

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • TV145B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, JUNE 7TH, 1981
By
HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
MAY 7TH, 2014

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Deuteronomy 29:29

“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

I believe I brought a message several years ago from the text that I am going to use today but let's look at it again; it's in the **Book of Deuteronomy**. In **Deuteronomy chapter 29:29** we have these words:

Now here is the topic: **“THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED.”**

Now listen to the text in **Deuteronomy 29:29**: *“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of this law.”*

I hear of the complaint on every hand, in fact, I heard it just two days ago. I hear people say: “I read the Bible but I just cannot understand it.”

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

“I just don’t understand the Bible preacher. I read it but I just can’t understand it, especially the King James Version; I just can’t understand it. The Bible is hard to understand;” now that’s the complaint.

Well, let me address that complaint in three ways. I may surprise you a little bit here, but you listen to me; I am going to tell you the truth. People say: “I don’t understand the Bible. I read the Bible but the Bible is hard to understand.” Let me give you three things about that:

First of all: The Bible, my friend, is not only hard to understand; it’s impossible to understand apart from knowledge of its author!

Now; don’t you ever forget that; the Bible is impossible to understand apart from knowledge of its author and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. I am talking about understanding its mysteries, understanding its message, understanding its redemptive glory.

Now, where do we find that? In **1 Corinthians 2:14** Paul wrote: *“the natural man.”* Now, when he said this verse of Scripture, he had already said: *“eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man (the sons of men) the things that God prepared for them that love him, but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: For the spirit searcheth the things of God, yea, the deep things of God.”*

Then he said: *“but the natural man.”* Who is the natural man? That is folks that are born of flesh. That’s the common, ordinary, person; that’s the man without Christ. That’s the man who is not a believer; he is a natural man. There are spiritual men and natural men.

He says: *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of God; they are foolishness to him; they are foolishness; (the things of God are foolishness to the natural man), neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned.”*

The word *“discerned”* is judged or understood. So, what I am saying is when you approach me with this statement, “I don’t understand the Bible;” well my friend, you can’t, it’s impossible if you do not know its author, if you are not talking about His Spirit revealing the things of the Gospel to us.

Secondly: The very fact that it is the Word of God limits my ability to understand it!

Whose Word is it? It’s not some man’s writing. I can understand the writings of people who have the same educational level as I have or the same nationality, or the same interest. I can understand about anything that a man writes or a man of my educational background or a man of my own interests, or a nation.

But, this is the Word of God. That limits my understanding. In **Romans chapter 11:33** it says: *“O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments. His ways are past finding out. Who can know the mind of God? Who hath been his counselor?”* The wise man said: *“It’s higher than the heavens; what can you know? It’s deeper than hell; what can you know?”*

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

So, let's remember that. You say: "I don't and I can't understand the Bible." It is God's Word. It requires a revelation. It requires being taught of the Spirit of God.

Thirdly: Even the redeemed, even believers, even the disciples only know in part!

I saw a book on a bookshelf one time, just a little book, just a little pocketbook. The title of it was: **"All About the Bible."**

Peter didn't have that information. Our Lord Jesus said to Peter and the other apostles: *"I have many things to say to you; you are not able to bear them yet. Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come; he will guide you unto all truth."*

The apostle Paul didn't have that information. He said: *"I know in part: I prophesy in part; I see through a glass dimly: But, when that which is perfect is come, I'm going to know even as also I am known."*

I say that this excuse is overworked, terribly overworked. This is a flimsy excuse and it's a deceptive hiding place. Let's be honest:

One old writer said years ago: "My problem is not with the parts of the Bible I don't understand; my problem is with that part of the Bible I do understand but I don't like." He said: "That's my problem, let's be honest.

My problem is not with those parts of the Bible that I don't understand; let's leave it that way; *"the secret things belong to the Lord."* The revealed things belong to us and to our children.

The very fact that it is the Word of God limits my understanding. I only know in part. I don't even know what percentage that is, it's just a part. I bet it is a very small part that I know: *"He that thinketh he knoweth anything knoweth not as he ought to."*

Paul said, *"We are not sufficient, to think anything of ourselves."* But, there is some of it that we do understand and our human, fallen, depraved, wretched, degenerated nature doesn't like it; that's the problem.

I believe the rich, young ruler understood what our Lord said to him. Here was a man and his hands were filled with diamonds, he was clothed in satin and purple and fine linen. His bank account's full. His barn's bursting.

Everything he had, everything he needed, everything he wanted, but his neighbors were sick and poverty stricken and without things and our Lord said: *"you go sell what you have and give it to the poor and come and take up your cross and follow me and you will have riches and treasures in heaven."*

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

That man knew what Christ was saying. There wasn't a doubt in his mind what Christ said. He didn't like it but he knew what he said and he walked off.

I believe Herod understood what John the Baptist said; don't you think he did; he kind of liked John the Baptist. O Herod, King Herod; he left his throne and castle and palace and went out yonder in the wilderness to hear this preacher, John the Baptist, a 32 year old preacher.

He admired him. He did many things but old John one day pointed his finger in the face of that monarch and he said: "*Herod; it's not lawful for you to have your brother Phillips wife;*" he had stolen his brother Phillips wife. He said: "*That's not right; you better do something about it.*"

I suspect Herod knew exactly what John was talking about, don't you? Do you reckon that was hard for him to understand?

Then, the Pharisees; I believe they understood what our Lord said when he looked at them and said: "*on the outside you appear beautiful to men. (You have all these religious rules and regulations and duties and deeds that you perform. You have all these do's and don'ts and all this legalism) 'you appear beautiful (to people who can only look at your flesh), but God doesn't look on the outward countenance; God looks on the heart and your heart is full of extortion and excess.*"

Christ said: "*You are like an old tombstone; on the outside you are white and on the inside you are full of dead men's bones.*" Do you reckon those fellows knew what He was saying? I kind of believe they did.

I don't believe that they needed anybody to explain to them what the Master was saying; they understood it. They gnashed their teeth and would have stoned Him.

Then there are the religionists; they understood what Christ said when He said: "*I and my Father are one.*" There's one God, manifested as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christ is equal with the Father. "*Before Abraham was I am.*"

In **Luke chapter 4**; our Lord He came back to visit his hometown there in Nazareth where he was brought up. "*As his custom was he went to the synagogue.*" Here are all of these nice religious people sitting there on the Sabbath morning who had come to worship God.

Our Lord Jesus stood up to read and He read something to them. They said: "*Do some miracles for us. Let's see you do some miracles that you did down in Capernaum or somewhere else.*" And he said: "*No prophet is without honor, save in his own country and among his own people.*"

The Lord added, "*There were many widows in the land of Israel in the days of God's prophet but he didn't heal a one of them; he only healed a widow;* (He only fed a widow that was a Gentile). There were many widows in Israel; the people thought that they were God's favored people, the religious people. Our Lord fed not a one of them but He fed a widow who was a Gentile.

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

He went on, he didn't stop. He said: *"There were many lepers in the land of Israel in the days of the prophet. God healed none of them. He only healed one, a Gentile."* They knew what he was saying.

They rose up in anger and wrath filled their hearts. They took him outside the city walls and would have thrown him off a cliff.

Those nice, religious, folks left church on that Sabbath morning to murder a man because He said God didn't owe them anything because of their nationality or their heritage or their tradition or their religious duties or their ceremonies, *"that God would be merciful to whom he will."* That filled them with wrath. They knew exactly what he was saying.

Here is what I am saying, my friend, yes sir, *"the secret things belong to God."* There is so much that I do not know and cannot know; we will never know until I stand in God's presence.

Those things belong to God, always have and always will, but I do understand much of this Word and much of it does not agree with my way and my nature and my desires. The same thing is true of you. If you resist and reject and rebel against certain parts of God's Word and say, "well, I don't understand that;" you don't want to; it crosses your will.

I never will forget several years ago; I was teaching a Sunday school class in a certain Baptist Church and I read a portion of God's Word that is found over in **Romans Chapter 9**. I was standing before a men's Bible class and I opened the Bible to **Romans Chapter 9** and I started reading.

I said: *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, it was said to Rebekah, 'the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written; Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated,'"* a man interrupted me. He said: "Just a moment preacher." I said: "Yes sir, what is it?" He said: "You are teaching that God chose men to salvation before they were born."

I said: "No sir I'm not." He said: "I know good and well you are; that's exactly what you are teaching." I said: "No sir; I'm not teaching that; I'm reading the Word of God and that is what God's Word is saying to you."

Instead of receiving what God's Word says and believing it and accepting it, you are turning your anger upon the teacher. I didn't say it; God said it. His is the message; I'm just the messenger. There's no reason to get angry with me."

Paul said: *"Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"* We understand these things. We do understand. It's not that we don't understand it's that we do not believe.

We reject the truth because it crosses our will, because it crosses against the grain of our will. We find something that we just don't like and we say "I don't believe that; I don't believe that."

We read a Scripture that says: *"God is love"* and we believe that but we read another that says *"God's angry with the wicked every day"* and we don't like that.

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

We read a Scripture that says: “*choose you this day whom you will serve*” and we like that. We read another that Christ says: “*you have not chosen me but I chose you*” and you don’t like that.

We read a Scripture that says: “*let your sons and daughters prophecy*” and so forth. We read another that says “*let your women keep silence in the church; I suffer them not to speak nor to teach, or use of authority over man.*” We don’t like that.

We know what it says. There’s not a doubt in our mind what it says but because we don’t agree with it, we say: “well, Paul meant something else; or I don’t understand that.”

My friend; let God’s Word speak. Don’t subject God’s Word to your thoughts or to your traditions. Subject your thoughts to God’s Word. Let’s look at several verses of Scripture:

First of all: In **John 19:11** our Lord stood before Pilate and Pilate was annoyed. The Lord Jesus wasn’t cooperating with him. He was a puppet dictator sitting on a puppet throne that ruled him from Rome. He wanted to demonstrate his authority; men usually do.

He said: “*Answeresth thou not me? I have the power to crucify you or let you go.*” Our Lord calmly looked at him and said in **John 19:11**: “*you could have no power against me at all except it be given thee from above. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above.*”

Pilate understood what the Lord said. He may not have understood the mysteries of it and the glory of it, but he understood the wording of it. “*You could have no authority or power over me at all, in any way, except it were given you of my Father.*”

Now, I don’t intend to preach divine sovereignty and deny human responsibility. Man is not a dead log. Man is not a robot; he is a responsible, accountable, creature. If any man perishes in sin it will be his own fault.

There is nobody in hell that will lay his condemnation at the feet of God. There is nobody under condemnation in hell that will blame God for his judgment: “*true and righteous are his judgments.*”

Men perish because they will not come to Christ, not because they can’t come, because they won’t come. Christ said, “*You will not come to me, that you might have life.*”

My friend, if a man is saved it is by God’s grace. If a man perishes it’s his own fault. The door is there and the door is open. The invitation is sent and the supper is spread; He says “*come, for all things are ready.*”

“*All ye that labor and are heavy laden, come unto me and I will give you rest. Ho, everyone that thirsteth; come to the water.*” Men will not come. If they do come it is because God called them and God almighty chose them and God almighty enabled them: “*thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*”

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

I am telling you this; when men begin to talk of what God can do and what God can't do, when men begin to boast of their free will and talk about God's weakness, God wants to do this but can't, Jesus Christ wants to do this but can't, the Holy Spirit wills to do this but can't; it's time to set the record straight, set as forcefully and kindly as we can.

"Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in the heavens, the earth, and the seas, and in all deep places."

Nebuchadnezzar said: *"When I got my sense back; my reason returned to me and I know now that God ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and giveth it to whomsoever he will."*

God said: *"Can I not do with mine own what I will? Hath not the potter power over the clay?"* We love him; yes we do, *"because he first loved us."* We seek God because he sought us.

I will tell you this, your birth is by the will of God. He said to Jeremiah: *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee. Before you came out of your mother's womb; I knew you, I sanctified you."*

Your salvation is of the Lord. Jonah said that: *"Salvation is of the Lord."* David said: *"Salvation of the righteous is of God."*

Your days are determined by the sovereign pleasure of almighty God. Man's days are determined; *"the number of his months is with the Lord; he cannot pass."*

I heard a man say recently that a fellow died in an accident; he didn't die by accident. He might have died in one but he didn't die by accident; *"it's according to the good pleasure of him who worketh all things after the council of his own will."*

Our Lord taught us to pray that way; He said: *"pray thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* In **John 6:44**; listen to this: *"no man can come to me except my Father which sent me draw him."* Our Lord Jesus Christ is saying that the drawing, the wooing, by which men come to God in repentance and faith, is by the power of God.

What is it to come to Christ? Just exactly what is it to come to Christ? We hear this all the way through the Scriptures: *"come unto me; he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden."*

Well, it's not a physical coming because many people came physically and walked away empty, the rich, young ruler, Nicodemus. It's not a physical move and it's not coming to those things that represent Christ.

Simon Magus came to baptism and *"departed in the gall of bitterness."* Ananias and Sapphira came to the altar and they carried them out dead. The Pharisee came into the temple and went home *"unjustified."*

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

So, it's not coming to the things that represent Christ. It's not even a moral reformation. What is it to come to Christ? It's to believe on him; *"it's to believe the record that God hath given concerning his Son."*

It's to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to believe who He is, what He did, why He did it, and where He is now, all things in reference to Christ; they are revealed in the Word. It is to trust Him, *"in whom you trusted after you heard the word of truth."*

Trust Him; like I trust my weight on this platform, like you trust your weight in a chair, like you trust yourself to a bridge, an automobile, or an airplane, you trust Him. You are leaning on nothing but Christ.

Then, it is to receive Him, to receive Christ in His office, all of them, Prophet, Priest, and King. It's to receive the scepter of His kingdom. It's to receive His grace and mercy.

This, men will not do; they are not able to do by nature except the Holy Spirit enables them. **Ephesians 2:1** says and this is clear and it's easy to understand: *"you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin."*

"In times past you walked according to the course of this world fulfilling the lust of the flesh, the desires of the mind, and were by nature, the children of wrath, (just like everybody else)."

"But God (but God) who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in our sins hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Paul said in **2 Timothy 1:9**: *"God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace which was given to us before the world began."*

That's not hard to understand; that's not hard at all to understand. That is giving God all the glory. That is saying I was unable; He made me able. I was unwilling; He made me willing. I was unworthy by Christ's righteousness He made me worthy.

I was in bondage and captivity and He set me free. I was blind and He gave me sight. I was deaf and He gave me ears. I was lame and He made me walk. *"To God be the glory."*

"Of him are you in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." David said: *"The salvation of the righteous is of God."*

Then, we understand some of these things. In **Matthew chapter 15:11**, our Lord was speaking one day to a host of religious people. Religious people have so many rules and regulations that are so unessential. They are so bad about neglecting the essential things, the important things.

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Our Lord said to them; his disciples had eaten something and they hadn't washed their hands before they ate. The Pharisees got all upset because the disciples had eaten without washing their hands, an old tradition, and a custom.

Our Lord looked at them and he said: *"it's not that which goeth into the mouth that defileth a man; it's that which cometh forth from the heart."* It's not that which goes into the mouth, you put something in your mouth, food, drink, or whatever, it is digested and it is cast out into the sewer and it leaves no effect unless you over indulge intemperately.

"But that particular thing that you put in your mouth does not defile you but it is that which comes out of the heart." Boy, these Pharisees, these religious people, got antagonistic; they got angry as they possibly could.

His disciples came to the Lord and said: *"Lord; the Pharisees were angry by what you said."* Our Lord said: *"leave them alone; they are blind leaders of the blind."* They are married to a system, they are married to a standard; they do not know a Gospel nor a person.

They are married to do's and don'ts. They are trying to confine sin to eating or drinking or food or some kind of ceremony or something like that. They are forgetting that sin is a nature, a principle of the heart.

Christ said: *"That which goeth into the mouth is cast out into the draught; it can't defile you. Those things that come from the heart, that proceed out of the mouth; that's what defiles you for out of the heart comes evil thoughts, fornications, blasphemy, envy, jealousy, pride, lust, all of these things."*

I picked up a newspaper in Fairmont, W.Va. a few weeks ago and it told a story of a woman who was up in years that had an automobile wreck. She was trapped in the wreckage. She was there several days.

They finally found her and got her out of the wreck and took her to the hospital and she got along fine. They said: "what did you do while you were in the wreck?" She said: "I prayed; I talked with the Lord."

They said: "What did you say?" She said; "Lord; I never did drink; I never did smoke, and all I ever chewed was food. The only bad thing I ever did was play Bingo."

Do you know what the paper said? It said that "she was lucky at both; she won \$30.00 at Bingo and she got rescued from the wreck." That's atrocious but that's what the ordinary person thinks sin is, "I do drink; I don't smoke, and I don't chew and I don't hang around with folks that do."

My friends; sin is a principle; that is what our Lord is saying. You understand what I am saying. *"It's not that which goeth into the mouth"* and you can make all the rules and regulations you want to about food, and eats, and drinks, and all these lent's and seasons and everything else; *"sin is a transgression of God's law"* and not the churches rules.

THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 29:29 • HENRY T. MAHAN

“Sin is a transgression of God’s law” and not man’s law. It’s a heart problem, a heart problem, and you have totally followed the deceptive subtlety of Satan in departing from an understanding of what my Lord and your Lord and this earth’s Lord have declared sin to be.

That’s what it is; it’s a nature. Until God gives you a new heart, you can quit every sin you know and still go to hell. Until God gives you a new heart you can quit every outward deed and every outward so-called bad thing and carry the very cesspool of iniquity around in your unregenerate heart.

That’s your trouble; but our Lord said; *“cleanse first that which is within then the outside will be clean outside also. Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God.”*

I don’t understand the Bible; let’s set the record straight. I understand what he is saying. I can read words. I can read nursery rhymes and I can read first grade material or high school material; I understand words.

I may not understand the principle of the atomic energy and the principle of all of these other things but I know what the words are saying. You know what God is saying and what we need to do is say: “Lord, be my teacher; bring my will in conformity to yours. I bow; *“speak Lord; thy servant heareth!”*