

Times Two pt8 – Provision In Any Environment

Dr. John Carmichael

[2Ki 4:38-44 NASB95] 38 When Elisha returned to Gilgal, [there was] a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." 39 Then one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, for they did not know [what they were.] 40 So they poured [it] out for the men to eat. And as they were eating of the stew, they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And they were unable to eat. 41 But he said, "Now bring meal." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour [it] out for the people that they may eat." Then there was no harm in the pot. 42 Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And he said, "Give [them] to the people that they may eat." 43 His attendant said, "What, will I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give [them] to the people that they may eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have [some] left over.'" 44 So he set [it] before them, and they ate and had [some] left over, according to the word of the LORD.

- "All you have been preaching is about money." A possible criticism. We are following the sequence of miracles of Elijah and Elisha.
- We see that the provision of material needs is mentioned many times. Why? God knows we need to learn how to have our needs met supernaturally. (NOTE: there is more to it than wanting God to help and worrying about it.)
- We are combining two miracle stories (8&9) about the provision of food.

What do these two stories reveal about supernatural provision?

Here are four revelations from these stories about supernatural provision.

I. God's provision works in any environment.

- a. V38 – both of these miracles came at a time of famine.
- b. [Gen 31:7, 12-13 NASB95] 7 "Yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times; however, God did not allow him to hurt me. ... 12 "He said, 'Lift up now your eyes and see [that] all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. 13 'I am the God [of] Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'"
- c. [Phl 4:12, 17-19 NASB95] 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ... 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- d. Learn that God will provide in any and all circumstances.

II. God will give you a divine strategy.

- a. V41 & 43-44 – God told them what to do to prosper.
- b. [Gen 31:8-10 NASB95] 8 "If he spoke thus, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth speckled; and if he spoke thus, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth striped. 9 "Thus God has taken away your father's livestock and given [them] to me. 10 "And it came about at the time when the flock were

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mating that I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the male goats which were mating [were] striped, speckled, and mottled.

- c. [Gen 30:41-43 NASB95] 41 Moreover, whenever the stronger of the flock were mating, Jacob would place the rods in the sight of the flock in the gutters, so that they might mate by the rods; 42 but when the flock was feeble, he did not put [them] in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. 43 So the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks and female and male servants and camels and donkeys.
- d. Often, God will give you a plan for how He wants you to prosper.
- e. Ask God for the plan to prosper.

III. God will meet the need and then some.

- a. V. 41 & 44 - This is called prosperity.
- b. [Pro 10:22 NASB95] 22 It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, And He adds no sorrow to it.
- c. [Mar 8:14-21 NASB95] 14 And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. 15 And He was giving orders to them, saying, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." 16 They [began] to discuss with one another [the fact] that they had no bread. 17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss [the fact] that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart? 18 "HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR? And do you not remember, 19 when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?" They said to Him, "Twelve." 20 "When [I broke] the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?" And they said to Him, "Seven." 21 And He was saying to them, "Do you not yet understand?"
- d. Matthew 6:11 – NRSV note: Or our bread for tomorrow...
 - i. LITS Commentary - Bread symbolizes all material needs. Jesus explains the necessity of depending on God for basic needs in 6:24–34.
 - ii. NET Bible note: "Give us bread today for the coming day,"
 - iii. Robertson's Word Pictures in NT: It clearly comes from epi and iōn like tēi epiousēi ("on the coming day," "the next day," Acts 16:12).
 - iv. Unlike conventional thinking, this is the opposite of the "manna" living of the OT. Jesus intended for us to pray for excess. (CF: 2 Cor. 9:8 – sufficiency and abundance.)
- e. God is interested in the immediate and future needs.
- f. Start asking God for immediate and future needs.

IV. God wants us to learn to trust Him.

- a. Both of these stories are here for a reason.
 - b. Jesus said... how will you receive greater. Mark 8:17-21 (see above.)
 - c. Paul connects our faith in God, who gave us Jesus, to God, Who gave us everything else.
 - i. [Rom 8:32 NASB95] 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
 - ii. If God gives us the greater. He will certainly give us the lesser.
 - d. Trust Him for eternal salvation and temporal provision.
- **God wants to provide for us in any environment by giving us a divine strategy that will more than meet our immediate needs as we continue to grow to trust Him.**