

## Samaritan Love

Hatred is a sin. It causes the believer to break fellowship with God. The remedy is to recognize sin and acknowledge it is wrong. Go back to faith dependence on God the Holy Spirit. This produces love, divine love.

You have heard this multiple times by now. At this point, you are ready to hear something about love. Jesus tells us a story of love in the book of Luke. Usually, this narrative is called the story of the Good Samaritan. I much prefer “Samaritan Love.”

We must agree that the New Testament, in the original Greek, is inerrant. Everything doctor Luke wrote down is correct and an accurate depiction of events he narrates.

Often in the New Testament, Jesus is challenged in His teaching. Religious people challenge Him because His teachings differ from their understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures. So today, we travel to the book of Luke, a destination we have not visited very often.

I have thought of the book of Luke as “historical.” History is not dry if taught correctly. Luke, an associate of the apostle Paul, provides keen insight into Jesus’ ministry. Jesus was an expert debater. This passage demonstrates that fact.

**Luke 10:25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”**

**And.** The first word in the sentence is “and.” It is both a continuation of the previous text and a break from it.

**Behold!** You didn’t see that in the NASB. It is in the Greek text. The King James Version is closer to the literal text. As you know, I don’t

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particularly like the word “behold.” This word is to get your attention. This word is an instruction to you the reader. It is an aorist imperative. The NASB and the NIV and other translations leave it out of the translation all together. However, as an instruction to the reader it is important. In this context, I would prefer something like, “Now pay attention and concentrate!”

It is like a mother chastising a daughter that has done something unbecoming. The daughter is fidgeting with her clothes, not looking at the mother, hoping the mother will stop talking soon. But the mother shouts at the daughter, “Look at me!” That is the force of this “behold.”

Now, look again at this word from another perspective. Besides being a imperative used as a demonstrative particle to get your attention, it plays nicely into the narrative. It is a verb. It is from the Greek verb “horao,” to see. Here it is an aorist active imperative. But... “horao” is a key verb in the parable that follows. Each of the passersby “see” the wounded man by the side of the road. It is in each case an aorist active participle. They each did the same thing. They observed. But the first use of the verb, “behold,” brings the reader into the narrative. It surreptitiously asks the reader to observe just like the passersby. What would you do in this situation?

**Lawyer.** The word is translated correctly, “lawyer.” Here is a challenge to the Western reader today. This is not your ordinary criminal or civil defense lawyer. In this context, this is a legal scholar of the Mosaic Law. Remember, Jewish oral and written tradition and legal opinions dominate the thinking of the religious crowd. Only the most erudite of the religious crowd were allowed to provide interpretations. But the Torah is the Law governing Jewish behavior.

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Uh OH! **Lawyer**. With that word introduced by Luke, we are now in a legal setting. If combined with other words, this could take us to the Angelic Conflict. The appeal trial of Satan.

**Certain**. There is a word for this in the Greek text. It identifies “someone.”

**Put Him to the test**. This is a word that can mean to tempt or to test. This is part of the narrative by Luke. Some say that this word shows no hostility was intended by the lawyer. But, Jesus uses this word to respond to the Devil’s testing of Him in the desert at the beginning of His ministry. Earlier in Luke:

**Luke 4:12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It is said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’”** (quote from Deuteronomy 6:16)

**Deuteronomy 6:16 “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested *Him* at Massah.**

So, put together, a religious legal setting plus a word that described the Devil’s actions against Jesus in the desert and we have now entered the Angelic Conflict zone.

When I grow up and become an old man, if I have time, I would like to study and write on the Angelic Conflict in the gospels. It would make for fascinating reading.

Assume this to be true, that this word means to test as a challenge. The Mosaic law said, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.” So, the Mosaic Law lawyer is already violating the Law without realizing it.

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He is doing the same thing that the Devil did in Luke chapter 4. **Strike one.**

Dr. Luke is a crafty writer. By using this word he identified Jesus' opposition in this narrative.

**Stood up.** Look at Luke's choice of vocabulary, so far. Lawyer (of the Mosaic Law), Testing (verb used of the Devil's testing of Jesus) and now "stand up." This word is often used of standing up as in a crowd to speak. Like the Hebrew, some verbs come in pairs. This is one. People stand up to do something.

For example:

**Luke 4:16 And He (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.**

Standing up is a preparation for the next verbal action.

There is no "and." The testing characterizes the standing, its purpose. The lawyer had a purpose in standing up. It was to put Jesus to the test similar to the way the Devil did in the desert.

In the Angelic Conflict, it appears that the Devil uses many people, including this lawyer, as defense lawyers in his appeal trial. The Devil doesn't just use Angels in the Angelic Conflict, but he enlists unsuspecting unbelievers and even believers to further his claims. Jesus uses each and every believer as an exhibit in the Angelic Conflict. The Devil has been attempting to poke holes in God's case against him. But he has never found a hole and never will. He keeps asking, "What about..." Jesus can just point to the cross. "It is finished."

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We know from the Bible that in the end the Devil loses and goes to the Lake of Fire. It is made for him. Yet, he keeps trying to find a way to escape God's verdict. The Devil tries to "impeach" God's work, finding some flaw. But to no avail.

Have you ever lost a credit card while shopping? You are 99% sure you lost it at the store. Yet, when you get home and discover your loss, you tear up the house, look in the garage and in the car hoping that maybe you lost it somewhere other than the store.

So the Devil. He knows he is going to the Lake of Fire. But the appeal trial allows him to see why a loving God can send one of His creations to the Lake of Fire. Yet, he is hoping there is some way he might have missed of escaping this verdict.

**What shall I do.** This implicitly assumes that eternal life is "inherited" by doing something.

**Inherit eternal life.** We read this from a 21<sup>st</sup> century Christian perspective. But Jesus and the lawyer were in the dispensation of the Law. The culture depicted in these words is different than we might interpret them. Listen to the words of Robby Dean:

"We looked at the parable of the good Samaritan. And this is so important. This is one of those passages that is often misunderstood because you don't go back and look at the original quotations, the context of these Old Testament quotations to understand what is going on here. And many people think that when this lawyer comes and says, "Teacher what do I do to inherit eternal life?" they think he is asking how do I get saved and spend eternity in heaven? And he is not asking that. In many places the idea of inheriting eternal life is more than simply going to heaven and living eternally with God. It has a qualitative aspect to it. And the idea of inheritance is of possession of something. And so it is

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when Jesus came in John 10. He says, “I didn’t come like the thief to steal and destroy but I came to give life and to give life abundantly. So what we see here is that is really what this lawyer is asking, “How do I have this fullness of eternal life?” Now we have to understand that in terms of the Old Testament, the framework that he is coming to Jesus with. This isn’t the Church Age question and answer session. This is under the Mosaic Law. So this is still, it has to be understood under the promises God gave in the Mosaic Law. So Jesus’ question back is “What is written in the Law? What is your reading of it?” So this guy is a lawyer. He is a specialist in the Torah. Jesus said, “OK, How do you understand the Torah about this?” And the lawyer says, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your strength and all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” So this is a quote from Deuteronomy 6:5. And that is... just the same thing. Love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your strength. In Luke 10:28, Jesus says to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.” Now a lot of people will say, “Well, you know that Jesus is really saying that he can’t really do that.” But that isn’t what the text says. You have to understand the Old Testament background here. ...Deuteronomy 6:5 is the first part that I just quoted. And then Leviticus 19:18 states that “You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the children of your people but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” So it is the last part that is quoted. And so when Jesus says, “You have answered correctly, do this and you will live, Jesus is taking us to an earlier part to Leviticus 18 in verses 4 and 5 where God says “You shall observe my judgments and keep my ordinances. This isn’t about salvation because when He is talking to the Exodus generation almost all of them were saved. Maybe all of them were saved but at least almost all of them were saved. We know that from the way they are described during the period of the Exodus. So God is telling these saved people something about how to live. And He says

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“Observe my judgments keep my ordinances to walk in them I am the Lord your God. Keep the statutes and ordinances. A person will live if he does them. Now that is a promise within the Mosaic Law. If you obey the Law, you will live. And what that is talking about is the generation that is observing the Mosaic Law is going to be blessed by God. That is the first part of Leviticus 18 which goes on in the first 12 verses, I think, it’s talking about the blessing for the obedient ones. And if they are disobedient the rest of the chapter is the five cycles of divine discipline. So keep my statutes and ordinances and a person will live. That is an abundance of life. That is not just biologically alive. Because those were Israelites that we studied under the oppression of the Canaanites under Deborah under the oppression of the Midianites before Gideon delivered them and those we are studying now, chapter 11 of Judges, the oppression of the Ammonites, they were alive but they were not living. They were under oppression from these foreign powers. So this promise is in Leviticus 18:4-5. If you are obedient to Me you are going to experience a full abundant life and I’ll be bringing blessing upon the nation. But if you disobey Me it’s not going to be much of a life worth living. You are going to be under oppression and you are going to be under judgment. So that is basically what we learned from that.<sup>1</sup>”

**Luke 10:26 And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?”**

Jesus throws the question back at the lawyer. Rather than show off His knowledge of the text of the Torah, Jesus forces the lawyer to show off his ignorance.

Let me comment on Jesus. He is the smartest genius that ever was and still is. And He had no sin nature and had the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit. Every word He uttered, every sentence He spoke was

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<sup>1</sup> <https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/philippians/message/19-the-description-of-love-b/listen>

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perfectly crafted. And Luke perfectly translates from Aramaic or Hebrew, whatever language Jesus used to converse with this lawyer.

Jesus asks two questions. The first is “What is written.” This is a reference to Scripture, specifically the Torah. The second is essentially asking, “How do you interpret that?” The first question is easy to answer. Just quote the appropriate Scripture. The lawyer will know that. But the second question is a bit tricky.

The word “read” means just that. But in this context, Jesus is not asking the lawyer to read it. He is asking “how” he reads it. He is asking for an interpretation.

**Luke 10:27 And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”**

Has the lawyer answered both questions? He has quoted from two separate passages: Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. Seemingly the lawyer only answers the first question making the assumption that the meaning is clear and needs no further explanation. Here is something to consider. Does the lawyer interpret the first quote from Deuteronomy by quoting from Leviticus? Is he saying the second quote about loving your neighbor is a demonstration, an interpretation of what it means to love God? Remember James’ saying that don’t tell me you have faith, show me you have faith. So loving your neighbor could be interpreted as showing that you love God. The lawyer is an expert in the Law but also an expert on how to “spin” it. Jesus is an expert in the Law but He knows exactly what it means in a divine spiritual context.



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But the lawyer by calling Jesus “teacher” is not recognizing Jesus’ as Messiah and as God. Robby Dean suggested that when quoting an Old Testament passage, it is advisable for the reader to look up the context it was taken from. He went back to Leviticus to show the context of loving your neighbor. Here we want to look at the context of loving the Lord your God. It might put things in better perspective if we look at the context of Deuteronomy 6:5. It follows Deuteronomy 6:4. “Daahh, you say.” But what is Deuteronomy 6:4? It is the “Shema.” It has a name because it was and still is a very important passage in the Torah for the Jews.

**Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. (This is the “Shema” which comes from the first word in this verse, “Hear.”)**

**Deuteronomy 6:5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.**

Deuteronomy 6:4 contains the “Shema.” It is a verse that orthodox Jews recite daily. They are very familiar with this part of the Torah.

Listen to what a Jewish commentator of Deuteronomy says about the Shema:

“The position of this paragraph in Deuteronomy lends it special significance. As the first paragraph of the Instruction that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai it is, in a sense, the beginning of Deuteronomy proper. It concisely states the central themes of the book and the central demands of the covenant, paraphrasing the first commandment and explicating its meaning: Israel's love and loyalty to YHVH must be undivided and accompanied by constant efforts to remember His instructions and teach them to future generations. The significance of this

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paragraph is reflected in the fact that it became the centerpiece of Jewish daily worship, the Keri'at Shema ("Recitation of the Shema"), named for its first word (see Excursus 10). Its significance is underscored in the Nash Papyrus and the Septuagint which preface it with an extra introductory verse, "These are the laws and the rules that Moses [Septuagint: the LORD] commanded Israel in the desert when they left Egypt."<sup>2</sup>

So it is obvious that the lawyer and Jesus could easily agree that this was the center of the Jewish religion.

By not recognizing Jesus as Messiah and God and not worshiping Him, the lawyer has already failed his own criteria that he gleaned from the Law. **Strike two.**

**Luke 10:28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."**

Jesus said that if the lawyer complies with the Scriptural promises he quoted, "you will live." He did not repeat the lawyer's "eternal life." It reminds me of the response of Jesus to the man on the cross that asked Jesus to remember him in His Kingdom. Jesus responded that the man would be in paradise.

**Luke 23:42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"**

**Luke 23:43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."**

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<sup>2</sup> Tigay, J.H. (1996). The JPS Torah commentary : the traditional Hebrew text with the new JPS translation. Deuteronomy: [Devarim]. Philadelphia, Pa.: Jewish Publication Society. Page 76

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So here, the physical abundant life is possible if the lawyer abides by Scriptural promises. We know that there is a missing word in all this: faith. Just as in Romans chapter 2, the word for faith is missing. Biblical promises must be mixed with faith (Hebrews 4:1-2).

**Luke 10:29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”**

**Justify.** Luke is doctor Luke to the apostle Paul. As such, he is likely very familiar with Paul’s theological vocabulary. Perhaps there is a play on words here. The lawyer wishes to justify himself before Jesus yet the lawyer cannot be justified eternally apart from faith in Jesus the Messiah. The lawyer is thinking in physical terms while Jesus thinks in spiritual terms. Theologically, “justify” means a person has been imputed with God’s righteousness. But this comes by faith and not by “doing” anything.

**Neighbor.** According to the Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT), the meaning of this word in the Hebrew of Leviticus 19:18 is “disputed.” This brings up an obvious logical question that is often missed in casual reading of this passage in Luke. Why did the lawyer ask this question? If the meaning of “neighbor” was clear to both Jesus and the lawyer, why ask this question? That is at the heart of the issue. Apparently, there was an ambiguity in the meaning of the Hebrew word, even in Jesus’ time. It is the lawyer’s attempt to trap Jesus into saying it means a “Hebrew” neighbor. That would lock Jesus into an argument to maybe mistreat a non-Hebrew. But if He said it included non-Hebrew neighbor the lawyer would have argued against that. The Torah is for the Jews only, he might say. Remember, this is key to achieving the “abundant” eternal life. So the meaning matters.

So, rather than get into a symantics argument Jesus throws the question back into the lawyers court with a parable.

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This is the beginning of Part 2. I have included previously taught text because I wanted it all to be available in one document. Also, I have updated bits and pieces.

Before we continue where we left off last time, let us open our Bibles and read the complete narrative to get our minds into the context.

And now we get to the good stuff, the parable of Samaritan Love.

**Luke 10:30 Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho (Question: Why this road?), and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead (Note He says half dead. I think this is important in the understanding of the various responses that follow).**

**Replied.** The Greek word is not the word I expected to see based upon the English translation. It is not really the word normally used for “replied” in a question and answer session. This literally means to “take up.” So here, Jesus takes up or continues the challenge with a parable which illustrates who the neighbor is.

There is a sense in which this reminds me of a scene from the Jack Reacher movie. Some young men challenge Jack Reacher to a fight. Just before the first punch is thrown, Jack Reacher faces his first challenger and says, “Remember, You wanted this!” So Jesus takes up the challenge knowing He will win the argument when the lawyer capitulates. Jesus could have said, “Remember, You wanted this!” But Jesus won’t have to say that. The lawyer will think that on his own. He will learn something very profound. Love observes a need. Love attempts to fulfill that need.

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Focus on the fact that this parable told by Jesus is for the lawyer. Yes, we are to learn from it, even participate in the action. But it is tailored for the expert in the Mosaic Law. As such, we are at a disadvantage. We must investigate individual words and concepts to understand the thrust of the argument and to see the ironic humor of Jesus.

Helpful comments from Thomas Constable:

“The 17-mile desert road that descended about 3,300 feet from Jerusalem to Jericho was treacherous, winding, and a favorite haunt of robbers. Clothing was a valuable commodity in Jesus' society, and this fact probably explains why the bandits took the man's clothes. Perhaps the man resisted his attackers, which would have been a common reaction, and suffered a near fatal beating.<sup>3</sup>”

Each word in this narrative is important. Some cause us to ask why they are important. One of those is the city of Jericho.

Why did Jesus pick the Jerusalem to Jericho road? It must have a meaning for the Mosaic lawyer. But some commentators seem to have missed the importance. There is a very informative article to be found on the jstor.org website.

“JSTOR provides access to more than 12 million journal articles, books, images, and primary sources in 75 disciplines.<sup>4</sup>”

“The history of Second Temple period Jericho was to a great extent the history of "priestly" Jericho. The fertility of the Jericho region as well as its administrative (sp. administrative) importance apparently attracted a large priestly population to the site rather early during the Second Temple period. The priestly population of Jericho grew when the area was further developed by the Hasmoneans who built royal estates there.”

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3 <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/luke.pdf> page 134

4 <https://about.jstor.org/>

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“Talmudic tradition also refers to a large priestly settlement. According to the rabbis, a priestly course would be divided in halves: one half would go up to Jerusalem to officiate in the Temple while the other half of the course would go to Jericho to arrange supplies for their brethren serving in the Temple. It is my contention that this reflects Hasmonean policy attempting to regulate and control priestly pre-rogatives. The large priestly population of Jericho is also verified by the numerous ritual baths discovered there.<sup>5</sup>”

So, the point is to indicate that this road was highly traveled by Jewish priests and Levites. Hence, there is an expectation that priests and Levites would traverse this road. The man that was beat up and robbed could have been a Jew. He could have been a priest or Levite. That is the likely assumption of the lawyer. It could even have been him. It would generate a question in his mind, “What if that were me? Would I care who saved my life by rescuing me?”

“The man in view may have been a real person and the incident Jesus described could have really happened. Yet the fact that Jesus told this story as He did, similar to other parables, has led most students of the passage to conclude that He invented it to teach a lesson.<sup>6</sup>”

Whether it was a true story or a parable is not important. But please understand that each and every word is carefully chosen to highlight the love difference between the Samaritan and the priest and Levite.

A certain man coming down from Jerusalem is assumed to be a Jew. Certainly the lawyer would assume this. This factors into the thinking of the Jewish lawyer. A Jew would be considered his neighbor. He would hate a Samaritan. But Jesus did not specify the victim’s background. He is just some man. Any man.

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5 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1454416>, Schwartz, Bar Ilan University, "On Priests and Jericho in the Second Temple Period" in the Jewish Quarterly Review, LXXIX, No. 1 (July, 1988)23-48. Constable says essentially the same thing in less detail.

6 <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/luke.pdf> page 134

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Remember, the man's clothes were stolen, so he is naked. Likely face down in the dirt. So whether he is circumcised or not, is perhaps hidden. Even if he was circumcised, other ethnic groups besides Jesus practiced circumcision.

The point is that it is a scenario Jesus used to force the Mosaic Law lawyer to answer his own question. It is genius on display. Rather than display His superior knowledge of Scriptures and put the lawyer to shame, Jesus causes him to answer his own question. And to answer his question differently than they way he intended it to be answered.

The lawyer is putting Jesus to the test intending for Jesus to fail. Jesus on the other hand is leading the lawyer to a grace answer that could potentially change his life.

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**Luke 10:31 And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.**

**By chance.** In a human perspective, this is a coincidence. But from a divine perspective, “properly, what occurs *together* by God's *providential* arrangement of circumstances – all achieving *His eternal purpose* in each scene of life.”<sup>7</sup> I don't like the phrase “by chance.” But I don't have a better word to replace it. In God's plan, there is no “good luck” or “by chance.” God has a plan. But it might be a word that the lawyer wouldn't question. It is an innocuous way to start the story. Like, “Once upon a time...”

Why is a priest included in this story? Or in the next verse a Levite? I think that some commentators miss the importance of their designated vocation in their decisions to avoid the half dead man. But the lawyer

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<sup>7</sup> <https://biblehub.com/greek/4795.htm>

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would not miss the risk these men encountered if they approached a half-dead dying man. He is a Mosaic lawyer. He is one of them.

The life of a priest is governed strictly by the Law. The book of Leviticus explains in detail how sacrifices were to be offered.

In the story, Jesus makes mention of the man who was robbed and left “half dead.” That is how the Greek word is translated. Those unfamiliar with the Mosaic Law don’t realize that if a priest touches a dead corpse he becomes ritually unclean and cannot do his prescribed job until he has been ritually cleansed. And if he doesn’t go through ritual cleansing, he can be banished from the Jewish community. Getting near a potentially dead body is risky.

In modern terms, think of a police patrol officer who is put on desk duty pending an investigation into a police involved shooting. It is required by the rules but no one is happy with the time the officer spends behind a desk. Compare that to the procedure to ritually purify a ritually “unclean” priest.

Let us look at the “half dead” man lying on the road from the perspective of the priest. The priest’s job is dependent upon him remaining ritually clean. Touching a dead body will make him unclean and unfit for his job.

**Numbers 19:11 ‘The one who touches the  
corpse of any person shall be unclean for  
seven days.’**

**Corpse.** This is a word derived from the word from death. It is a participle used as a noun. It means corpse. A dead body.

But you say, the man in the road is only *half* dead. Does the priest know this? If a man is half dead, unconscious, how long would it take for the man to die? And what if the priest goes over to the half dead man and he



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becomes a dead corpse in his hands with blood all over his clothes? And of course, there is the possibility that the robbers are still in the neighborhood and ready to rob the priest. So there is a tension implicit in the text. The lawyer understands this. The priest must remain ritually clean to accomplish his God appointed job. Yet, here is a man, probably a Jewish man from the lawyer's perspective that is in need of help. What is he going to do?

So, no, move over to the other side of the road and let the vultures pick at the man's bones. Clearly there is a dissonance in the priest's mind about his job and the greatest commandment. His job wins out.

From gotquestions.org:

“According to the Mosaic Law, a person could become ceremonially unclean for numerous reasons. Those who were ceremonially unclean were separated from worship in God's temple, and any person or thing they touched was made unclean as well. The time a person remained unclean—one day, one week, or forty or fifty days—depended on the cause of the uncleanness, and God provided purification rituals to restore cleanness.<sup>8</sup>”

**Numbers 19:11 ‘The one who touches the corpse of any person shall be unclean for seven days.**

**Numbers 19:12 That one shall purify himself from uncleanness with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and then he will be clean; but if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean.**

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/ceremonially-unclean.html>

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**Numbers 19:13** Anyone who touches a corpse, the body of a man who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is still on him.

**Leviticus 21:10** ‘The priest who is the highest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes;

**Leviticus 21:11** nor shall he approach any dead person, nor defile himself even for his father or his mother;

Pretty strong warning.

**Approach.** Not the usual word for approach in the Hebrew. It means “over.” I read somewhere that rabbinic interpretation included the shadow. If one’s shadow touched the dead body, you were ritually unclean. So, to be sure you don’t become ritually unclean, move as far away from the body as possible. Move to the other side of the street.

**Luke 10:32** Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Who were the Levites? How were they different from the Levitical priests?

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Based upon a number of sources<sup>9</sup>, in summary, the non-priest Levites served in a supplementary role to the priests. They were musicians, gate keepers, guardians, Temple officials, judges, and craftsmen<sup>10</sup>. They were the temple singers.<sup>11</sup> They also were responsible for teaching the Law.

**Deuteronomy 33:10** “**They** (includes priests and likely Levites) **shall teach** Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your law to Israel. They shall put incense before You, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.

**2 Chronicles 17:7** Then in the third year of his (Jehoshaphat) reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to **teach** in the cities of Judah;

**2 Chronicles 17:8** and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests.

**2 Chronicles 17:9** They **taught** in Judah, *having* the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

Also 2 Chronicles 35:3

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hebrew-Bible>, [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/5577273/jewish/The-Levite-Choir-and-Orchestra-What-Who-and-How.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5577273/jewish/The-Levite-Choir-and-Orchestra-What-Who-and-How.htm), <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levite>, <https://knowingscripture.com/articles/levites-class-of-warrior-priests>, <https://www.christianwebsite.com/what-was-the-role-of-the-levites-in-the-bible/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hebrew-Bible>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/5577273/jewish/The-Levite-Choir-and-Orchestra-What-Who-and-How.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5577273/jewish/The-Levite-Choir-and-Orchestra-What-Who-and-How.htm)

Samaritan Love  
Luke 10:30-37

**Nehemiah 8:7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place.**

**Nehemiah 8:8 They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.**

**Nehemiah 8:9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.**

The point of quoting all these passages is to emphasize that while the priests were officiating and serving in the Temple in a strict protocol based upon the Torah, the non-priest Levites were teachers and expositors of the Law in addition to other services supplementary to the priesthood.

So, in this parable, the Levite should have understood the meaning of being a neighbor and of love. It was easy for him to be concerned with being ritually unclean. He took the easy route. Move over to the other side of the street. Don't want my shadow to touch the half-dead, dying man.

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**Luke 10:33 But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,**

A word on the Samaritan. There was great animosity between Jews and Samaritans. It was embedded in history. When the northern kingdom was conquered in 722 B.C., many of the Jews, but not all, were removed to other countries and foreigners were brought in to replace them. However, wild animals started invading the towns. This was taken as a sign that the “local” God was not being worshiped. So the people of Samaria demanded that a Jewish priest (who was likely corrupt) be brought back to teach them the ways. As a result, there was a form of Biblical worship based upon the teaching of an errant priest with a different form of the Torah than the Jews in Jerusalem had. After the return of Judah from the Babylonian captivity, Joseph explains:

“...for such is the disposition of the Samaritans, as we have already elsewhere declared, that when the Jews are in adversity they deny that they are of kin to them, and then they confess the truth; but when they perceive that some good fortune hath befallen them, they immediately pretend to share communion with them, saying, that they belong to them, and derive their genealogy from the posterity of Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh.<sup>12</sup>”

Jesus has structured His sentences such that Samaritan stands out in the list. He is trying to gently guide the lawyer to the correct grace viewpoint. Remember, grace orientation is one of humility. The recipient is undeserving of the blessing he or she receives.

1. Priest (10:31): And by chance a priest. The word priest is not first in the sentence. In Greek, the first word in the sentence has “pride of place.” I am making the assumption that in the language Jesus used

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<sup>12</sup> Josephus Antiquities of the Jews, Book XI Chapter VIII paragraph 5, Flavius Josephus (1960). Complete Works. Kregel Classics.

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to communicate with the lawyer would have a similar structure. But remember, we are dealing with the Greek text which is Scripture and inerrant.

2. Levite (10:32): Likewise a Levite. The word Levite is not the first word in the sentence.
3. Samaritan (10:33): The word “Samaritan” is the first word in the sentence. It is almost like Jesus emphasizes Samaritan as to say, “Here is the right answer.” Whether the lawyer caught this or not is not stated. But from the end of this passage it is evident he did “get it.”

**Luke 10:34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.**

**(Olive) oil.** Oil can soothe a wound. It also contains Vitamin E which helps in healing<sup>13</sup>. Wine, assuming it contains alcohol is a disinfectant. I am not here trying to interpret this allegorically, only literally. Consider the possibility that the Samaritan was a merchant and that he is using supplies that could have been sold at a profit on the market in Jerusalem. His job.

**His own beast.** This would mean that the Samaritan, rather than riding on his own beast, might have had to walk.

**Luke 10:35 On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.’**

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.webmd.com/diet/health-benefits-extra-virgin-olive-oil>

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**Luke 10:36 Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?"**

**Proved.** So the translations. Jesus is asking the lawyer for his opinion, his judgment on the three men. Jesus has subtly changed the emphasis of neighbor from the lawyer's view as neighbor being a Jew with whom he dealt with to anyone who was in need.

**Luke 10:37 And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."**

**Showed mercy/do the same.** Literally it is "did" mercy. The "do" is the same vocabulary word as when Jesus says "do." It shows a parallelism. He did it. Now you do it.

**Mercy.** This is a different word than Jesus used in verse 33. Jesus asked the lawyer for his opinion. The TDNT suggests the word used here is often a rendering of the Hebrew word for lovingkindness in the Septuagint. So we are talking about love. This is the lawyer responding. He gets it from a human perspective. The Samaritan showed love. Literally, he "did" love."

There is a similarity in the sounds for the word for oil that Jesus used in the parable and the word for mercy used by the lawyer. It is possible that Jesus has been setting up the man to get the correct answer.

Perhaps you have encountered the trick to predispose an individual to an answer. In one version, you tell someone to not think of the word "elephant." Well, that is the first word that will come to mind. You will have to fight your mind in order to not think about that word.

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Another version is trickier. You tell someone to spell the word “SPOT.” So the person says “S-P-O-T.” Good. Now what do you do when you come to a green light. Everyone is predisposed to say, “STOP.” When that first happened to me, I said, “STOP.” When the other person reiterated, “GREEN light,” I argued by emphasizing, “STOP.” I finally got it. I was predisposed to answer incorrectly. Here Jesus is predisposing the lawyer to answer correctly. God wants us to get it right. It is our sin nature that always tries to get it wrong.

Jesus may have been doing this to the lawyer. Jesus is not trying to trick the lawyer. He is applying lovingkindness to help him get to the correct answer. The grace answer.

For instance, each of the priest, Levite and Samaritan all observe the victim on the side of the road. The same word is used. The Greek is ἰδῶν The same word. Each man observes a need.

In introducing each person, Jesus uses the language to emphasize the Samaritan. The priest is introduced as “And by chance a priest.” In the Greek, “priest” is not the first word in the sentence. The Levite is introduced as “Likewise also a Levite.” In the Greek, “Levite” is not the first word in the sentence. In Greek, the first word in a sentence has “pride of place.” It is a place used to emphasize that word. Now, when Jesus introduces the Samaritan, the word “Samaritan” is the first word in the sentence. Importance. And of course, the Samaritan applies love to the need. He fulfills the need.

The lawyer says “the one who showed mercy.” Showed is a word for “do.” Then Jesus says go and “do” the same. Jesus is linking the lawyer’s future actions to what the lawyer said the Samaritan did.



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I like to look at other people's perspectives. Why did the other person make the choices he did? Can I learn from his success or failure?

Perspectives:

1. The first perspective is your perspective. You are forced to participate in this narrative when Luke says "behold" or more literally, "Observe" or "Pay attention!" That word is left out of the NASB and NIV translations. Shame on them. This is a word communicated from almost 2,000 years ago from Doctor Luke to you the reader. You are to "observe" the parable and come to a conclusion. You must ask yourself, would you have been a good loving Samaritan or just a person obeying the protocol of your job?

2. The second perspective includes both priest and Levite. Their perspectives are similar. They both must follow prescribe protocol or they have an impact on their respective jobs. The priest, if he becomes unclean, will be unable to accomplish his prescribe tasks per the Mosaic Law. The Levite had a teaching function. Does he understand the requirements of the Mosaic Law concerning "neighbor?" Both choose to stay with the protocol of their job instead of protocol of neighbor. **Work over Love.**

3. The third perspective, not in chronological order, is the lawyer. His initial perspective is to challenge Jesus and thereby unknowingly violate the Mosaic Law. When Jesus funnels his attention to what he knows about the Mosaic Law and agrees with Jesus, then the lawyer needs to push for a more explicit victory over Jesus. But Jesus has orchestrated the outcome, channeling the lawyer's attention to the meaning of "neighbor." Jesus predisposes the lawyer to answer correctly. Jesus is predisposing the lawyer to get to humility and grace orientation. At that point, the lawyer will be susceptible to the gospel and saving grace. The salvation of his soul. The gospel does not always start with "Believe on

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Jesus Christ for salvation.” Many times a soul must be prepared to receive the message in grace.

There is an episode of Law and Order in which a man who has killed two people and now has a woman hostage with a knife to her throat. He demands to speak to a lawyer. If he doesn't get a lawyer, he says he will kill the hostage. Since he has already killed, the threat is real. The only lawyer readily available is a lady from the Assistant District Attorneys office. She represents herself to the man as a lawyer, never explaining that she is with the District Attorney's office. She gets a confession and saves the hostage's life. Yet, she faces disbarment proceedings because of her actions. She lied to the criminal. She could not become his lawyer. She risked losing her job in order to save a life. Neither the priest nor the Levite were willing to risk having to lose some time on the job and go through a cleansing process. The Samaritan, while there is no apparent risk of losing a job, spends lavishly to save the victim's life. If a denarius is considered a day's wages, then he paid two day's wages or a day's wage for two people (?priest and Levite?), personally suffered if he had to walk alongside his beast and bound up the victim's wounds promising the inn keeper more money if required. **Love over work.**

4. Jesus' perspective. Up to this time, I have avoided dealing with the most obvious but perhaps least recognized perspective. Jesus' perspective. We know He is good. We know He is sinless. He is filled with the Holy Spirit which produces love. But do we see that Jesus is actually applying love to this lawyer? The lawyer is hostile towards Jesus. I say this in spite of what Thomas Constable says about this. The lawyer is trying to trip Jesus into a misstep.

The lawyer's attitude starts by more than likely siding with the priest and the Levite. He is one of them. The protocol of the job forces them to avoid the possibility of becoming unclean over saving a life. It is probable that the lawyer is familiar with this road. He may even know of

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similar incidents. What if he was the man beaten, robbed and half dead by the side of the road? Would it matter who saved him? In the end, the lawyer has changed his thinking to understanding that saving a life is more important than the requirements of the job or work. Jesus did that. He predisposed the lawyer to look at the situation with humility. Jesus has guided the lawyer's thinking from blind compliance to the law to humility and saving a life. He has done that so logically and so subtly that few see that. What Jesus did was to guide the man's thinking by setting him up to receive the gospel. Jesus was saving a soul.

Like the little girl in the John 3:16 YouTube video said: "Wow!"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5beoRa\\_HR8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5beoRa_HR8o)