



2021 4Q Present Truth in Deuteronomy The Stranger in Your Gates

by Tim Jennings

SABBATH

Read memory text: “Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Dt 10:19 NKJV).

The lesson focuses our attention on loving others and in the second paragraph quotes Jesus, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”...(Mark 12:31).

What does this mean?

Is loving your neighbor the first and greatest commandment or the second? What is the first and greatest? “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength.”

Why do we love God before we love our neighbor? Because it is in a loving trust relationship with God that we have selfishness purged, are given wisdom to comprehend reality, are empowered with strength, motivated with love, given new hearts with spirits of mercy, compassion, patience, kindness—in other words, if we don’t love God first we won’t be able to love anyone.

And what does it mean to love your neighbor *as yourself*?

What is the first rule in caregiving? The first rule in running a psychiatric ward is staff safety, not patient safety why? Because if the staff are not safe then the patients are not safe and no care can be given.

In my book, *The Aging Brain* I discuss caring for a loved one with dementia and the first rule is the health of the in-home caregiver. If the spouse or whomever is providing the in-home care doesn’t maintain their health first, then they become disabled and can no longer provide care to their loved one.

This brings back the principle of remember the first commandment—we have our first duty to God, to maintain our health, wellness in the highest state—not for selfishness sake, but so that we can be of greatest service in God’s cause, which means ministering to others as God would have us.

So, each person must establish the routines necessary to maintain their own health and wellness—regular hours of sleep, healthy diet, physical exercise, not placing demands on one’s body that injures and disables (such as lifting another person if they are too large), time away from work, from the responsibilities to rest the mind and be quiet with God and rejuvenate etc. So, when one is in the role



of caregiving and these basic requirements for one's own health are consistently compromised then it is time to get outside help.

Jesus consistently took time away from needy people to rest, sleep, unwind, spend time with His Father. Jesus, as a human, had to live in harmony with the laws of health and His physiology required rest and recovery, His mind required time with His Father etc.

Any disagreement with this principle?

So, if Satan cannot get a righteous person to choose to do evil, what might Satan tempt the righteous person to do that would effectively neutralize the righteous person's influence? Get them to take on too many good tasks, responsibilities, roles, duties to the point of overwhelming their limited human abilities and they burn out.

- Does this principle, of maintaining the health of the person, not for selfishness sake, but for the sake of being a benefit to others, require we sometime say no?
- Would it require we set boundaries?
- Would it require we limit how much time, energy, and resources we spend on *worthy* projects?

- Does this principle apply only to individuals, or does it apply to our local churches as well?
- Does your local church have unlimited membership, with unlimited human energy, and unlimited finances, or does the local church have to decide upon which projects it will invest?
- Will the local church, at times, have to say no to very worthy needs in the community and the world because to invest in all of them would bankrupt the church?
- Does saying no mean the church doesn't care about those people or projects for which they have decided to draw a boundary and limit investment?

- Does this principle apply only to individuals and churches, or does it apply to other organizations?
- What about nations, does it apply to nations?
- Do nations have responsibility to set boundaries, say at their borders, to limit the numbers of people entering the nation—not for the purpose of selfishness, but for the purpose of maintaining national integrity, health, financial solvency to be a blessing to as many people as possible?
- Do churches have the responsibility to not only set boundaries on expenditures, but also on who becomes a voting member of the church? Should a church allow into membership people who don't believe in Jesus, people who believe in godlessness, who want to become members to get into positions to teach Eastern philosophies instead of Biblical truths?
- Is it unloving for a church to set such boundaries?
- What about a nation—should a nation allow in immigrants who don't share their values of religious liberty, civil liberty, people who want to change society toward communism where the state controls the press, the state controls the education of your children, the state controls your healthcare, your liberty to travel, associate with family, your religious practices?
- Is it unloving for a nation to set such boundaries?



If you wanted to ruin a church might you trick them into over extending and bankrupting itself, or perhaps allowing unconverted people into membership who will fundamentally change the principles of practice in the church?

What about a nation, could a nation be ruined by unregulated immigration?

Is it unloving to set such boundaries? And what does it say about people who advocate for such actions claiming it is an expression of love, of compassion to do so?

So, could you be loving the strangers by setting limits on the amount of resources you expend on them in order to maintain a steady flow of support to help many more people over time? And could you love the strangers by allowing in a steady, but limited number of them, that will not overwhelm the organization or nation in order to sustain the organization's ability to support them, or would it be more loving to bring in so many that the economy collapses and many more than just the immigrants end up in poverty?

Satan is at work in the world. He is moving his agents to undermine love, to incite increasing fear, conflict, poverty, exploitation, disease. Satan hates liberty because in freedom love grows.

SUNDAY

The lessons asks us to read Deuteronomy 10:1-15:

At that time the LORD said to me, "Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones and come up to me on the mountain. Also make a wooden chest. I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. Then you are to put them in the chest."

So I made the ark out of acacia wood and chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. The LORD wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the Ten Commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain, out of the fire, on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. Then I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, as the LORD commanded me, and they are there now. (Dt 10:1-5 NIV84)

Why was there a second set of 10 Commandments? Why did Moses break the first set?

Where did the second set get placed? In the Ark of the Covenant. Why? What is the lesson?

What does the ark represent?

The ark in the Most Holy Place represents the universe reconciled to God again—the Shekinah represents the Father, the angels the angelic heavenly host, the lid of solid gold represents Jesus the



connecting link between God, the heavenly universe and what is below the lid/covered by the lid? The box made of porous wood covered in gold represents the saved sinners who are covered/infused with the righteousness of Christ. There were three elements in the box that were placed a certain order: the first was the manna, which represents the Word of God, the truth, of which we are to partake. It is the bread of heaven, Jesus, which destroys lies and wins us to trust. And having been won to trust, we open the heart and have the living law of God written upon their hearts (represented by the 10 Commandments) which was next placed in the ark; and once the living design law of God has been written upon our hearts and minds, we who were dead in trespass and sin come to life and bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, represented by Aaron's rod that budded—which was the third item placed in the ark.

Now, there were two sets of 10 Commandments given, one that was broken by Moses and an unbroken set, which went in the ark? The unbroken set—what is the lesson, and this is huge, it is another Biblical evidence that exposes the lie of the penal legal view of salvation.

In the penal legal view of salvation, it is declared that the law was broken, and that the broken law requires a penalty be paid, and that atonement is having the blood sprinkled above the **broken law** to pay the legal payment for sinners so God can legally save. But, there were two versions of law, a broken one and an unbroken one. If God wanted the lesson to be that the broken law requires a blood payment, then He would have had Moses put the broken pieces of the law in the ark. But He didn't. He had Moses put the **unbroken** law in the ark, because the ark symbolizes the hearts of saved sinners who have had God's unbroken design law of love written in their hearts again. In other words, the sanctuary theater teaches healing and restoration and refutes the pagan systems of blood payments and legal adjustments.

Read Deuteronomy 10:14-16:

To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today. Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer (Deuteronomy 10:14-16 NIV84).

What is it that we are to understand about the heavens and earth belonging to God and everything in them? Is the most important lesson about power? Why does the entire creation belong to God? Because He made everything—AND—He sustains everything! Why is this important? What happens to any part of creation that becomes completely severed from God? It ceases to exist. What happens to any part of creation that does not become completely severed from God, but is disrupted in its operation, no longer functioning as God designed? In other words, it is no longer operating in perfect harmony with God's design laws that He built reality to exist upon? Then that part of creation will groan under the weight of sin, it will have defects, it will suffer and be compromised in its health, wellness and function in some way. And it will ultimately die if not restored back to harmony with God's design laws for life.

All things are God's for what purpose?



- So God can be built up by them?
- Does God get taxes from His creatures to fund infrastructure projects?
- Does God require praise to make God feel good?
- Did God create angels get good housekeeping services?
- What is the purpose of all creation? **To be recipients of God's love**, God's grace, God's energy flowing out from God to give life, health, energy, happiness, vitality and ever-expanding growth to all of God's creation. God experiences joy from the health, wellness, joy, and happiness of His creatures, just as parents experience joy from the health, happiness, wellness, joy and development of their children.

So the purpose of all creation is to receive God's love and grow in God's love.

So, what is the most important thing to know about all things belonging to God? It is God's character of love, His design laws, and how all things are built to operate upon design law of love.

What is the lesson about circumcision of the heart? Why does the heart need to be circumcised?

This is a powerful and poignant object lesson.

The physical circumcision is of the bodily organ that is designed by God to be an expression of intimate love, of life-giving love, the organ used when, as God designed, the two separate individuals come together in marital love and become one.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh (Genesis 2:24 NIV84).

Circumcision physically cuts away a barrier in this union of two becoming one and is a metaphor of our hearts.

Jesus prayed that we would be one with God and each other just as He and the Father are one. This is at-one-ment. It requires we cut our heart free from all attachments to the things of this world, we cut away our love and affection to anything that we use to comfort ourselves in place of God and what God has provided. Fear and selfishness must be cut out of the heart in order for us to be at-one with God and others. This means we must have the worldly things we value, cling to, attach ourselves to cut away from our hearts so that we can have our hearts truly united with God in love and trust. As long as we feel safe and secure because of our wealth, or position, or abilities, or guns, or church membership, or rituals, or Sabbath-keeping, or we comfort ourselves with entertainment, drugs, alcohol, food, or anything else instead of God, we will not have complete union with God. So God allows events to unfold to challenge us in where we place our trust, what we look to in order to find peace and security for our hearts and minds.

Physical circumcision is painful—so too is cutting away the ties to things we have become attached to. The older a person is when physically circumcised the more painful, likewise the older a person is with deeper attachments to sin and worldliness the more painful to cut away those attachments. And



sometimes, like the rich young ruler, people walk away sad rather than cutting the ties to what makes them feel secure.

We cannot tell just by looking at people who are circumcised or who are not—the only way is to become intimate with them. Likewise, we cannot tell whose hearts have been cut away from the things of the world just by looking, we have to get to know people and see them live out their principles in real life.

So, circumcision is a powerful and poignant metaphor of the cutting away of fear and selfishness and various worldly attachments used to make us feel safe and secure, and the establishing of our hearts in purity and at-one-ness with God.

What does it mean to be stiff-necked? The lesson rightly suggests stubborn. But I think the idea of stiff-necked symbolizes more—when the neck is stiff what can a person not do? They cannot turn their head and take in information from different points of view. Consider driving and never turning your head. Thus the stiff-necked metaphor goes beyond stubborn, it connotes a certain level of blindness, resistance to even considering or evaluating points of view that are different or new. Stiff-necked people become stuck in a single focus and are difficult to convert to the truth.

MONDAY

Read Deuteronomy 10:17-19:

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 (Dt 10:17–19 NIV84).

When the Bible uses the language that God is the God of gods, does that mean there are actually other gods? No, there are no other real gods, but there are many false gods, so Moses is communicating to people who have a history of coming from a polytheistic society in which it was commonly believed there were many gods. Remember Abram and Jacob had household gods until Jacob finally buried them all. And Egypt was a pagan polytheistic society and the Hebrews had been deeply affected by those teachings. So God is simply affirming to them, there is no God other than Him, the Creator of all reality.

What does this mean, “the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes”?

What is a bribe?

According to the dictionary a bribe is “anything given or serving to persuade or induce.”

So, the Bible says that God accepts no bribes, do you believe this? I certainly do.



But do you realize that almost all of Christianity does not believe this? Do you realize many in our own church do not believe this? Do you realize that most of Christianity teaches just the opposite of this—they teach that Jesus died to pay a blood payment to God so that God will be persuaded, propitiated, assuaged, appeased, have His wrath turned away so He will declare us to be righteous even though we are not and therefore not kill us.

Do you realize that because of the imposed law lie, the idea that God's law functions like human law, that sin is defined as a legal problem requiring inflicted punishment and legal adjustment, that it is taught that Jesus came to be punished by God in our place and then to offer His blood to His Father to pay the Father a blood payment to induce or persuade the Father to accept us back and not kill us. This is a bribe, and it is corrupt, and it is a lie based on Satan's false view of God's law.

When we return to the truth that God's law is design law, then we realize that sin changes the sinner, and without intervention from God the sinner dies from sin, just as the Bible says "sin when full grown brings forth death" or "those who sow to the carnal nature from that nature reap destruction." And Jesus was God's means to restore His living law of love, the basis for life, back into the species human and provide a way for every willing person to have this living law restored in us. Thus, there is absolutely no bribe going on, there is sacrificial love originating in God and being bestowed upon us in Jesus and His victory over sin in our behalf.

The last paragraph, in talking about how we are to love others, states, "In other words, the Lord is telling the people, *Ok, maybe you are chosen, you are special, and I love you, but I love others, too, including the needy and helpless among you. And just as I love them, you must love them, as well. This is one of your covenant obligations, and an important one, too.*"

What does this make you think? How does it make you feel? Do you feel relieved, freed, or burdened?

Can you love people through obligation? Can you get love through legislation? Through taxation? Through forcing yourself to do things you really don't want to do?

Would you want a spouse who has a check list of duties and carries them out because it is a rule—so on their list they:

- Smile when you come home and give you a hug and a kiss
- They, then look down at the list and read the prescribed words "I love you"
- They, then ask, "Is that sufficient or do you need to hear me say those words again?" And they offer to repeat those words as many times as you need to hear them.

Would you want a marriage like this? Would you want your children to relate to you like this?

I received this email this week:

Thank you all for everything you do. Don't let the discouraging emails derail you. There are more of us that your ministry has blessed than there are of them.



You helped my wife and I to find our way out of a stale and repetitive 17-year-old SDA experience with Revelation Seminar after seminar and knowing all kinds of facts about God and memorized Scripture but raining fire and brimstone on anyone I disagreed with on Facebook.

Your application of God's Design Laws into our everyday lives is life altering as it teaches us how to live out Jesus' character in real life through His indwelling Spirit. And for the first time in a long time, we started to see progress in the way we treated others and even each other.

When other SDA preachers always talked about denying self, they make it sound so dreary and self-punishing almost making it sound like God wants us to walk around like monks, miserable and depriving ourselves out of any pleasure. This of course is not true and incomplete.

When understood through Design Law, denying self more accurately means, If you love others more than self and you are looking out for their best interest over yours, you are in fact still denying yourself but now the heart motive is altruistic agape love like Jesus loves us and then we find joy and happiness in the whole experience not just doing the self-denying out of compliance.

I would have never understood that without your message. Thank you so very much guys for what you do. Your message has made a huge impact in my life and in my relationship with my Lord Whom I love now more than ever by seeing just how much more amazing His character is, especially in the way He has dealt with humanity through His Design Laws.

May God continue to Bless you all,

Have you had a similar experience? Is there a difference between loving others out of compliance and loving others because the heart has been changed?

This is why the new covenant is writing the law on our hearts and minds—it is the living law of love restored into the heart and mind that becomes the wellspring of action. It isn't primarily about the external behavior, but the motive that drives that behavior.

And even when we are restored to hearts that love, does God call each of us to love others in the exact same way—in other words, do we all have the same specific duties to carry out in ministry? No! Our service for God and others will necessarily be different based on God's wisdom, our talents, our position, or place in society, our willingness to work with God, our gifting by the Spirit etc.

TUESDAY

The lesson again focuses our attention on helping the stranger. What does that look like?



How can a desire to help others be used by Satan to hurt others?

When the desire to help is carried out by people who don't understand reality, who don't understand God's design laws, who don't understand the circumstance or situation, who are carrying out their ministry:

- to keep a rule
- fulfill an obligation
- obey a commandment
- make themselves feel good
- make themselves look good
- get credit

If we really want to help others we must understand reality, God's design law, the actual need of the person from an eternal point of view, not merely a temporal point of view. And then sometimes the best help we can provide is to let the person suffer—am I being harsh? Am I making this up? Am I being unloving?

Consider what Paul wrote, "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat" (2 Th 3:10 NIV84).

Was Paul being unkind, unloving, cruel? Or was Paul fulfilling the commandment to love his neighbor? How, why?

Which is more in harmony with God's design, God's law of love, what Paul wrote or the Basic Universal Income proposed by some politicians today? Understand, the Basic Universal Income is not disability income, it is not retirement income, it is not poverty subsistence—it is income to be given to able-bodied people regardless of ability to obtain employment and provide for themselves.

What would likely happen to your teenage child if you provided them with perpetual income without any requirements to achieve, they don't need to go to school, or work, you put money into their bank account every month for them to do as they please?

Consider story of the prodigal son, what did he do with his inheritance? And once he spent it all and ended up in poverty, why didn't the father intervene and give him a Basic Universal Income? Didn't the father love that child?

Understand how Satan manipulates people through empathy and compassion to take actions that approximate or mimic love, but are actually violations of God's design laws and end up injuring and harming.

We cannot effectively carry out love for others while violating God's design laws for life. In other words, effective love for others cannot be done by rules, only by living out God's design laws, which require we actually understand them!



What about God allowing Israel to be taken into captivity by Babylon—was God being unloving?

If your grandmother is weak and struggles to walk, but is still able to walk, is it an act of love to give her a motorized wheelchair for her home so that she doesn't have to walk anymore? What if your grandmother has arthritis and walking is painful—would it then be an act of love to give her the wheelchair?

If your child struggles to learn to read or do math at a fourth-grade level, is it an act of love to pass them to the fifth grade even if they haven't mastered their current level? What would happen when faced with even more difficult material at the higher level? What happens to their developing sense of self?

If you're hiking with your spouse and she falls and breaks a leg, and you need to splint her leg, but doing so will cause more pain, would it be an act of love to splint the leg? Would it be loving to have surgery even if that caused pain? And when it is time for physical therapy and your spouse cries from the pain, is it an act of love to do her exercises for her?

What if it is not a broken leg, but a broken heart—she has been traumatized in the past and is hurting—is it an act of love to focus on merely relieving her pain, or to focus on healing the emotional wound even if the work to heal is painful? What if she gets angry and accuses you of attacking her—is it love to accept the accusation and apologize for trying to help?

If your child has a temper tantrum when you don't give them candy, is it an act of love to give them the candy to stop their tantrum? What if it isn't a child, but an adult, perhaps your spouse, who yells, accuses, screams, threatens to leave, or even threatens suicide if you don't do something they want—is it an act of love to give in to them in order to calm them down?

Once there is brokenness, there are no pain-free options. The path of love is to bring healing, even though the healing interventions are painful. Unfortunately, many people focus merely on the immediate experience and instead of seeking to heal, they seek to relieve the pain or discomfort and, thus, actually harm. Love understands design law and reality and acts to heal and restore even if it is painful.

WEDNESDAY

The first paragraph states, “As believers, we have been called to reflect the character of God. Paul wrote about ‘my little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you’” (Galatians 4:19 NKJV).

No question we want Christ formed within us. Any questions or point to clarify in this statement?



What about the idea of being called to “reflect” the character of Christ? Is that the same as saying we have been called to “reveal” the character of Christ?

What is the difference and which do you think is more accurate to use?

Consider this quote from the book *Education*, does it describe a rule or a principle and if a principle does it apply even to our relationship with God, why or why not?

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to **develop this power**, to train the youth to be **thinkers**, and **not mere reflectors of other men's thought**. [Is this only other men's thoughts or not mere reflectors of God's thoughts?] Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions. Ed 17.2

What do you think? Do we bear God's image by thinking for ourselves, exercising godly powers of individuality, power to think and act, or do we bear the image of God by being reflectors of God's character?

Consider, is there a difference between a bicycle reflector and a headlight? What is the difference?

What did Jesus call us to be—reflectors in the world, or lights in the world?

In John 15:15, Jesus says, “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15 NIV84).

What is the difference between a servant and friend? Servants do what they are told, but they don't necessarily understand, but a friend who joins with their friend to carry out their work does so out of understanding appreciation and willing participation.

What is the last fruit of the Spirit when the Spirit has His way in our lives? It is “self-control” we have fear and selfishness removed and our liberty, our freedom to live out God's design law under the direction of our God-given abilities is restored to us. This is how we are lights in the world, not puppets, not robots, not reflectors, by living lights who freely love God and others.

Read second paragraph, “It's all kind of proverbial...” Can we achieve godly justice through human governments, human laws, inflicted punishments and coercive pressure—why or why not?



What is the best human governments can do?

- Can human government legislate unbiased laws? Laws intended to improve the lives of its citizens? Does that mean when such laws are passed that every person experiences justice under those laws?
- What else is necessary besides the best set of imposed laws humans could ever devise in order to have the least biased government possible?
- Governmental officials who have Jesus in their hearts and are mature in the things of God. Even if you have good laws, if you have godless, atheistic, pagan, or imperial law believing God-believers in office, you will have corruption in the application of the laws and injustice will occur.

The best human governments are the ones that maximize liberty for their people. But let's be very clear here—every kingdom, nation, government of this earth is part of Satan's kingdom—every one. So they are all beastly, they all commit injustice, they all injure and harm and we will NEVER achieve God's goals for humanity through human governments.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, "Again we see the Lord's concern..." Don't oppress them why? Because in the eyes of the Lord it is sin? Meaning what? That if the Lord didn't see it as sin it would be okay to oppress them? That oppressing people isn't sin in its own right, it is only sin because the Lord sees it that way?

Is this how we understand sin, sin is sin because God says it is, or is sin sin because it violates God's design law for health and damages and destroys those who break God's design law. And God says it to educate us, enlighten us, warn us, protect us, but even if God didn't say it, it is still sin?

Which way do you see it?

Human law doesn't work this way. Human law requires the law to be enacted by some authorized way, and then posted in some way, and breaking it isn't illegal until it is actually imposed first. For instance, illegal substances are not illegal until the specific molecular structure is written into a new law and made illegal. Thus, new designer drugs keep getting released onto the market that are not illegal until the government identifies them and passes a new rule making them illegal. But, even without the imposed law making them illegal, all of these substances violate the laws of health. This is the difference between human law and God's law.

FRIDAY read and discuss questions
