

Truth Is a Person



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 13)
by Derek Prince

A friend of mine, a Jewish believer that's close to me in Israel, we were talking about the book of Job and he made a casual comment which really registered with me. He said, "After Job saw the Lord he had no more questions." Isn't that remarkable! That finished all his questions.

I want to suggest to you if you have a lot of problems, maybe the solution is for you to meet the Lord. Not to get all your questions mentally answered but to get to know God. It's dramatic, he had no problems left after he'd encountered the Lord. He said, "I've heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see you." There's a beautiful chorus in German which we don't have in English. It says [speaking in German], "now my eye has seen you." What a difference it makes when you have a vision of the Lord. Nothing else is going to answer your problems, nothing else is going to settle all your doubts. Nothing else is going to give you real, complete, settled peace but knowing the Lord.

So, I suggest to some of you stop worrying about your problems and begin to seek the Lord. When you meet Him you'll wonder what happened to your problems because they won't be there any longer.

It's a very interesting thing, but you know with my background as a philosopher I was very interested in truth. I speculated about truth but do you know what the Bible says about truth? Truth is a person, it's not an abstract. Righteousness is a person, not an abstract. See, we tend to think in terms of abstractions, principles, laws. But the highest form of truth and reality is not an abstraction, it's a person. We have to change our way of thinking, not least me. It's taken me years to get out of my philosophizing. I don't think I'm totally out of it but I'm a lot further out than I was.

This is really interesting, notice again in verses 7 and 8 of chapter 42, twice God said, "Job said what was right about me." He spoke to Eliphaz the Temanite and He said:

> "My wrath is arised against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right as my servant Job has."

And then He goes on to say:

> "Take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him..."

The Hebrew says "I'll accept his face."

> "...lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has."

God never criticized anything that Job said or did from beginning to end, although Job said a lot of hard things about God. He said, "God has taken away my justice." You think God would object to that statement, He didn't. Because as I pointed out, in a certain sense, it's true. God really didn't deal justly with Job. If that leaves an unanswered question in your mind, let's move on and see if we can do something about answering it.

The next thing is interesting, verse 10:

> "And the Lord restored Job's losses..."

But the Hebrew says "turned again the captivity of Job," delivered him from his captivity.

> "...when he prayed for his friends."

So one way to get healed is to pray for all your critics. And if you have any resentment against your critics you won't be healed until you learn to pray for them. Believe me, that's a lesson I've been learning in a rather difficult situation in the last few months. Don't bear any resentment, don't hold anything against them because it will hinder your healing.

You see, God dealt with everybody. Eliphaz and his friends had to humble themselves and come to Job with their offerings and say, "Job, pray for us." After all the unkind things they said about him they had to ask him to pray. But Job had to humble himself and pray for them after all the unkind things they said. See how God deals with relationships? He got everybody sorted out. I mean, the wisdom of God just impresses me.

Then we read in verse 12:

> "Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys."

Exactly double of what he had at the beginning. So God not merely gave it back to him but doubled it. And one thing that this teaches me which I continually have to lay hold of is there's no problem for God to deal with finance or material possessions. We often stagger at the promises of God about His provision. We think how could God make such provision in such a situation? God never has any problem with material provision. So, don't let your faith be hung up on the fact that there's a recession or whatever else, because it doesn't change God's ability to provide one iota. It's just as easy for God to provide a thousand camels as five hundred camels. And it's just as easy for God to provide whatever you need in any financial or economic situation. I've often said there are no recessions in the kingdom of God. Another thing I say is there's no inflation, the price never changes. The price that Jesus and His apostles had to pay is exactly the same price we have to pay today. God never has a sale and He never experiences inflation. He can handle material provision, it's no problem to Him. Can you say amen to that? I think it's going to be very important for all of us to realize that.

See, in our ministry I'm continually telling our brothers, "Listen, we don't look at our mailing list, count the number of names and say how much can we expect. We say what does God want us to do, how much will we need?" That's a totally different approach. Don't build your faith on what you have, build your faith on what God has. Philippians 4:19 says:

> "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in Christ Jesus."

Not our riches. One of our biggest problems is looking at what we have and calculating on that basis.

There's one thing that God didn't double, what was that? His children. Do you know why? Because the others weren't lost. So we need to go back to the fact, let's look at it for a moment, Job 1. This is very important for those of you who've lost loved ones. Job 1:5, speaking about Job's children.

> "When the days of feasting had run their course, then Job would send and sanctify them. He would rise early in the morning and offer a burnt offering according to the number of them all, for Job said it may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts."

Now you could easily react and say that didn't do any good because they all were destroyed in one disastrous accident. But God said it did. "I didn't have to double his children, the

others are just gone ahead." That's very, very encouraging for those who have lost loved ones.

Now then, the next thing we're going to look at very briefly is the comment of James on the book of Job. He offers a brief comment in James 5:10–11:

> "My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have herd of the perseverance [or the endurance] of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord [or the end of the Lord]—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful."

First of all, James points us to the prophets of the Old Testament as our example of two things: suffering and patience.

I'd like to read two other passages because I'm really concerned about the contemporary picture of prophets. It seems to me in many cases it's not at all in line with scripture. There are a lot of people who seem to think it's rather exciting and prestigious to be a prophet. It wasn't in those days. In Matthew 5, in the Sermon on the Mount, in verses 11–12 Jesus says:

> "Blessed are you [His disciples] when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake."

Do you count that a blessing? Are you happy when it happens? Then He says:

> "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad…"

That's not the normal, natural reaction, is it?

> "…for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

So He says you're in the line of the prophets and what happened to the prophets is probably going to happen to you. When it does, rejoice and be exceedingly glad.

In another version He says leap for joy. See how totally contrary that is to natural reaction.

And then in Hebrews 11, the famous faith chapter, speaking about the saints or the prophets of the Old Testament, in verses 37 and 38 it says:

> "They were stoned, sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, dens and caves of the earth."

And there's a special reference to Elijah there. So I said last night how many of you want to apply for the job of an apostle? Tonight I'll say how many of you want to apply for the job of a prophet? The pattern of the prophet is suffering, affliction and endurance.

God has no problem giving revelations, God's problem is building character. Revelation can come at any moment but character has to be built.

Radio Program

Transcript: TS-R188-103-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

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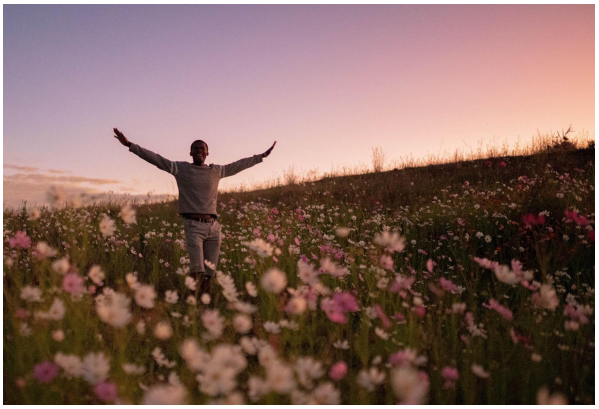

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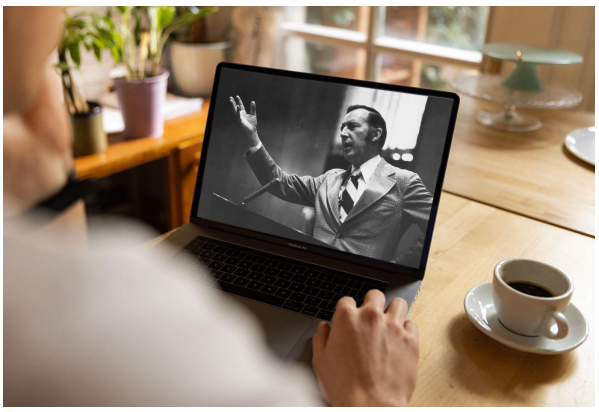

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