

Facing Reality



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 10)
by Derek Prince

In the midst of it all Job had the most glorious flashes of prophetic revelation. This is so characteristic of people like you and me. We're right down, we're depressed, we're moaning, we're complaining, we've lost the victory. And suddenly for no reason on our part we get this glorious revelation which changes our whole outlook in a moment. There's one that's very familiar, it's not the only one, but we'll look at it in Job 19:25 and following:

> "For I know that my redeemer lives, and he shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God..."

In other words, no matter what happens to my body it's going to be resurrected. I'm going to come back with a body.

Then he says:

> "...whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"

I'm sure that stirs something with many of us. We'll die unless the Lord comes. Our bodies will decompose but one day they'll be raised up and we shall see the Lord with these same physical eyes that we now use.

Job, perhaps the oldest book in the Bible, has this clear absolutely unmistakable affirmation of the resurrection of his body in connection with somebody he calls "my redeemer". You can't tell me that's not by inspiration. How could it be that any other way that a man in Job's situation at that time would have such a revelation?

So, when you're in the midst of your mourning and your problems and your pressures, maybe God will suddenly give you a flash of prophetic revelation. That will change everything, not permanently but for a moment. And, as it were, you'd be transported out of time into an eternal situation and you'll be able to see yourself face to face with your redeemer.

The next thing Job said to his friends is "you have failed me". I think we'd have to agree. He said it in a lot of different ways

but we'll look in Job 6:14–17.

> "To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, Even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook, Like the streams of the brooks that pass away, which are dark because of the ice, And to which the snow vanishes. When it is warm, they cease to flow; When it is hot, they vanish from their place."

He's talking in terms of a Middle Eastern wadi, a dry river bed which is filled with water in the winter season from the rain and the melting snow but when it gets really hot and you really need water there's none there, it's dried up. And he says you're like that. When I really need water you're all dried up, you have nothing to give me.

Job 16:2–5:

> "I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all! Shall words of wind have an end? What provokes you that you answer? I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my soul's place. I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you; But I would strengthen you with my mouth, And the comfort of my lips would relieve your grief."

He says you're not giving me what I need, you're just adding to my problems. I could do without all that. He said the function of a friend is to comfort, not to accuse.

I think some of us need to learn that. Perhaps I do.

Then Job, this is Brother Prince's language, rejects the prosperity gospel as unrealistic for two reasons. Number one, there are many examples of innocent people who suffer. Job 21:23–25:

> "One dies in his full strength, being wholly at east and secure; His pails are full of milk, and the marrow of his bones is moist. Another man dies in the bitterness of his soul, never having eaten with pleasure. They lie down alike in the dust, and worms cover them."

Two people both die. One never had a day's problems, the other never had a day's happiness. But who can say that one was more righteous than the other? That's a fact of life. In the ministry we're continually meeting people who never seem to have known a day's happiness in their lives. And we don't say you're wicked sinners worse than all the rest, we have to say we can't tell you the reason, we don't have the answer. We can tell you about God's love. But why this has come in your life sometimes we can see. My book that I spoke about, Blessing or Curse gives a lot of reasons but it doesn't give all the reasons by no means.

Let's look at Job 24:1–12. Remember, he's dealing with the suggestion that the wicked are always punished and the righteous always prosper. He says it just isn't true. Thank God for somebody who tells it like it is. I mean, it's bad enough to suffer but then to be told you oughtn't to be suffering just makes it worse. Job 24:1–12:

> "Since times are not hidden from the Almighty, why do those who know Him not see His days? Some remove landmarks; they seize flocks violently and feed on them; They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; They take the widow's ox as a pledge. They push the needy off the road, so that the poor of the land are forced to hide. Indeed, like wild donkeys in the desert, They go out to their work, seeking diligently for food."

This is the poor, the oppressed, the people that don't get a fair deal from society. Are there people like that in modern America? There certainly are.

> "They go out to their work, seeking diligently for food. The wilderness yields food for them and for their children. They gather their fodder in the field and glean in the vineyard of the wicked."

They just get what's left over after the wicked have had all that they want.

> "They spend the night naked, without clothing, and have no covering in the cold. They are wet with the showers of the mountains, And huddle around the rock for want of shelter. Some snatch the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge from the poor. They cause the poor to go naked, without clothing; And they take away the sheaves from the hungry. They [the poor] press out oil within their walls, And tread winepresses, yet suffer thirst. The dying groan in the city, and the souls of the wounded cry out; Yet God does not charge them with wrong."

Somebody said to me the other day why doesn't God intervene in Yugoslavia? Because that's the situation that's very vividly described. My answer would be—I didn't give

it—what would you expect God to do? To blot out the whole company of people? To drop some kind of nuclear weapon on one side? Apparently God doesn't do anything. I think this is a serious problem for a lot, especially younger people. They see the suffering and the misery and say where's God? Well, Job said that 4,000 years earlier and it's not out of date. But he said don't tell me that the righteous always prosper or that the wicked are always punished. He said I've got eyes in my head, I can see it.

I hope I'm not shocking you but maybe I hope I am.

As I see that, these people who are wicked and prosperous, live out their whole lives flourishing in their wickedness. And you say doesn't God care? God says the moment they step out of time into eternity they'll be plunged into everlasting darkness.

Job recalls his former prosperity and glory, and the whole of chapter 29 is a description of how he flourished and how he prospered.

> "O that I were as in times past..."

And then he goes into all the details of how he was respected, honored, prospered, was able to help all sorts of people, minister to all sorts of needs.

You see, it's bad enough to suffer but it's worse still when you've prospered. The psalmist said in Psalm 102:

> "The Lord has lifted me up and cast me away."

That's when it really hurts, when you know the Lord lifted you up and suddenly He dumps you. That's a test.

Now let me say God will not test you above what you're able to bear. You're not Job and God won't put you through the same tests as Job. Job was a very unusual character. But God will put you through the tests that are needed to make you what He wants you to be.

Let's go on. Job then described how he's despised and mistreated in his own community. We'll look at Job 30 for a moment, verses 1–5. He's just described all his prosperity and now he says:

> "But now they mock at me, men younger than I am..."

And in the Middle East that is terrible for the younger to mock the older. And then he describes the lowest of the people in the community and says in verse 9:

> "Now I am their taunting song; Yes, I am their byword."

They're all speaking about me.

> "They abhor me, they keep far from me; they do not hesitate to spit in my face."

That's another feature of the Middle East, that people who are regarded as failures, it's made very clear to them that they are. People don't use tact, they let them have it.

> "Because He [God] has loosed my bowstring and afflicted me, They have cast off restraint before me. At my right hand the rabble arises; They push away my feet, and they raise against me the ways of destruction. They break up my path, they promote my calamity; They have no helper."

I'm treated like the lowest of the low in my own community where I was honored and esteemed and where I blessed many, many people. The very same people that I used to help are the ones that are now treating me with contempt. Don't tell me that isn't hard.

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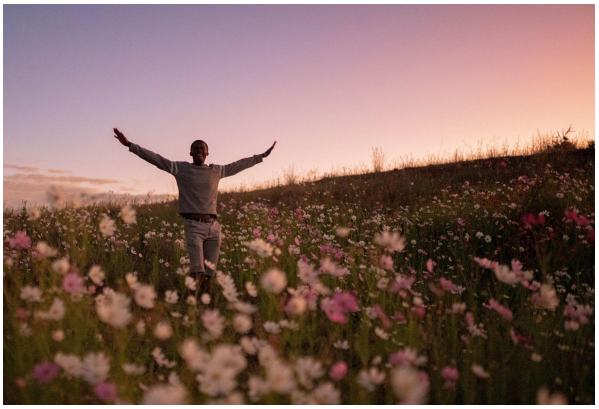

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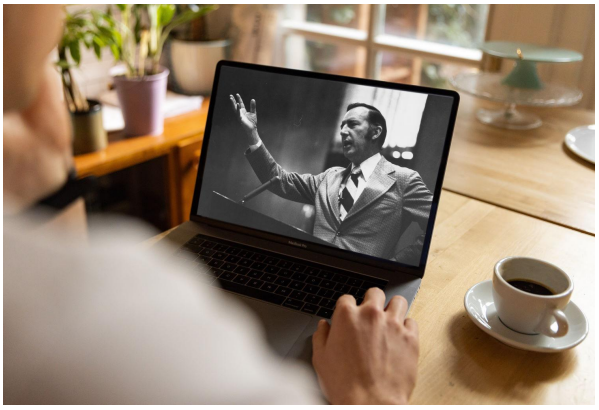

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