

The Lord is my provider

Many of us have faced difficulties in our lives in many areas including not having everything we need. When we were going through those times we wondered if we would get through them. Would we starve to death? How are we going to eat? How are we going to survive? The fact that we're all sitting here today is a testimony that God got you through those times, although we may not even been conscious of the fact that He was at work in our lives. During those times we are tempted to scream out: "Where is God?" However if God had to truly withdraw His presence and provision from our lives we wouldn't have survived those times.

Psalm 23: 1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing

1) The nature of God to provide

- God has shepherded man from the beginning starting with Adam and Eve. He placed them in the Garden of Eden and provided everything for them.
 - Genesis 2: 9 The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.
 - Genesis 2: 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden"
- After the Lord delivered Israel from Egypt and led them through the wilderness for forty years He provided for them even though they were rebellious and disobedient.
 - Deuteronomy 29: 5 Yet the LORD says, "During the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet."
- Besides their clothes and sandals not wearing out God provided food and water for them.
 - God provided water at Marah where the water was bitter but became fit for drinking after God told Moses to throw a piece of wood into it. (Exodus 15: 22 – 25)
 - Then in the Desert of Sin the people were thirsty and grumbled against Moses. God told Moses to strike a rock, which he did and water flowed out of it. (Exodus 17: 3 – 6)
 - God provided manna which the Israelites ate for the forty years they were in the wilderness. (Exodus 16)
 - He also provided them with quail when they complained that they didn't have meat, but that came with dire consequences due to their complaining. (Numbers 11)
- Elijah was fed by ravens and then was fed by a poor widow of Zarephath who gave her last handful of flour and oil, but then God kept her jar of flour and oil from running out until it rained again. (1 Kings 17)
- Psalm 107: 7 Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.
- God provided for rebellious people, obedient people, well-known people and obscure people because it's His nature to provide.

2) God's promise of provision for us

- God has never ceased to be a provider. To do so would mean that He would deny His own nature.
- Jesus exhorted His disciples not to worry about anything because their heavenly Father would feed and clothe them.
 - Matthew 6: 25 – 34
- When I left home to go into ministry I didn't have any financial support. I went with my life based purely on the promises in God's Word. More than thirty years later God is still providing for us in incredible ways.
- George Muller ran an orphanage in Bristol based on the principle of trusting God alone. He went through many trials but God always came through.

- "The children are dressed and ready for school. But there is no food for them to eat," the housemother of the orphanage informed George Mueller. George asked her to take the 300 children into the dining room and have them sit at the tables. He thanked God for the food and waited. George knew God would provide food for the children as he always did. Within minutes, a baker knocked on the door. "Mr. Mueller," he said, "last night I could not sleep. Somehow I knew that you would need bread this morning. I got up and baked three batches for you. I will bring it in." Soon, there was another knock at the door. It was the milkman. His cart had broken down in front of the orphanage. The milk would spoil by the time the wheel was fixed. He asked George if he could use some free milk. George smiled as the milkman brought in ten large cans of milk. It was just enough for the 300 thirsty children.
- Philippians 4: 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

3) The ultimate provision of God

- The Lord is our shepherd, I shall lack nothing.
- We have seen our God provides our physical needs, however He was called Jehovah Jireh when He provided the ultimate sacrifice.
 - Genesis 22: 1 – 14
- The Shepherd was going to take His unique lamb and sacrifice Him for the flock.
- God Himself will provide a Lamb.
- The ultimate provision of God was that of His only Son to die on a cross for all of our sins that He might buy us back to be His treasured possession.
- The true Shepherd provides both that which is of temporal as well as eternal worth.