



A Self-Paced Study Guide for  
the Presbytery of East Iowa

*Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world.*

*And ready to fight for it."*

*- Arundati Roy*

## **WEEK SEVEN - Theme for the Week**

As Pure and Chaste as Falling Snow

### **Readings from *Caste***

Pillar Three: Endogamy and the Control of Marriage and Mating

Pillar Four: Purity Versus Pollution

### **Scripture**

#### **James 4:8**

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

#### **Genesis 2:24**

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

#### **Deuteronomy 7:3-4**

You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the Lord would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly.

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. Through belief that members of the subordinate caste are somehow dirty or polluted, the dominant caste can continue to excuse and perpetuate their exclusion from society. What surprised you most in the discussion of caste and purity in these two pillars?
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2. How do social controls such as endogamy or purity laws help to sustain unequal power relationships within a stable caste system? What ideas did you find most significant in the explanation of these two pillars?

### **Action Steps**

Read the transcript from the PBS series, RACE - THE POWER OF AN ILLUSION

EPISODE THREE: THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN, linked [HERE](#). If your group is feeling really creative, assign roles for a collective dramatic reading. Then, in discussion or in your journal, reflect upon the ideas or experiences that you find most significant and potentially transformative.

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