returning to the Lord) is used, especially in Deuteronomistic texts, also for returning to the Land, for the change of fortunes signified by the end of the Exile and for the end of the Babylonian captivity. See e.g. the various translations of Ps 126:1.

¹⁹ Abraham is given not only the burial cave, but an adjoining field also, Gen 23:10-20.

²⁰ LXX: *pároikos*= “alien, stranger, exile” and *parepídēmos*= “temporary resident, refugee, staying for a while in a strange place.” But the *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament. vol. 1* (Ernst Jenni – Claus Westermann, eds.) (Peabody 1997) (henceforth *TLOT vol.1*), 308, notes that “The *tôšāb* “inhabitant,” discussed in post-exilic priestly texts in particular (14x, 8x in Lev), often parallels the *gēr* (Gen 23:4; Lev 25:23, 35, etc.). The social status of the *tôšāb* is comparable, if not identical, with that of the *gēr*.” Moses named his first son Gershom, “for I have been a stranger in a strange land,” Exod 2:22, where Robert A. Heinlein got the title for his popular 1960’s book. See Acts 7:29.

²¹ Amending the RSV to reflect the plural “sojournings” in the Hebrew.

²² Literally, “with me,” in the LXX “before me.” The NAB renders it: “You are aliens who have become my tenants.” I have elsewhere (in a handout for Fr. Steve O’Hala’s Social Justice class entitled “The Origins, Cultural Setting and Elements of Social Justice in the Bible”) rendered *tôšābîm* as “squatters.”

²³ Note that the title is “This is the *tôlédôt* (Priestly term signalling the various accounts of origins in Gen) of *Jacob*. The story of Joseph is ultimately about how Jacob-Israel came to be in Egypt. This is the last instance of *tôlédôt* in Gen. See JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP, *The Pentateuch. An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* ((New York 1992), 119.

²⁴ “To go up” means to go or return to the Promised Land, especially to go up to Mount Zion. See Gen 50:24. The Hebrew Bible ends with the exhortation to those Babylonian exiles who are willing to “go up” to rebuild the Temple, 2 Chr 36:23. The returnees are called *hā-’ōlîm*= “those going up” in Ezra 2:1 (*Biblia de Jerusalén* [1998] calls them “Zionists”), as are those Jews today who immigrate to Israel; they are said to make the

‘ālîyāh, literally the “ascent,” but also translated “immigration, pilgrimage.” Pss 120-134, sung on pilgrimages to Jerusalem, are each titled “song of ascent,” *šîr hāmma ‘ālôt*.

²⁵ See also Gen 47:27.

²⁶ In this verse he is said to “dwell” (*yâšab*) in the land of Midian; in 2:22, he calls himself “a *gēr* in a foreign land.” As with the Fathers, God promises to be with Moses, 3:12.

²⁷ The verb for “visit,” *pāqad*, often indicates a calling to account with subsequent punishment, as in Hos 1:4; 2:15; 4:9; 8:13; 9:9; 12:3, but can be synonymous with salvation, as in Luke 1:68; 7:16; Acts 15:14. From the Greek translation of this verb, *episkopéō*, comes our word for bishop, official visitor or overseer; see, e.g., Acts 15:36 (Greek). Moses goes to “visit” the Israelites in Acts 7:23. It is also used in Matt 25:36, 43. Cf. Acts 6:3 (Greek).

²⁸ See also Gen 48:21. The language in Exod 3:17, “I will make you go up from the affliction of Egypt” seems soteriological, that is, salvation terminology. Cf. the use of “exodus” in the Greek text of Luke 9:31.

²⁹ Cf. Hos 11:1; Matt 2:15.

³⁰ Note, however, that the group which comes out of Egypt is a rather mixed lot, Exod 12:38.

³¹ See, in the LXX, Deut 28:25; 30:4; Neh 1:9, for instances of “Diaspora;” cf. the verb in Jer 15:7. Cf. the MT and the LXX versions of Zech 2:10 (NRSV 2:6); MT: “oy, oy, flee from the land of the north, for like the four winds of the heavens *I dispersed you!*;” LXX: “ho, ho, flee from the land of the north, for from the four winds *I will gather you!*”

³² Greek *sympolítai, oikeíoi*.

³³ See footnote 16 above.

³⁴ See footnote 11 above.

³⁵ This expression is found in Ps 46:5. From this ultimately comes Augustine's title; see *The City of God. An Abridged Version from the Translation by Gerald G. Walsh, S.J., Demetrius B. Zema, S.J., Grace Monahan, O.S.U. and Daniel J. Hogan* (New York 1958), 9 ("A Donatist writer named Ticonius had previously contrasted two cities, of God and of the Devil.").

³⁶ Like Moses, who though he begged God to let him "*cross* and see the good Land which is *across* the Jordan," was only allowed to see it from afar, from on top of the mountain which he was commanded to climb in order to die, Deut 3:23-27; 32:48-50. Interestingly, the mountain is called "the mountain of the Abarim," which could be translated "the mountain of those who have crossed" (or, vocalizing the Hebrew consonantal text differently, even "the mountain of the Hebrews," which etymologically is the same thing). Some would translate "Abarim" by "the regions beyond [the Jordan river]," *BDB* 720. In any case, the name of the mountain (also called Nebo and Pisgah) suggests a place not yet reached, a destination requiring further travel. "Mt. Nebo is located in west Jordan, ancient Moab, near the Dead Sea, ca. 19 km. (12 mi.) E of the Jordan River's mouth." *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, 953.

³⁷ "Transients" is yet another possible translation of *parepídēmoi*; see footnote 20 above.

³⁸ God is the God of the sojourning Fathers, Exod 6:2-4, as we have seen.

³⁹ Note the theologization of “Promise” in Acts 13:23, 32-33; 26:6-8. The author of Hebrews also thinks of the Promise in terms of resurrection, 11:35. Another image he uses is that of the great Sabbath rest, 4:9-11; cf. Deut 12:9. (The “Great Sabbath” in the Jewish tradition is the one before Passover; see John 19:31.)

⁴⁰ See Num 35:34. The very Land will vomit such evildoers, Lev 18:24-30 (using the example of the “Canaanites”); 20:22 (applicable to the Israelites). The Land will even demand its sabbatical rest, 26:34-35; cf. 2 Chr 36:21.

⁴¹ Joseph is not said to be so explicitly, as far as I know, but it is clear that he also was an exile; implicitly, in Gen 39:14 (when he is called a “Hebrew”); see footnote 13 above; Heb 11:13, 22.

⁴² See also 1 Kgs 8:27; Isa 66:1-2. Jeremiah praises the Rechabites, who are *gārîm* (Jer 35:7, with the participle form of the verb, instead of the noun *gērîm*). Jesus found no place in the “inn” and had nowhere to lay his head, Q 9:58 (Q saying found in both Matt and Luke, using the Lukan chapter and verse to cite).

⁴³ The “foreigner,” Hebrew *ben hannēkar*, Greek *allogenēs*, is usually viewed negatively in the Old Testament; see e.g., Exod 12:43; Lev 22:25; Ezek 49:9; see also (using the Greek *allōtrios* instead of *allogenēs*) Deut 15:3; 17:15; 23:20; cf. 1 Kgs 8:41, 43 || 2 Chr 6:32, 33; 2 Sam 15:19-22 (*xénos*). From this last Greek word we get “xenophobia,” fear of foreigners, or of the foreign or strange. *Allogenēs* is used by Jesus for the sole grateful leper in Luke 17:18. *Xénos* is found in the parable of the Last Judgment in Matt 25:35, 38, 43, 49, and in Eph 2:12, 19; Heb 11:13; 3 John 5. These “real” foreigners (not just resident aliens or proselytes) are viewed positively in the dissident literature: see Ruth 2:10 (LXX *xénē*) and, most importantly, Isa 56:3, 6, where

foreigners will be eschatologically admitted to YHWH's altars: YHWH will bring them to his holy mountain and accept their holocausts and sacrifices, for his house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Eunuchs will also be welcome. Cf. Deut 23:2-7. Isa 56:8 promises that "others" will be added to those already gathered to Israel.

⁴⁴ "Newcomer" is yet another definition of *gēr* given in *BDB*, 158, 'with no inherited rights, as opposed to the homeborn'.

⁴⁵ Laws protecting "resident aliens" are found, e.g., in Exod 12:49 (equal protection under the law); Lev 23:22 (leave the borders of the field unharvested so that the '*ānî*'="humble, poor" and the *gēr* may gather something; the LXX translate "the poor and the proselyte;" Ex 22:20; 23:9; Lev 19:33-34 (prohibition of mistreatment of the alien, since Israel herself was such in Egypt; the LXX translates *prosēlytos*, applied even to the Israelites in Egypt!). "Proselyte" in Greek means literally "one who has come over." The LXX's usage reflects a time when the *gērîm* had been religiously assimilated to the Israelites, even in the technical sense of conversion; see *TLOT vol. 1*, 309. M. Martin-Achard, the author of the article on *gēr* in this volume, likes to translate this term as "guest." Some use the modern German term *Gastarbeiter*, a more urban version of our "migrant worker." Other instances of *gēr/tôšāb-pároikos/parepídēmos* occur in 1 Chr 29:15; Ps 39:13. Acts 7:6 quotes Gen 15:13.

⁴⁶ *A People Called. The Growth of Community in the Bible* (San Francisco 1987), 46.

⁴⁷ In Hebrew, the native is the '*ezrāh*', as in Exod 12:49.