

Jesus Exhausted the Poverty Curse



God's Abundance (Part 12)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again.

We're continuing today with our theme of God's Abundance.

Our study of this theme has led us to the list of blessings and curses found in Deuteronomy, chapter 28. We've seen that the blessings come through listening to God's voice and doing what He says. Conversely, the curses come through the opposite: not listening to God's voice and not doing what He says.

In both cases,the blessings and the curses alike cover every area of our lives—spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial—as well as the whole area of relationships, within and without our family. All these things come within the scope, both of the blessings on the one hand, and the curses on the other.

Yesterday I shared with you God's Remedy for the Curse, which is stated in Galatians 3:13 and 14.

> "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.' He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit." (NIV)

I pointed out that on the cross a divinely ordained exchange took place. On Jesus came all the rebelliousness of the entire human race and all the evil consequences of that rebelliousness that we might be delivered, set free, and in exchange, God now makes available to us all the blessings that are due by divine right to Jesus. So Jesus became a curse hanging on the tree, for it was written in the Law of Moses that everyone who hangs on a tree is a curse. Jesus became a curse that we in turn might receive the blessing of Abraham.

I pointed out that the blessing of Abraham covered every area of His life and that we receive this blessing with the help

of the Holy Spirit who is the guide, the interpreter, the administrator of all the wealth of the Godhead.

Now today I'm going to show you how this truth applies specifically to our theme of abundance.

In examing both the blessings and the curses, we've seen that both alike apply specifically to the whole area of financial and material needs.

Let's look first at the blessings again in this respect. In Deuteronomy 28, verses 11 through 12, this is part of the blessings:

> "The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you. The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none." (NIV)

Notice, amongst the blessings we find abundant prosperity—lending but not borrowing, fruitfulness in every area; that's the blessing. On the other hand, we see that the opposite is clearly listed among the curses in very vivid language. In Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verses 47 and 48:

> "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; [that's the Will of God that we as His people should serve Him with joy and a glad heart for the abundance of all things, that if, through disobedience, we do not do that, then here is the alternative in the next verse:] 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." (NASB)

That's very specific. The condition that disobedience will bring upon us is stated in four successive phrases—in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things. You take those four phrases and put them together; what do you have? If you have hunger, thirst, nakedness, lack of all things, what is that? My answer is: That's absolute poverty. You cannot have greater poverty than to be hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking all things, and that's a curse. How important it is we see clearly that poverty is a curse; it's not a blessing, and the ultimate curse is total poverty—poverty in every area. We don't have enough to eat. We don't have enough to drink. We don't have enough clothes to wear; we just need everything. Now that is the poverty curse.

Now, I was speaking some years back in the land of New Zealand, in a meeting where I was appealing to Christians to offer to God for the work of His Kingdom, and as I was speaking and following my note outline which I had in front of me, the Holy Spirit was dealing with me, and He was giving me a mental picture of something different. He was giving me a mental picture of Jesus as He hung on the cross. And as I went through this poverty curse, the Holy Spirit checked off every item of the curse to me; hunger—Jesus was hungry; He hadn't eaten for nearly 24 hours. Thirst—one of His last utterances was, "I'm thirsty." Nakedness—They'd taken all His clothes from Him. Lack of all things—He didn't have a garment to be buried in; He didn't have a tomb to be buried in. He was totally and absolutely and utterly destitute. Why was that? It was no accident. It was the outworking of a divine purpose. It was the outworking of that aspect of the exchange which relates to abundance. Jesus took upon Himself the poverty curse. He took upon Himself in its totality; He was hungry, He was thirsty, He was naked, He lacked everything. He exhausted the poverty curse. I want to emphasize that. He didn't just take part of the poverty curse; He took the totality of it. Every aspect of it found its final, total fulfillment and outworking in Jesus as He hung there on the cross, visibly made a curse for you and me. He took the sickness curse. He took the guilt curse. He took the rejection curse. He took the death curse. But the particular curse that I want to emphasize in my talk today is that poverty curse. The curse of absolute poverty was visited upon Jesus and He totally exhausted it. He took our poverty that we in return might have His abundance.

The outworking of Jesus taking the poverty curse on our behalf is clearly stated by Paul in two chapters of 2 Corinthians—two Scripture texts that we need to put together in our minds. I'll give you each reference and I think you'll see they're easy to remember. The first one is 2 Corinthians 8:9. The second one is 2 Corinthians 9:8. Put them together and you have the perfect description of Jesus taking the poverty curse and of what is offered to you and me on that basis. 2 Corinthians 8:9 says:

> "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." (NIV)

You see the clear exchange. Jesus was rich with all the riches of heaven. Even in His earthly ministry, He was not poor. I pointed out in my talks earlier, He ministered out of

abundance. He never lacked. He could feed 10,000 people with five loaves and two fishes. When He needed money for taxes, He could send Peter to catch a fish in the Sea of Galilee, a fish without any bait, with just a hook, and out of the fish came the money that was needed to pay the taxes. So Jesus was not poor during His earthly ministry. He didn't have a lot of cash. I've sometimes expressed it this way, He used His Father's credit card and it was always valid. But when He went to the cross, then He became poor. Not merely did He become poor, but He took the poverty curse. He became poor so that we, through His poverty, might become rich. That's the exchange. He took our poverty that we might enjoy His riches.

And in 2 Corinthians 9:8, the other Scripture I gave you, Paul speaks about this, and in each case the key word is "grace." Grace is not something we can earn; it is something we can receive only by faith. 2 Corinthians 9:8 says:

> "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (NIV)

I love that Scripture. It uses the word "abound" twice. God makes all grace abound toward us that we in turn may abound to every good need, and there is no exception. There is nothing left out. Let me reiterate those words—God is able to make all grace abound to you so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound to every good work. Actually in the original Greek, the word "all" occurs five times; the word "abound" occurs twice. I don't know that any use of language could give a stronger presentation of abundance than that verse, and that's the result of the death of Jesus on the cross. That's the result of Jesus bearing the poverty curse on our behalf. The answer is abundance. God's abundance is made available to you and me. Let me read those words again as I close, "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work or to every good work." That's the provision of God, when the poverty curse was taken by Jesus, and God's abundance made available to us.

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, I'll begin to explain the conditions we must fulfill in order to receive and enjoy the blessing of God's abundance.

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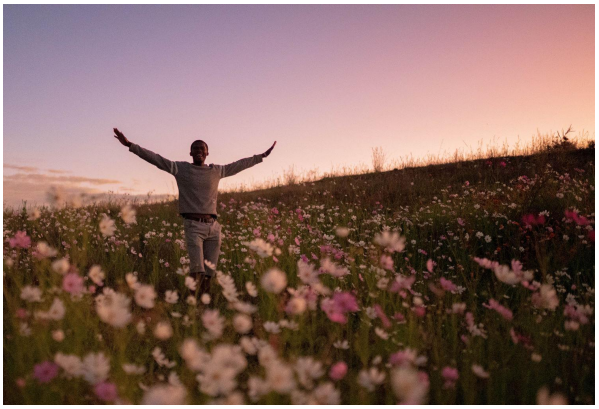

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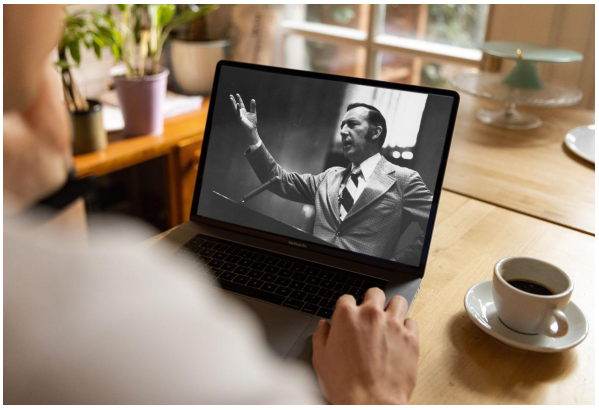

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