

DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Teaching Letter

Tapping the Source - Part 1



Part 1/6

God's Abundance
By Derek Prince

In this series I will be teaching on the theme of God's abundance. In connection with the restoration of Israel, there is a significant Scripture in which God says, "I will ... reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth" (Jeremiah 33:6).

The key word here is "reveal". I have come to see that you cannot understand or appropriate God's abundance unless He reveals it to you. It comes only by revelation. I pray that God gives you that revelation.

In this first teaching letter in the *God's Abundance* series I will focus on the first two basic principles that govern God's provision for us. In the second Letter, I will deal with the conditions for receiving God's abundance, and the purpose for which God gives us abundance—outlining three more basic principles. In the last four teaching letters of the series, I will address the following related topics: *Receiving the Promise*; *Meeting the Conditions*; *The Final Four Conditions*; and *People—Purpose For Abundance.*

Basic Words

First, let's examine some of the basic words or concepts that are used in this connection. They're all interrelated but not all synonymous—they have different shades of meaning. I will deal first with the positive concepts. There are four main groups of words on the positive side:

- rich, and riches;
- wealth and wealthy;
- prosper, prosperous and prosperity,
- abound, abundant and abundance

Let me point out an important distinction. When we use the words *rich* and *riches*, or *wealth* and *wealthy*, we are referring to somebody who has considerable financial and material assets. But when we speak about *prosper* and *abound* and their related words, the implication is not necessarily that the person referred to has a lot of money or owns great material possessions. Actually, God's promise is primarily that we have abundance rather than wealth.

Essentially, *abundance* means you have all you need and something spare to give to others. Abundance suggests

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that you are lifted above the level of your own needs so you are able to reach out to the needs of others.

The word *prosper*, especially as it is used in the Bible, has a connotation of success. But it doesn't necessarily mean tremendous material wealth or possessions. Let me illustrate this by two Scriptures. In his third epistle, John says,

> Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers (3 John 2).

What a beautiful statement regarding the will of God for the committed believer! Gaius, to whom the epistle was written, was a model believer. Studying the epistle, you will find that he was walking in all the truth that God had made available. The apostle John, writing as the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit, said to him, Beloved, I pray that you may ***prosper*** in all things and be in ***health***, just as your ***soul prospers***. This covers all three areas of life:

- the material
- the physical
- the spiritual

In every one of them, the will of God is good. The word translated *prosper* here means literally "to have a prosperous or successful journey." In Romans 1:10 where Paul is praying that he may have a prosperous journey by the will of God (kjv) as he travels to Rome, the same word is used. God answered Paul's prayer. His journey to Rome is described in Acts 27 and 28.

However, you will notice from the description of that prosperous journey, Paul did not travel first class but as a prisoner in chains. He went through a tremendous storm. It seemed as if the whole ship would be lost. But through God's intervention they all survived the storm. They arrived on an island and had what we would call a "revival". When they left, the islanders gave them all they needed for the rest of their journey. So, Paul had a prosperous journey, but it wasn't exactly comfortable and he didn't travel first class. The point is, that when we use the words prosper and abound, we are not necessarily talking about people whom the world would classify as being wealthy.

Not Just Riches

Let's look again at these four different word categories. We see *rich* and *riches* and the words *wealth* and *wealthy* are basically synonymous. But they are very different from *prosper*, *prosperous* and *prosperity*, which relate to doing something successfully. In this sense, the opposite of prosperity is failure. On the other hand, *abound*, *abundant* and *abundance* mean that you are not living in want, lack, or frustration, even though you may not have a great surplus, nor have anything in your bank account.

I always say that Jesus, during His earthly ministry, did not have a big bank account—though He and His disciples did have a bag in which they deposited offerings—He simply used His Father's credit card and it was always honored. Actually, very wealthy people really don't need a lot of cash. I was with a wealthy man once at dinner for a beautiful meal. At the end he never even produced a card. He just signed his name on the bill. That was enough—the waiter knew it would be taken care of. So let's not focus on the idea of having lots of money in the bank. That is not what we are talking about.

Of course, the opposite of those four positive concepts we have cited is pretty obvious. The words that occur to me are: *poor* and *poverty*; *want*; *need*; *lack*; *fail* and *failure*. We need to keep in mind these two groups of concepts—the positive and the negative—as we proceed to study the principles that govern God's dealings in this area.

Five Principles of Provision

I am now going to explore five basic principles regarding God's provision which are very important. The first two will appear in this first teaching letter of the *God's Abundance* series;—the next three will follow along in the second teaching letter of the same series.

Principle One: God's Provision is in His Promises

We see this most clearly from 2 Peter 1:2–4:

> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue ..." (vv. 2–3)

Note that the Christian life is a life of multiplication. It's not static—just holding on to what you've got. It's not even mere addition. It's multiplication. This comes through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Everything that

we ever need comes to us from God through Jesus. We need no other source of supply and no other channel.

In the tense that Peter uses, *has given*, we see that God has already given us all we are ever going to need for time and eternity, for every area of our lives—for life and godliness. Many times we pray on the basis of a misunderstanding. We ask God to give us something He has already given us. It's not easy for God to answer those prayers because by answering them He would support that misunderstanding. So sometimes we have to adjust our thinking in order to pray the kind of prayer that God is able to answer. Thanking God is often more appropriate than petitioning Him.

Notice again, *all things* are included in *the knowledge of Jesus Christ.* The Greek says that Jesus *called us to His own glory and virtue.* It's not our glory, but His. It's not our virtue, but His. God has already given us everything we are ever going to need, and it's all contained in the knowledge of Jesus. The Greek word for 'knowledge' can also be translated 'acknowledging.' It means both knowledge and acknowledging. It's not enough that we intellectually know about Jesus; we must effectively acknowledge Him in our lives.

> ... by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises ... (v. 4)

Here's the key! God has already given us everything we are going to need. Where is it? It's in the promises of His Word. God's provision is in His promises. This is the vital truth that you must grasp: the provision is in the promises. Say it over to yourself until it becomes part of your thinking: the provision is in the promises ... **the provision is in the promises**.

Now, another breathtaking statement (v. 4):

> ... that through these [promises] you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

I just wonder whether we understand that language. It means that we become partakers of God's own nature. We receive the actual nature of God. We become divine.

Now, you might think that is a risky statement to make, and it is. Yet Scripture supports it. When Jesus was challenged about His claim to be the Son of God, He quoted one of the psalms, saying, "If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)" (John 10:35). This quotation is taken from a psalm which says, "I said, 'You are gods'" (Psalm 82:6). God actually spoke to men and said, "You are gods".

We may find this hard to receive, but Jesus gives us the divine commentary. How could men become gods? What was the basis? It was that the Word of God came to them. If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, the same principle applies to us. Because the Word of God comes to us through the promises of God, we can become partakers of God's nature. We can become divine.

I realize, of course, that statement could be misused. Nevertheless, I believe that in the way I have presented it, it's an accurate analysis of what Scripture actually teaches.

And then the final part of that revelation is a logical consequence of what has gone before. In proportion as we become partakers of the divine nature, we are delivered from the corruption that is in this world—because the divine nature and corruption are incompatible. The divine nature is incorruptible. Everything in this world is corruptible. Logically, therefore, as we become partakers of the nature of God, we are delivered from the corruption of this world.

I would like to now sum up in my own words the essence of what Peter has told us in verses 3 and 4 above. It can be reduced to five successive statements that describe principle number one: God's provision is in His promises.

- God's divine power has already given us everything we are ever going to need for time and eternity.
- It's all contained in rightly knowing and acknowledging Jesus.
- God's provision is in His promises.
- As we appropriate the promises, we become partakers of God's nature.
- As we become partakers of God's nature, we are delivered from the corruption of this world.

I suggest that you don't merely read through this summary once—or even twice. Take time to meditate on it. The revelation is such that you can't absorb it quickly. It demands that you expose your whole mind and being to it until it becomes a part of you.

Principle Two: The Promises are Our Inheritance

The promises are what God is bringing us into. There is a very simple parallel between the Old Testament and the New. In the Old, under a leader named Joshua, God brought His people into a promised land. In the New, under Jesus (which in Hebrew is the same word as Joshua), God brings His people into a land of promises. Old Covenant—a promised land; New Covenant—a land of promises.

Let's look for a moment at the book of Joshua and seethe basic conditions that God gave to Joshua. God first reminded Joshua, "Moses My servant is dead" (Joshua 1:2). That's very significant. Before we can come into something new, there always has to be a death of something old. The spiritual life, in a certain sense, is like the seasons of the year. There is a continuing, ongoing cycle of seasons. We have summer with its abundance; then fall, a time of withering; winter, the time of death; and then spring, the time of renewal and resurrection. This is a principle that goes through our lives. God only blesses that which has died and been resurrected. The transition from Moses to Joshua represents one which recurs from time to time in the life of every believer.

> Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them —the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, that I have given you, as I said to Moses. (Joshua 1:2–3)

Recently I noticed something in these verses I had never seen before. The Holy Spirit emphasized the word *all* in *all this people*. God was not going to leave any of the people behind. In most circles today, we would be satisfied if we could get 90% of the people over. But God said, "Everyone is going to go over". I really believe that is how God views our situation today in regard to His promises. Everybody will have to move in. Then notice the tenses. God says there: "I am giving them the land" (present tense). Then He says in verse 3, "I have given you". Once God gave it, it was given. From then on, it was spoken of in the past tense.

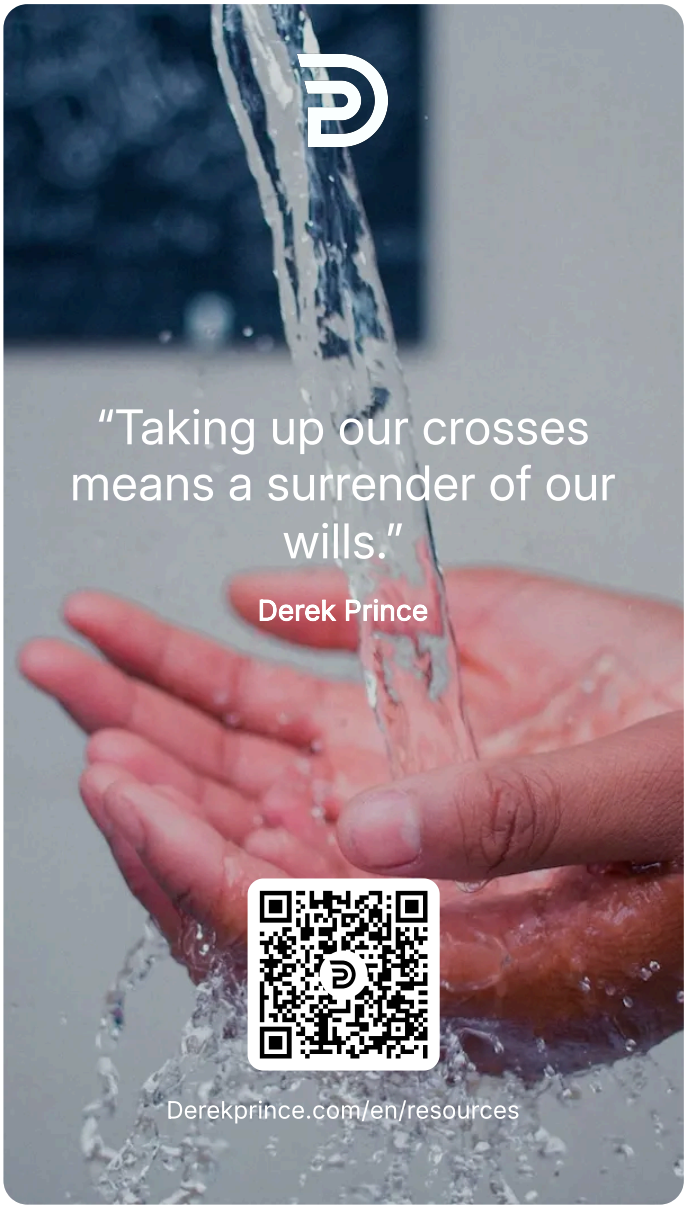
From that moment onward, the land legally belonged to the children of Israel. But we have to distinguish between legal and experiential. Many times when I've talked to believers about being baptized in the Holy Spirit or receiving some further provision of God, the response is, "I got it all when I was saved. There's nothing more to get". One way to answer that is, "If you got it all, where is it all?"

Nevertheless, I do believe, in a sense, they are correct. Legally, when you came to Christ, you became an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. Thereafter, the whole inheritance is legally yours. But there is a great difference between the legal and the experiential. You may own much legally, but enjoy very little in actual experience. I sometimes illustrate this by the following parable: If Joshua and the children of Israel had been like some fundamentalists, they would have lined up on the east bank of the river Jordan, looked across the river, folded their arms and said, "We've got it all!" That would have been legally correct, but experientially incorrect. If they had been like some Pentecostals, they would have crossed the river Jordan (which I liken to being baptized in the Holy Spirit), then lined up on the west bank, folded their arms and said, "We've got it all!" But actually they would have been just one stage further—still far from their real inheritance.

The interesting thing about the children of Israel taking the Promised Land is that God brought them in by a miracle, and then gave them their first victory over Jericho by a miracle. But after that, they had to fight for every piece of land they possessed. In the same way, ***we cannot expect to get our inheritance without conflict!*** The way the children of Israel were to gain their inheritance was: "Every place that you put the sole of your foot upon shall be yours". So it is with us also. Legally, it's all ours right at this moment. Experientially, however, ***we have to move in and assert our claim to what God has given us***. We have to put our foot on each promise as we come to it. That is a very vivid picture for asserting: "God has promised this to me, and I now lay claim to His promise".

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