

When Pigs Fly Series – Part 4

The God of Provision

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This is our final message in our series “When Pigs Fly”. We wanted to take some time and encourage your faith and remind you that God is the God of the miraculous. In a world of skepticism toward the things of God and in a time of denying of the power of God, we would like to make an appeal to you for faith. Faith in the one true God who created all things. Faith in Jesus Christ who purchased your freedom on the cross. Faith in the Holy Spirit who is guiding and directing and changing us from the inside out. Faith that in him people can change, mountains can move, and giants can fall.

Our journey during this series has been to re-ignite our faith and expectation that God still moves in miraculous ways. He still heals the sick, he still restores relationships, he still delivers those in bondage, and today I'd like to talk about our God who supernaturally provides.

Yes, supernaturally provides, miraculously provides, in fact all of the topics we have covered already are a form of provision. We have hundreds of stories of God showing up and intervening in your life and in my life.

The skeptic would say that there is no such thing as the miraculous. The naturalist or the materialist would say that everything that happens on this earth is a result of the laws of physics or the laws of the universe. Two plus two equals four.

And God works within the laws of nature all the time. He has established laws of nature. These are the boundaries we live in. They are rules for success or disaster. They create predictability in our lives so if we create habits and disciplines that honor these laws you can predict the outcome. If you brush your teeth you will have healthy teeth.

But we also know that there are times that God will miraculously intervene in the laws of nature, the law of cause and effect, the laws of action and reaction. And he will do for you what you need even though you don't deserve it.

In fact, I think God wants to cause us today to realize that we are far more dependent on him than we realize. Not just in the big moments of healing or powerful breakthrough. But in every breath, every moment is from him and supplied by him.

1. God's provision reveals the provider.

We have provision problems. We don't like the idea of provision. Provision is getting what you need. We like excess.

When we ask God to provide for a need, what we are often asking is for God to eliminate the need, or even our need for God. Our need for God's provision in our lives comes with the realization that we are dependent upon a provider.

The Lord is my shepherd. Give us this day our daily bread. These are not just requests for God to meet our needs. This is a submission to him to be the one to determine what I need.

That is a level of control that most of us are not comfortable giving. But if we are going to talk about God's provision, we have to talk about it on his terms.

Story in the old testament Israel is led to through the desert by Moses and the people start to grumble against the Lord.

Exodus 16:15b-30

Moses said to them, "It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. 16 This is what the Lord has commanded: 'Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'"

17 The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. 18 And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

19 Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."

20 However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.

21 Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. 22 On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. 23 He said to them, "This is what the Lord commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"

24 So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it.

25 "Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a sabbath to the Lord. You will not find any of it on the ground today. 26 Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any."

27 Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none.

28 Then the Lord said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? 29 Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out." 30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

Provision reveals problems.

Deuteronomy 31:20

20 When I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, the land I promised on oath to their ancestors, and when they eat their fill and thrive, they will turn to other gods and worship them, rejecting me and breaking my covenant.

James 4:3

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

We think the purpose of provision is provision.

But the purpose of provision is to point to a provider.

John 6:25-50

Jesus the Bread of Life

25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

John 6:26, 29-35

26 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.

29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

30 So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? 31 Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

32 Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread."

35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

They were looking for a meal and Jesus wanted to give them eternal life.

It's not about the bread, it's about the God who provides the bread.

It's not about the house...

We are so prone to think we know what we need. Not only that but when we get what we think we need we take our eyes off of the giver and focus on the gift. Jesus is saying, instead of coming to me with a list of needs, just ask me to give you the things I've been waiting to give you. Some of the things I want to give you are like medicine it might not feel good or taste good, but it will heal you. Some the other things I want to give you will satisfy your heart in ways you can't even imagine. But the real question is, do you trust me to give you what you need?

Little boy and the needle

I don't know what your need is today, physical, material, financial, relational. But your ultimate need is to know Jesus.

2. God's provision reveals his power.

I'd like to share with you two stories from the Bible that speak of God's power. They aren't incredible battle scene or mass feedings; they may even seem simple to us. But I would suggest that they were extraordinary to the people who were involved in them. I think they were included in the scripture to show us that God's provision are not just for the main stage. But he desires to show his power in our everyday individual lives.

The Widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7-16)

8 Then the Lord said to Elijah, 9 “Go and live in the village of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon. I have instructed a widow there to feed you.”

10 So he went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow gathering sticks, and he asked her, “Would you please bring me a little water in a cup?” 11 As she was going to get it, he called to her, “Bring me a bite of bread, too.”

12 But she said, “I swear by the Lord your God that I don’t have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die.”

13 But Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you’ve said, but make a little bread for me first. Then use what’s left to prepare a meal for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the Lord sends rain and the crops grow again!”

15 So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continued to eat for many days. 16 There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the Lord had promised through Elijah.

The Widow’s Olive Oil (2 Kings 4:1-7)

4 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the Lord. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.”

2 Elisha replied to her, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?”

“Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a small jar of olive oil.”

3 Elisha said, “Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don’t ask for just a few. 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.”

5 She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. 6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another one.”

But he replied, “There is not a jar left.” Then the oil stopped flowing.

7 She went and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.”

There are many parallels in these stories

They knew the problem

They knew their resources

They knew the end of the story

Maybe you are here today and you find yourself in a similar situation. Look to him.

What’s in your hand Moses?

3. God’s provision reveals his purpose.

Playing in the snow

Romans 8:28

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

When David went to face Goliath there is a good chance that he was scared or nervous. But truthfully there is just as much of a chance that he wasn't scared at all. He was just anointed as king and hadn't been made king yet.

God's provision is not always through victory sometimes it's through defeat. Sometimes he adds by subtracting, sometimes he multiplies by dividing. The God who provides the rain for the plants also prunes the plants and cut them back so they will be even more fruitful.

James 5:17-18

17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Closing

Prayer ministry

A time of ministry, a time of renewed faith and trust in the Lord. re-alignment.

Great if thy faithfulness

Just haven't seen it