

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Fourth Quarter 2021: *Present Truth in Deuteronomy*
Lesson 7 “Law and Grace”

Read for this week’s study

Ezekiel 28:15, 16; Deuteronomy 4:44; Romans 3:20; Deuteronomy 10:1–15; Deuteronomy 5:6–22; Deuteronomy 9:1–6.

Memory Text

“ ‘I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain’ ” (Galatians 2:21, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Law in Heaven
- III. Law in Deuteronomy
- IV. *L^etov Lak*
- V. A Slave in Egypt
- VI. Not for Your Righteousness
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Galatians 2:21 (the memory text). What is wrong with works righteousness? While Deuteronomy does not use the exact same language as Paul, the relationship between God’s law and God’s grace is a major theme. (Sabbath afternoon’s lesson)
2. According to the lesson, God is a God of love. Love is at the core of His character and is the foundation of His government. And because God desires love in return, He has created creatures with moral freedom, the freedom to love and the freedom to reject love. And central to the idea of moral freedom is moral law. Whether or not the law is stated, its principles applied from the beginning. Read Ezekiel 28:15-16. What do these verses imply about moral law in heaven before the earth was created? As biblical values fade from consciousness in today’s world, where do people go to find a foundation for morality? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. What is the meaning of grace? What is the common thread among the following texts? Deuteronomy 4:44; 17:19; 28:58; 30:10; 31:12; 32:46; 33:2. What relationship do you see between grace, trust and obedience? (Monday’s Lesson)

4. Read Deuteronomy 10:1-15. What do these texts teach us about the grace of God? How does God respond to Israel's rebellion and sin in this passage? Read verse 12 again. How do you understand the concept of "for your good"? What experiences in your life would support the idea that the laws and commands of God are more of a blessing than an obligation? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Read Deuteronomy 5:6-22. Particularly notice the differences in the fourth commandment. What do the actions of God in the Creation and the Exodus have in common as they relate to human beings? What are the implications for the meaning of the Sabbath? Read Matthew 18:21-35. How does this parable relate to the Sabbath command in Deuteronomy? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Deuteronomy 9:1-6. What is Moses' diagnosis of both Israel and the Canaanite nations? What is the difference between the two? What is your understanding of righteousness by faith? What are the implications in this passage for righteousness by faith? Read Deuteronomy 9:6 again. What are the reasons Moses gives for God favoring Israel in spite of their stubbornness and disobedience? How far back do God's promises go? 2 Timothy 1:9. (Thursday's Lesson)
7. What is the difference between obedience and legalism? How do we discern the difference between the one and the other? (Friday's Lesson)
8. What does the reality of the cross tell us about the futility of trying to earn our way to heaven? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

We usually use 1 John 3:4, and we usually translate that, "Sin is the transgression of the law." But that's a rather expansive translation of one word. And it tempts one to put the Ten Commandments up on the wall and say, "Well, I haven't broken that one, and that one, and that one, and that one, so this has been a rather good day." Paul used to look down the Ten, and on a Tuesday night when he knelt to pray, he could say, "This has been a good day. I haven't murdered anybody. I haven't committed adultery today. I haven't stolen today. I haven't broken the Sabbath, because it was Tuesday anyway. I thank thee, Lord, I am not like this publican over here." And then he looked at the tenth, and he realized he had been breaking them because sin in 1 John 3:4, is not "the transgression of the law." The Greek says "sin is lawlessness." Sin is a state of mind. It's an attitude. And that's what is here. "Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, to him it is rebelliousness." "*Lawlessness*" is the literal Greek word in 1 John 3:4. Moreover, when you think of the fact that it's God who has told us what to do, and everything he has asked us to do is for our best good, and if we do not do it, that suggests distrust. And you remember in Romans 14, the last verse: "Whatever is not of faith and trust is sin."

Sin is a breach of trust. And I think we would protect ourselves from a rather mechanical understanding—or *misunderstanding* of sin—if we put these three verses together instead of one. Romans 14, James 4 and 1 John 3. “Sin is lawlessness.” “Sin is knowing what you ought to do but not doing it.” “Sin is a breach of trust.” And I think they’re all in harmony there, aren’t they? You could even put Malachi with it: “Cursed be the cheat.” Not that God hates cheats. He just can’t help cheats. He can’t save and heal cheats. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – 1 and 2 Peter and James, recorded July 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:* <http://pkp.cc/75MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/76MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

I believe that the essence of legalism is preoccupation with our legal standing with a legal, legalistic God. And so many Christians are preoccupied with their legal standing, because they don’t really know God. They don’t realize that he is a gracious God who is not preoccupied with our legal standing. Like the father of the prodigal son, he’s very preoccupied with our welfare and whether or not we will come home. That’s what God is preoccupied with. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #12, “God’s Law is No Threat to Our Freedom” recorded April 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/12MMCAG>

All the law requires is that we love him and we love each other, and behave accordingly. If God changes his law, the quality of life in the hereafter would deteriorate. We do not wish him to change it! So eventually it will be written on our hearts, where a man does his thinking. It becomes thinking obedience, intelligent obedience. We don’t love because we’re told to; we love because we’re absolutely sold on this. We agree with God; we actually do love him, and love each other. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Larger View, #2, recorded October 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/2MMLVIEW>

For example, in the narrow view; now lest that sound disrespectful and unrealistic, by the narrow view I mean the view that is preoccupied with what God has done for you and me. And that might be perfectly understandable in the lives of some of us. We still even have our tents pitched at the foot of Sinai. We have no right to tell anybody where he should have his tent

pitched. But in the narrower view that is preoccupied with our own salvation, consistently the seventh-day Sabbath is presented as a mere test of obedience. I've read it again several times of late. But in the larger view, in the setting of the great controversy over the character of God, the Sabbath is God's gift to us, to remind us of the answers in the great controversy. To remind us of all the things he revealed about himself, and about freedom, and about his unselfishness in the Garden of Eden. How he even shared his creative power with us, and enabled us to create little people in our own image.

Magnificent was the revelation given during creation week, and the Sabbath was given to remind us of those truths. But then when we lost our freedom, and God gave it back to us again, he says in the other version of the Ten Commandments, which has just as much authority as the Exodus one, the Sabbath was given to remind us of how God rescued us from Egyptian bondage. Sabbath is a monument to freedom. And then at the end of crucifixion week, when the ultimate questions about God were answered by the way Jesus suffered and died, the next day was seventh-day Sabbath, and the whole universe paused, earth time, to think and to remember and to celebrate the answer that God gave. The Sabbath is even described in the Bible as a type and a foretaste of the final rest to come. Instead of the Sabbath being a mere test of obedience, it becomes a great aid to us, and a time of celebration of the truth that is the basis of our trust, and the basis of our freedom. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Larger View*, #1, recorded October 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/1MMLVIEW>

Is there a verse in the Bible that says that when Jesus died, he was given up? Romans 4:25 says Christ was given up for our transgressions. And many versions, with their reformation influence; translate this "Christ was put to death." There is nothing in there about being put to death; it says he was given up. To tie that in with the issue in the Great Controversy, God gave up his Son as if he were a sinner, just as he will give us up, if we are real sinners at the end, because you can't force people to trust you. In a free universe, what can you do but give people up? When Jesus was given up, yes, he died.

So I believe there were three questions answered by Gethsemane and the cross. One: who is right, God or the devil? Is God a liar when he says sin results in death? The devil says, "Yes, God has lied to you." "You will not die" is the teaching of the devil. God says, "You will die. But, it is not torture and execution at my hands." The devil developed the whole doctrine of hell to turn the universe against God. And God says that is not true.

And I say, "Well, how do I know how the wicked are going to die?" He says, "Only one person has ever died the death as a result of sin. It's only happened once in all eternity. I died that death. I wouldn't ask any of you to prove the truthfulness of my word. This is the meaning of

substitutionary death.” Yes, he died in our place, but not for legal reasons. He died because he wouldn’t think of asking anybody else to go through that painful experience to demonstrate the truth. Besides, our death wouldn’t have answered it anyway. Because if our dying would have answered the question, then he might as well have let Lucifer die in the beginning.

But you remember the explanation. Had he left Lucifer to die, the universe would have misunderstood and assumed God had put him to death. So only by God coming; He said, “No one takes my life from me. Nobody can kill me. I’m going through this myself. I have arranged this with my Father.” And the universe looking on said, “The Father isn’t killing the Son; God isn’t killing God.” And it was clear enough to them that they could say, “Our questions are answered.

One: sin does result in death. Two: it is not torture and execution at the hands of our gracious God. Only one thing left. “God, why were you so concerned that we understand this?” God says, “Because if you serve me from fear, it will turn you into rebels—holy rebels.” He says, “Come to Calvary.” On Calvary, Jesus was tortured to death. By whom? The most devout, blueprinting Adventists the world has ever known. Absolutely dedicated to God, the scriptures, creation, Sabbath, the Ten Commandments, you name it. Jesus said, “You even strain gnats out of your goat’s milk.” Real health reformers. You couldn’t fault them for a thing. You couldn’t have disfellowshipped one of the people who crucified Christ. Their lives were apparently without blemish.

But they hated him; they hated his picture of God. They killed him to silence his unbiblical heresy. And the angels looking on said, “We thought, by sending your Son to Palestine, you did that to get a good running start with people who already agreed with you. We didn’t realize you sent him there to prove this costly point, that if we obey you for the wrong reason, because we don’t really know you, we could turn into your worst enemies in the middle of our Sabbath keeping and our tithe-paying and our health-reforming.” And that’s why I think the biggest mistake the Adventist church could make in these last days is to have one tremendous revival in reformation, get out the blueprint, straighten out our lives, without spending much more time on the picture of God. Because if we do the right things for the wrong reason, we’ll do what some of the Jews did, and become his enemies.

So I believe the cross was the only way to answer the questions. Without answers to the questions, there would be no peace, no freedom, no security throughout the universe. So it was for these specific reasons. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, Questions People are Asking About the Plan of Salvation, recorded April 1983, Redlands, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

[http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP \(Part 1\)](http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP) [http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP \(Part 2\)](http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP)

Further Study with Ellen White

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” Ezekiel 28:12. Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God’s presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God’s purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father. {DA 758.4}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {GC 493.2}

God in His wisdom permitted Satan to carry forward his work, until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and his influence over them was strong. God’s government included not only the inhabitants of heaven, but of all the worlds that He had created; and Satan thought that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also the other worlds. He had artfully presented his side of the question, employing sophistry and fraud to secure his objects. His power to deceive was very great, and by disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood he had gained an advantage. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading. {GC 497.1}

In His dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit. He had sought to falsify the word of God and had misrepresented His plan of government before the angels, claiming that God was not just in laying laws and rules upon the inhabitants of heaven; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. Therefore it must be demonstrated before the inhabitants of heaven, as well as of all the worlds, that God’s government was just, His law perfect. Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper, and his real object, must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works. {GC 498.1}

We are all to understand that there is a fallen angel who was once next to Christ in honor among the heavenly host. His work of deception was done in so great secrecy that the angels in less exalted positions supposed that he was the Ruler of heaven. Satan made the representation that all wrong insinuations existing in heaven originated among the angels,

while he himself had made suggestions which would never have been entertained by the angels, had he not created them. He artfully presented these things to God, as having come from the angels, while they all originated with Satan himself. . . . {TDG 256.2}

Because he was not able to insinuate his deceptions upon Christ, he determined to undermine Him by false statements and reports. War in heaven was the result, and Satan was expelled. He became Christ's most deadly foe. His constant effort was to counteract, in every possible way, His great work of saving souls. {TDG 256.3}

The moral law was never a type or a shadow. It existed before man's creation, and will endure as long as God's throne remains. God could not change or alter one precept of His law in order to save man; for the law is the foundation of His government. It is unchangeable, unalterable, infinite, and eternal. {6BC 1097.1}

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897 par. 11}

That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, "This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan." There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO, and Live (Letter 89, 1898). {1BC 1105.2}

But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe. To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me." John 12:31, 32. The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin. {PP 68.2}

There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. {Ed 76.1}

Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. {Ed 76.2}

Let it be made plain that the way of God's commandments is the way of life. God has established the laws of nature, but His laws are not arbitrary exactions. Every "Thou shalt not," whether in physical or in moral law, implies a promise. If we obey it, blessing will attend our steps. God never forces us to do right, but He seeks to save us from the evil and lead us to the good. {MH 114.2}

God has withheld nothing from man that could promote his happiness or secure to him eternal riches. He has clothed the earth with beauty, and furnished it with everything necessary for the comfort of man during his temporal life.—*Signs of the Times*, June 2, 1887. {TDG 162.6}

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men. {SC 10.3}

The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. A lost sheep never finds its way back to the fold of itself. If it is not sought for and saved by the watchful shepherd, it wanders until it perishes. What a representation of the Saviour is this! Unless Jesus, the Good Shepherd, had come to seek and to save the wandering, we should have perished. The Pharisees had taught that none but the Jewish nation would be saved, and they treated all other nationalities with contempt. But Jesus attracted the attention of those that the Pharisees despised, and He treated them with consideration and courtesy. . . . {LHU 212.3}

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man's necessity. He "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character. {MH 17.1}