

1008 – Dr. Derek Prince – Spiritual Conflict Series – Vol. 2 – The Exchange Made At The Cross

Transcript

At the present time we are studying the truth contained in the revelation of Jesus as the last Adam. In our previous study we saw that this is one main title of Jesus, the last Adam or the son of man, the son of Adam. And that by the will of God and by his own choice he deliberately became identified in every respect with the Adamic race. He took not upon him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. He became a direct lineal descendant of Abraham, and through Abraham, of Adam. He became our kinsman redeemer, the one who came to take our nature and to take our place and to bear our judgment. And all this culminated on the cross, as is stated in Isaiah 53:6: “The Lord made to meet together upon him the iniquity of us all.” Our rebellion and all its evil consequences was visited upon Jesus. Jesus, the son of God, took upon himself all the evil due by justice to the sons of Adam; that in return, the sons of Adam might receive all the good due by eternal right to Jesus, as the son of God. The cross was the place of exchange. Jesus took the evil, that the believer might receive in return the good.

We began in our previous study to examine certain aspects of this exchange. And we’re going to continue with this in the present study. In the previous study we dealt with four aspects.

First of all, Jesus was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him. In other words, Jesus received the punishment due to our sinful acts, that we might have peace [that is, forgiveness and reconciliation].

Secondly, the physical counterpart of that. Jesus bore our sicknesses and carried our pains, and with his wounds, healing was obtained for us. Jesus bore in his own body our pains and sicknesses, that we might receive healing.

And then we moved on to Isaiah 53:10, which is the climax of the atonement, and we saw that the soul of Jesus was made sin as a sin offering with our sinfulness. And that Isaiah 53:10 is quoted by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:21 in these words:

2 Corinthians 5:21

King James Version

²¹ For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

“God made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”(KJV)

The exchange is, Jesus took our sinfulness that we might have his righteousness.

The fourth aspect we began to deal with, but did not completely deal with, it is exactly parallel in the physical realm: Jesus was made sick with our sickfulness, that we might be made whole with his health. Isaiah 53:10 says that it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. But the correct literal translation is it was the will of God to bruise him unto sickness, to make him sickness by bruising him. The same word is used in Micah 6:13, and in the King James Version, it is translated I will make thee sick in smiting thee. Jesus was made sick with our sickfulness that we might be made whole with his health.

Micah 6:13

King James Version

¹³ Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins.

There’s another very, very vivid picture of this in the prophet Isaiah that we did not look at in the previous study. We’ll glance at it for a moment now in Isaiah 1:5–6. Isaiah 1:5–6.

Isaiah 1:5-6

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King James Version

⁵Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

⁶From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

In this chapter Isaiah is painting the sins of the rebelliousness of God's people Israel and warning them of the judgment that will come upon them. But in the midst of this, the Holy Spirit has included a picture of the atonement. But only in the light of New Testament can we see the reality of this. Isaiah 1:5 says:

“Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more.”(KJV)

The whole problem is as we have already said is in the realm of rebellion. The will, set in opposition to God. And then the results of rebellion are described in a very vivid figure from the human body:

“The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.”(KJV)

This is a picture of Israel as God saw them, in spite of all their religion, their temple worship, their sacrifices, their nominal keeping of the law, He saw them as a totally corrupt community or society. And I often think about this in connection with the Christian church. All our church going, all our hymn singing, all these things do not necessarily commend us one wit to God. Many, many times I think that when God looks upon the professing Christian church today, he sees it exactly as he saw Israel as recorded in Isaiah, chapter 1. Remember, Israel thought they were the keepers of the law, they thought they were the people of God, they thought there was no one else like them, they were proud of their temple, proud of their religion, proud of their sacrifices, and it was something very, very unacceptable to them to hear the judgment of God upon them in all their religiousness. Because their heart was not yielded to God. Inwardly they were still rebels at heart. They were in revolt against Almighty God. And this, without a shadow of a doubt, is true of millions of professing churchgoing Christians. They're still rebels at heart. And this is how God paints rebellion and its consequences and how he sees it spiritually.

“The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”(KJV)

And I remember one day reading that verse and thinking that is a picture of Israel as God saw them. It's a picture of man in his rebellion against God. And suddenly, the Holy Spirit showed me, and something more, it's a picture of Jesus on the cross. Because Jesus became identified with all that evil, all that rebellion. Now, you go through that picture again and see every detail applies to the body of Jesus on the cross. The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint. And then from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. Now that is an exact literal description of Jesus on the cross. Never let any pretty religious pictures deceive you. He did not look pretty. In fact, in Isaiah 52, if you want to turn there for a moment and keep your finger in Isaiah 1. And Isaiah 52, which is really the last three verses of Isaiah 52 are the introduction to Isaiah 53, and the two should really be read together. Isaiah 52:13 begins with the word behold. It's introducing a person, and the person is then called my servant. Now this person is Jesus.

Isaiah 52:13

King James Version

¹³Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted, and extolled and be very high.”(KJV)

The rabbis teach exalted; higher than Abraham, extolled; higher than Moses, very high; higher than the angels. That's the rabbinic interpretation. And it applies to Jesus. God has highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name. But notice now, the astonishing contrast to the next verse:

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“As many were astonished at thee; [aghast, it’s a very, very powerful word. They saw something that they simply could not bear to see. It was shocking.] his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men”(KJV)

And one of the translations says he lost even the appearance of humanity. What they saw on the cross was a bruised, bleeding, mangled mass of putrefying flesh. Let’s keep that in front of our eyes. Because in that truth lies physical healing. Just as real as the physical suffering is the physical healing that is offered. And when you spiritualize the suffering, you spiritualize away the physical healing too. And that’s one of the things that has happened in the church. Then it says in the 15th verse of Isaiah 52, just to complete this little picture:

Isaiah 52:15

King James Version

¹⁵ So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

“So shall he sprinkle many nations; [sprinkle them with his precious blood. And notice here is the gospel going to the Gentiles, because the word nations refers to Gentiles always.] the kings shall shut their mouths at him, [and in the course of history, many, many kings and rulers of the Gentiles have acknowledged Jesus as their savior and their Lord while Israel’s eyes still remained blinded. This is just to point out the accuracy of this application.]”(KJV)

Turn back now to Isaiah 1:5–6. Here is the same picture again.

“From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it.”(KJV)

There was no soundness in him with what purpose? That there might be perfect soundness in us. His name, through faith in his name, has given him the perfect soundness in the presence of you all. It’s something that can be seen, can be verified, you can send him to the doctor and have an X-ray examination. It stands every test. This is the soundness that is made available to us because there was no soundness in the body of Jesus. If you consider the different kinds of physical mistreatment that Jesus’ body endured, you’ll realize this was a literal description. They placed a crown of thorns on his head, pressed the thorns in, lacerated the scalp and caused the blood to stream down his head. It would clot in his beard and mat there. They plucked out the hair of his beard, tore it out and left areas where the whole flesh was exposed and raw. They struck him on the face with their fists and with rods and left great welts that bled. They struck his back thirty-nine times with the Roman lash and tore out the flesh and exposed even the muscles and bone. They bowed his whole body beneath the weight of a cross until he could no longer stand. And then on the cross they drove the nails through his hands and through his feet. And finally they plunged the spear into his side. All this is literal and just as literal as the physical suffering is the physical healing that’s available to God’s people. It was an exchange.

Notice the, what I would say the pathos of it, these wounds have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. He received no medical attention, no dressing, no ointment, nothing. And in that climate, they quickly putrefied. This is the picture of Jesus on the cross. It’s a real tragedy in my opinion, that religious art has completely misrepresented it and turned it into something that is almost pretty. It’s incredibly horrible. But it’s the result of his identification with us in our sinfulness and its consequences.

As I said in the previous study, because Jesus took our sickfulness, God offers us his health. This is the revealed will of God. Complete soundness, perfect health. Stated there in the 3rd epistle of John, the 2nd verse:

3 John 1:2

King James Version

² Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

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“Beloved, I wish above all things [that’s a pretty intense wish, isn’t it? What a good wish.] that thou mayest prosper [financially], be in health [physically], even as thy soul prospers [spiritually].”

(KJV)

If that isn’t good news, I don’t know what is. But you see, the gospel is good news. And if you ever hear anything that isn’t good news, remember it’s not the gospel. Lots of people go to church and hear something preached that is called the gospel but if you look at their faces when they walk out, you know they haven’t heard good news. Or if they heard it, they didn’t believe it. But in many cases, what’s offered to us as the quote, gospel, unquote, is anything but good news.

I think I told you in a previous study, but I feel I’ll mention it again about a friend of ours whose husband at that time was a deacon in the Moody Bible Church in Chicago. She became incurably sick with a kidney complaint, went to every doctor that specialized in this; they all said it’s incurable. So in her desperation she went to the Moody bookstore to find a book on healing. And she said, [I’ve heard her say this herself] she got fourteen books on how to suffer, but not one on how to be healed. That’s not good news. That’s not the gospel. Later, she went to an Episcopal church, what a thing for a good Bible believing fundamentalist to do, and an Episcopal priest named Brother Winkler anointed her with oil in the name of the Lord, and God instantly healed her. She went back to the same Jewish atheistic professor and he acknowledged the miracle that had taken place in her body. That’s good news. That’s the gospel. Never trade it in for anything secondhand or less good than that. Let’s remember, God loves us and he treats us as sons and daughters, his will for us is altogether good. His will, Paul says in Romans, is good, acceptable and perfect.

Let’s notice now, parallel with the difference we noticed last time between sins and sin, exactly the same difference between sicknesses or diseases, in the plural, and sickness or sickfulness, in the singular. Let’s notice this in the book of Exodus, in the 15th chapter, verse 26. And I want you to compare this with Exodus 23:25, because though they are both provisions of healing, they’re different. Exodus 15:26:

Exodus 15:26

King James Version

²⁶ And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

“If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians.”(KJV)

Notice diseases in the plural. But now turn to Exodus 23:25, it says:

Exodus 23:25

King James Version

²⁵ And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.

“Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.”(KJV)

I will take the very nature of sickness away, not diseases, but sickness. The very thing that is behind all disease, I will take away **from the midst of thee. And in Deuteronomy 7:15 we have the double promise. Deuteronomy 7:15:**

Deuteronomy 7:15

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King James Version

¹⁵ And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.

“The Lord will take away from thee all sickness [singular] and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee [diseases, plural].”(KJV)

See, there is a double deliverance. Some people have the attitude: Well, that was all right for the people of Israel under the Old Covenant, but it doesn't apply for Christians under the New Covenant. But the Bible tells us that the New Covenant is a better covenant, established upon better promises. As a matter of fact, the way some people present the gospel, it would have been better to live under the law of Moses than under the gospel. But after all, in 2Corinthians 1:20, the scripture says:

2 Corinthians 1:20

King James Version

²⁰ For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

“All the promises of God in him [Christ] are yea and in him [Christ] amen, to the glory of God by us.”(KJV)

So every promise in the scripture is made available to the believer in Christ. We aren't living on the leftover crumbs from the law of Moses, nor are we living on a polite wish and hope for the millennium. We're living in the midst of God's abundant provision for his children right now.

Now I want to go on to the fifth aspect of the exchange which is stated there—number 5. Galatians 3:13–14. Here is another clear example of direct exchange. The evil upon Jesus, that the good might come upon us. Galatians 3:13–14:

Galatians 3:13-14

King James Version

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”(KJV)

What is the exchange there? It is between what two things? Curse and blessing. Is that right? What was Jesus made? He was made a curse that we might receive what? A blessing. Notice again it is the clear, specific exchange. It is not vague, it's not blurred. It's absolutely precise. You see, under the law of Moses it was ordained that if a man was executed and hanged on a tree, he was not to be left hanging on the tree all night because he was a curse. And when Jesus was hung on the cross, this was a visible declaration to all Israel who knew the Lord that Jesus was made a curse. You see, he hung between Heaven and earth. Heaven couldn't receive him, and earth had rejected him. There was no place for him anywhere. He was put out because he was made a curse. He was made a curse for the broken law. If you look back in Galatians 3:10, it says:

Galatians 3:10

King James Version

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¹⁰For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”(KJV)

It's worth pausing on that for a moment. My purpose is not to deal with the place of the Lord in the life of the believer but notice, that if you come under the law and you begin to accept responsibility to keep any part of the law, you have to keep the whole law all the time. There is no question of keeping a little bit of the law every now and then. The Bible says if you come under the law and you don't keep the whole law all the time, you're under a curse. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in this book of the law. It's not just the ten commandments. It's every single thing that is written in the book of the law. If you don't keep them when you are under them, you're under a curse. See how dangerous it is to get back under the law as a believer. Because automatically, you put yourself under a curse unless you're going to do what Israel never could do, which is keep the whole law. Praise God we're not under the law. We've escaped from the law through the death of Christ. But now here we have the presentation of what Jesus did for those who had come under a curse through the breaking of God's law. He became that curse. He was made a curse.

Now the curse of the broken law is stated very fully, with tremendous detail in the book of Deuteronomy. And it is worthwhile to take a little time to look through this lengthy 28th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy. It has 68 verses. I do not intend to read to you all those verses, but I recommend you to take time to read them for yourselves. Because some people have got some of them mixed up. Some people are calling a blessing what God calls a curse. And therefore, they're enduring a curse when they should be enjoying the blessing. It's very clear, the Bible is very specific. It's logical, it goes all the way through in the same way, it never varies, it never changes. But many, many believers in Jesus Christ who believe that Christ was made a curse that they might receive the blessing are still hanging on to the curse. And sometimes their theology is so crooked that they're even calling the curse a blessing. Let's say this. If sickness is a blessing, why don't you call it that? Why go to the doctor to get rid of this blessing? And if it's the will of God, why fight against the will of God by asking the doctor to remove it? That's really wicked. It's bad enough that you're fighting against the will of God, but fancy involving that innocent doctor in fighting against God's will on your behalf. How wicked you are. Be logical. If it's a blessing, well, wish it unto everybody. Don't be selfish. Pass it on. Communicate it. The people don't really believe that. The only place where people talk so silly as that is in church. As soon as they get outside the church, they stop talking as silly as that. But unfortunately the harm is done by then.

Now the Bible is absolutely clear, sickness is one of many different aspects of the curse. Let's look for a moment, and this is only one aspect. If you turn to Deuteronomy 28:1, it speaks about complete obedience. And in verse 2 it begins to list the results of complete obedience and it goes on through verse 13. And it's really so nice to read it that I think I'll take a moment or two to read it.

Deuteronomy 28:1-13

King James Version

28 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

²And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

³Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

⁴Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

⁵Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

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⁶ Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

⁷ The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

⁸ The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

⁹ The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways.

¹⁰ And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.

¹¹ And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

¹² The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

¹³ And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:

“All these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee...”(KJV)

You see, you can't go so fast that you can escape from the blessings of God when you're obedient. Really this is the truth, an actual fact. I've proved it in my own experience. When I'm walking in perfect harmony with the will of God, the blessings overtake me. I don't have to pray for them. I just wonder where they're coming from. No matter if I travel at 75, the blessings travel at 85, they catch up. And it says in the 23rd Psalm, and every Christian believes the 23rd Psalm, because that's The Good Shepherd psalm. “Goodness and mercy shall follow thee all the days of thy life.” They'll overtake you. They'll catch you up.

Psalm 23

King James Version

23 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

“If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. [Let's go on reading the blessings.] Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. [Fruitfulness is the blessing.] Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. [And the Lord says in Psalm

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121, “he preserves our going out and our coming in from this time forth even for evermore.” Verse 7:] The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face [no

Psalm 121:7-8

King James Version

⁷The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

⁸The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

enemy will be able to stand before you. Verse 8:] The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses...

Isn't that delightful? Not just grant it, but command it. If God commands it, it has to happen, you see. It says in Psalm 33:9, “he spoke and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.” When God commands it, there's not a person, there's not a thought that can take it away. In verse 8, going on:]

Psalm 33:9

King James Version

⁹For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

...in all that thou settest thine hand unto...”(KJV)

You'll never do anything that isn't blessed. Isn't that something? Psalm 1 says whatsoever he doeth, he'll prosper. And that's speaking about every believer that meets certain conditions. It's not speaking about some particular outstanding Old Testament character. It says:

Psalm 1

King James Version

1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

²But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

⁴The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

⁵Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁶For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”(KJV)

That doesn't leave any room for failure.

Now I'm simpleminded enough to believe that. Verse 8, the second part,

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“He shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. [Verse 9:] The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself.”

Holiness is part of the blessing of the Lord. Being set apart, not living in Egypt’s territory but living in another area where the flies and the darkness and the diseases cannot come. Verse 10:

“All the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord and they shall be afraid of thee.”(KJV)

And you know as Christians, we are called by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody should see it pays to be a Christian. We should advertise the Lord by the way we live. We should make people jealous of what we’ve got. Paul said to the Gentile Christians, I’m trying to stir you up to enjoy the blessings of God so that you might provoke to emulation my brethren, the Jews. And I’ll tell you, in nineteen centuries, the Jews have seen very little to make them envious of the Christian church. It’s just about time we began to demonstrate what God has done for us. Verse 11:

“The Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body and in the fruit of thy cattle. [God’s provision is plenty. It’s not a bare sufficiency. Verse 12:] The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, [if that isn’t delightful, I don’t know what is. Verse 13:] The Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail.”(KJV)

There’s a tremendous lot in that. You see, the head has the initiative. The tail just follows where the head goes. Now I understand that God’s people should have the initiative. We don’t let circumstances dictate to us. We don’t let the devil dictate to us. We don’t let the world dictate to us. We make the decisions. One of the great purposes of my teaching these studies is to restore the initiative to the people of God. Because basically, by and large, most of God’s people have lost the initiative. We make the decisions. The world turns around us. We’re the center of God’s purpose. “Thou shalt decree a thing and it shall be established unto thee.” That’s to be the head. Not dragged around by the tail, wondering where you’ll go next or what will hit you next and what direction trouble will come from next. That’s to live like the tail. God says don’t be the tail, be the head.

“...and thou shall be above only, and thou shall not be beneath.

Somebody asked a believer in my presence, “How are you doing?” And he said, the answer was, “Under the circumstances, I’m not doing too badly.” The other believer said, “What are you doing under the circumstances? Because you should be above and not beneath.” And that’s the truth. But it all comes:

“...if thou shalt hearken to the commandments of the Lord thy God and not go aside from any of the words which I command thee.”(KJV)

I can say that I am learning more and more to do what God says. And not worry about what people think or the traditions of the church, or the reactions of people. My safety is in obeying God and I am perfectly safe when I do it.

Now then, let’s turn to the other side of the picture. That’s not so good. Verse 15, and this goes on through verse 68. If I am not mistaken, that’s 54 verses of curses.

“It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. [Now it’s the curses that overtake thee. And it doesn’t matter how fast you travel down God’s highway because the curses will travel faster.] Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, [fruitlessness is part of the curse, spiritually and physically. Verse 20:] The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand to do, [Verse 21:] The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, [remember, the pestilence is part of the curse. Verse 22:] The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption [consumption is part of the curse] with a fever, [that’s part of the curse] and with an inflammation, [that’s part of the curse] and with an extreme burning [and in modern Hebrew, that word is ?cadahish? is used for malaria] with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew. [Verse 25] The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies. [You will not be able to stand against the forces that oppose you. Verse 27, and I’m just going through them as my eye catches them:] The Lord

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will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, [the botch, that's a curse. It means a boil, carbuncle, any of these things] with the emerods [hemorrhoids or tumors, the alternative translation in the margin. That's a curse.] . . . with the scab and with the itch. . .

You know, I prayed for a man the other day up in the Washington, D.C., area who had itched since he was born and he was over forty. He had never known what it was not to itch. And in a moment of faith, I cursed that and he instantly stopped itching. He said it was "the first time in my life I have known what it is not to itch." You can think an itch is a little thing, but believe me, if you itch for forty years, it's a relief when you stop itching. Verse 28:]

The Lord shall smite thee with madness [it's a curse, and all mental sickness is a curse] and blindness, [is a curse] and astonishment of heart [is a curse. And what I would understand by astonishment of heart in modern English, is a nervous breakdown. That's the way I read it. Verse 29:] . . . thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in the darkness, [total lack of direction] and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways. [Not prospering is part of the curse.] Thou shalt be . . . oppressed, [oppression is part of the curse. How many Christians we meet under oppression. Oh brother, I'm oppressed. I've got such a heaviness. It's part of the curse.] Thou shalt be spoiled [cheated, done out of your inheritance. Turning on, going a little further, verse 33:] Thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always. [Verse 34:] Thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes. [It's a curse. Verse 35:] The Lord shall smite thee in the knees and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, [Notice, that's part of the curse] from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head. [All skin diseases you can say really are specified as part of the curse. We'll go on a little further, verse 41:] Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them [Isn't that the curse of modern America? Isn't that the truth? How many modern American parents enjoy their children? Very, very, very few. There's disobedient children in modern America. What is the reason? Disobedient parents. Never begins with the children. Oh, how that gripped me when I read that this morning.] Thou shalt beget children and not enjoy them."(KJV)

If you read in the 11th chapter of Deuteronomy, I think it is, or the 6th, family life, if people obey God, is like Heaven upon earth. How many American homes are like Heaven upon earth today? The reason, disobedience. One simple word. Reading on, verse 44:

"He shall be the head [the enemy], thou shalt be the tail."(KJV)

Notice, it's the exact reverse of the blessing. Now your enemy dictates to you. He sets the terms. Do you know, every time I find myself under pressure, I stop and say what's going wrong. Every time I'm being driven, oh, I've got to do this in the next five minutes, I stop and say wait a minute now. I don't let circumstances or time dictate to me. I dictate to them. And I've learned that God blesses that stand. One of my big problems is being under a sense of pressure I've got to do this in the next five days or five weeks or five months. I'm always setting myself my own particular goals. Very often, they're not God's goals. And there comes conflict and disharmony between what I can do and what God wants me to do. I can see my wife smiling at me. She says to herself at last he's seen it. I've seen it a long while but it has something to do with something about it. That's the point. I don't say this is easy. But I just advise you the next time you find yourself being driven, you see, you're no longer the head. Somebody else has taken the initiative, made the decision. Find out who that is, it's the enemy. Don't let him dictate to you, you're a child of God. All right.

Verse 47, 48. Actually, we'll come to verse 47, 48 in the next exchange. So let's pass them by and make a note we're coming back to them. Verse 52:

"He [the enemy] shall besiege thee in all thy gates."(KJV)

You see, what's the church, beleaguered. You know what Jesus said, Matthew 18, the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. Where should the initiative be? Not with the enemy besieging the church, but with the church besieging the enemy. We should be attacking the devil's strongholds. That's what the Bible teaches. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, devil's strongholds. You see, when God's people are disobedient, they lose the initiative. It passes to the enemy. And all the things that they should be doing to the enemy, the enemy starts to do to them.

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All right, we'll go on to the next exchange which is number six on your outline, and the key scripture there is 2Corinthians 8:9, but keep your finger in Deuteronomy 28 because we'll be back there in just a moment. 2Corinthians 8:9:

2 Corinthians 8:9

King James Version

⁹For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”(KJV)

What are the two opposites there? What's the evil? Poverty. What's the good? Riches. That's my simpleminded way of understanding it. I understand poverty to be evil. Again, if you think poverty is a blessing, why don't you call it that? Why go out and work five or six days a week to fight the blessing? That's so ridiculous it's nonsensical. Saying that again is just religious language. People are under the oppression of the enemy. They're sick, they're poor, everything is going wrong so the preacher comes along and says never mind, it's the will of God. But he's wrong. The man that pats you on the back and comforts you in your unbelief is not doing you a favor.

Now notice verse 9 of 2Corinthians 8, the word grace. You notice this is grace, and there's only one channel of grace. We said this before, it's the Lord Jesus Christ. John 1:17,

John 1:17

King James Version

¹⁷For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. There's only one basis of grace, the cross. All grace is administered on the basis of the cross. There's only one means of appropriating grace: it's faith. And there's only one administrator of grace: it's the Holy Spirit. He is the spirit of grace. Let's say that again. There's only one channel of grace: it's Jesus Christ. There's only one basis of grace: it's the cross. There's only one means of appropriating grace: it's faith. And there's only one administrator of grace: it's the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit administers all the riches of the grace of God made available by Jesus Christ. That's why you can't steal grace. You can't cheat your way into grace. It isn't under your administration. It's administered by the Holy Spirit. He's the steward of the grace of God. In the 24th chapter of Genesis, you'll find this beautiful parable which you're probably familiar with. Abraham sends his steward to find a bride for his son, Isaac. Of course, this is interpreted by all good Sunday School teachers, Abraham is a type of God the Father, the son is a type of Jesus Christ, the bride is a type of the church, and the steward is a type of what? The Holy Spirit. He's the administrator of the riches of the father, bestowed upon the one who believes in the son.

And you know the wonderful thing about that story, do you know how many camels that steward took with him? Ten camels. And it says they were all laden with gifts. And when Rebecca believed, the steward started to open up those gifts and shower them upon Rebecca. And that's grace. It comes by doing what? Believing. And it's administered by the Holy Spirit. For whom? Those who receive the son, Jesus Christ. All right.

So grace is the exchange in this case between our poverty and Jesus' wealth. Jesus was wealthy with all the riches of Heaven, but he became poor that we, through his poverty—I used to say might become rich, but God corrected me and said you don't read very well. It doesn't say become rich, it says be rich. Because you can become rich and poor again. Just like you can be sick and get healed and get sick again. But this is like be in health. Be rich. 3 John, verse 2:

“Beloved, I pray above all things thou mayest prosper [continually] and be in health [continually], even as thy soul prospereth.”(KJV)

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I'll say something that could be misunderstood. But I think you have to agree it's logic. If you can serve the Lord well on a hundred dollars a week, you should be able to serve him better on two hundred dollars a week. Now that's so nitty-gritty that it isn't spiritual. But I think it is just plain simple common sense. That's the way I see it. Now I want to point out to you that this exchange also is made possible by the cross. Will you turn back for a moment to Deuteronomy 28 and look just at two verses, verses 47 and 48. Remember now this is the unfolding of the curses. Deuteronomy 28:47-48:

Deuteronomy 28:47-48

King James Version

⁴⁷ Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

⁴⁸ Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

“Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things.”(KJV)

What is the will of God? That we serve him with joyfulness, with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things. Now don't tell me that you don't get joyful when God abundantly supplies, because you do. And don't be so religious that you pretend it doesn't matter. To me, it's wonderful, first of all, because I like abundance. Secondly, because it delights me to see that my father likes to have it. It's not just the thing, but the spirit behind the thing.

We had a phone call last night, I went home, and I was really feeling rather uncertain about things because of our sickness of our son-in-law. And we got a phone call from a lady, you're going to have a piano. Just out of the blue like that. Well, I'll tell you, it made me feel better. I don't—maybe I'm so carnal that I feel that way about things. But it says we're to serve him with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things. I could have struggled and skimped and saved and bought a piano. But how wonderful when it just drops out of the sky. I mean, to me that makes that piano twice as valuable. By the way, it isn't here yet but we have it by faith, it's coming. And I mean, it was so precious, just a little group of people, about maybe ten people decided to make that piano available. Isn't that something. You see, I'm grateful to the people, but I'm so grateful to God, to my Heavenly Father for thinking about a thing like that. And arranging just a moment that I needed a little encouragement, there was the news, waiting for me. The piano's on the way. You know, sometimes we're so spiritual we're not even real. That's the trouble.

We were talking in the meeting of leaders the other day, appointing different people to do things, and Brother John Norwood said well, he said we've got two committees. So somebody said that's a dirty word, committees. And he said well, I could have gone into religious gear and used another language, but what it is is a committee. Now why don't we call things by their right names. Let's be nitty-gritty. It's a committee.

Now listen, we got one aspect, the will of God. Verse 47:

“Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things.”

Can you think of anybody being so stupid as not to do that? Isn't it almost incredible that anybody would refuse to do that? And yet the truth is multitudes of God's people are just in that category. Not serving the Lord their God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things. What's the alternative? Verse 48:]

“Therefore shall thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.”(KJV)

I will tell you something, if God sends your enemies against you, you aren't going to dodge them. You can do what you like, but you have to face those enemies. And it is to me a frightening thing to think that disobedience can cause God to send my enemies against me. It really is a frightening thing. Because, I know what those enemies are like. I've met them long enough

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and often enough and seen them in so many people, I know what God's enemies and ours are, they're the demons. And if God turns those demons loose against you, friends, there's no avoiding them. All right.

Thou shalt serve thine enemies. There's a demon of poverty, did you know that? Very definitely there is a demon of poverty. I've seen it. I've heard it name itself, and I've seen it come out of a man. And that man was shaking like jelly when that demon came out of him. He was a well qualified, gifted man with two degrees, and good experience, and good references, and he had not been able to find a job for two years. And he spent over a thousand dollars with just putting his name with firms that would find placement for him. And he came to us and said what's the problem? It wasn't I who prayed with him, it was another brother who discerned this demon of poverty. Now, I tell you, it shook him to pieces when it came out of him. It was frightening to see it. You don't think poverty is a demon? Well I tell you I know it. I'll tell you another demon, too. And a very strange one. And it concerns people who are known to many of us here. I don't think I'll give their name because on tape it may get to so many different places. But if I tell you what he does, many of you will know who it is. It's a veterinarian. And a very successful one. And he was looking after a very valuable horse for a very wealthy man. And the horse was making good progress. And he decided to make a long distance telephone call to this man to tell him his horse was doing so well. And there was something in him that was begrudging the money of the phone call. And as he was wrestling with this, the name of the demon was given to him. It was frugality. A very strange name. And he saw how utterly illogical it was to grudge a long distance phone call to a millionaire to tell him that his horse was making good progress. It was far from being practical, it was ridiculous. And he loosed himself from that demon and went and made the phone call and the man was delighted. It was probably worth several hundred dollars to make that phone call. But you see, he had been trained and brought up through the Depression, in an atmosphere of teaching to spare and spink and never enjoy anything. And do you know what I have seen? I mean, I'm not American by background as you know. But I deal with so many people and counsel them and so many times when people start to talk about the Depression, I see an absolutely different look come into their eyes. Now I realize that it's left a wound on many, many people that have been through it and brought up, and those that grew up in it.

My wife and I were dealing with a couple the day before yesterday in our home. And really, the root of their spiritual problem was in the Depression because of what they went through in childhood. And the attitude that they were brought up in in relation to material things. Now you can go overboard the other extreme. I fully agree that the problem the modern generation growing up now in America is they have never known want. And therefore they despise material abundance, which is just as illogical and foolish as the other. There's an extreme on either side but the middle course is God's course.

I have to—I'd better be careful. I've learned another thing because I'm a new American, as you know that. I've learned you've got to be careful what you say about states. Because if it happens to be somebody's state, they feel involved. But I'll tell you, there's a certain area of the United States, round about Tennessee and Missouri and around there that's the absolute breeding ground of the demon of poverty. Did you know that? It's a remarkable thing. I trust I'll offend nobody, but I'm in a certain way objective, because I come to this country and view it as it were, as an outsider and a stranger, though I'm identified with it by American citizenship. But I've learned that if you can get to know a person's background, you can begin to guess their problems, anytime. It's really remarkable. You see, this is the enemies that are sent against us for disobedience.

Now, turn back to Deuteronomy 28:48:

“Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.”(KJV)

Now notice that's the curse. You put hunger, thirst, nakedness and want of all things together and what do you have? Absolute, total poverty. What is that? Is it a blessing or is it a curse? It's a curse. Now then, take one more thing. You picture Jesus on the cross. Read the background and you will see that he fulfilled every one of those conditions exactly. He had not eaten for twenty-four hours. He was hungry. He actually said, one of his last utterances was, I'm thirsty. And listen, that no pretty religious picture should deceive you, he was naked. Because a man in those days had four main items of clothing. And these items were divided against the four soldiers at the foot of the cross. Each soldier had one part and then he had, in addition, the seamless robe which they would not split, so they cast lots for it. So the direct logical conclusion is: Jesus had no clothing on

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the cross. That was part of the curse. It had to be fulfilled. That's why I say never let pretty religious pictures deceive you as to what happened on the cross. In every aspect, Jesus was totally identified with the curse. Why? That we might have the blessing. The culmination is: Want of all things. That he was stripped, literally stripped of everything, not a thing he didn't have. He didn't have money, he didn't have any grave to be buried in, buried in a borrowed grave. He didn't have a friend, he didn't have a relative. Everything was taken from him. It was total. And you know why he did that? He did it as our substitute. He did it in our place. And the motive was love.

Now, what's the alternative? It's stated in 2Corinthians 9:8.

2 Corinthians 9:8

King James Version

⁸And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

I would like to say one thing to correct one wrong impression while we turn to that. Do not imagine that Jesus was poor till he went to the cross. He was not. He never lacked a thing. When he sent forth his disciples without silver or gold, or purse or a script and they came back, he said did you lack anything? They said, nothing, Lord. You see, there's a mistaken idea that you have to have a lot of money in the bank to be rich. You don't. In fact, that's really a second rate kind of richness. The real richness is to have everything at your disposal and not have it till you need it. You see, I've had the privilege of being around with one or two quite wealthy men at one time or another. I've noticed one thing. They very seldom carry much cash. You know that. They just flash out a credit card. I was with one wealthy man in a certain area who didn't have to produce a credit card. He just signed on anything he took because he was so well known. See? Well, Jesus, as I said before, he just used his Father's credit card. There was never anything lacking. If there wasn't any money to pay the tax, go down and haul out a fish. There it is, it's in the mouth of the fish. That's real wealth, actually. I have to confess I'm not quite up to that standard. Some are. I know believers who live that way. Absolutely, from moment to moment. In complete abundance without a bank account. Don't call that poverty. That's abundance. And the more you abound, you know what, the more you can give to others. God has shown me this. It's all right to have faith for your finances, that's one stance. But when you can have faith for others, that's the higher stance. Paul said about his own ministry, he said, these hands have ministered to my needs and to them that were with me. He had faith for himself and those that traveled with him. And God is showing me that there is a higher level of faith than just being able to believe for your own needs. Another thing it says in the scriptures which applies to me and many of us here: The children should not lay up for the parents, but the parents should lay up for the children. We should be able to bequeath something to our children. Now I'm not talking merely in terms of finance. But we should have something to pass on. We shouldn't be living on the bare minimum. I just got enough for myself. Well, thank God if that's where you are, but there's a higher standard. Don't rest content with that.

Turn to 2Corinthians 9:8, we just have a moment, and look at the picture of what Jesus has made possible now. We saw in 2Corinthians 8:9, if you want to put two scriptures together, do this. 2Corinthians 8:9 and 2Corinthians 9:8. You can do it for yourself later. Well, I'll read it. 2Corinthians 8:9 says:

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."(KJV)

2Corinthians 9:8 says:

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to all good work. [I put in all good work instead of every, because the Greek word is all.]" (KJV)

And this brings out the fact that in that one verse, we have the word all five times and the word abound twice. Now I believe that is the level of God's provision. It is not a bare adequacy. It is not merely sufficiency for ourselves. It's sufficiency that

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enables us to abound unto all good work. Just go through that with me once and just take it in. God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to all good work.

Now remember, when you've read it, remember it's grace. And it comes by Jesus Christ through faith. A lady said to me the other day, [she happens to be here this morning, she'll excuse me for saying this] that it took her quite awhile to learn that her source of supply was not her husband's employer. How many of us in our faith are limited to the fact that I earn so much and that's what I can get.

We have a daughter in England married to a man who is studying to be a dentist. And they don't have more than just enough to get by on. So she was saying in our presence, well, we can manage this, we can manage that. I said if all that you receive through the government as an allowance is your source of supply, that's all you can manage. But if you're trusting in God, you can go further. Buy yourself a telephone. A telephone is quite a luxury in England. I said you get the telephone and see if God won't supply for it. And he did. Let's remember, no matter if you're in regular employment, on a salary with a pension scheme, the source of your supply is not your employer, it's God. And God could supply through that person, or half a dozen different other channels. Don't, by your unbelief, limit God to just one channel of supply.