

Miracles of Supply

Passages: Mt 17:24–27; Lk 5:3–10; Jn 21:4–11; Heb 11:1; Col 1:16; Lk 11:28; Joel 2:13; Prov 10:22

Memory Verse

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Work [Behavior]
1. God provides for all our needs. 2. God’s grace is abundant and sufficient for us.	1. God is omniscient. 2. God is the source of all things. 3. God is compassionate.	1. Learn to rely on God and not on ourselves. 2. Repay God’s love by returning to Him with urgency and doing His work.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. The Miracle of Finding a Coin in a Fish’s Mouth (Mt 17:24–27)
- B. The Miracle of Catching a Great Number of Fish (Lk 5:3–10)
 - **Life Application:** The Purpose of God’s Supply
- C. The Miracle of Breakfast by the Sea (Jn 21:4–11)
 - **Life Application:** The Goal of God’s Supply

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Draw close to God with complete faith and obedience so that He can supply us with immeasurable grace and blessings. God’s providence, just like His word, is wonderful, perfect, and full of abundance.

Introduction

We have been given the ability to solve various issues in our daily life. Some abilities come easily to us, while others have been accumulated through years of experience and learning. Yet, no matter how capable we may be or how much we try, there are still moments out of our control and beyond our abilities; these moments may result in disappointment, helplessness, or anxiety. Today, let us study three miracles to learn how Jesus Christ provides for our needs and the reasons behind His providence.

A. The Miracle of Finding a Coin in a Fish's Mouth

Let us read Matthew 17:24–27.

This miracle occurs as a result of the tax collector coming to collect the temple tax from both Jesus Christ and Peter. Unlike the common Roman civil tax, the temple tax is a religious tax paid to support the temple in Jerusalem. God established this tax in the wilderness, instructing Moses to collect half a shekel from every male twenty years and older as an offering to the Lord (Ex 30:11–16). The tax collected provided for the work of the tabernacle and, eventually, for the costs of the temple, including during the time of Christ.

After Peter came into the room, Jesus Christ knew what was on Peter's mind. So, He asked Peter: Who pays the taxes, the common people or the sons of the king? As the Son of God, the temple belonged to Jesus, and as such, He should be exempt. But rather than cause unnecessary offense and conflict, Jesus Christ chose to pay the tax. He gave Peter precise instructions about where to obtain the money.

How illogical does Jesus' command sound? There are so many fish in the sea; what are the odds that the first one Peter catches would contain the exact amount of money needed to pay the tax? All these are questions that Peter could have asked, but instead of questioning Jesus' command, he obeyed with complete faith. What is faith? "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). Even though Jesus' words seemed to describe the impossible, Peter nevertheless believed with faith and took action. Thus, he was able to experience God's supply, which is not of this world.

Learning About Jesus Christ from His Supply

1. Jesus Christ is all-knowing

Jesus Christ was not physically present when the conversation between the tax collector and Peter took place, yet He knew exactly what had happened. Our Lord is all-knowing. Though He is not physically in the midst of our tribulations, He knows the difficulties we are facing. For this reason, our Lord knows our specific needs and how to provide for us, even in times when even we may not have a full understanding of our circumstances.

2. Jesus Christ is Lord of creation

Jesus Christ is omniscient; He knew that the first fish Peter would catch would yield the exact amount needed to pay the tax. Not only is He omniscient, but He is also in control of all things: both organic, such as the fish, and inorganic, such as the coin. All creation is under Him and obeys Him. Just as Paul reminds us, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (Col 1:16).

As children of God, we should feel relieved and strengthened to know that nothing is impossible for God. No matter how difficult our situation or how painful our struggle, our God knows and can provide a way. People around us may be willing to help, but they too are limited because we all are simply human. Our Lord can provide not only for our physical needs, but also more importantly, for our spiritual needs. Who better to seek and ask for help from than the source of all things, our Lord Jesus Christ?

B. The Miracle of Catching a Great Number of Fish

Let us read Luke 5:3–10.

This miracle was performed when Jesus Christ first met the disciples. After using Peter’s boat to teach the multitudes, Jesus Christ asked Peter to launch the boat into the deep and let down the net. Peter had doubts since he was an experienced fisherman. Furthermore, he had already toiled all night and caught nothing.

However, Peter did not allow his doubts to keep him from obeying Jesus. After listening to what Jesus Christ had taught the multitude, he was willing to follow up with actions in complete faith and obedience. Jesus Christ said in Luke 11:28, “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” Sure enough, Peter experienced a miracle that was beyond his expectations. The number of fish was so great that Peter needed his partners to come and help him pull up the net. Peter’s experience reminds us that in the presence of God, our effort and experiences are often insignificant. Likewise, if we rely only on our own effort and experiences, we will come up short in life. But if God is in our life, just as Jesus was in the boat, His word, abidance, and grace will satisfy our needs.

Immediately after catching a great number of fish, Peter began to see his true self and recognized his sin before God. However, Jesus responded by entrusting Peter with even a greater work—to be a “fisher of men.”

The Purpose of God’s Supply

1. To shift our reliance from ourselves to God

“Believe in yourself” is a common value that is preached to us in today’s society. We are taught to believe in our abilities, our judgments, and our experience. But when we rely on ourselves, we forget who the ultimate provider is.

- There is a point in our lives where we will come to realize an important fact of life: we can toil, put forth a tremendous effort, or even use up all of our resources in pursuit of our desires, but still turn up empty-handed. But the end of man’s way is the beginning of God’s grace. Tribulations help us realize that we need to put our faith in God and not in ourselves. We must undergo trials of life, as they make us reevaluate our way of life in Christ—experience versus obedience. Our limitations are a blessing that we can give thanks for, as it is often the difficulties in our life that help us to refocus on the principles of God, not of this world.

2. To increase our understanding of God

The purpose of God’s providence in our life is not merely to assist us with our needs, but more importantly, to give us a greater understanding of God’s nature. Peter was able to experience Jesus’ blessings and power by following His words. He witnessed that Jesus Christ is God—the Creator and Master of all things—and that His supply is immeasurable. As we ourselves experience God’s abundant grace, we also experience the promises and power of God’s word. It opens us up to a deeper understanding of God’s love and a greater awareness of His true existence.

- Let us ask ourselves: When we experience God’s providence, do we come to know God more than before experiencing it? Or do we simply take His providence for granted?
- When was the last time God answered your needs? What did you learn about God’s divine character? How does our experience with God help us increase our faith?

3. To bring self-awareness

When Peter witnessed the miracle, he fell to his knees and acknowledged himself as a sinner. Through God’s providence, not only can we come to know God even more, we can also come to learn more about ourselves. One brother testified that when he first came to True Jesus Church as a truth-seeker, he did not understand much of the sermon. But he felt that while sitting in the chapel, listening to the words of God made him feel small and filthy. This is a self-awareness about who we are—we all fall short of God’s glory. Paul wrote, “For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle” (1 Cor 15:9) when he understood his error in persecuting the church. But as long as we are willing to surrender to God and His guidance, He will listen to and care for us.

C. The Miracle of Breakfast by the Sea

Let’s read John 21:4–11.

This miracle took place when Jesus Christ showed Himself to the disciples for the third time after His resurrection. Being spiritually weak and lost without guidance, the disciples had returned to being fishermen. Knowing this, Jesus Christ stood patiently on the shore awaiting their return. The Israelites often went astray and forgot the teachings of God, yet God continuously called for their return. As Jesus stood on the shore, the first thing He asked was whether or not they had eaten. The God that we worship is a merciful and compassionate God. Whenever we are lacking, our Lord knows and cares for our needs. As mentioned in Hebrews 4:15, our God sympathizes with our weaknesses. Our Lord is standing on the shore waiting to share our burdens and worries—when we are willing to seek Him and return to Him, He will care for us and provide for our needs (Joel 2:13).

Jesus commanded the disciples where to cast the net, and once again the disciples gained plentiful fish—153 to be exact. However, the Bible specifically states that despite the great number of fish, the net did not break. This reminds us again that when we obey God’s word, blessings will follow. The blessings of God can be abundant and rich, but they will not overwhelm us or add to our worries. “The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it” (Prov 10:22). God’s grace is always perfect and sufficient for us, just like the net that held an abundant number of fish.

As soon as the disciples experienced the miracle, one of the disciples immediately recognized it as the miraculous work of the Lord. Peter even plunged into the sea to swim quickly ashore and see Jesus Christ. As the other disciples reached the shore, Jesus Christ asked them to bring some of the fish for breakfast, as He had already prepared the meal (Jn 21:12).

The Goal of God’s Supply

1. To draw us closer to God

As mentioned in the previous miracle recorded in the Gospel of Luke, God’s providence will help us understand God better. However, sometimes we can forget His providence because it has been too long since we last experienced God. For example, how long has it been since you last felt the power of Holy Spirit? How long has it been since you last thought about the love of God? Or the joy and peace from God? Many times, God’s grace and providence remind us of God’s unending love and

promises. Just as the miracle reminded the disciples of what Jesus Christ had done for them, we are also reminded of what we know of God from our past blessings.

- We should not simply be reminded of God's grace. We should constantly count God's blessings in our daily life.
- As we learn more about God and His grace, what significance does it hold for us? What should we strive to achieve in our faith? Like Peter, we should go to Jesus' side quickly. Since we have already experienced how wonderful God's blessings are, we will desire God's presence all the more.
- "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (Jas 4:8). How can we draw near to God? By spending time with God through worship and prayer, and by inviting God into every single aspect of our life. By drawing closer to Him, we develop a stronger spiritual life!

2. To use what God has given us to do His work

When the disciples came to shore, Jesus Christ asked them to bring some of the fish that they had caught. Similar to the disciples catching 153 fish, we too have received abundant providence from God. These may be strengths, gifts, or wonderful testimonies that God has given us. Instead of keeping these blessings for ourselves, we should follow Jesus' teaching to give them as an offering for the Lord so that others can witness and share these blessings. We can use our personal strengths to serve our brethren, use our gifts to serve in church holy work, and use our wonderful experiences of God to testify to truth-seekers or brothers and sisters to further glorify the name of God.

(Teachers: The following Life Application questions are included on the Student Handout.)

Life Application

- *Why do we need to cast aside our self-reliance to see God's providence?*
- *How can God's providence change our faith?*
- *How do we answer to God's providence?*

Check for Understanding

1. **Why did Jesus and Peter need to pay temple tax?** The temple tax is a religious tax used to support the temple in Jerusalem. Every Jew needs to pay the temple tax according to God's instructions to Moses. Even though Jesus points out to Peter that as the Son of God, He does not need to pay, He still instructs Peter to pay the tax to avoid offending others.
2. **What do we learn about Jesus Christ through the miracle of finding a coin in the fish's mouth?** Jesus Christ is God, who is all-knowing; He is the Creator of everything, and all creation is under His control.
3. **What did Peter experience about Jesus Christ in the miracle of catching a great number of fish?** Peter experienced blessings by obeying Jesus' command. He witnessed Jesus' sovereignty, which is beyond human logic and understanding. Lastly, through Jesus' glory, he understood that he was a sinner.
4. **What can our trials help us to realize?** Trials help us realize that we should rely on God and not on ourselves because as humans, we are limited in power.
5. **What additional actions should we take as we experience God's providence?** We should draw closer to God because we have learned how wonderful it is to have Him in our lives. In addition, we should use the blessings God has given us to serve Him.

Memory Verse

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Meaning

Our Lord knows our needs because He is compassionate and caring. He is able to provide for us because He is omnipotent—all things have been created by Him and are under His control. His grace is so abundant that we find no lack in Him, and to repay God’s unfailing love, we should further use His grace to serve Him through every good deed.

Conclusion

Mankind constantly seeks things of this world, whether tangible or intangible. We may seek material satisfaction or worldly joy and peace to fill the emptiness inside us. But when we rely only on our own experience and effort, many times we come to realize that we cannot find true and lasting satisfaction. However, it is possible to achieve what seems impossible through God. God is omnipotent and omniscient; He can provide what this world cannot. His providence is immeasurable and in Him our labor will not be in vain. Jesus said, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn 4:13–14).

When we come to know God through His providence, let us not linger in drawing ourselves closer to Him. He is waiting for us to return so that He can give us love and grace; He is there to provide for and satisfy our needs. And when we are restored from our weaknesses, let us also not forget to strengthen our brethren by sharing what God has given us.

Lesson 10 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about God's character and power?
Our Lord knows our needs because He is compassionate and caring. He is able to provide for us because He is omnipotent. His grace is so abundant that we will find no lack in Him.
2. What can we learn about God through God's supply?
God is omniscient and knows all our needs even when we ourselves do not have a full understanding. As Lord of all creation, God is omnipotent and has power over all things.
3. What does it mean to shift our reliance from ourselves towards God?
We are taught to believe in our abilities, judgments, and experience, but when we rely on ourselves, we forget who our ultimate provider is. When we encounter trials, we must learn to rely on God, not on ourselves, to overcome them.
4. Choose one characteristic of God that you learned in this lesson. Describe how it was manifested.
*God is omniscient: Jesus understood His disciples' needs even before they knew them.
God is the source of all things: Through the coin in the fish's mouth and the great number of fish that the disciples caught when they first met Jesus both times, and when Jesus appeared after His resurrection.
God is compassionate: Jesus did not rebuke His disciples for their return to their old occupation. Instead, He patiently awaited their return on the shore and prepared food for them.*
5. In what ways can God's providence change us?
We can attain a greater understanding of both God and ourselves. We can also draw closer to God and, instead of relying on ourselves, learn to rely on God.
6. Describe a gift that you have and why you think it is from God. How can you use it to serve God?
Personal answers.