

Small Group Questions

Drawn from “Holiness & Enfolding Mission: A Riddle,” A Sermon on Deut 23:1-8

Pastor Nicoletti @ Faith Pres Tacoma

September 20, 2026 AM

1. The sermon text called for ancient Israel to exclude various groups of people from the Lord’s assembly. The basis of that exclusion was their ancestry and anatomy, not their own actions or sins. Talk about a time when **you** were excluded based upon something outside of your control.
2. Look again at verses 1-3: what was the assembly of Yahweh, and what was the spiritual significance of being excluded from it?
3. Look again at verse 1: why was **this** physical defect (as opposed to other common defects e.g. a cleft palate or a club foot) highlighted and made the basis of exclusion? As you think about this law, what connections can you draw with other passages and Biblical principles?
4. Look again at verse 2: what constituted a “forbidden union” and why was that ancestry the basis of being excluding from the Lord’s assembly?

5. You are talking with a professing Christian who is a theological liberal. She points to verses 3-6 and says, “This is a good example of why I just can’t believe in the inerrancy of the Bible. This law is obviously racist and ableist. It perpetuates prejudice, hatred, and social inequalities. This passage is antithetical to an individualistic society that values personal liberties and social justice.” How might you respond?
6. In the sermon Pastor Nicoletti argued that these ritual requirements are riddles. What did he mean by that and what arguments did he use to prove it? Did you find his arguments persuasive? Why or why not?
7. You are talking with a transgender person who has received several body-altering surgeries but has recently had a renewed interest in spiritual matters. He comes across this passage and asks you, “What does this passage mean for me?” How do you respond?
8. What difference should these laws make in **your** life?