

Trouble in the Garden



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

I want to say very emphatically right from the beginning that I cannot give you all the answers. Even when this little series of talks is over, you will have some questions to which you haven't found an answer. We're all like that, none of us can fully understand God and His dealings. If we could, He wouldn't be God.

Let me give you just two scriptures that will help you, or at any rate, state the problem. Romans 11:33, Paul says of God:

> "How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

So if you want to search the judgments of God, you'll never get to the bottom. And, if you want to know all the ways of God, they're past finding out.

Now, that can help you to no end just to come to that recognition, that things will happen in your life that you don't understand, you don't know the reason and you may never know the reason.

The other scripture is Proverbs 3:5:

> "We trust in the Lord with all our heart and do not lean on our own understanding."

Now, some little while ago God dealt with Ruth about the problem that she's had with her neck. God showed her from that verse that she was disobeying scripture because instead of trusting the Lord she was trying to understand. Have you ever done that? See, it's contrary to scripture. Scripture says trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. Do not try to work it out with your own understanding.

I'm going to try to deal this morning with one basic problem which every one of us has, and if you don't come to grips with this problem then you will not be able to resolve a whole lot of other problems and you won't understand a whole lot of things that happen in your life. Tonight I'll be dealing with some lessons from the book of Job. I announced it in advance and one or two people have made it known to me that they really had never read the book of Job! It wasn't on their list of reading. I'm amazed at that. I thought all

Christians read all the Bible. Is that true?

You see, the Bible says all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God might be made perfect or complete, lacking nothing. There's another verse that promises you to be lacking nothing but you have to apply it. If you only read half the Bible you're never going to be a complete believer because all scripture is given by inspiration of God—even the genealogies.

I'm going to go back to the beginning of the history of the human race, our first parents, Adam and Eve, and I'm going to try to draw out of that a basic truth which concerns every one of us.

You see, we're all descended from Adam, I believe. I know a lot of people don't believe that but I do. I had studied as a philosopher many theories about the origin of man and the origin of the universe and so on. But when I turned to the Bible and read it with faith, I discovered it did something no other theory had ever done, it explained me to myself. I discovered what kind of a preacher I was, the different elements in my personality, why I behaved the way I did, why I had the pressures that I did. That all came to me from the book of Genesis from the description of the creation of Adam and Eve. So, don't write that off as some old-fashioned fairy tale because it's a very exact, accurate description of the origin of our race, man.

The Bible talks about the sons of Adam many times. It doesn't come out that way in the English translations. You need to bear in mind that the Bible and salvation are all directed towards Adam and his descendants. There may have been many other beings on earth before Adam, we don't know. But the Bible is not talking to them. For some amazing, incredible reason God has a special concern for Adam and his descendants. It's the most amazing thing. Sometimes I say to myself it's incredible that God should bother Himself about this particular area of His creation. Then I say it's not incredible because the Bible reveals it and I believe it. So, there it is.

I want to read the description of the fall of Adam and Eve. It's very brief. The remarkable thing about the Bible is it can say so much in so few words. So, what I'm going to do is read the first seven verses of Genesis 3.

> "Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God has made. He said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

How did Eve know that? Who told her? Adam, that's right. It was his job to do that, you see.

And you see how unwilling she was to admit that there was something they couldn't do. She said, "We may eat of all the trees of the garden but there's just one exception." How reluctant we are to acknowledge our own limitations, have you ever noticed that?

> "The serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that is was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."

I'm not going to go any further. But in there we have the essence of what we need to know about ourselves, about our problems and how to avoid them.

The serpent who was an incarnation of Satan had one supreme objective, to remove Adam and Eve from their foundation in the Word of God. Once he could do that they were at his mercy. I want to say to you, whoever you are as a believer, the supreme objective of Satan in your life is to undermine and discredit the scripture. And when he's got you to the place where you no longer believe and accept the authority of scripture, you're sunk, you're a casualty. That's all he needs to do.

He proceeded in a very subtle way. The Bible says he was more subtle than any of the beasts of the field. He did two things. First of all he questioned the Word of God. Has God said? And when Eve entertained the question she was sunk. When she once entertained the question then he followed up with a denial. God, you will not surely die.

Now, he hasn't changed his tactics. Today the devil operates precisely the same way. You know why? Because it works. It's brought him endless success. So I want to warn you. Whatever you do, don't be moved away from your faith in the

scripture as the Word of God.

He won't necessarily start by attacking it, he'll start by questioning it. He did that specifically maybe in Germany and maybe in Norway and then in Britain at the end of the last century. He questioned it and today we have professing churches and ministers who are total unbelievers.

But he didn't start by denying, he started by questioning. And if you entertain the question you'll have just the same kind of problems as Eve.

Now Eve's response can be summed up in three words, all of which happen to begin in English with D. First of all, she doubted the Word of God. Having doubted it she disbelieved it. And, having disbelieved it she disobeyed it. Those were the three downward steps: to doubt, to disbelieve and to disobey. And when she did that she was lost, she was defeated.

I want to emphasize again it will be exactly the same with you. No matter who you are and where you come from, if you take those three downward steps: to doubt, to disbelieve and to disobey, you will be just as lost as Eve was. Satan will have won a major victory in your life.

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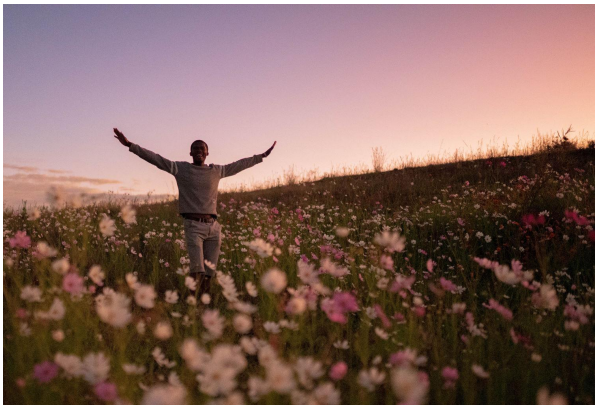


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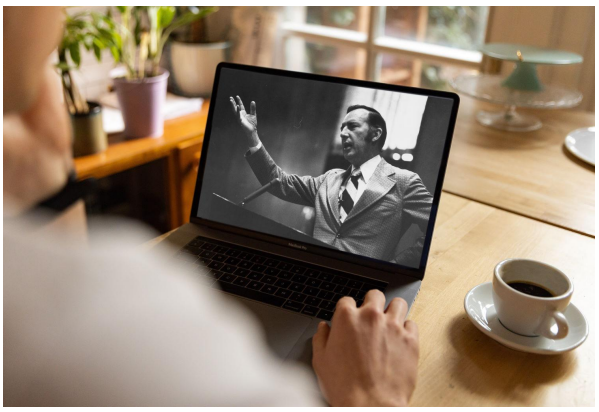
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