

FINANCIAL BLESSING

There Will Be No Lack

God loves to provide for His people! We never have to beg for provision because God is able and wants to give abundantly in our behalf.

"I have been young, and now I am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed." (Psalm 37:25-26)

As we seek the Lord, we will lack for no good thing. Why? Because God is a provider.

"O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." (Psalm 34:9-10)

I thank God daily for His provision, as I know you do also. How do you think you received your job? How did you get food on your table?

Yes, you went out with the sweat of your brow and labored... but who got you the job? As we seek God, He will provide.

God's Quality Provision

"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and long life, and peace (prosperity) shall they add to thee."

(Note: Keeping the commands of God or His words in our hearts will bring prosperity.)

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. Honor the Lord with thy substance (wealth), and with the first fruits (tithe) of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Proverbs 3:1-10)

These are God's benefits and provision for us who are doing His word. As we honor God first with the provision we have, acknowledging Him in all our ways, He will move to provide in our behalf.

We are not to rely on our own wisdom and knowledge. We are to trust God for our provision. As we acknowledge Him or look to Him as the source of direction, then He will direct our paths, and we can count on success. (Psalm 1:2-3, Joshua 1:8) We don't have to force things to happen as we go out praising and thanking God, acting on His word. God will open the doors. As we walk obediently in His word and witness to the world that God is our provider, God will then provide.

It is important that we manage our affairs in godliness with integrity and honesty. As we seek to maintain the attitude that whatever we do, we do to God's glory, then God will provide.

Biblical Miracles of God's Provision

I get excited when I look at the miracles of God's provision revealed in His word. God provided for Elijah, a prophet of God, in the time of famine by sending birds to feed him. God used the birds as messengers of His provision. (1 Kings 17:4-7)

In another account, Elijah came to a widow who was making some cakes for herself and her son. Then they were going to die for lack of food. When Elijah said, "Give me the first cake," he did not have in mind for her to die of starvation. What he was really saying was this: "You give to me, and God will take care of you!" As the woman stepped out in faith to give what she had to God's man, the provision of God went into effect for her. She never ran out of food during the length of the famine because God kept filling the flour bin and oil cruse. This was God's supernatural provision.

I believe that today God is still a God of miracles. We who have called upon Him will never lack for any good thing. He wants to provide for those who have, in love, set their hearts and minds on Him.

The book of Exodus shows how God provided manna to the children of Israel in the morning and in the evening. He provided quail. He had Moses tap rocks to bring forth water. This was supernatural provision for the people who were wandering around in the forsaken area of the Sinai

Peninsula. In an area of little vegetation, God provided for His people supernaturally for forty years. Manna in the morning, quail in the evening, water, and their sandals did not wear out (see Deuteronomy 8) as they relied on God. This is the God I know and trust. This is the same One who wants to love and care for you.

He wants to move on the basis of His word in behalf of His people who believe Him at His word and act accordingly. Don't get me wrong. I am not saying to quit your job so that God can provide for you. Your job is part of God's provision. I am saying that as we walk in obedience, not being lazy, but believing Him as our source of provision, not our jobs, He will provide for us. We will never lack for any good thing.

Jesus, as He walked the earth, fed over five thousand people with a few fish and loaves of bread; and there was an abundance left over. (John 6:1-13) I challenge you today to look to a *"God who is able to give far exceedingly abundantly more than anything that we are able to ask or think, according to the power that works in us."* (Ephesians 3:20) God is able to provide for us far better than we ever could in all areas of our lives - spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically.

If we would begin to look to our God as our Provider and understand that His provision is beyond anything we are able to think of, then we would never have to worry or fear again.

Deliverances from demons as well as healings took place throughout Jesus' ministry, and they are happening today. We will see more and more miracles as we begin to expect God to do more and more. This is a miraculous age we are living in. Jesus will be coming soon! Miracles are happening in the lives of those who are looking to God, believing that He will do what He says, and then acting on His word in quiet assurance and confidence. They believe God is able to provide whatever is necessary for life. God is able and willing to heal. He is able and willing to bless marriages. He is able and willing to do the impossible in behalf of them that believe. (Mark 9:23)

The disciples were sent out by Jesus. They were instructed to take one coat (not a wardrobe) and no wallet or sandals. (Matthew 10:9-10) I believe Jesus sent them out this way deliberately to prove to them that the only one they would have to look to for provision was God. Upon their

return, Jesus asked them, "Did you lack for anything when went out?" They joyously responded, "No, we did not lack!" (Luke 22:35) They were dependent on God. They didn't have to have a whole closet full of clothes, a freezer full of food, or lots of money in the bank. God would supply their needs, whatever their needs would be.

There is nothing wrong with having a closet full of nice clothing, a freezer full of food, or a bank account overflowing. However, God is to be the One whom we are relying on and dependent upon for our needs being met. We are not to look to ourselves or our provision on hand, however great or small. We are to look to God to supply our needs.

If the children of Israel hoarded up manna, it spoiled on the second day. God was teaching His people to rely and depend on Him to supply for them one day at a time. See Deuteronomy 8. There never was a day that God did not supply their needs. We have such a faithful and wonderful God.

Other Kinds of Provision

Our salvation is totally dependent upon God's provision, for life eternal is only supplied by Him. We couldn't earn it or work for it. We couldn't have eternal life with Him unless He made it available to us. In His love He supplied eternal life through Jesus Christ. Our part is simply to receive His provision by calling upon the Lord to be saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

It is God who makes the rain to fall and the crops to grow. It is God who is responsible for the abilities that we have and the jobs we enjoy. He is responsible for everything in our lives that is good. (James 1:17-18) As we acknowledge Him, then He moves freely in our behalf. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

All this may seem foolish to the people of the world. Worldly people want to save and hoard things up, thinking, *If I don't keep it where I can see it, there may come a time when I won't have it!* So they store up gas, in case of a gas shortage, food, in case of a food shortage etc. "What I have, I must keep for myself," the world says.

The child of God, however, can give out because God is a giver. Even though circumstances may not appear to be right, God is a giver and

is in control, giving abundantly to the people who trust Him. As we give, He freely gives to us. This is what His word says. God will provide. (See Matthew 6:25-34)

God knows our needs better than we do. As we are obedient to Him, seeking first the things of God, then He will provide for us. Read Deuteronomy 8:2-6; see also the entire chapter. God wants us to be solely dependent upon Him, seeking Him alone as our source of provision. (verses 17-18)

When provision is coming in, don't forget who gave it to you. It was not who you knew that provided for you nor your mighty reasoning ability or maneuvering. It was God! Acknowledge the fact that He is your provider. He says, "Don't forget Me when everything is going well for you." Be thankful for what you have whether it is little or much. Thank Him for His provision and refuse to grumble and be discontented. As you rejoice in God and His word, and His promises begin to work to bless you, you will start to understand, "Yes, God has something else for me." As you act on the word, God does what He says He will do. Don't forget, He loves you and is the One responsible for you being blessed, not you.

A young fellow at one of our meetings decided to give a tithe (10% of his gross earnings) into God's work for the first time. The following week the Lord provided an apartment for him, which had not been available before, a raise on his job, and a car. God kept His word as the young man gave in love from an obedient heart.

Everything was going well for the fellow, just like God had promised. (Deuteronomy 8:6-20, Malachi 3:8-12) However, he began to think that he was the one responsible for all that had happened. He believed a lie of Satan. Then we heard that he had gone back into the things of the world. He had no more desire for God, and the job he once loved had become a drudgery. He had forgotten who his source of life and provision was. We share this with you as a reminder, "*Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall!*" (1st Corinthians 10:12)

God loves you and wants to provide for you. As you continue to obey His word, God's blessing will continue.

Man's Response to God's Provision

In Matthew 6:31-34 the Lord Jesus told us not to worry about what we would eat, wear, drink, etc. It is after all these things that the unbelievers focus their attention. If our hearts are set on God, having Jesus as our Lord, God has already provided for us in His storehouse.

God gave us direction about how to receive from His storehouse. *"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"* (Matthew 6:33). Then He will supply all our other needs, which He knows better than we do. We don't need to worry. Our part is to seek God, and His part is to take care of us. Worry will prevent His provisions from coming. We need to be thanking and praising Him for His abundant provision to us.

If God takes care of the lilies of the field and the birds in the air, how much more will He take care of those who are the crowning glory of His creation? (Matthew 6:30) *"My God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Jesus Christ."* (Philippians 4:19)

God has already taken care of our needs, and He knows them even before we ask. (Matthew 6:8) He knows our needs better than we do, and He wants to meet our needs in an abundant way. (Ephesians 3:20) It is because of His abundant provision to us that we are able to generously and cheerfully supply the needs of others.

We need to be content in God's provision, confessing with our mouths, "I do not lack for anything." (Psalm 23:1) You might be thinking, *But I don't have everything I need.* Understand, as your heart is set on God, and you thank Him for whatever you need (food, clothes, transportation, job, etc), He will provide for you. Put your trust in Him and never speak about lack and need.

None of God's promises are automatic. He always says, "You do this, and I will do that." We need to understand that He tells us to do certain things to receive His provision. God's nature is to be generous and give abundantly. He is not a "tightwad." Since God is in our hearts, it should now be our desire to give abundantly to others from God's provision to us.

All About the Tithe

Let's take a look at what God says about the tithe: *"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee?"*

In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:8-12)

This is God's word and promise to us.

Many believers are cutting off God's provision to themselves. They are greedy and selfish with His provision, hoarding for themselves, giving the "left-overs" to God's ministries instead of the "first-fruits" which He expects. God calls them "God-robbers!" If we are "robbing" Him, how can we expect Him to bless us with provision?

Only a thankful heart can give as God has given to us. If your heart is set on the things of the world, to get blessing after blessing for yourself, then you will miss some of the greatest blessings God has for you. Giving is how the blessing of God comes to us. Jesus said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35)

(We are not asking you to give into this ministry. The ministry which God has given us is set up to give out God's word freely. He will take care of us through the people He has led to give. We want you to understand this word concerning God's provision so that you can come into the fullness He has for you, and you can then give to His ministries.)

God says in Malachi 3:8 that you and I are robbing Him if we are not giving a tithe (off the top of our earnings) out of thanks to Him. God wants to bless us. As we do what He says, He promises to open the windows of heaven to pour out His blessing upon us. It comes in many different ways. He provides health, increased goods, and He stretches what we have.

We have found that some people in our congregation make two or three times more than we do because of God's provision, but we always have extra to give out as the Lord directs. (There are many "good causes"

around. God may not want us to give to them. Give where God directs after you have prayed.)

God will rebuke the devourer (Satan) and he will not be able to steal the other 90% from us. This will happen as we do what God says to do with a thankful, obedient heart, claiming His promise as we give. After you give, thank God for His promise and tell the devil to take his hands off of what is yours. *"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."* (Proverbs 3:9-10)

God wants us to give to Him, so He is free to give to us. He doesn't need us to give to Him. He gave us everything we have to begin with. He is saying, "Set your heart on Me! Praise Me!" The tithe is basically a thank offering to God for all that He has done for us. He wants to see whether our hearts are set on Him as the source of provision or upon the world.

Giving and Receiving

"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for what he has done." (Proverbs 19:17)

If we are giving to the poor, we are loaning to the Lord, and He will repay us for what we have done. We do not give with the attitude, "Okay, Lord, I'm giving just like you say - bless me now!" It is true He will bless you; however, do not allow yourself to get into that "bless me" frame of mind. We give because we are so thankful to God for His provision to us and for the opportunity to help our brothers and sisters in their time of need. We are not giving to the poor expecting a great return from God. Returns will come if our hearts are right. We give to the poor because we love God. I challenge you today to give to others because you love them and want them blessed of the Lord also.

"Give and it will be given to you, good measure pressed down, shaken together running over will be given to you. The measure you use (give out), will be given to you." (Luke 6:38)

This illustration shows that if we were to give someone a big grain sack, God would give back a grain sack which is pressed down, shaken, and pressed down some more (like when you jump on your garbage can to

get in as much as possible!). In other words, God will give you a 15 pound grain sack for the five pound one you gave out. This is God's provision.

Why will God do this? Not so you can hoard it or go out and get everything you always wanted to get. Rather, so you have more to give out. This is God's way of taking care of His people. He can do this through you and me because we are His children. We have God's nature - love, generosity, forgiveness, and we want people to be blessed.

In every situation where people are doing what God says to do out of a thankful heart, not seeking rewards for themselves and popularity, but seeking to give glory to God, those people never lack for anything. They are taken care of so well that they are able to give and give and give some more. This is God's nature - to give. This is our nature as His children - to give. God and His people are generous.

He supplies to His people and ministries through the people who recognize that all of what belongs to them has come from Him. We are stewards of God's provision to use as He directs.

When we give to the poor, needy, or for a special offering (not the tithe), we are to decide what we will give or not give. We are not to give if we feel obligated to give, like "Oh no, here comes the offering plate." We have freedom to choose what we will give, if anything. Give what is in your heart to give. Give cheerfully, counting it a privilege. We give because we love God and love to bless His people and ministries, and because God has blessed us. Let us look closely at 2nd Corinthians 9:8-15.

Verse 8 - God is able to make us abound in order that we are sufficient in all areas and we can focus our time, thinking, and abundance on how to help others.

Verse 9-10 - As we give out of a cheerful, thankful heart, meeting the needs of God's people, He will give us more seed to sow (the word, goods, etc.) so that His people will be blessed.

Verse 11 - *"You will be made rich, so that you can be generous on every occasion."* God is telling us to give generously so that His blessing might flow to us. He doesn't want us to be tightwads. He is generous and wants people blessed.

There is someone around you right now, if you take a moment to think, who is in need of something you have to give. God is challenging you to meet that need. Prove God's word in you by giving because you love God and that person.

Verse 12-14 - By giving we not only supply the needs of God's people, but we are also causing them to give thanks to God. We receive His blessing and reward at the day of accounting. Those who have received are able to thank Him and pray a blessing on those who gave.

We always want to be good witnesses for Jesus. Our giving is another way in which we can tell and show others about how good and loving God is. Read James 2:14-16.

It is ungodly, when you see a brother or sister in need of something, to tell them, "I'll pray for you," or to say, "God bless you," but then send them away empty. It is the godly thing to supply their need and pray for them. What good is it if we see others in need but do not give? Our giving shows that we have faith in God. We could give away all that we had, if God directed to, and not lack for anything. We are not telling you to give away all that you have, we are telling you that God will supply all our needs. If we are giving to supply someone else's need, we can be confident that God will look out for us.

Read 1st John 3:17-18. How can the love of God be in us if we see someone in need, and we do not give? Because we have the love of God in us, we give to people who are in need. I am certain that even as you are reading this, you are thinking of ministries and people to whom you can give. Why? Because you love God and His people. You care.

Read 1st Timothy 6:17-19. This passage is speaking to the rich who have great abundance. We are not to put our hope in uncertain riches but in God. We are to be generous, doing good, being willing to share. As we do this we will avoid falling into Satan's snare of the "deceitfulness of riches" (Mark 4:19), where our hearts are set on acquiring and keeping the riches of this world rather than on God. Our hope is to rest in Him and not in how much we have in our bank accounts. Everything of this world is going to pass away. Only the Word of God and our faith in Jesus Christ, the source of our life, will remain.

It is not the amount of our giving that will make the difference. Many think that if they give much, then they will get a greater blessing. True; however, God goes beyond the amount of the giving to look at the heart of the giver. I want you to understand that the only way to give is out of an attitude of love and thankfulness to God.

The widow who gave a mite, Jesus said, gave more than all those who were giving large bags of money. She gave all that she had to the Lord. The others were giving a small fraction of what they had in their accounts. For instance, to give \$300 is nothing to a millionaire. However, for someone else to give \$300 would truly be a love gift.

Remember asked the widow for a cake she was going to prepare for her and her son before they would die of starvation. As she gave the last that she had from the generosity of her heart to Elijah, God moved in a miraculous way to supply her needs for months and months. The oil cruse and flour bin continued to be filled by God's provision.

Think about that widow the next time you start to say, "I can't give. I only have a little left over for myself." I want to challenge you to allow God to do a miracle in your life, to let you see God's divine provision where you can give when you do not have anything to give. "What am I going to give?" Give of yourself. Give of your time. Give of your goods. God will honor your giving if you are doing it as to the Lord, loving His people.

How does God love His people today? He loves them through others. We are His children. God has given us the exciting privilege to love each other because He first loved us. It takes faith to give, not for gain, but because we want God's children blessed. Then they can say, "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. Great is the provision of our God." If the people don't know Jesus, they will say, "There is something different about those people. They care and give even if they don't have that much to give." The people of the world note this difference because the world's way is to look out for one's self and to hoard, gathering more and more. God's way is to give, understanding that God is providing all our needs.

Many people will receive the Lord as the result of our becoming generous. These people will see God through us. God so loved the world

that He gave His only Son [His best] that we might have life. (John 3:16-18)