

GOD'S Promise To Provide



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GOD'S PROMISE TO PROVIDE

The Bible recorded many examples of God provided for His people, among which was preserving the life of Jacob and his offsprings during the years of severe famine they experienced :

Ge 41:56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. 57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that famine was so sore in all lands.

Ge 42:1 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, "Why do ye look one upon another?" 2 And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die." 3 And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

Ge 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

God provided for Elijah :

1 Ki 17:2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, 3 "Get thee hence, and turn thee westward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. 4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." 5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. 6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

God sustained the Israelites for 40 years in the wilderness :

Ne 9:21 Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

Even in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus repeatedly showed His power in providing for the people contemporary of Him:

Mt 14:19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

Mt 17:27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

These cases described above that occurred in the past give evidence of God provided for His people.

Does God promise to provide for His children at this time?

Yes, God's promise to provide is found among others in Matthew 6:25-34 :

25 "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

The promise of God's provisions mentioned above, starts with the Lord Jesus told us that we need not worry nor doubt about God's power and ability to sustain us :

*Mt 6:25 "Therefore I say unto you, **Take no thought** for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. **Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"** (KJV)*

*Or "Therefore I tell you, **do not worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. **Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?"** (NIV)*

The Lord Jesus said that we need not worry, because "life is more important than food." This means that since God has given life to human beings (the breath of) and other living things which is so valuable and important, should not we also believe that God will provide food for the maintenance of His living creatures?

Human beings are the most intelligent among all other creatures the LORD God has created, because human beings are blessed with the remarkable ability of reasoning,

the mind. That is why only human beings are capable of creating or inventing something, so we can enjoy many conveniences today whether in the field of transportation, or communication, or gadgets that facilitate them. And many more devices have been made to enhance the comforts in our lives.

Hence Freethinker began to grow. Initially there was merely a notion that people can do whatever they want within the capacity of their brains, but later on this developed into a conviction and in some countries Freethinker is already regarded as a cult even as a religion. The Freethinkers also believe that human beings are able to solve any problem and meet their own needs by using their brains. They believe in the existence of God, but they assume that God's role is no longer needed because all problems can be solved, and human desires can be carried out or actualized by the ability of their brains. Their self-confidence increased when computers were devised. It continued to grow with the discovery of cloning techniques and becomes even more elaborated recently as scientists has invented and developed stem cells. Despite the fast and overwhelming developments in technology, yet so far we have not heard that a human being can create life. We have not heard of any invention that can give life to objects that are already dead. Or simply we have not yet discovered a technology that can revive people who are already dead. We also have not heard of anyone who is able to give life to inanimate objects nor create living objects, nor even create the kind of grass on which we tread every day. Man can create artificial grass and turf of plastic or of other materials, but artificial grass is still a non-living object that can not grow nor multiply. Man are capable to breed or cultivate grass only from the real grass; man has no ability to create life.

Back to the the verse above that states, "***life is more important than food***", it emphasizes that we do not need to worry about God's maintenance and His care to provide for us. Since God can give life -- something that no man even the most intelligent one, nor technology even the most sophisticated one, is able to do, then certainly God is able to provide food to feed us.

The verse above continues with these words, "***and the body more important than clothes?***" which means that if God gives us a body so beautifully made and complicated that up to this day we still do not understand the functions of many parts of our body and how they work, hence we ought to believe that God would clothe us.

For years the medical world have been trying real hard to create human organs, while the demands to transplant the organs to the sick who need them increase and until now it is very difficult to find the donors. The medical world was delighted when some scientists managed to find the technology of cloning, because through this technology they hope to be able not only to create living objects from other living things, but also to make the organs of the human body. Yet until now they have failed to make human organs as they expected.

But today's medical scientists are excited by the discovery of stem cells through engineering technology and hope to be able to create human organs by developing this invention effectively. From the entire human body, the blood is most needed and it was assumed to be most easily made. Today quite a lot of universities and companies are doing research on a large scale to make human blood, for if it is successful the artificial blood would be of great help to mankind. Nowadays there is a shortage of blood donors nearly all over the world . Thus this engineered artificial blood would become a very large and promising industry, as it is not only needed for transfusions but also believed to help alleviate and even cure some diseases. That's why at present very large funds are expended and great efforts are made to do research on producing artificial blood. From the informations the author has gathered, there are some universities and companies that have already been successful currently in making particles of the blood, such as the leukocytes, thrombocytes and so on. They are even capable to make artificial blood with exactly the same shape and composition like the human blood. Surprisingly, however, when the artificial blood was transfused into the human body it could not perform the general basic functions of the genuine blood, to absorb and circulate oxygen and nutrition throughout the body. And this is enough to cause frustration.

In the next verse, the Lord Jesus gave a more detailed explanation of how God the Father takes care of all His creations, with the intention that we will truly believe in God's ability and promise to care for the welfare of His children :

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much clothe you, O ye of little faith?

The verses above are closed with this rhetorical question, "*Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*" While prior to this the Lord Jesus uttered the same kind of question, "*Are ye not much better than they (those fowls)?*" These two statements distinctly show us that as God's prime creation we should have a firm faith that God will surely take care of us. Therefore, the above verse is followed by an assertion that we should not worry about our lives nor be like the nations who do not know God and are always worried about their lives. But instead, we must be sure that God knows our needs and He will meet them all.

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Furthermore, the Lord Jesus explained what God requires from us to be provided for:

*33 But **seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness**, and all these things shall be added unto you.*

The above verse describes God's requirement. And that is, we should "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" rather than worrying about our physical needs.

What does "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" means?

The kingdom of God is God and all His power and greatness.

His righteousness is God's truth or God's laws and commandments.

*Joh 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth.***

So the requirement to be provided for by God is to seek first the kingdom of God or to know God first and all His greatness and His laws and commandments.

At first I myself did not understand why God's promise to provide for us should be connected with knowing God and all His greatness, and knowing the word of God or God's laws and commandments. I had been thinking about it for quite a long time, but I still could not understand because it did not make sense to me.

If God's promise to provide for us is related or interacted with ministry, such as "If you serve me, I will provide for you", then it would make sense to me because we do something for the LORD God by serving or ministering Him. Thus we would receive a reward from God in the form of His provisions.

Or "If you give an offering for Me, then I will provide for you" seems more reasonable and acceptable because we give something to the LORD God. Thus He would grant us His provisions.

However, the above verse very clearly states "seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." So, first learn to know God and all His laws and commandments, then everything we need will be met as an addition unto us.

Then one night, the understanding about this came to me. That night after I finished praying, I could not fall asleep immediately. This is not extraordinary, because quite often I can not fall asleep immediately after the midnight prayer. So then I tried to reflect on the verse, "***But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.***"

In a semi-conscious state between pondering and dozing off, I was reminded of my first child who has always been dressed with pretty clothes since her childhood. And she was given the chance to attend good schools even abroad. Later on, when she was going to be married we fulfilled all her wishes about making pre-wed photos and other requirements. Suddenly a question arose in me, "What has your child done for you that she earns all such generosity from you?"

I was surprised by that question. Yes, I think, what has my child done that she got all that generosity? Has my child served me much? I do not think so, because I can count how many times my child has served me some drink or food, whereas my housekeeper served me far more often. Has my child given me many things? Well, I do not think so, too. Of course, she always loves to give me a birthday present on my anniversary, but actually most of the gifts were bought with my wife's money not my child's. My child loved to give me greeting cards or pictures or writings/poems when she still attended Sunday School. Besides that, I did not recall any other ministry or gifts my child has rendered that would cause her to be entitled to all that abundance. So I kept on thinking until finally I got the answer: "My child could get all this abundance because she knew to whom she should ask for something, and that was to her father and mother."

I was still thinking about those reasons, when the second question arose: "Now look at the street children. Why could not they get this sort of generosity whereas they have begged and pled to every passerby, "Please give me, Bu ! . . . Pak !" (Addressing strangers in Indonesia is not with "Madam" nor "Sir", but "Ibu" and "Bapak") The answer is, eventhough the street children addressed them with Ibu (Mother), or; Bapak (Father), actually those people were not their real mother nor father. Maybe these street children did not know who their real father or mother was! If only they knew exactly who their father and mother were and asked them for something, then they surely would get it. Or, at least they would not just get five or ten cents as they might received at that very moment.

And so too with my child. If she asks for anything to someone else rather than to her father or mother, then most likely my child will not get what she is asking for.

Indeed, our earthly fathers are limited in their capabilities, so that they are not able to give all what we ask for. Yet, we have a heavenly Father who has unlimited power. The heavens, the earth and everything in it show tangible evidence of the power of our Heavenly Father.

Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Our Heavenly Father is powerful, and He is also a loving Father :

Mt 7:11 "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Therefore we need to know our heavenly Father very well. Maybe up to now we praise the One we call Father and pray to Him, addressing Him, "Father . . . , Father . . ." Yet, whose Father is He? This means, when we mention "Father", is it really directed to God we know well as our Father in heaven, or only lip service, no different than the street children because basically we do not know God the Father. We sing, "Father ... Father ...," just because the lyrics of the song are so written. We pray, "Father ... Father ...," just because our pastor or fellow believers pray that way, while in fact we do not know truly our Heavenly Father.

How can we be sure whether we really know God the heavenly Father?

It is not easy to answer that.

Knowing the Father usually comes from the desire in us to get to know Him.

If the desire is there, then surely we will listen intently every time the Word of God is delivered. We also will certainly make time to read the Bible every day.

Why do we need to read the Bible?

Since God the Father is so clearly and completely depicted in details in the Bible.

This means that if we do not like to read the Bible how then could we know the Father well? It would be almost impossible.

Reading the Bible should be from the Book of Genesis through to the Book of Revelation without skipping a single verse.

Why so? Since the Bible is God's Word is a compilation of books with coherent main themes, as God's revelation about Himself to mankind, written by God chosen individuals who are all inspired by His Spirit. So we need to understand the Word of God as a whole, not partial or only some passages separated from one another, let alone picking out only single words. Besides that, there is an interrelationship between the passages or verses as one explains the other.

Why should not even one paragraph nor verse be skipped?

Because the Bible is not a compilation of books put together with the intention just to add to its thickness. It is one unified book. Every word in the Bible even every punctuation is put correctly and purposeful.

The author himself began to believe fully that the Bible is the Word of God when in the year 2003 he was given the opportunity to study Jn 19:1-10 about Zacchaeus. He found out that every word and punctuation in the passage actually was used intentionally, with purpose. This reassured him that the Bible must certainly be the Word of God because it is written so expertly and detailed as no man, how smart he is, would be able to do. Evenmore at this time, when the author was given the opportunity to study about the End Times, he discovers how precise each word, term, number, punctuation, and the choice of words is in our Bible.

Let us think again about the earlier question, "Do we know the Father?" How many times, since we became followers of Christ, have we read the Bible through from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation without skipping any part of it? Only several times, or never at all, would be impossible for us to get to know the Father. This means that though we call God as "Father" repeatedly, we are no different than the street children who call the passersby, "Bapak (Father)..., Bapak (Father)...," while in fact they do not know them at all. However, reading the Bible very often too can not guarantee that we will know God as our Father, when we try to understand with our own human reasoning or knowledge only. Therefore be sure we pray first to the Lord Jesus every time before reading the Bible, asking Him to give us the Spirit of wisdom to help to reveal the true knowledge of God the Father.

*Eph 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 **That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:***

Later at the same night, I also came to realize why we allow our child to study abroad.

Some times previously we had been considering whether we would send her abroad or not. Then at last we decided to allow her to study there when we saw that she was always obedient. She followed any rule we set up before her and did whatever we told her to do. My child studied diligently and with discipline. She had gained high scores and she never came home trespassing the appointed time, except to settle important issues with our consent.

From these two points I understand the connection between the promise of God's provision and our relationship with Him as our heavenly Father according to our knowledge of Him and our obedience to His laws and commandments.

If we study verse 33, it is clearly stated that God's provisions promised to us is an increase as it is written "added" :

*33 **But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added** unto you...*

"Added" is different from "granted": added means that **previously some provision was already prepared for us**, but not enough so He added more, while granted means that previously there was none at all and then the provision was given fully. So this means that God promised to provide for us, yet we ourselves must not be idle. We ought to work, to make serious efforts. Then what is still lacking God will

add or grant an increase.

This is true according to 2 Th 3:10 :

*For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, **that if any would not work, neither should he eat.***

The above verse explains that God's children should not be lazy and do not want to work to earn for a living. Instead, he has to work hard to provide for themselves and their families. God's children has to fulfill their responsibility for their livelihood.

They should not beg from others, but have to be content with what they have.

Heb 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Like this verse, the following verse also reminds us not to be lovers of money which will consume all of our time just to seek for money like the people who do not know God, as our blessings are actually from God :

*Ps 127:2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat – *for he grants sleep to those he loves.”(NIV --*for while they sleep he provides for)*

Dear reader, let us read again Mt 6:32

*32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for **your** heavenly **Father** knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

Here the word “your heavenly Father” explains that the promise of God's provision is only for God’s children. God does not make His promise to everybody, but only to His children. So it is very important for us to ensure that we are children of God. (Please read the characteristics of God’s children).

Once again, this passage is closed with this reminder, “do not worry”.

34 “Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” (KJV)

Or “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow wil worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (NIV)

In closing this passage the Lord Jesus said, “do not worry about tomorrow”. So let us not worry about our future, because when we know our heavenly Father with all His power and His love for us, we will definitely not worry about anything, whether about food, clothes, our future, or even His care to sustain and protect us in time of

afflictions. Therefore we must have faith like a child who does not worry about anything but entrust everything into the hands of the Father, because he is convinced that his Father will watch over him and take care of his life.

Mt 18:3 "(And said,) Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. " (KJV)

Or *"I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. " (NIV)*