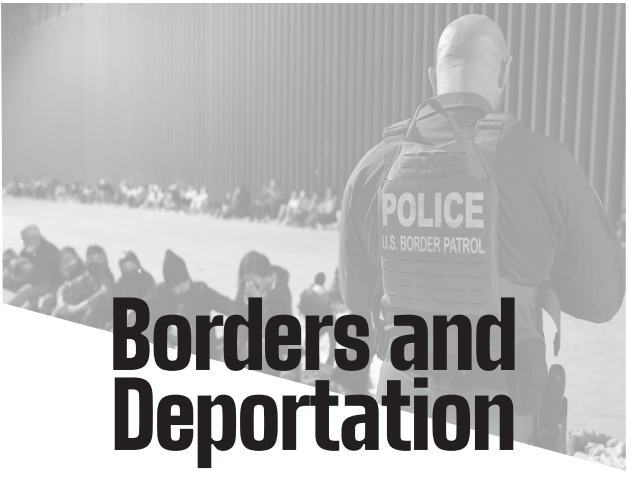


Point of View

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON

Borders and Deportation

By Kerby Anderson



Borders and Deportation

Immigration and border security have been perennial issues in American politics for decades. They were significant issues in the 2024 presidential campaign. These issues and deportation will be significant issues in the 2026 midterm elections. Both the president and several congressional candidates have called for a pause in immigration until we can assess who has been allowed into this country. Other candidates want to stop depor-

tation and have even called for the defunding of ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement).

In a previous booklet, *A Biblical View on Immigration*, I discussed some of the biblical principles that provide a foundation for a discussion. I will review those principles but first need to address the issue of boundaries and borders. This is an undiscussed assumption that has been guiding the debate about immigration and deportation.

Boundaries and Borders

It has been said that a country without a border isn't a country. Any commonsense perspective must realize the necessity of any country controlling its borders. Nations have a right and a responsibility to dictate who can come into their country and how they can become citizens.

The Bible does address the issue of

borders and boundaries. For example, God established the boundaries for the nation of Israel: "I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates" (Exodus 23:31).

The Bible also warns the Jewish leaders, "You shall not move your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old have set" (Deuteronomy 19:14). And again, "Do not move an ancient landmark or enter the fields of the fatherless" (Proverbs 23:10-11).

In Acts 17:26, we read that God set boundaries for the lands of the nations: "And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place."

Nations have established borders so they can protect their citizens and so they can control the movement of

people and flow of goods. An open border invites drug and sexual trafficking and many other dangers. Borders also help establish laws and customs. They also protect their citizens from various forms of illness and disease. As we have seen, an uncontrolled border is a danger to a nation.

Immigration and the Rule of Law

In developing a biblical perspective on immigration, we should acknowledge that there are two conflicting issues that generate lots of emotion. On the one hand is the concern of national security and a belief that citizens and aliens alike should obey the law. On the other hand is a concern for the poor and needy who want to come to this great country.

The Bible instructs us to obey government: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1). Later in this passage, Paul re-

minds us that the government "does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God" (Romans 13:4).

We are to be in subjection to governing authorities not only to avoid punishment, but also to be good citizens. Peter expands on this motivation in 1 Peter 2:13-15, "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Many of the verses just mentioned illustrate that border security is biblical. Another verse found in Deuteronomy (32:8) says, "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples."

Here are a few more reasons why a government should control its borders: First is the issue of national security. Some of the people at our borders or who enter this country through a visa intend us harm. Even in the nation of Israel, the foreigners dwelling among them were required to enter into a covenant or obey God (Deuteronomy 31:12-13). A country must be able to protect its citizens from harm.

The inspector general for the Department of Homeland Security issued a report that documented that 79,000 Afghan refugees were brought into this country between July 2021 and January 2022. But it warned that the U.S. Customs and Border Protection "did not always have critical data to properly screen, vet, or inspect the evacuees." This is one of the reasons the president has called for a pause in immigration from certain countries.

A second reason to control our borders is economic prosperity. Every nation (including the U.S.) has limited resources. A flood of aliens and immigrants does affect the economic status of a country. Countries have the right to enforce borders so the citizens can prosper.

Third, border security is important for cultural integrity. A country has a right to maintain its democratic institutions and its historic traditions. If aliens and immigrants do not assimilate, then those values and traditions begin to disappear.

Victor Davis Hanson explains that once immigrants were allowed in by the previous administration, they concluded that they did not need "to assume fully American identities" and did not have to follow all the laws and customs of America. Therefore, he argues, we should not be surprised that

"Somali immigrants, both legal and illegal, have pulled off a likely multi-billion-dollar welfare fraud in Minnesota—perhaps the greatest single heist in welfare funds in the nation's history."

Compassion Towards Aliens and Immigrants

In addition to those biblical convictions about the rule of law and border security are other biblical principles that encourage us to also have biblical compassion toward aliens and strangers in the land. The Old Testament called for Israel to treat aliens with respect.

Exodus 22:21 says, "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt." We find a similar passage in Deuteronomy 10:18- 19, "He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you

were sojourners in the land of Egypt." They were to remember their history as aliens dwelling in Egypt. In Israel, the alien was put in the same category as widows and orphans. They could receive a portion of the tithe (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). They had access to the gleanings in the field (Deuteronomy 24:19-22).

It is also worth noting that these provisions did not apply to the foreigner who was temporarily in the country for work or other purposes. But we should also understand the unique nature of the Old Testament theocracy and not make a one-to-one application to our country today.

As I just mentioned, Deuteronomy 31:12-13 required that all foreigners dwelling in Israel must enter into the covenant to obey God. Those that did not support God's leadership were not allowed to enter the land. We

don't require and should not require that aliens and immigrants must be Christians who enter into a covenant with God. Another example has to do with the rights afforded to aliens in Israel. They were not given the same status and rights as Jews in the land (Deuteronomy 1:16, Numbers 15:16). These aren't policy positions that anyone would like to implement in America today.

We also have New Testament verses that apply. There are the commands of Jesus. For example, He teaches that we are to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan as an admonition for us to show kindness to strangers. And he instructed His disciples that "as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to Me." (Matthew 25:40). Hebrews 13:2 says we are

not to "neglect to show hospitality to strangers." Each person is created in the image of God and worthy of our love and concern.

Additional Biblical Principles

In addition to our biblical convictions about compassion, we should also apply a biblical standard of fairness. Why do so many millions around the world want to come to America?

That is because living in the U.S. and becoming a citizen is the highest achievement they could ever consider. It is almost like winning the lottery. In fact, many enter into what looks like a lottery to see if they might have an opportunity to come to this country and eventually become a naturalized citizen.

Millions of people around the world are on a waiting list to come to the United States and eventually become

citizens. We should not allow people in this country to "jump ahead of the line" when others have been waiting to come to this country legally. Yet, some members of Congress want to provide a pathway to citizenship for millions of people in this country here illegally. Some crossed our borders illegally. Others came here legally and overstayed their visas. And still others are children who were born in the U.S. to parents who were here illegally.

Critics of the citizenship provision rightly argue that everyone should play by the same rules. We wouldn't put up with someone cutting ahead of us in line. We don't want to reward bad behavior. Yet, that is what could happen with a provision that provides a pathway to citizenship for people who broke the law and are here illegally.

They jumped in line ahead of the millions overseas who have been waiting

to legally come to this country. Their presence in this country began with a violation of the law. Either they broke the law or else their parents broke the law. That is why the Trump administration has been in the process of deporting illegal aliens, starting "first with the worst."

Before we consider any significant immigration policies, we needed to close the border and remove dangerous migrants already in the country. Any future proposal should also consider what is fair not only to people in this country but also fair to others who have waited their turn to come to America.

America has been blessed with a rich cultural and religious diversity. We are truly a "melting pot of people." We welcome a million immigrants to our nation each year. Many more come to this country illegally or overstay their

visas illegally. But there should also be unity amid our diversity.

Unfortunately, there is much disagreement among our elites about what should be American values. We aren't even doing a good job of assimilating people from other cultures because of our internal debate about what it means to be an American.

Our government should enforce the laws and require a uniform acceptance of the Constitution and principles of democracy and equality. Whatever policies our government implements and whatever views we as Christians hold, we should attempt to balance our biblical convictions (about government and the rule of law) with our biblical compassion (toward the alien and immigrant).

Additional Resources

Kerby Anderson, *Biblical Point of View on Immigration,* POV Booklet, 2018.

Victor Davis Hanson, *Immigration Gone Wild*, December 8, 2025

John Stonestreet, "That Verse Is Not About Immigration," July 29, 2025, https://breakpoint.org/that-bible-verse-is-not-about-immigration/

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