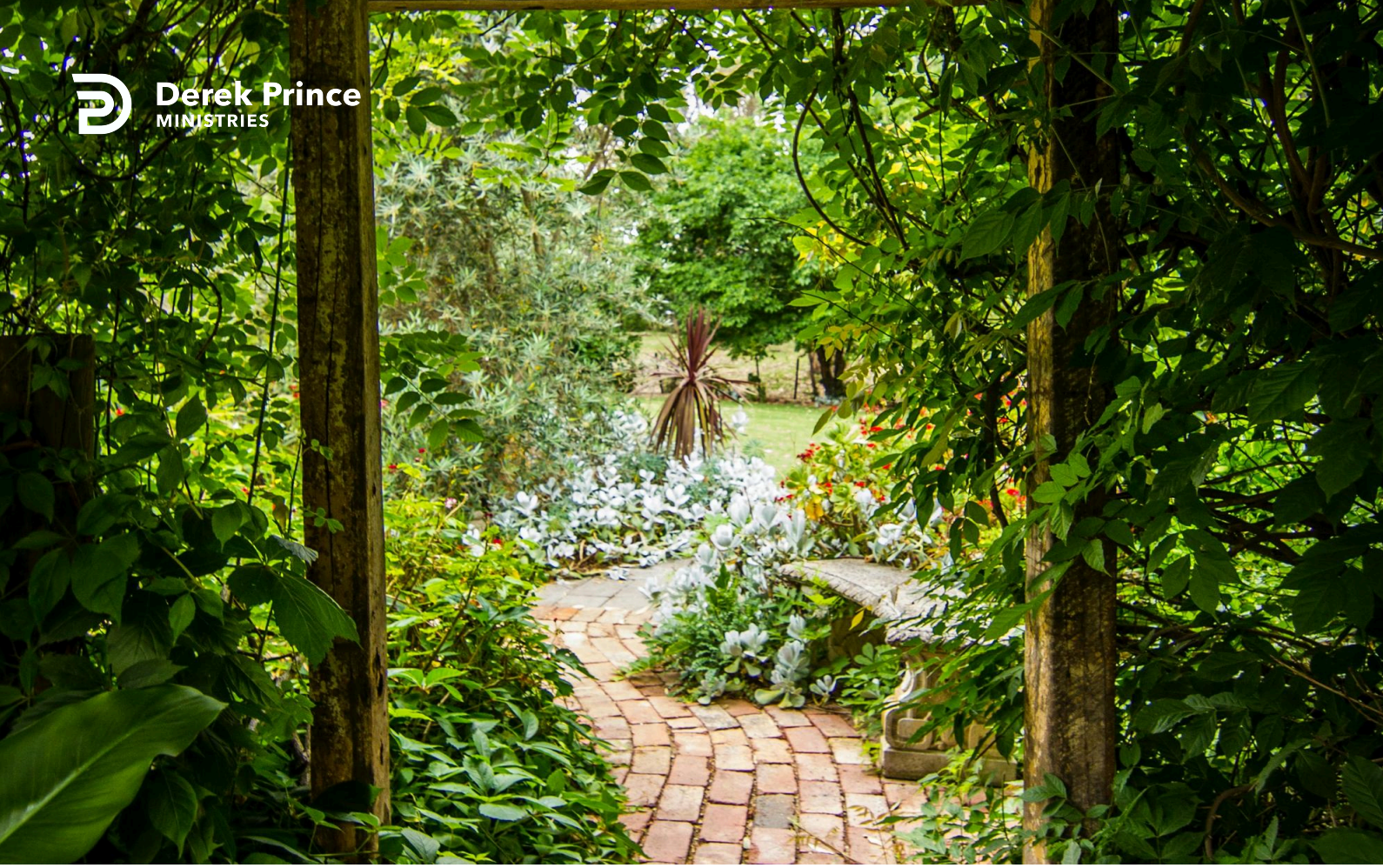

Blessing And Imparting Authority



Foundations (Day 248)
by Derek Prince

The laying on of hands was an accepted practice in the earliest records of God's people. For instance, consider how Joseph brought his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh to his father, Jacob, and how Jacob blessed them.

> "Then Israel [Jacob] stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn." (Gen. 48:14)

At first Joseph thought his father had made a mistake, and he tried to make his father change his hands over, placing the right hand upon the head of Manasseh, the firstborn, and the left hand upon the head of Ephraim, the younger. However, Jacob indicated that he had been conscious of divine guidance in placing his right hand upon Ephraim and his left hand upon Manasseh. With his hands still kept crossed in this position, he proceeded to bless the two boys, giving the first and greater blessing to Ephraim and the lesser blessing to Manasseh.

This passage shows it was an accepted practice that the blessing of Jacob should be transmitted to his two grandsons by laying his hands upon their heads; and, furthermore, that the greater blessing was transmitted through Jacob's right hand and the lesser through his left hand.

As Moses came near to the end of his earthly ministry, he asked the Lord to appoint a new leader over Israel who should be ready to take his place.

> "And the Lord said to Moses: 'Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.'" (Num. 27:18-20)

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Moses carried out this commandment of the Lord:

> "So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. And he laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses." (Num. 27:22-23)

Moses' action produced a tremendous result in Joshua.

> "Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses." (Deut. 34:9)

From these passages we see that this act of Moses laying his hands upon Joshua was one of great significance both for Joshua individually and for the whole congregation of Israel collectively. By this divinely ordained act, Moses accomplished two main purposes:

1. He transmitted to Joshua a measure of the spiritual wisdom and honour which he had himself received from God.
2. He publicly acknowledged before the whole congregation of Israel God's appointment of Joshua as the leader who was to succeed him.

Devotional

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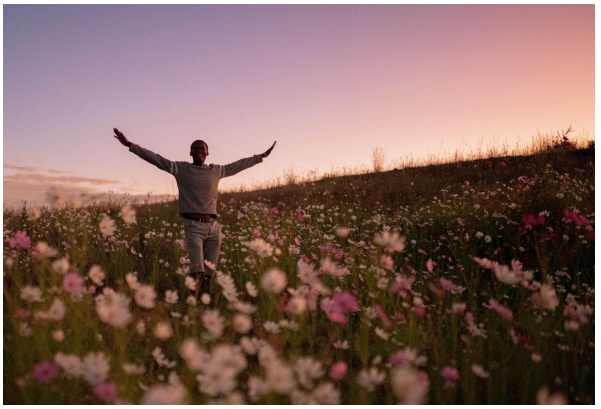

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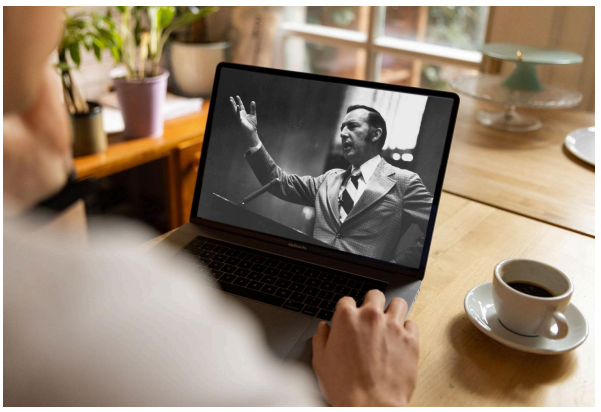

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