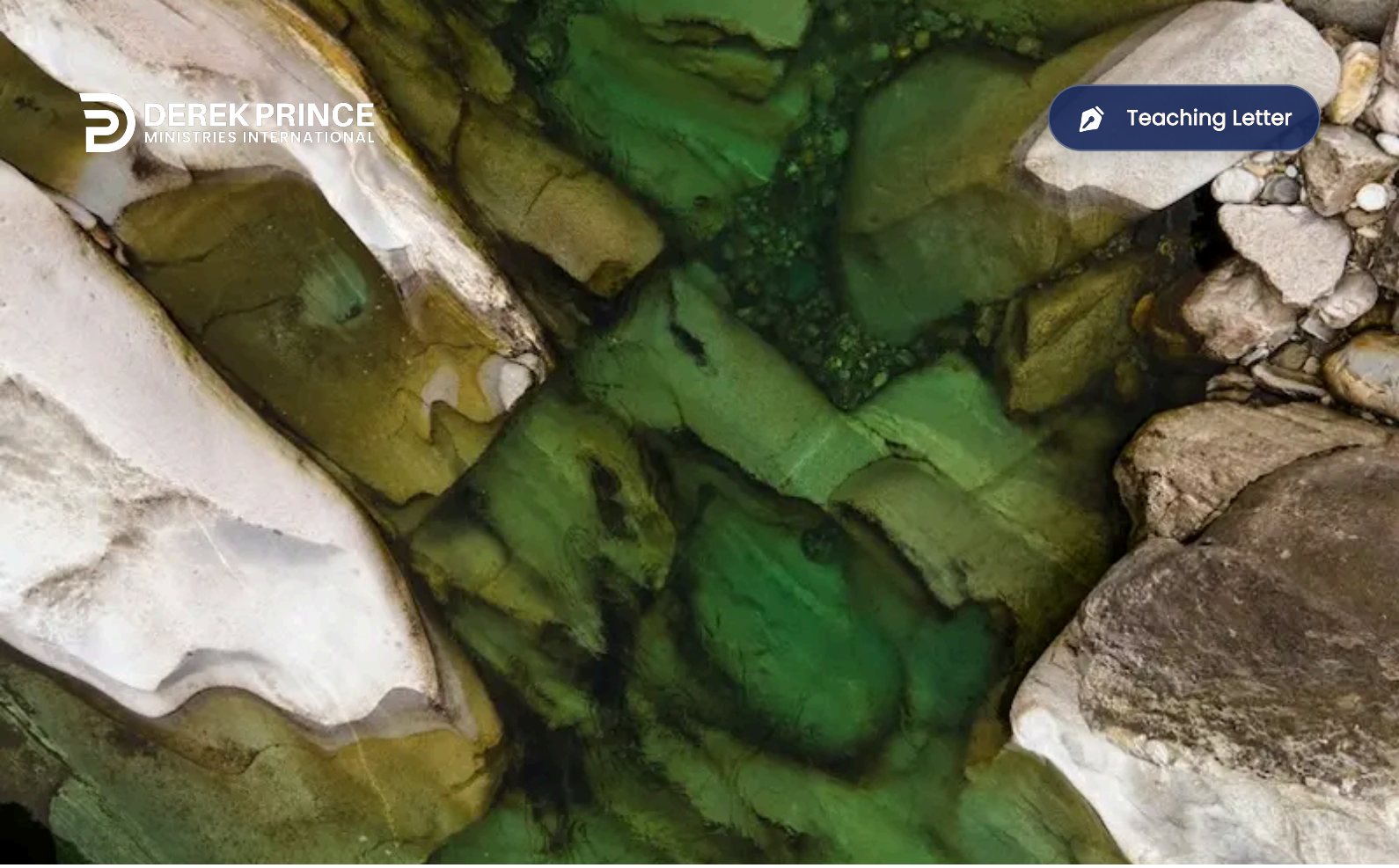


DEREK PRINCE
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Teaching Letter

From Death to Resurrection



Part 3/3

Life's Bitter Pool
By Derek Prince

At some point in our lives, there may be a bitter pool—a place of severe disappointment. Something that seemed so beautiful—gleaming and shining in the distance—ended up not being what we thought it would be. This kind of disappointment has been the theme for our three-part Teaching Legacy series, *Life's Bitter Pool*, based on what the Israelites experienced in the wilderness at Marah.

This incident from the history of the children of Israel confronts us today with a surprising truth: the bitter pool was in God's program for His children. This is true in our lives as well, summarized by the saying: "Man's disappointments are God's appointments." In other words, God permits us to come to the bitter pool because He has a purpose. Then, when His purpose is accomplished, the bitter water turns sweet through the supernatural work of God.

A Source Of Revelation

As we saw in our first two letters, God wanted to give the children of Israel two revelations through their experience at the bitter pool. First, He wanted to reveal that the source of their healing was the tree. When Moses cast the tree into the waters, "the waters were made sweet" (Exodus 15:25). Second, although the tree was the source, God wanted to reveal that He Himself was their Healer:

> For I am the Lord who heals you. (Exodus 15:26)

In this third letter, we will see one more revelation that God had for His people. At the bitter pool, He allowed them to come to the end of themselves—the end of their own resources, confidence, strength, and ability. Ultimately, He allowed them to enter into an experience of death. Why? So that when they confronted death, He could reveal Himself to them as their Resurrection. This revelation is the topic of our final letter in this series, *From Death to Resurrection.*

A Vital Principle

Our experience of the bitter pool reflects a vital principle that operates in every area of life. God uses our troubles to draw us to Himself. Two passages particularly explain that principle for us. The first passage illustrates that often, God

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does things in a way that is different from what you and I would expect from Him. In Hosea 2:14, the Lord says:

> Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness [also translated "desert"] and speak tenderly to her. (niv)

The word allure is a rather mystical word. It implies that God deals with us in a way we don't fully understand—and yet we feel drawn to Him. God says, "I will lead her into the desert (not normally the place of blessing) and speak tenderly to her." In the Hebrew, the Lord is saying: "I will speak to her heart."

Opening Our Hearts

This is a beautiful Hebrew expression, isn't it? But you and I know that it is not always possible for God to speak to our hearts. Why? Because sometimes our hearts are closed. Sometimes we are not responsive. So, God has to bring us into situations—just as He did with Israel in the desert—where He can speak to our hearts. Once He has gained our attention, He says (in v. 15):

> There I will give her [Israel] back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. (niv)

In Hebrew, the word *achor* means "trouble." In other words, God is saying "Using the Valley of Trouble, I will open a door of hope."

Our Song Returns

Earlier in Israel's wilderness experience, Miriam and all the women of Israel sang praises on the shores of the Red Sea. Here in Hosea 2:15, God says, in effect, "I am going to give her back a song."

Maybe you have lost your song. You used to have a song in your heart; you used to praise the Lord so freely and spontaneously. But now there is a heaviness, a doubt, or a sense of being left out.

God wants to give you back your song. Do you believe that?

> She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the Land of Egypt. (Hosea 2:15)

A Tender Revelation

At this point, we come to the final purpose of God mentioned earlier. Beyond what He revealed at the bitter pool, there is one more revelation of Himself that God wants to provide. He gave it to the children of Israel, and He wants to give it to us as well.

> "In that day," declares the Lord, "you will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master.'" (Hosea 2:16, niv)

Under the Old Covenant, Israel's relationship to the Lord was a marriage relationship. However, they related to Him more as Baal, as Master. It was not a relationship based on heart commitment, or deep personal love.

What is God is saying to us? When He restores you and me from our troubles, we will not come back on the same level of revelation. Our restoration brings us to a higher level of revelation. You and I won't just call Him "my Master." We will call Him "my Husband."

Husband is a very intimate word in Hebrew. Here, in effect, is what God is saying: "I will show you Myself in a new light. I will show you Myself as the One who loves you as a husband loves his wife." It is a revelation of love and deep tenderness.

The Door Of Hope

Even if you and I must go through the Valley of Trouble, it can open a door of hope to us. If we persevere—not giving up, turning back, grumbling, or complaining our Valley of Trouble will become for us a Door of Hope. And that will lead us to a new and deeper and fuller revelation of the Lord; a revelation of His love, His compassion, and His tenderness. Sometimes it is only in seasons of grief that we can really appreciate compassion and tenderness.

Are you experiencing a bitter pool right now? If so, please bear in mind that out of the bitter pool, God is going to reveal Himself to you, if you will let Him speak to your heart.

Don't Give Up

As we close this letter, I want to illustrate this same principle from a passage in the New Testament. Paul is writing in a very personal way about experiences he himself had gone through—some very difficult experiences.

> We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we

> experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril [literally, from such a death], and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us. (2 Corinthians 1:8–10, niv)

Paul said, "We were under such pressure, we even despaired of life. It was beyond our ability to endure." Please bear in mind that Paul was in the full will of God, doing the purpose of God, and being used of God. And yet, God permitted him to come into a situation where it seemed the very life was being pressed out of him.

Have you ever felt like that? Have you ever thought, "I can't take another step. I can't endure one more ounce of pressure. God, why are you permitting this?"

Paul and many other servants of the Lord have been through such trials long before you and I experienced them. Why do they happen? God's reason is stated by Paul: "This happened that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God, who raises the dead."

The Place Of Resurrection

God's purpose is to bring us to the end of all confidence in ourselves. He takes us beyond the limit of our own knowledge, experience, strength, and ability. In many ways, it is an experience of death to ourselves. But out of that death, God will then supernaturally bring us into a resurrection—a far higher level than where we were living before. To bring us into His resurrection, the Lord has to bring us through a type of death.

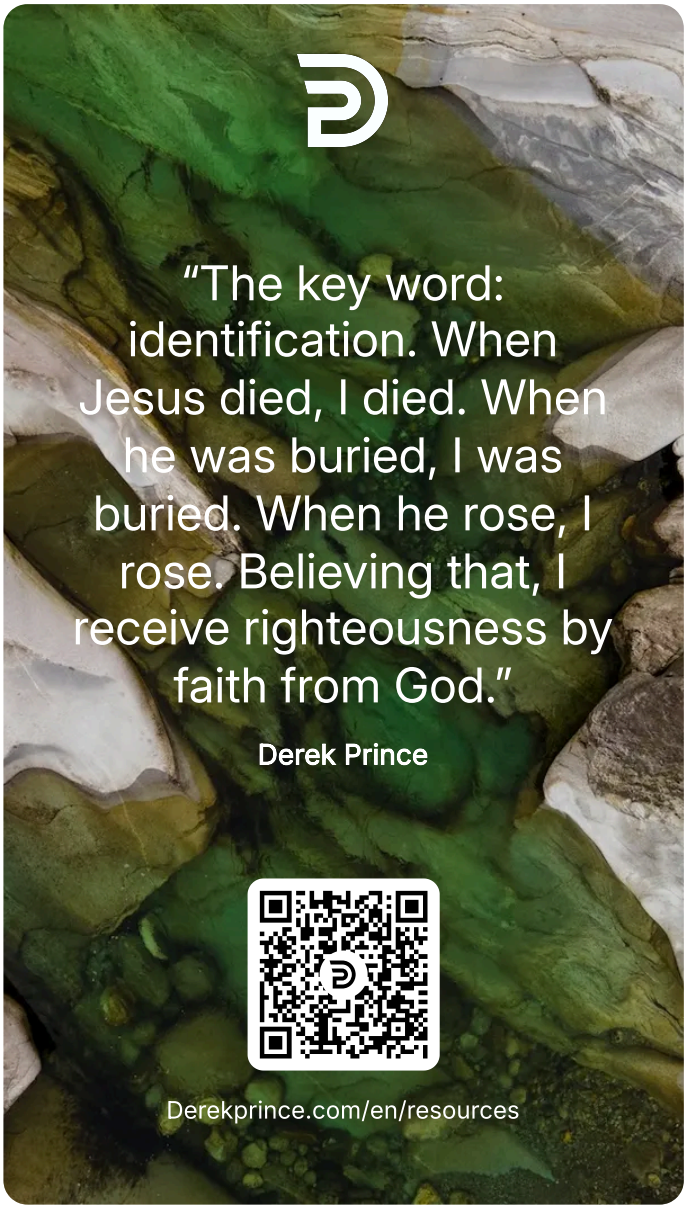
If you and I must go through an experience of death, we need to remember one glorious truth. Beyond the death, there is a resurrection. We will experience a new revelation of God; a deeper, fuller knowledge of Him. It will come to us if we will just hang on, trust Him, and believe Him.

Let's express that intention with the following prayer:

Dear Lord, I declare my belief in You and my trust in You. You will bring me through the death of disappointment into the resurrection and hope You have destined for me. I confess that when I have encountered bitter pools in life, I have not always handled them well. Sometimes I have grumbled and missed the revelation of Your love and discipline. Please forgive me, Lord.

From this point forward, please help me to view every disappointment as an opportunity to draw near to You and trust You. This is my prayer, O Lord. Amen.

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