

God's Abundance

TAPPING THE SOURCE - PART 1

**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.

Tapping the Source Part 1 will focus
on the basic principles that govern
God's provision for us. In Part 2 I will
deal with the conditions for receiving
God's abundance, and the purpose
for which God gives us 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', 'riches';
'wealth' and 'wealthy'; 'prosper',
'prosperous', 'prosperity'; and
'abound', 'abundant', '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 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 and 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.

“prosper:
to have a
prosperous
journey.”

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 honoured. 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 state five basic principles regarding God's provision which are very important. The first two will appear in this teaching (Part 1)—the next three will follow along in Part 2.

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, ... [VERSES 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

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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... [VERSE 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 [VERSE 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 realise, 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.

“God's provision is in His promises”

“[Jesus] simply used His Father's credit card”

our Money'. In this short powerful book, Derek explains how your
ade toward God (85 pages, \$8 incl. P & H). We also recommend his
e on CD (#110/1, \$10 incl. P & H). To order, see our contact details.

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“the whole inheritance [in Christ] is... yours”

PRINCIPLE TWO

The promises are our inheritance. They 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 see the 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”. ■

“but don't expect to get [it] without conflict”

Find out the next three principles of God's Abundance in ‘TAPPING THE SOURCE’ - PART 2

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GOD'S ABUNDANCE

Tapping the Source-Part 1

GROUP BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



READ OUT LOUD



DISCUSS



BRAINSTORM



CONSIDER

OVERVIEW

There are basic principles which govern God's provision for us. However, you can't understand or appropriate God's abundance unless He reveals it to you first.

- 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.

LEADER'S GUIDE: IN THIS STUDY WE WILL:

- Read from the Bible about God's plan for abundance
- Discuss the principles of God's provision
- Consider the promises of God for provision
- Assert our claim to the provision of God

YOU WILL NEED:

1. Bibles & individual copies of this Teaching Letter
2. Individual copies of the proclamation (page 2)
3. Personal journals and pens

RELEVANT SCRIPTURES:

3 John 2; Romans 1:10; 2 Peter 1:2-4; John 10:35; Psalm 82:6; Joshua 1:2-3

1 WHAT ABOUT YOU?



Discuss as a group practically:

1. What does it look like when a person prospers?
2. What does it look like when a person abounds?

Encourage everyone to apply this to their own lives, and try to pinpoint what it would mean for them to live in these states, i.e. would anything be different to now?

2 PROVISION IN THE PROMISES



In journals, get each person to take some time and write down their interpretation of the following statements, then together discuss the actual meanings as a group.

- 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.

3 SO WHERE'S MY PROVISION?



It's all very well knowing that God has provided everything we need before we even ask for it. But the reality is that there is a spiritual conflict involved in attaining our provision.

However, one of our weapons is utilising the power contained in declaring God's Word over our lives. Give each member this proclamation which is based on scripture. As a group proclaim it out loud.

IN CHRIST I CAN DO EVERYTHING

Great is the Lord and mighty in power.¹

Therefore I am strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.²

The Lord will make me the head and not the tail. If I follow the commands of the Lord carefully, I will always be at the top and never at the bottom.³

I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.⁴

The one who calls me is faithful and He will do it.⁵

I trust in the Lord; I am like a tree planted by the water, my leaves are always green; in a year of drought I have no worries and I never fail to bear fruit.⁶

I prosper in all that I do.⁷

The Lord goes ahead of me and guides me on my way so that I can continue day or night.⁸

With my God I can scale a wall.⁹

Because I believe in Him, everything is possible.¹⁰

But thanks be to God. He gives me the victory through my Lord Jesus Christ.¹¹

AMEN!

¹ Pslm 147:5; ² Eph 6:10; ³ Deut 28:13; ⁴ Phil 4:13; ⁵ 1 Thes 5:24; ⁶ Jer 17:7,8; ⁷ Pslm 1:3; ⁸ Ex 13:21; ⁹ Pslm 18:29; ¹⁰ Mark 9:23; ¹¹ 1 Cor 15:57

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¹PS 147:5 Great is our Lord and mighty in His power; His understanding has no limit.
²EPH 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.
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⁶JER 17:7,8 But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.
⁷PSLM 13 He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.
⁸EX 13:21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.
⁹PSLM 18:29 With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall.
¹⁰MARK 9:23 'If you can?' said Jesus. 'Everything is possible for him who believes.'
¹¹1 COR 15:57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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