

Monergism

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A RICH SUPPLY OF ALL GOOD

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SETTING FORTH,

- I. The Believer's interest in it.
- II. The riches of it in quantity.
- III. The gloriousness of it in quality.
- IV. The means sealing up all: Namely,

CHRIST. All illustrated, with many wonderful and remarkable spiritual experiences, not only of former, but of later Christians.

By Doctor Nathaniel Holmes.

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## **God, a Rich Supply of All Good**

But my GOD shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. - PHILIPPIANS 4:19

Here is a rich and glorious text; for it contains riches and glory. A comprehensive text, for it holds forth a supply of all need. The Fountain is infinite, namely, God. God shall thus supply. The conveyance and assurance are infallible, in Christ Jesus. And the

impression that all these make upon the heart of a believer, first or last, is very great. For this text is spoken out of much confidence and experience: My God shall supply. My God, who has supplied me (see verse 12, 13), shall supply you.

So that the "But" in our English translation may be better turned into "And" (as the Greek well bears it) thus: God has heretofore supplied me (verse 13), now you have supplied me (verse 14, 16), AND God shall supply you.

Question: Why did not Paul refuse the Philippians' benevolence and turn "YOUR" into "MY," and his words to others into faith for himself, saying, "My God shall supply all my need"?

Answer: Paul could, and has, and would again have done this if God had denied all means. But for him to refuse means when means are offered would have been to tempt God, not to trust in Him. The Philippians had well to spare, and (contrary to the griping Corinthians) were willing to spare, and Paul's hands could not make up his need. He must fulfill his ministry, whatever was laid by, and he had been rich in doctrines to the Philippians; therefore, the Philippians did well to give, and he did well to receive. Besides, Paul's faith here engages for more to the Philippians than his sense had received. He, alone, had received from them a great many, some small contributions of some temporal things. But he promises them that his God should supply all the need of them all, spiritually and temporally. "My God shall supply all your NEED, according to his riches by Christ Jesus."

"Shall supply," in Greek "ἐπληρώθη," means "shall fill" or "will fill." He shall because He will. His good will puts a necessity on His great power to do great things for His people. See the great things, the fundamentals of salvation, of grace and glory that God does for His

people in and by Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1, first ten verses). And why? Because He had taken counsel with His will to do so (verse 13). So in all providences, yes, in all things (Romans 8:28, 29). Mark well the "FOR" that knits the two verses together. And as His will is a good will, it is a rich good will. "According to his riches," says the text. He is rich for our need and has riches for every need. And richly shall He proportion the allowance, namely, "According to his riches in glory."

The adjoining glory to riches signifies (as some, namely Beza, will) that God will supply according to His riches gloriously. Or rather, it signifies more, to wit, that He will supply according to His glorious riches.

For all the supplies that come from God through Christ to one in Christ come tipped, gilded, with a glory upon them; a centre to heaven. Providences below, graces within, heaven above, as they have a lovely scarlet blush of Christ's blood upon them, so they are arrayed with a beam of divine love to those who are in Christ.

And whether we render the text "in Christ," "by Christ," or "with Christ," it makes no great matter, see the Scriptures. For according to Scripture, all are true and apt, and all will well concur to make forth the way, how all things are ours through Christ. In regard to Christ's Passion, we have all by Christ, namely, by purchase (Ephesians 1:11, 12). In regard to Christ's incarnation, we have all in Christ, namely, in our union with Him (1 Corinthians 1:5, John 15:5, Colossians 2:10). In regard to donation, we have all with Christ. That is, God giving us Christ in spiritual marriage, with Him, He gives all He is worth, all His estate with Him. "Transit res cum persona" (Romans 8:32).

D. Believers have assurance and experience that their God will fully supply all their need according to His glorious riches through Christ Jesus.

There are 4 things to be explained in order as they lie in the doctrine for the manifestation, and so confirmation thereof. 1 The believer's interest in the Supplier, that makes him so bold and confident as to say, "My God shall do so and so." 2 The extension in quantity of the supply: to supply all need. 3 The intention in quality, According to His glorious riches. 4 The medium or means, Christ Jesus.

1. The interest. The believer has a God, the only true God, truly; who is the origin of all. All goodnesses but copies taken out of, and according to that original. All streams of goodness are from that Ocean of Nectar. All my springs (says the Psalmist Psal. 87. last verse) are in you. i.e. From God giving forth himself in the Church. All things are in God, either formally or causally, or eminently. Wisdom, power, etc. are so formally in God, that they are essentially God. All the creatures are causally in God. That is, they have moving and being from an efficacy proceeding from Him. And all the rest are eminently in God; whatever is excellent below; is in God in a more excellent manner. As light is more excellent in the Sun, than in the fire or candle. God is the divine Artist to know all. He is the divine Artificer, to make all. Heb. 11. And He is the divine virtuous one, Agere, to do all. As it is said of Christ, He did all things well. Acti agimus we act well, being well acted of Him. His omnipotent power upholds all. His all-loving heart gives all. And His all-wise hand dispenses all. His power is above all difficulties. And His good will above all our unworthiness. You see the world below is virtually in the Sun; and the Sun is a more excellent thing than all on which it has an influence: So all things are much more eminently in God, but

God Himself is more excellent than all. Psal. 84.11. His nature is unapproachable. He dwells in light that none can approach unto. His love is incomprehensible. Ephes. 3. And His ways of works and providences are past finding out, Rom. 11. He supplies the Angels with power that fell not, that they might never fall. He supplied Christ; filling Him with the Spirit above measure, and raising Him from the dead. Therefore much more can He supply us who believe.

In this God, the believer has his interest, and he can confidently call Him "my God"; mine by creation. And not only of being, as the fallen Angels, but of His well-being, of a gracious heart, and gracious qualities in that heart, Psal. 51.10. Ephes. 4.24. Ephes. 2.10. Mine by preservation, and not only in common providences, as He is the Saviour of all men; but in the preservation of the soul from sin, of the affections from prevailing temptations, and graces from deadness. Mine by redemption. Suitably to what is specially meant here, there is mention of Christ Jesus. According to that, Christ is made of God to us redemption; 1 Cor. 1. He has paid a price to justice to redeem us from vengeance; and has gained the actual love of mercy to bestow all good upon us. \* The same Fine and Recovery cuts off the entail of evil and conveys the good estate to us. Upon these grounds, and in this manner, does the believer challenge God to be his God. If you want the measure and gradual; then thus. The believer says, God is my God, fundamentally by the promise. As in that, "I will be your God, and you shall be my people." Formally and properly by faith, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." Cant. 2. And Thomas, "My Lord and my God." Effectually, and feelingly, by the operations of love, joy, etc. As Mary said, "My spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour." And as the believing Jews did. 1 Pet. 1.8. Completely (in parts) when we own God, and own ourselves to be none but His. Faith drawing down Christ to us. And that faith working by love carries us up to

Christ. Cant. 2, "My BELOVED is mine, and I am HIS, he feeds among the Lilies, until the day breaks, and the shadows flee away, turn my beloved, etc.

2 Extension in quantity. God shall supply, even to fulfilling all needs. The word "χρεία," here rendered need, 1. Signifies want, necessity. So that whatever is necessary to supply, God will supply. A sinless wanting, namely, of such things without which we cannot answer to God's ends, God will be sure to supply. But a sinful wanting, a moral aguish dropsy thirst of such things, and so much, as will rather hurt than help; a wantonness rather than a want, God best supplies by keeping us in that want than supplying; rather by withholding than by giving. Psal. 119. "It is good for me that I was afflicted." For in this case, we more want soul health than bodily supplies; therefore God withholding the drink of creature comforts is best to cure our spiritual ague or dropsy appetite. So then our desires must be natural, not unnatural, either after things in kind, not good for us, or in degrees unsuitable for our condition. As on the other side our wanting must be real, not imaginary as the dream of thirst in the Prophet. Such an imaginary want was in Rachel when she fantasised that her life depended upon having children. "Give me children," said she, "or I die."

2. The Greek word signifies use, that which is useful, and instrumental to act and do. Now that is for our true use, that more fits us for God's use. For (as the Philosopher called Servants) we are God's, instrumenta rationalia; His reasonable tools or household goods. Revelation 4. All is made for God's end and use; Therefore without all fail God will so supply and serve our need, as may fit us best to serve Him. And in relation to both significations of the Word, remember that I told you that the word supply in the original signifies to fill; God will at least



fill the true useful need. He may and does often make our cup to overflow, gives a measure running over; but that is of superabundant kindness. But this He will do, and is tied under hand and seal, in Word and Sacraments; namely, to fill such wants. He will fill every size of vessel, replenish every capacity to its proportion. He will ballast and tackle every ship, as it may safelyest swim and ride out every storm. He clothes lambs and sheep with a fleece they may best bear and get away from the thorns.

3. Intention in qualities, one way or another, first or last He will supply according to His glorious riches. God is glorious, and so will dole out your share according to your proportion; you shall confess it when the total is cast up. In comparison with others, nothing, or your own former small thing, you shall have great things. God has chosen the poor in regard to the world (says James), rich in faith. And (says Paul) Godliness is great gain with contentment. For it brings contentment, heart's ease; more satisfied than Alexander with a world. The Godly man has two worlds entailed upon him. Godliness has the promise of this world, and that to come. So that the Godly man can say, I have enough; He is rich who thinks he wants nothing; who has as much as he can ask or tell what to do well with; give us, "ἀρκετὸν ἐπιούσιον," bread sufficient for our substance. A man's estate is to be valued according to the use, not the bulk, according to the efficacy, not the quantity. What are tools of which one has no use or benefit? Green herbs, if they give content (says Solomon), exceed a stalled Ox. If a man's estate serves his use, is effectual to a quieting of the spirit, he has the greatest ENOUGH that can be desired.

The whole of a believer's estate is very rich, thus:

1. The least mercy is greater than he (as Jacob confessed), for a man is all misery in himself.
2. The least that he has, as to him, that it might be a mercy (not a snare) cost the value of Christ's blood. A little Diamond costs more than a load of quarry stones.
3. If the stream of mercies be small, yet great is the continuance, from the fountain. A little freehold is better than more by a short lease.
4. Besides all, he has the fountain itself; God Himself. The heavenly man has not only the light but the Sun itself fixed in him as in its Orb. The Christian and God are one, as Christ and God are one. John. 14.20. John. 17.21. All that God gives to believers intends and ends in this, to lead them to God. (Judge your condition by this) God is a wooer, that gives tokens of His love with an intent to give Himself.

You see then God does many ways supply richly.

That richness according to which God will supply is a glorious richness. The glory is three-fold; as the riches are three-fold.

1. There is a glory upon the temporals of a believer. They come from God's right hand. See the difference, Proverbs 3. and in the Patriarch's blessing. The right-hand blessings perfected the left. They come from God's goodwill, not from mere common providence. They all taste loving; they are varnished with love; polished with a beauty as given to Christ for us, as the world was made exceedingly good; that is, beautiful, useful, etc., for the first Adam in innocence. Again, there is a glory in the seasonable giving of temporals to believers, So like apples of gold with pictures of silver. Striped with the blood of Christ, inlaid with the operation of the Spirit sanctifying them unto us. Yea, there is

somewhat of God himself stamped upon every creature, which only the believing eye can see. On vegetables, life, on Animals, understanding and wisdom. And so much of God as is in a creature is most glorious. And God that is in them has laid His Command upon them, to do us good (if we believe) and goodness is glorious.

If there were but the divine order in God's dispensations of outward things, first this, then that as is best for our welfare; this were glorious. He first provides for us the breast, then bread. He dispenses as the parent does clothes, suits fit for our age, and so they sit handsomely. Look how grim disorder is, so comely and glorious is order. He gives not all at once to overwhelm us; nor the last thing first, or the first last.

2. There is a glory in spirituals. In gifts some as in knowledge, elocution, etc. but in grace and graces more. For the grace of favor; It clothes us with Christ's righteousness: This must needs be glorious. (2 Corinthians 5.1 ) it being the righteousness of God. You may perceive it by considering how grim the sight of sin was to you, before you saw that glorious clothing upon you. While you see not yourselves in Christ, mantled in, and clothed with His righteousness, you are an abhorring to yourselves. But when you behold yourselves (yes and as beheld of God in Christ's righteousness) you see your glory, so that you can glory. 1 Corinthians 1.2. Christ is made to us righteousness, etc., that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord. The Apostle adds, 1 Corinthians 3. that the very ministry that holds forth this righteousness to us is far more glorious than the glorious giving of that glorious fiery Law, as it is set forth and called, Deuteronomy 33.2. The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir, and shone forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten

thousand of his Saints, from his right hand went a FIERY Law for them. And then too, the graces of the Saints are glorious. They are the spiritual creation of God. Ephesians 2.10. The purchase of Christ's blood, Ephesians 1.7, 8. The breathings of the Spirit, John 20.22. The Image of God in us. Ephesians 4.24. They make the soul of man (in the bent of it) like Adam's soul; yes, it is another divine soul, in our natural soul.

So that by all glories aforesaid, a Saint is made most glorious within his own court or habitation. He dwells in Christ, glorious in his garments, glorious in his complexion; he is full of righteousness and holiness. Solomon was glorious; the Lilies (says Christ) are more glorious than he, but Christ most glorious; and spiritually and imputatively, as he was, so are we in this world. 1 John 4.17.

3. There is the glory of heaven; which is the platform of all our happiness. I need not argue this glory, but rather declare it, if I (or any else) could. Here below we have a glory, but it is like the glory of a glow-worm, brightened at the night-shining of the stars, in comparison to heaven, which is as the glaring of Diamonds, or sparkling of Crystal looking-glasses, the gloss of cloth of gold, and Tissue, at the sight of the noon-sun. In heaven every glory is lightened and heightened to a transcendency of translucidity and luster. Our natural bodies shall glitter above the face of Moses, Stephen, or innocent Adam; namely, like the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 15. which was most glorious on Tabor. Our reason shall be equalized too, if not made superlative above the highest intellectuals of Angels (for as much as we are nearer in union with God through Christ they.) And as for our graces, every grace shall be raised to the highest perfection, and actings that graces can be extended, or exalted. There in glory, we have the sight of God; either by some extraordinary Species

representing the divine essence, a light of glory the mean while elevating the understanding with a supernatural strength, to behold the representation; or by the light of glory, elevating and strengthening the understanding to the highest, pitch of apprehension, to behold the divine essence immediately presented without any Species, or by any immediate clear vision of God without. Species or elevation by any light, more than is innate in the glorified intellectuals. Doubtless by unspeakable union with Christ, in him we shall apprehend God, as he (so far forth as he is man) doth apprehend him, to our utmost proportion.

In heaven, the fountain of our happiness is substantial glory. Namely, God Himself, perfecting our beings to the highest of our kind; our companions are the Angels, full of superlative glorious qualities, the place filled with rays of both, and we perfected and polished in all things to a glorious hue and lustre. The flower-coloured shining spring, the Golden sea (as Homer calls it), with morning beams, or the spangled starry heavens, on a serene evening, are but shadows to this glory in Heaven. Our communion there is like the most ravishing music, our sights all of admiration, and our thoughts seraphical raptures.

The fourth thing to be explained is the means, namely, Christ Jesus. God, considered in Himself, is able to supply, being infinitely rich and glorious. And naturally, He is willing as the chief good to communicate His goodness to His creatures, considered in their mere and pure naturals; but there is not in Him a moral willingness (as we may say), a willingness of free choice to be communicative of Himself to fallen man, but through Jesus Christ. God, foreseeing what was wisdom and justice to Himself, chose us in Christ. And now in time, He communicates Himself no other way but through Jesus

Christ. He is fixed in, and shines through the Orb of Christ Jesus, 2 Corinthians 4. Shines to us in the face of Christ Jesus; even as after the Sun was made upon the fourth day (though there was some general light before, as innocent Adam had a legal light), there was no light to be communicated to the world but through the Sun. The sum of all we will say of this is briefly this.

1. That Christ's incarnation is the fundamental assurance of our assurance of our nearness to God than Angels, Hebrews 2. That He will be our Immanuel. Matthew 1. Applied, Romans 8. to our justification and salvation. And so will do by us as He did by Christ, in all excellencies whereof we may be capable.
2. The perfecting and formal act of the virtue of this incarnation to communicate Himself to us is our actual union with Christ by the Spirit.
3. That Christ is the pattern to which we must in all things, according to our proportion, be conformed to; and is the beginning of the reassimilating and making us like God's image in the first Innocent Adam, Christ, therefore, is called, the firstborn of every creature, etc.

Useful is this Doctrine, 1. For the invitation of all that stand off at a difference with Christ, totally holding off, or stand off at a distance from Christ, as in a degree strange, fearing to come near and close to Christ; in doubt whether to throw themselves into Christ's arms, fully to trust themselves with Him. Come, says this Doctrine, come in, come near, own God in Christ, and rejoice in Him as yours, that you may come up to this privilege, namely, with assurance of faith to say, My God shall supply all wants. Mine and yours in temporals set all the world together by the ears; Kings say, that is mine, nay, say Parliaments, that is mine; nay, say the people, that is mine. But in spirituals, they set all in tune. Therefore of all things learn to possess

the Lord, to cry by faith, you are mine, as Thomas, My Lord and my God; and as Mary, My God and my Savior. You may as they (but more spiritually) rely on Him, for you have Him held forth to you not only as born but as crucified for you before your eyes. Galatians 3.1. That is, in the preaching of the Gospel; which continually beseeches us to receive Christ. 2 Corinthians 5. Why, therefore, do not men come in and come up closer to Christ Jesus, through whom God will be such a rich supply? And therefore if you be poor like Laodicea, it is because you do not come on through the profession of Christ close to Christ Himself. If you be rich, yet you are not rich indeed, if you do not close with Christ. If you be honourable; yet you are not right honourable, unless you put on Christ. Come, therefore, come, come to God in Christ. Hear those glorious invitations, Isaiah 55.1. to the end of the Chapter. And Revelation 22.17. turn to them, read them, weigh them; they woo you emphatically and pathetically; and answer all scruples. Come, therefore, to Christ. The promise is to you, for it is to all the Lord shall call; that is to all that obey His Call, Acts 2.39. He died for the ungodly, Romans 5. And He came with an intent not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved, John 3.

Oh, therefore, embrace Christ, throw yourselves into His arms. Let your heart say, He is mine by faith, mine in hope; I love Him, I give up myself to Him, I will rest in His arms, lean on His bosom, live in and upon His heart of love, there I will expect all blessings from God. Embrace God in Christ, for here in the Text and Doctrine, He calls out to you in the marketplace of wisdom: come, see what you lack, see what you want. Do you want riches, honour, comfort, anything, everything? See what you want, come and buy without money or any other payment. Isaiah 55:1, Revelation 22:27. And in the Text, He will supply all your needs. Do you want a comfortable home? Psalm 90:1 says, "Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations." Do you want riches? Solomon tells you, "The blessing

of the Lord makes one rich," and Paul tells you that godliness is great gain. We could continue in this manner for all things. His power shall be your refuge, Isaiah 26:20. His love and union shall be your chamber (your bridal chamber) to rejoice in, Song of Solomon 1:4. Do you want peace? The Apostle calls God the God of peace, and Isaiah 26:3 promises, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you." Do you want friends? By faith, Abraham was called the friend of God, which means that God was a friend to him, for God justified him by faith, James 2:25. By obedience (flowing from faith), we manifest ourselves as Christ's friends, John 15:24. Do you want wisdom? And wisdom on how to bear afflictions (perhaps arising from needs)? If anyone lacks wisdom, James 1 advises, "let him ask of God, who gives it liberally."

If anyone, out of a willingness to follow Christ, loses everything, they shall find all things, with addition above what they lost, Matthew 19:28, 29.

Objection: For spiritual needs, God easily supplies them by immediate infusion. But how can He supply temporal needs when they do not exist?

Answer: This is our fault. God provided manna, but some questioned, "Can He provide flesh in the wilderness?" Surely, says that great man in 2 Kings 7:2, He cannot send plenty into besieged Samaria by tomorrow, even if the windows of heaven rained down bread. This or something similar is the language of our unbelieving hearts and the criticisms we make of divine providence, as if we would provoke God to do nothing for us. God, however, can do wondrous things that seem to be done by creation. How wonderfully He led His people from Egypt into Canaan! He will create Jerusalem, a sad city, into joy. He will create peace.



So, you disputants, listen to the words of His mouth, trust Him by faith; He will be faithful to you, according to this Text, to supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Can you identify a spiritual need? Do you feel your need? Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things will be added to you. Embrace Christ closely, then go to God and ask for anything you truly need that may do you good. By this, you shall know whether your outward needs are true and right; you will ask them of God in prayer with boldness. That is not a true need that you dare not ask boldly of God in prayer. Therefore, it is not truly necessary if you dare not confidently request it from God in prayer. Also, any way, manner, or means of attaining something is not necessary if you dare not petition God with a free heart for His blessing upon it. When God is willing to incline His ear, He will prepare your heart to pray, Psalm 10:17. Therefore, go to God in faith, make your requests to Him in prayer, and confidently ask for anything that you genuinely need for your well-being.

The Devil and sin may tell us they will supply our needs, as they told the Angels who fell and Adam. Belzebug seduced the rest, and one of them deceived Adam. The worldly and political powers will assure us that they will supply all our needs. "Come with us," they say. "Join our plot, cooperate, and align with our designs, and you'll achieve success. We will make you prosperous forever." The creatures, with their appealing appearances, will seemingly promise much, and our corrupt hearts and carnal reasoning will tell us many enticing stories. But whom and with what will they supply? Only our senses with tangible things, leaving our inner selves to suffer. Or they may satisfy our lusts with impure objects, which are worse than nothing, poisoning us and leading to greater misery. They may provide, they say, but according to what? Even in direct contrast to this text, they will supply according to the abundance and baseness of evil found in

sin and the Devil. But the voice of this text is the voice of life, the voice of God indeed. He will supply all your needs according to the riches of His glory by Christ Jesus.

The second use is for the enhancement of God in Christ Jesus to bring consolation to those who can wholeheartedly embrace and acknowledge God in Christ, saying, "My God, through the blood of Christ, My God, through the spirit of faith." These individuals will be able to declare, "My God shall provide for all my needs," even for mine and others who are believers, as Paul speaks in the text, for himself and other Saints. God shall provide for all, including widows, orphans, prisoners, and all those things of which we have an absolute need, without any doubt, and those that are necessary for us when it is necessary.

First, we have an absolute need for grace; without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11). And God tells us that we need patience (Hebrews 10:36). Therefore, God must certainly supply these needs according to His promise; He will pour out His Spirit (Acts 2), and according to His assurance, having filled Christ so that we may receive from His fullness (John 1).

Secondly, there is an absolute necessity for everything that is required for gracious actions in all circumstances (Hebrews 4:16). "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in the time of NEED." And God's grace shall be sufficient for us, even in our struggles with Satan (2 Corinthians 12). Compare diligently 1 Corinthians 10:13. Therefore, God must certainly supply these needs as well.

Thirdly, there is an absolute need for what contributes to our natural existence and life, as God wants us to be on Earth for His service. In this respect, Christ said about outward things, "Your heavenly Father

knows you have NEED of these things." Therefore, God must certainly supply as much food, clothing, liberty, peace, etc., as is necessary for us to be able to act according to God's will.

Fourthly, there is an absolute need for God to be glorified through us; He must achieve His purpose. "All things were made for His glory" (Revelation 4). Therefore, whatever is necessary for us to further God's glory, God must certainly supply.

All these are only absolute necessary provisions. However, God sometimes supplies exuberantly, giving good measure pressed down and running over, not just for necessity but also for delight. He will supply our present needs in such a way that, from our experience, we will be able to confidently declare about future needs, "My God shall provide for all needs," as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Who delivered us from such a great death and does deliver; in whom we trust He will yet deliver." And in Romans 5, "Tribulation works patience, patience experience, experience hope." Past mercies are the first fruits of the future, as the Apostle argues in Romans 11, stating that God has more mercy for the Jews, whom He calls the "lump," because the first-fruits of the fathers before the flood and the Patriarchs after the flood were made holy by mercy received from God.

As God supplies for all with all (as we have mentioned), He also supplies suitably to the condition of the Saints in this world. Hell and the world strive to put the Saints in need and all kinds of wants. However, the text assures us, "God will supply all your needs." Hell and the world seek to make them poor, needy, and miserable. Yet, the text states, "God will supply all your needs according to His riches." Hell and the world do nothing but render them contemptible and ignominious. However, the text promises, "God will supply

according to His riches in glory." Hell and the world strive, if possible, to separate them from Christ. But the text declares, "God will supply them through Christ Jesus."

Object: But how will God supply us?

Answer: Either ordinarily or extraordinarily, God is pleased (when He sees fit) to use means, but He is not bound to any specific means, method, or manner of acting. When Moses spent much time with God on the mountain, he could fast for forty days; when Peter had a vision (Acts 10), he forgot his hunger; when Paul was in a rapture, he didn't even know whether he was in the body or not and therefore didn't concern himself with bodily needs. When we contemplate our clothing with Christ's righteousness and eternal glory, we will pay more attention to our spiritual clothing than to garments that can be eaten by moths (2 Corinthians 5). While Adam enjoyed God's presence, he paid no attention to his nakedness. No difficulties can entangle and overwhelm Paul's spirit when he considers Christ's fullness, through whom he can accomplish all things (Philippians 4). A word from Christ's mouth silences him in the face of great temptations (2 Corinthians 12). There may be distractions in the affairs of states and churches, with people wondering about the outcome. But the consideration of this fact remains: Christ must reign (Psalm 2, Hebrews 2), the four-metal image representing all human power opposing Him must be shattered (Daniel 2), Antichrist must fall, as certain as if it has already happened (Revelation 18), Christ's Church must be established in glory (Revelation 21), and the Saints must rule (Revelation 20). These, I say, will quiet our minds.

Object: But my heart has many doubts in it.

Answer: Do you call Him "my God," and have you had previous experiences of what He has done for you? Then, like Paul in the text,

you may boldly say, "My God shall supply all my wants." Yes, the same God who makes any promise will give you assurance, through that promise, that He will fulfil it when you seriously consider that promise. He will make you wait until you see it done. While waiting in hope upon God, a soul often has much communion with God. In this communion, God impresses remarkable convictions upon the spirits of His Saints concerning assurance (Psalm 130:5-7). So, if the whole world were to persuade them that it is in vain to wait, they cannot be deterred. Indeed, some Saints, while waiting upon God in great suffering, have almost received prophetic impressions upon their spirits. Hus, a Bohemian, signifying a Goose in his language, said that if they burned him in the fire, within a hundred years a Swan would rise to carry on the cause for which he suffered. And indeed, Luther (signifying a Swan) rose up and did so most successfully. The Martyr who was last burned in Smithfield told the people to take comfort, for he was convinced he would be the last to suffer under Queen Mary, and so he was. The world does not take into account these secret impressions. Therefore, they sometimes hatch great plots, thinking they will gain the support of the people. However, God instills contrary impressions, causing all their schemes to come to nothing.

Question: When will God supply?

Answer: When His time has come. He will not wait a minute longer than the most suitable time, nor will He act a minute before it. But just at the appointed time, down to the minute, He will do it. In John 2, when there was a shortage of wine, His mother informed Him of it. He replied that His hour had not yet come. But there were only a few moments left, and as soon as they ran out, He turned water into wine, which happened shortly after His mother spoke to Him. You

see, Christ will be punctual at the exact moment that is most appropriate to benefit us.

Object: Many influential people and circumstances can obstruct the supplies we need.

Answer: What are mountains compared to Zerubbabel (as Zechariah says)? What can prevent God from making His path smooth? Indeed, who can resist God when He impresses the hearts of powerful individuals so that they do not harm or hinder? Both Laban and Esau approached Jacob in anger, but God impressed their hearts so that they did not harm him, and they became as gentle as lambs. There have been plots against us by powerful individuals, as we mentioned earlier, but God impressed the common people so that they could not act or execute anything.

Object: But I am full of unworthiness.

Answer: Yes, you are unworthy in yourself, but recognizing and acknowledging it is the way to remove it as an obstacle. Especially if you look away from yourself to God's free mercy through Christ (Psalm 130:4). The text provides you with a clear answer: God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory THROUGH CHRIST JESUS.

Even though you are unworthy, believe in and hope in Christ, who is worthy. He accepts us in Himself, the Beloved (Ephesians 1). Oh, how I wish people wouldn't merely adopt religion superficially, based on wit, intellect, reputation, and the favour of powerful individuals, but would instead embrace the essence of faith, hope, and communion with God. Through these, resting in God's bosom will bring peace, even when all forms of assistance are suspended.

Object: I am in a state and condition of afflictions, imprisonments, etc., which are entirely contrary to any probability of receiving supplies for my needs.

Answer: God, to demonstrate His wisdom and power and to test our faith, often takes contrary courses to provide for us. Just as in Creation, when He was about to create a beautiful, well-lit world, He first created a chaotic state in darkness; in His providence, He frequently works through contraries. Israel had to leave Canaan and go to Egypt to be preserved for Canaan. Initially, when Moses and Aaron were sent to negotiate with Pharaoh to let them go, things got worse for them. Sometimes, God deliberately places us in afflictions and appears to hide Himself, so that we may pray, believe, and hope until He returns to help (Hosea 5, Isaiah 1). Regarding your specific situation of being in prison: Concerning your inward condition, the heathens used to say, "Solus sapiens est liber," which means, "Only a wise person is free." A wise person is freer in prison than a fool at large, and this is most gloriously true spiritually. If Christ has made us free, we are genuinely free. It's a splendid freedom to go to prison to gain freedom of conscience. Regarding your outward condition of imprisonment, Joseph had to go through prison to be elevated. The Lord will lead Jeremiah to the Potter's house, where He will teach him the lesson of free grace, that God shows mercy because He wants to. Once, a prisoner in this place spoke a glorious sentence when condemned to lose his head. He uttered it on the scaffold.

"If there had been," he said, "an easier way to heaven for me, I would have found it. But God chose to lead me this way rather than no way to heaven."

Objector: "You have used many fair words, but they seem to be mere ideas."

Answer: "This is how our confused and restless minds consider tangible realities as mere illusions. Let me tell you, as Paul once said to the Corinthians, God and His Gospel ministers are not restricted, but it is your own narrow perspectives that limit you. Otherwise, we could attain to what other Saints have reached. A woman of humble means recently said,

'I lack nothing; I have everything in Christ.'

Are these mere ideas, which reveal to us the ultimate outcome, namely contentment? For God in Christ is the only true contentment. This becomes evident when we compare a poor believer with a wealthy unbeliever: One experiences much contentment, while the other has none. Is this just an abstract concept? 'He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also freely give us all things?' (Romans 8) And in Psalm 37, 'I have been young, and now am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken, etc.' Are God's provisions for crows, sparrows, and ravens mere ideas? From this, our Saviour argues, how much more will God care for those who trust in Him? Are these notions, which are most evidently real in practice? In these difficult times, a woman who had lost her possessions and was concerned for her children, lacking clothes, fell down before the Lord in prayer, lamenting in this way,

'Lord, one child needs a coat, and another needs a particular garment. What should I do? My eyes and hopes are fixed upon You for help.'

Suddenly, the Lord provided for them in a remarkable manner. Two others were in distress—one tormented by pain and the other deeply moved with compassion.



'Come,' said the husband to the wife, 'if it is God's will for us to endure this hardship, we will even employ more help to assist and embrace the affliction.'

And, behold, the Lord promptly removed the affliction. I have witnessed many years of persistent prayers for a blessing, and often the deliverance seemed imminent but was not brought forth. Finally, it came as if in a dream, with the matter being resolved when hardly any means were employed. Therefore, I conclude: Believe, pray, hope, and wait upon God, and He will unquestionably (according to the unassailable truth of this passage) provide for all your needs in accordance with His abundant riches in glory through Christ Jesus. Amen."

FINIS.

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