

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Fourth Quarter 2021: *Present Truth in Deuteronomy*
Lesson 5 “The Stranger in Your Gates”

Read for this week’s study

Mark 12:29–31; Deuteronomy 10:1–19; Psalm 146:5–10; Matthew 7:12; Deuteronomy 27:19; James 1:27–2:11.

Memory Text

“ ‘Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt’ ” (Deuteronomy 10:19, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Circumcise Your Hearts
- III. Love the Stranger
- IV. For You Were Strangers in Egypt
- V. Judge Righteously
- VI. Pure Religion Before God
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. This series of studies in Deuteronomy does not take a chapter-by-chapter approach to the book. Instead, it takes a thematic approach, treating a number of different themes in the book. The theme for this week’s study is “the stranger.” In the narrower sense, the stranger represents the foreigner or the refugee. In the broadest sense, the stranger is anyone who is different from the community norm. How does this theme relate to the theme of love in the previous week’s lesson? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Deuteronomy 10:1-11. What is the purpose of this review of the previous generation’s history? Why is the story of Moses and the tables of stone retold here? What is the significance of God choosing the tribe of Levi to perform the services at the tabernacle? Review Deuteronomy 10:12-13 from the previous week’s lesson. What does God want from His people? Read Deuteronomy 10:14-16. What is the meaning of the images used in this passage? What does the depth of God’s forgiveness here tell us about His grace? (Sunday’s Lesson)

3. Read Deuteronomy 10:17-19. Why does God use language like “God of gods” here? Why does the analogy of taking bribes come up here? What is the connection between the earlier part of this chapter and the command God gives to Israel here? How does Psalm 146:5-10 further underline this concept? (Monday’s Lesson)
4. Re-read Deuteronomy 10:19 alongside Genesis 15:13. Look up the meaning of “stranger” (Hebrew: gêr) in the original language. What did the concept of “stranger” mean to Israel in Egypt? Who is the “stranger” in Southern California today? Wherever you live? What does Matthew 7:12 add to this concept? (Tuesday’s Lesson)
5. Read Deuteronomy 1:16, 16:19, 24:17, and 27:19. What is the common theme in these texts? What kind of behavior should the people of God exhibit when they come into power? Who are the oppressors of the poor in our own context today? (Wednesday’s Lesson)
6. Read Deuteronomy 24:10-15. This passage gives some keen insight into everyday life in ancient Israel. How do these laws impact the topic of how to treat the stranger within Israel? Read James 1:27 – 2:11. How does the New Testament apply the principles of Deuteronomy to church life? How does James link these principles to the Ten Commandments? What implications does this have for our view of the Ten Commandments? Why do you think James leaves out the foreigner in his application of non-partiality of Deuteronomy? Can one be faithful to the Ten Commandments without taking James and Deuteronomy seriously? (Thursday’s Lesson)
7. Read Amos 5:11-12. What is the SDA equivalent of taking a bribe and depriving the poor of justice? (Friday’s Lesson)
8. In what ways has what Jesus has done for us impacted the way we treat others, especially the more helpless among us? Can acting unjustly be as simple as gossip about the neighbor or the fellow church member? (Friday’s Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

We are God’s true people in the right and proper place on the right and proper day. We’ve paid our tithe. We have practiced health reform. We are God’s chosen few. And they were still saying this when they nailed Jesus to the cross and rushed home to get ready for another Sabbath. They were trusting in the wrong thing. Though who gave them all these services? Well, let’s read on:

If you truly amend your ways and your doings [and this is all I really want. And if the temple and its worship, and Sabbath-keeping, and health reforming, and tithe paying do not make you nicer people to live next door to, it hasn’t done you any good. If you truly amend your ways and your doings, that is, if you truly execute justice one with another], if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow, or shed innocent blood in

this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt [see, who gets hurt when we go after other gods? We hurt ourselves!], then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

Which, by the way, describes the kind of people who will live in that land. Will we not? It's going to be awhile yet, but someday Eden will be restored, and this earth will be given back to God's loyal people. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Jeremiah and Lamentations*, recorded 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/35MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/36MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

How much does God expect of us? Who will be judged safe to admit to his kingdom? James replies, "So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty" (James 2:12). As the Good News Translation puts it, "Speak and act as people who will be judged by the law that sets us free."

This liberating law is clearly identified in James' Epistle. "You will be doing the right thing if you obey the law of the Kingdom, which is found in the scripture, 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' But if you treat people according to their outward appearance, you are guilty of sin, and the Law condemns you as a lawbreaker. Whoever breaks one commandment is guilty of breaking them all. For the same one who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not commit murder.' Even if you do not commit adultery, you have become a lawbreaker if you commit murder" (verses 8–11, GNT).

This royal law of liberty is quite clearly the same law given to Israel amid the thunder and lightning of Mount Sinai. Sometimes it is suggested that the law of love is first found in the New Testament. But Moses taught the people, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might," and "You shall not hate your brother in your heart,... but you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:17, 18). Moses went even further: "Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would a fellow Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves" (verses 33, 34, GNT).

When a lawyer asked Jesus, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" the Lord simply quoted the teachings of Moses (Matthew 22:34–40). Paul understood the Decalogue in the same way. After listing several of the Ten Commandments, he summarized by saying that "he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.... Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8, 10).

Then, to help us understand the meaning of real love, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 13. “Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men’s sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance” (verses 4–7, NEB). {Maxwell, Graham. *Can God Be Trusted?*, 115-116. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 2002}
<http://speakingwellofgod.org/written-materials/can-god-be-trusted-chapters/chapter-11>

Look at Deuteronomy 10:12:

Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to reverence the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I command you this day for your good? Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it; yet the LORD set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them.

Now look at verse 16: “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.”

I thought it was Paul and Jesus who talked that way. But way back in the days when circumcision was first given, it was understood that the real circumcision was inside, and had to do with where one does his thinking. Every time I go through, I’m more and more impressed with how the teachings of the New Testament are in the Old, and this is what Jesus grew up reading. Look at Romans 2:29. We often think that things were not that clear in Old Testament times, and then we wonder how some people in the Old Testament could know God so well that he could speak to them face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. It wasn’t that obscure. In Romans 2:29: “He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal.” Now where did Paul get that? A brand new revelation, or he read Deuteronomy, you see? And then we’ve already referred to in Luke 19 where it says we should love our neighbors as we love ourselves, and we should not hate our neighbors in our hearts. Here in Deuteronomy 6:5 it says, “We’re love the LORD with all our hearts, and with all our souls.” Isn’t that what Jesus said when he was asked to summarize the Ten Commandments? Isn’t that what Paul said later on? “Love is the fulfilling of the law. He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled all law.” That’s not new in the New Testament! That comes right out of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. They understood it then. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Deuteronomy*, recorded November 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/9MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/10MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. {DA 324.1}

The truths of God's word are not mere sentiments, but the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature. He is not given new mental powers, but the darkness that through ignorance and sin has clouded the understanding is removed. {CT 452.2}

When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. To have a change of heart is to withdraw the affections from the world, and fasten them upon Christ. To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—A changed life. {OHC 159.5}

The plan of redemption is not merely a way of escape from the penalty of transgression, but through it the sinner is forgiven his sins, and will be finally received into heaven—not as a forgiven culprit pardoned and released from captivity, yet looked upon with suspicion and not admitted to friendship and trust; but welcomed as a child, and taken back into fullest confidence. {7BC 950.6}

The same divine mind that is working upon the things of nature is speaking to the hearts of men and creating an inexpressible craving for something they have not. The things of the world cannot satisfy their longing. The Spirit of God is pleading with them to seek for those things that alone can give peace and rest—the grace of Christ, the joy of holiness. Through influences seen and unseen, our Saviour is constantly at work to attract the minds of men from the unsatisfying pleasures of sin to the infinite blessings that may be theirs in Him. To all these souls, who are vainly seeking to drink from the broken cisterns of this world, the divine message is addressed, “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. {SC 28.1}

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that

transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10. And again he says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.” Psalm 103:12. {MB 114.1}

It is God’s glory to encircle sinful, repentant human beings in the arms of His love, to bind up their wounds, to cleanse them from sin, and to clothe them with the garments of salvation. {PK 668.3}

The gifts of Jesus are ever fresh and new. . . . Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of the Lord. He gives grace for grace. There can be no failure of supply. If you abide in Him, the fact that you receive a rich gift today insures the reception of a richer gift tomorrow. . . . {AG 104.2}

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. {SC 68.1}

Every human being is the object of loving interest to Him who gave His life that He might bring men back to God. Souls guilty and helpless, liable to be destroyed by the arts and snares of Satan, are cared for as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his flock. {MH 162.1}

In the place where sin abounded, God’s grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, “and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,—Immanuel, “God with us.” {DA 26.3}

Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. {AA 532.2}

In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in “the beauty of the Lord our God.” Psalm 90:17. Looking upon them with hope, He inspired hope. Meeting them with confidence, He inspired trust. Revealing in Himself man’s true ideal, He awakened, for its attainment, both desire and faith. In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy, were

awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life. {Ed 80.1}

Christ bound them to His heart by the ties of love and devotion; and by the same ties He bound them to their fellow men. With Him love was life, and life was service. "Freely ye have received," He said, "freely give." Matthew 10:8. {Ed 80.2}

The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. By His Spirit He is everywhere present. Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men. {MH 417.2}

Wherever there is union with Christ there is love. Whatever other fruits we may bear, if love be missing, they profit nothing. Love to God and our neighbor is the very essence of our religion. No one can love Christ and not love His children. When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Purity and love shine forth in the character, meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. {RC 104.2}

Christ brings all true believers into complete oneness with Himself, even the oneness which exists between Him and His Father. The true children of God are bound up with one another and with their Saviour. They are one with Christ in God. {SD 293.5}

To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks. These cost those who give them nothing, but they leave behind a fragrance that surrounds the soul. Their effect can never be estimated. Not only are they a blessing to the receiver, but to the giver; for they react upon him. Genuine love is a precious attribute of heavenly origin, which increases in fragrance in proportion as it is dispensed to others. . . . {5BC 1140.4}

True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another. {5BC 1141.2}

He who called the fisherman of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples. However imperfect and sinful we may be, the Lord holds out to us the offer of partnership with Himself, of apprenticeship to Christ. He invites us to come under the divine instruction, that, uniting with Christ, we may work the works of God. {DA 297.1}

Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. Love illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the entire man. It brings him into harmony with God, for it is a heavenly attribute. {4T 559.3}

The love of God alone can open and expand the heart, and give to love and sympathy a breadth and height that is without measure. Those who love Jesus will love all the children of God. The sense of personal infirmities and imperfections will lead the human agent to look away from self to Christ; and the Saviour's love will break down every cold, Pharisaical barrier, it will banish all harshness and selfishness, and there will be a blending of soul with soul, even with those who are opposite in temperament. {OHC 183.3}

Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1118.2}

God is the source of life and light and joy to the universe. Like rays of light from the sun, like the streams of water bursting from a living spring, blessings flow out from Him to all His creatures. And wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing. {SC 77.1}

It is a wonderful thought that human beings can speak the Word of God, in simple words of comfort and encouragement. The humblest instruments will be used of God to sow the seeds of truth, which may spring up and bear fruit, because the one in whose heart they were sown needed help—a kind thought, a kind word, made effective by the One who has said, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” —Letter 329a, Nov. 16, 1905, to her 19-year-old granddaughter Mabel. {TDG 329.6}

The glory of heaven is in lifting up the fallen, comforting the distressed. And wherever Christ abides in human hearts, He will be revealed in the same way. Wherever it acts, the religion of Christ will bless. Wherever it works, there is brightness. {COL 386.1}

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. {COL 386.2}