

Material Benefits of Redemption



Claiming Our Inheritance (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you some of the keys to successful living that God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry. In my talks this week I've been explaining the basis of our redemption through Christ. On the cross, Jesus took upon Him all the curses due to our disobedience that He might in turn make available to us all the blessings due to His obedience.

In my last two talks I've explained the blessings that Christ has made available in the spiritual realm and in the physical realm. Today I'm going to deal with the blessings that are available to us in the material realm. I'm going to go back once more to Deuteronomy 28, that chapter which lists so completely the two opposites. First of all, the blessings that are a result of obedience, and then the curses that are the result of disobedience. And remember what I said, the decisive issue is whether we listen to the Lord's voice and obey it or whether we do not listen to the Lord's voice. Listening to the Lord's voice and obeying it brings blessing, not listening to the Lord's voice brings curses.

Today we are going to look at the blessings and the curses specifically in the material realm. First of all, we look at the material blessings promised to obedience. And they are many indeed. It's not possible for me in this brief talk to go into them in detail. But here is what Moses says in Deuteronomy 28:3-5, 8 & 11:

> "Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. [That was really the main material possession of the Israelites as an agricultural community.] Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl, [We might say your shopping basket today, your purse. These will be blessed.] The LORD will command the blessing upon you [I love that thought, that God is going to command His blessing upon us] in your barns and in all that you put your hand

> to, [that leaves absolutely nothing out of anything that we undertake. God will bless it] and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. And the LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you." (NAS)

Notice that phrase, "The LORD will make you abound in prosperity." Abounding in prosperity is a blessing that results from hearing and obeying the voice of the Lord.

Moses returns briefly to the same theme in the next chapter of Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy 29:9. And this is what he says there to Israel:

> "So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do." (NAS)

So keeping the words of God's covenant causes us to prosper in all that we do. That leaves no room for failure or frustration in any area of our lives. These are the blessings.

Now let's look at the material curses for disobedience. Going back to Deuteronomy 28:29:

> "And you shall grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in his darkness, [you see, there's a total inability to find the right way through life] and you shall not prosper in your ways..." (NAS)

Notice that just as abounding in prosperity is a blessing, so not prospering in our ways is a curse. And then still more completely and vividly, Moses states it again in Deuteronomy 28:47-48, and here the blessing and the curse are set directly side by side.

> "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; [Now notice, that's God's will. That's the result of obedience that we serve God with joy and a glad heart for the abundance of all things. Abundance is the outcome of obedience. But the alternative, and it's a very grim alternative, is stated in verse 48 for those who will not serve the Lord with joy and a glad heart.] Therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you." (NAS)

Well, you couldn't have the two alternatives more clearly pictured than in those two verses. The results of obedience: the abundance of all things, serving God with joy and a glad heart. The results of disobedience: we have to serve not the Lord but our enemies, and we serve him in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things.

As I was meditating on those words one day, I saw that this is a description of absolute poverty. A person who is hungry, has nothing to eat; thirsty, has nothing to drink; naked, no clothes to wear; and lack of all things. That person is in a condition of absolute poverty. It is impossible to picture greater poverty than that: hunger, thirst, nakedness, and lack of all things. The important thing to see is that poverty is a curse. Poverty is not a mark of holiness. If it takes poverty to make you or me holy, I question how holy we really are. Poverty is a curse. It does not belong to the people of God. What a joy and release came into my own soul when I saw this one day so clearly, that poverty is not for the children of God. It's not for God's redeemed people. For God's redeemed people, the will of God is abundance that we may serve Him with joy and with gladness of heart.

This understanding of the material blessings due to obedience and the material curses that result from disobedience was brought home to me personally in a very vivid way, a way I shall never forget. Some years ago I was preaching in the country of New Zealand and I was teaching on God's financial provision for His people. I had my note outline prepared and I was following through with it, but while I was speaking from my note outline, inwardly in my mind I was seeing something I'd never seen before. I was seeing in a mental picture of Jesus as He hung there on the cross atoning for our sins. And as I unfolded the full extent of the poverty curse: hunger, thirst, nakedness and the lack of all things. It was as if the Holy Spirit was pointing to Jesus on the cross as He hung there, and showing me that every one of those four conditions that make up total poverty was fulfilled in the person of Jesus as He hung on the cross. He was hungry, he hadn't eaten for nearly 24 hours. He was thirsty. One of His last utterances on the cross was "I thirst." He was naked, and let no pretty religious pictures ever deceive you about that. The Scripture states that the soldiers that carried out the execution stripped Him of all of His clothes and then divided them between them. He was naked. He was in lack of all things. He had nothing. He was buried in a borrowed burial robe and in a borrowed tomb. He literally had absolutely nothing.

And as I was preaching there to that congregation in New Zealand, I was still going through my note outline, but the

Holy Spirit was simultaneously showing me something in my own spirit and mind, something that's remained with me ever since. I can never totally forget that picture of Jesus hanging there on the cross. And the Holy Spirit showed me why Jesus was hungry, why He was thirsty, why He was naked, why He was in want of all things. The reason: it had to be so because he exhausted on our behalf the poverty curse. He took the complete curse away once and for all that you and I, redeemed believers through the blood of Jesus, might not have to endure that yoke of iron, that poverty curse. That is not the result of blessing and of obedience, but is the result of disobedience. Thank God, though all of us have been disobedient, Jesus took upon Himself the iniquity of us all. Our rebellion and all its evil consequences, including poverty, were visited upon Jesus as He hung there on the cross.

Now this exchange is clearly summed up in the New Testament. In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, we get the two aspects of the exchange in the material realm. In 2 Corinthians 8:9, Paul says:

> "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich." (NAS)

What's the exchange there? It is very clear. Jesus took our poverty on the cross that we in turn might have access to His wealth, to His abundance. And it's grace. Grace comes only through Jesus Christ. Grace cannot be earned. Grace is appropriated only by faith.

Then the opposite side is stated in 2 Corinthians 9:8:

> "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that in all ways having all sufficiency in all things you may have abundance for every good deed..."

In the original Greek that statement is amazing. The word "abound" occurs twice, the word "all" occurs five times in that one verse. And all that it says, this is what Jesus had obtained for us. He exhausted the poverty curse that we might inherit the blessings.

Let me say again, as I said earlier in this series of talks, the blessings in all three areas obtained for us by Jesus: the spiritual, the physical and the material, are summed up in that beautiful verse in 3 John verse 2, where John says:

> "Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper [that's the material] and be in good health, [that's the physical] just as your soul prospers [that's the spiritual]." (NAS)

Bear in mind, that's the will of God, that's your inheritance.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll continue with this theme of "Claiming Our Inheritance." I'll be explaining the practical principles that are the key to claiming all the blessings that Christ has made available to us. It will be very practical.

But stay tuned now for some important announcements. In particular, how you may obtain a copy of my book, Faith to Live By. This book will place in your hands the one essential key to the kind of living that belongs to the Christian inheritance: the key of faith. It explains what faith is, how it comes, and what it will do. The announcement that follows will tell you how you may obtain this book.

Radio Program

Transcript: TS-R022-105-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

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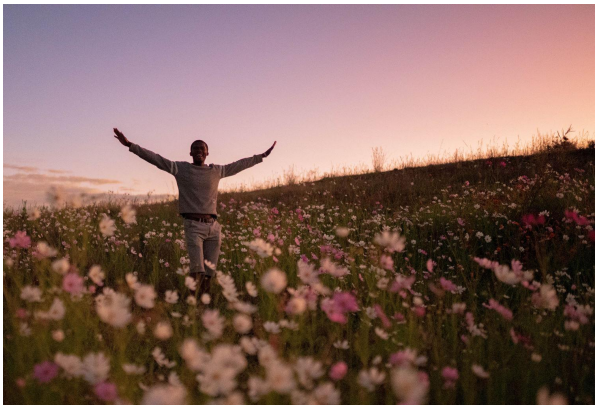

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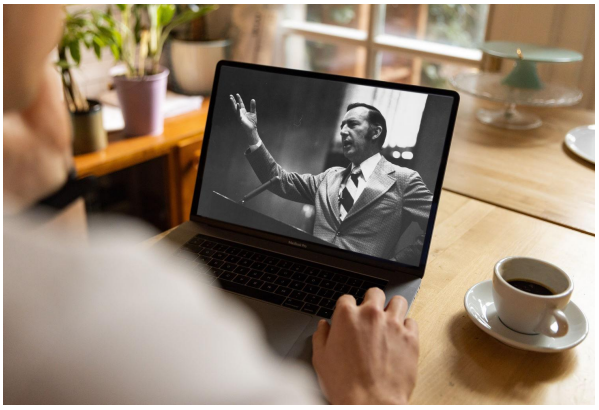

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