



## God Does Provide

Becky Combee

For many years when sleep escaped me, I would rehearse the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm. I am a student of the Scriptures, and this psalm is one of my favorite passages. I like this psalm because it calls to mind the names of God. Each name highlights a characteristic of our great God, reminding us of His specific desires for our life.

In the beginning of this psalm, we read, "The Lord is my shepherd." A shepherd watches over the sheep, meeting every need. Sheep are defenseless animals. One new shepherd did not realize how desperately his flock would need him, so when there was much commotion in the pasture during the night, he did not check on them. The next morning there were many dead sheep. He reports that from that day forward every noise got his immediate response.

Our God is Jehovah Jireh, the Lord who will provide.<sup>1</sup> Abraham learned this valuable lesson when he went to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. As he raised his knife to kill his son, the Lord spoke saying, "Lay not thy hand upon the lad." In the thicket, there was a ram that was to be offered for the sacrifice. God did provide.

I love the depth of this wonderful word from the Lord. It actually means the Lord will see ahead and provide. Oh, what a cause for rejoicing! God is never late. He always fulfills His promises. He does provide!

The apostle Paul captured this principle when he wrote to the church at Philippi. In Philippians

## Bettered

Suzanne D. Williams

The speaker has it wrong. It is not "I will be so heavenly minded that I'm no earthly good." But that "I will be so heavenly minded that I am of INCREASING earthly good." For this is our commission. We are to GO YE and teach and lay hands on the sick and SEE THEM RECOVER. Not "come ye" and shelter in the walls of the church. We are not spiritual brooms sweeping people into the building but wind which quivers the leaves of every plant it passes by. Because I was there, because you were there, that person has peace. Their life changed.

And it didn't require a practiced speech. It only needed our connection to the God of the Universe. Our loving, gentle Father reached out to them from His place within us. He isn't sitting there to prove we're His. He's working within us to strengthen us, to deepen our intimacy, to stretch His hand out through us. We are vessels of oil. Not only fingers and toes but His anointing, spreading from us onto others. He does the cure. We do the work. But it is not that we work that cures, but that He cures that works.

A minister gave the finest depiction of the secret place. He said when we sit in God's presence and abide, when we lift up who He is in us, we will find those few minutes we struggled to spend with God, have become an hour. I am here to tell you they will become days. Day after day after day, and you will never NOT be in His presence. If you will commit to Him. Not to time needed, though it may

*(Continued from "God Does Provide")*

4:19, he writes, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Although this verse has a specific reference to finances, the word ALL includes every need.

In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul again highlights God's bountiful provision when he walks us to the cross, reminding us of Jesus' sacrifice. Here, he says that through the cross, Jesus "freely gave us all things."<sup>2</sup>

God's gracious provision that meets every need is not a maybe so, could be, or hope so characteristic of God's plan for His people. In Ephesians, the apostle Paul writes that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.<sup>3</sup> In 2 Peter 1:3, we read that God's divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. In 3 John, we are introduced to God's desire that we prosper and be in health.<sup>4</sup>

What magnificent promises! Yet, here is the key given in the Epistle of John. God's bountiful provision comes to us as our soul prospers. According to John, our soul prospers when we know the truth and we walk in the truth.<sup>5</sup> The truth of God guides our decisions and orders our footsteps.

God's abundant provision is not about greed. It does not dictate accumulation of goods with a "somewhat more for me" mentality. Instead, it promotes the love of God that meets my need and allows me to give to those who are struggling.

When God provides FOR me and gives TO me, I have enough. I have increase! I don't live on Barely Get Along Street at the end of Grumble Alley! Why? Because the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ge 22:14 <sup>2</sup>Rm 8:32 <sup>3</sup>Eph 1:3 <sup>4</sup>3Jn 1:2 <sup>5</sup>3Jn 1:3 <sup>6</sup>Ps 23:1



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require giving some things up. But if you give them up, you will find yourself far more fulfilled, and they won't matter anymore. Not to endless words. Though He desires conversation, much is said without speaking at all.

But from one glory you will go to another glory and who He has made you to be will be its very best. The best athletic director. The best retail clerk. The best artist. The best small groups leader. He will lead you into places you would not have gone without His favor. He will accomplish through you and in you what all our personal struggles can never do.

I said this about my book sales, years ago. God is my salesman. I sell what He wants me to sell and in the places and manners He leads me to sell them. I refuse to pick up the weight of book sales, medium, or plots. I have been on hiatus for several years. Frankly, I have no idea if I will ever write fiction again, but I know He will use what I have learned to show His face of love and kindness to others. Through what I have written many see romance as He has designed it. I say this without pride but in complete humility that He would know my works and bless them at all.

What does He want to begin, to develop and grow, in you? What we cling to, we keep from Him and what we keep from Him cannot grow. Or fall away. He blows the wind which carries off the chaff. I will be free of it so that all I am will be Him, and it will not die in me, one leaf at a time. Victory requires forward movement. We reach the throne because of His victory. We climb the mountain and level it because of Him in us, and that we did not give up. We do not give up because others encouraged us. They are full of Him too. And that one person who is so very good at speaking, at teaching, at worship, at art, that one person who is so good with children is so very good because He is their power, their anointing.

We all look like Him, united together in Him, because of Him, and the earth is better. The world society may seem further away from His truth, but God—Father, Son, and Spirit—have not turned loose of it. That's not the plan. He is not letting it all "go to pot" but has this magnificent plan to rescue it, to remake it, and recreate it into His glorious possession. And we, His body, are part of that. We must change our viewpoint for His. We must see heaven so clearly that this earth is bettered because of Him seen in us.