

## LOVING ALIENS

### **“You are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt” (Deut. 10:19)**

Boston's Omni Parker House hotel was founded in 1855. It is America's longest continuously operating hotel. Needless to say it is full of folk lore and history. It was here, for example, that the “Boston Cream Pie” was invented by a French chef named Sanzian. In 1996 the legislature declared it the official dessert of Massachusetts. In 2005 they celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Parker House by baking a Boston cream pie that was 16 feet across and contained over two million calories.

As incredible as it may seem, guests of the Parker House in 1912 and 1913 may have eaten Boston cream pie baked by Ho Chi Minh, the future Communist leader of North Vietnam. He was born in 1890, but fled French Indochina in 1911 to avoid persecution for his political beliefs. He took a job as a cook on a French steamer in 1911 and eventually wound up in Boston. Fluent in French and familiar with French cuisine he was hired by the Parker House to work in their kitchen as a pastry chef. How we treated this young alien is significant beyond words. In 2005 officials from the Vietnamese government went out of their way to visit the hotel kitchen in Boston where Ho Chi Minh once worked.

Mahatma Gandhi spent 21 years in South Africa fighting for the rights of the South African Indians. He was there as an alien from 1893 until 1914. When approached by Christian missionaries Gandhi said: *“I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ . . . There is no need for me to join your creed to be a believer in the beauty of the teachings of Jesus or try to follow His example.”* The way South Africa treated an alien named Gandhi had a profound significance on the future of India and the world.

Yamamoto Isoroku graduated from the Japanese Naval Academy in 1904. In 1913 he enrolled in the Japanese Naval Staff College and graduated in 1916. He studied at Harvard in the United States from 1919-1921. After flight training in 1924 he was assigned to another tour of duty in the United States from 1926-1928. In 1929 he was promoted to rear admiral. In 1936 he became the vice minister of the navy. On Dec. 7, 1941 he was responsible for planning and executing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The point is, the way aliens are treated is important!

It is undeniable that some “aliens” come to a country with a predetermined desire to destroy the very country that receives them. This was true of the 19 terrorists responsible for the infamous 9/11 attack on the U.S. This, however, does not relieve believers from the Biblical mandate to “love aliens”.

This command was initially given to the Hebrew people after they were delivered from Egyptian bondage. God told them: **“Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt” (Deut. 10:16-19).**

When Israel left Egypt there were “many other people” who went with them (Ex. 12:37,38). Some versions called these “many people” the “mixed multitude”. It is the Hebrew word “gehrev” which is found 11 times in the Bible. We know very little about these people except that they were “many”, they were “mixed”, and they travelled with Israel. Even though they were aliens they shared every experience with the Hebrews including miracles, manna, and the Laws of God (Nu. 15:15,16).

While Israel was to love aliens, the love of aliens did not reach fulfillment until the church became a reality. As you know, the church began with converts from every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5). Further, the apostles of Christ were specifically sent to “all nations” (Matt. 28:18-20). God’s grace is for everybody! It doesn’t matter whether you are a Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, everyone in the church is a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-29).

Love is the distinguishing mark of Christians. Jesus said: **“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (Jn. 13:35).** The full measure of that love cannot be experienced without the Holy Spirit for the “fruit of the Spirit is love” (Gal. 5:22). When we have the Holy Spirit, we can not only love aliens, but we can even love our enemies as well (Matt. 5:43-48).