

God's Covenant Blessings



God's Abundance (Part 9)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we follow through with our theme for this week, God's Abundance.

In my previous talks this week, we've examined the important, logical distinction between that which is essentially good and that which is relatively good. And we've applied this distinction to the various concepts associated with abundance such as: riches, wealth, prosperity, abundance. And we've seen that according to the Bible, all these are essentially good, though they may not always be relatively good for us in a given situation.

Today we're going to approach this theme along a slightly different line. We're going to look at the Bible's comprehensive list of God's covenant blessings. This is found in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verses 1 through 14. We'll begin by looking at the conditions for receiving these blessings which logically, as usual with God, are stated in the first two verses. That's Deuteronomy 28, verses 1 and 2.

> "Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey the Lord your God." (NASB)

Twice there, Moses uses the phrase "obey the Lord your God." It's important to understand that in the original Hebrew, the phrase is a little more elaborate. It is: "Listen to the voice of the Lord your God." And I prefer to go back to that translation. Moses says, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do His commandments," ...and then he ends up again at the end of verse 2,... "If you will listen to the voice of the Lord your God." So the two conditions there for entering into the covenant blessings of God are: first, listening carefully to God's voice; and second, doing what God says. As a matter of fact, listening to God's voice is always the primary requirement of God for a right relationship with Him in all ages and dispensations.

Let me show you two other passages. In Jeremiah chapter 7, verses 22 and 23, the Lord speaks through the prophet to Israel and reminds them of what He originally required of Israel when He brought them out of Egypt. This is what He says. It's somewhat surprising.

> "'For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. [God says, I wasn't primarily interested in burnt offerings and sacrifices—there was something else that comes first.' What was it?] But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people.'" (NASB)

That really is God's basic requirement in all ages and dispensations—"Obey My voice and I will be your God." And that implies a direct personal relationship with God, because a voice is something personal. We have to able to hear God's voice before we can obey it. If we don't hear God's voice it's impossible to obey it.

Now you might say, "That changed in the New Testament." But really it didn't. Listen to what Jesus says Himself in John 10:27:

> "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (NASB)

"My sheep, My true disciples," Jesus says, and He's not talking about denominations or church groups. "My sheep, all My true disciples," — what's the first requirement? — "hear My voice." And second, "They follow Me." That's never changed all through Scripture. The first requirement: listen diligently to the voice of the Lord; the second one is do what He says. But it's logical to put them in that order because if you don't hear God's voice you can't even start to do what He says.

Now, let's go back to Deuteronomy 28, verses 1–14 and look at the list of blessings. I'm going to pick them out briefly in my talk today. I really recommend you to go back to your own Bible at your convenience, read Deuteronomy 28, verses 1–14, and study these blessings carefully. They will repay careful study. Now I'm going to point out to you briefly the blessings which come from hearing and obeying and God's voice.

Verse 1 says, "The Lord will set you high above all the nations of the earth." You will be set high above—you will never be below.

Verse 3 – "Blessed shall you be in the city and in the country." You will be blessed in the city and in the country.

Verse 4 speaks of fruitfulness – "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body, the produce of your ground, the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd, etc." It's fruitfulness in every area of our life.

Verse 5 speaks of the basket and the kneading bowl – "Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl." Everything you do in the kitchen, dear sisters, will be blessed.

Verse 6 – "Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out." There's no part of your daily walk that will not be blessed – whether it's going out or coming in, it will be blessed.

Verse 7 speaks of victory over enemies. "The Lord will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way and shall flee before you seven ways." I often remind the devil of that. "You came out against me one way but you are going to flee from me seven ways." Because that's the blessing.

Verse 8 – "...your barns and all you put your hand to..." The Lord will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to. Everything you do will be blessed.

Verse 9 "The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself..." Holiness is one of the blessings that flow.

Verse 10 "You will be feared by all other people." The Scripture says, "All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of you." The blessing of the Lord will be manifest, it will be something that people can see and it will cause them to develop a very special attitude toward you.

Verse 11 is particularly appropriate to our theme of God's abundance. It says the "the Lord will make you abound in prosperity..." Let me repeat that, "The Lord will make you abound in prosperity..." Abundant prosperity is one of the covenant blessings of the Lord. Let's lay hold of that fact.

Verse 12 speaks about the climate and the weather. "The Lord will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand..." Notice it's so all inclusive. Earlier it said, "...everything you put your hand to..." Here it says "...all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but

you shall not borrow." That indicates financial abundance. If you don't have to borrow, but you're in a position to lend, then that speaks of financial abundance.

There's an important verse about borrowing and lending in the book of Proverbs, Proverbs 22:7:

> "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender." (NIV)

I think the great majority of people in contemporary America are in debt. They do not realize it, but being in debt, they're in servitude because the borrower is servant to the lender. The man who lends the money calls the shots. The one who's borrowed is subject to him. And God's blessing on His people is that you be the ones that lend and that don't borrow. I think many Christians need to adjust their faith in this area. They haven't seen that it's a blessing to lend, but it's not a blessing to have to borrow.

Now, I'm going to continue with this list of blessings. We've got the last two verses, verses 13 and 14. I'm going to read those:

> "And the Lord shall make you the head and not the tail, and you shall be above, and you shall not be underneath, if you will listen [notice we always come back to the condition] if you will listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully, [listen and do] and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them." (NASB)

So at the end of the list as at the beginning the conditions are plainly stated—listen and do. And I think that thriteenth verse really beautifully sums up the expression, the outworking of the blessing of God in our lives. The Lord says He will make you the head, not the tail. You'll be above and not underneath.

I heard an imaginary conversation about two Christians. One said to the other, "How are you today, brother?" And the second one replied, "Under the circumstances, I'm not doing badly." And the first one said, "Well, what are you doing under the circumstances?" You shouldn't be under the circumstances. You're supposed to be above and not underneath.

And then, "the Lord shall make you the head and not the tail." God made this very vivid to me at a certain point. I said to myself, "What's the difference between the head and the tail?" And this is the answer I came up with. The head makes the decision, the head sets the course, and the tail just follows wherever the head goes. And then I said to myself, "Which am I in my life right now? Am I the head? Do I make the decisions? Or am I the tail? Do I just get pulled around by situations and circumstances over which I have no control?" That's a decision. Which are you? How are you living today? Are you living like the head or are you living like the tail? Are you under the circumstances or are you above them?

I sometimes shock people, but I say this in sincerity. As a believing servant of the Lord, when I go to buy something which I believe is God's will for me to have, I don't ask, "Can I afford it?" I ask, "Is this what God wants me to have?" And many, many times I've discovered God wants me to have something better than I would have chosen for myself. Somebody said this once; let me leave it with you—"God gives His best to those who leave the choice to Him." You see, God cares for us and understands us and loves us better than we ourselves. If we can only trust Him. If we can only come to the place where we walk in the close intimate fellowship with Him, where we listen to His voice and do what He says. The blessings will take care of themselves.

Let me recommend to you sincerely that you go back to Deuteronomy 28:1–14 and read those blessings. I'm going to sum them up in my own way in just a few words, but I'd like you to check for yourself. This is my summation of the blessings:

EXALTATION

HEALTH

FRUITFULNESS

PROSPERITY

VICTORY

GOD'S FAVOR.

Who wouldn't want those? At least, I don't know about you, but let me say, I want them. And I'm willing to try to meet the conditions to receive them.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. I'll continue with this theme of God's Abundance. Tomorrow we'll look at the opposite side of the coin—the curses for disobedience.



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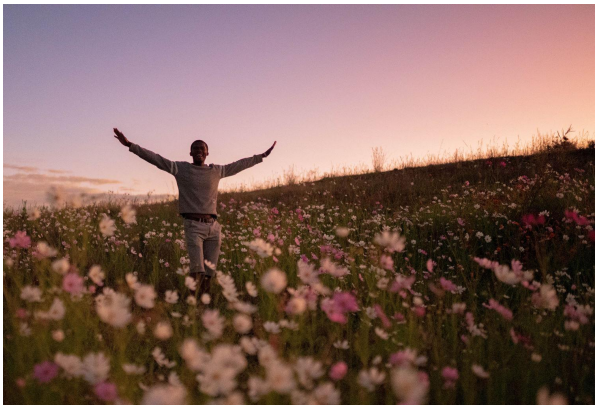

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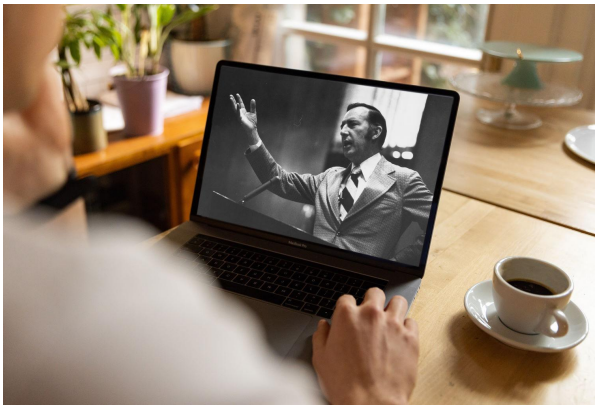

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