

What is the best source of welfare and provision? (10:3)

The LORD will not allow the righteous to hunger, but He will reject the craving of the wicked.

THE TEXT (NASB)

The LORD will not allow the righteous to hunger, but He will reject the craving of the wicked.

The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish, but he casteth away the substance of the wicked. Classic KJV - Proverbs 10:3

INTRODUCTION



The righteous have a life preserver that the wicked don't. Righteousness is a divine welfare program.

The word LORD in uppercase signifies the proper name of God. It means that the personal God (Yahweh, Jehovah, Jesus) rules everything, down to the tiniest details, directing resources to some people and withholding them from others. We are not alone in our accumulating wealth.

The LORD looks at a person's righteousness before he provides a handout. The LORD gives better to the righteous than to the wicked. It is a real privilege to witness some of the ways people have received divine assistance.



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COMMENTARY

God-Directed Hunger



A literal and likely more accurate translation is “righteous soul” rather than simply “the righteous,” so the KJV uses the expression, “soul of the righteous.” God certainly allows the bodies of righteous people to experience physical hunger. And He uses devastating famine to discipline a rebellious people, as Elijah prophesized (see below).

The Spirit of God deliberately led Jesus into the wilderness to suffer physical hunger, when Satan tempted him (Matthew 4:2). God’s children also suffered famine as part of His Providential plan, as when famine drove Jacob and his sons into exile in Egypt (Genesis 43:1-2). Christ’s apostles suffered hunger with Him (Matthew 12:1), and after Christ’s departure, the apostle Paul gladly suffered hunger in spreading the faith (2 Corinthians 11:27).

George Müller

An amazing, well-documented example of divine welfare comes from an English orphanage of the 1800’s, run by George Müller. God provided food, clothing, shelter, and education for as many as two thousand orphans in miraculous and spectacular ways. Here’s an example of what happened early one morning when there was absolutely no food on the premises, but hundreds of children sat down for breakfast unaware of the empty cupboards:

One morning in 1861, Abigail was playing in Müller's garden on Ashley Down when he came and took her by the hand. ‘Come, see what our Father will do,’ he said to her.

He led her into the long dining-room. The plates, cups and bowls were on the table, but they were all empty. The children were standing waiting for breakfast.

‘Children, you know we must be in time for school,’ said Müller. Lifting his hand he prayed, ‘Dear Father, we thank you for what you are going to give us to eat.’



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There was a knock at the door. It was the baker.

'Mr Müller I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you didn't have bread for breakfast, and the Lord wanted me to send you some. So I got up at two o'clock and baked some fresh bread and have brought it.'

Müller thanked the baker and said a short prayer, praising God for His care.

Then there was a second knock at the door. This time, it was the milkman.

'Mr Müller, my milk cart has broken down outside the orphanage. I should like to bring in all the cans of milk, so that I can empty my wagon and repair it.'

- Heroes of the Cross: George Muller by Roger Steer¹

Take a look at these three videos that detail some of Müller's anecdotes of God's miraculous provision.

[Robber of the Cruel Streets](#) (2 min): A trailer of the movie Robber of the Cruel Streets dealing with the misery of orphans in the English workhouses during the industrial revolution.

[The Preacher's Own Account - George Muller HD Final](#) (40 min): The preacher's own account is like a personal testimony of what God did for him and through him.

[George Muller Documentary](#) (60 min): Detailed documentary with a brief account of a visit to the orphanage from contemporary author Charles Dickens.

Creatures or Children



God provides for the real needs of His children, as distinct from those who are merely his creatures. So the text does not say that the LORD never lets one of his children die from starvation. God's great protection is from inner hunger, that gnawing lack of inner peace. A strong, well-fed soul—mind, will, and passions—is much better than a strong well-fed body. God does not abandon His children at their physical death, so Jesus tells his



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followers not to worry about “what you will eat,” since God feeds even of the birds that store up no grain (Matthew 6:31-34). Angels came and served Jesus food after he had successfully resisted the devil in the wilderness (Matthew 4:11). God sustained Elijah with food from the ravens while others were in a severe famine (1 Kings 17:6).

Rejection

In stark contrast, the LORD rejects the craving of the wicked. Proverbs 28:9 says, “He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, even his prayer is an abomination.” So one sign of wickedness is blatant rejection of the Ten Commandments. It seems God does not listen to those who do not want to listen to Him. The text advises us to seek righteousness and so qualify for the LORD’s provision.

Power for Living

Righteousness can’t come from a list of do’s and don’ts. A moral law alone can never make someone perfect. It can even bring frustration, since it reveals our own inadequacy. And more rules just don’t fix the root problem.

As a university student, I had a summer job cleaning offices. Late one evening, as I was vacuuming behind the president’s desk, I saw two identical file folders. Both were closed. One was blank. The other had the words, CONFIDENTIAL—HIGHLY PERSONAL, stamped on the cover. If both folders had been blank, I wouldn’t have slowed my vacuuming. But I suddenly found myself wrestling with the impulse to open one of the folders—and guess which one.

All rules, laws, and regulations reveal to us our in-born tendency to rebel. Laws are good but they can’t produce life. To get life, we need more than a set of rules, principles, and guidelines. No—not even inspirational pictures.

Christian author John Bunyan (1628-1688) expressed it well:

Run, John, run, the law commands, but gives us neither feet nor hands,

Far better news the Gospel brings: It bids us fly and gives us wings

The Gospel (meaning “good news”) is all about the life and work of Jesus Christ. The law came though Moses. Grace and truth came through the person Jesus Christ (John 1:17).



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OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life," John 6:35. Amazing!

Jesus draws attention to himself as a source of nourishment. To the best of my knowledge, no other great teacher (eg. Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Buddha, Moses) ever made such a claim about himself. Paul describes Jesus as the last Adam, as a "life-giving spirit," 1 Corinthians 15:45.

Jesus, as the last Adam, is the start of a new type of human person—a divine makeover.

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Ask the LORD to include you in the number of the righteous. By seeking to be one of the righteous ones, you will also secure your food supply.
- Carefully consider the warnings in Malachi 2:1-2 and 1 Samuel 2:30,31. Note that those who snub God deliberately and repeatedly, will have their prayers ignored and their blessings neutralized.
- Read Matthew 6:25-34 in the New Testament. How do the teachings of Jesus Christ support or contradict this passage.
- The righteous are not promised all that they can imagine (boats, houses, lands etc.), but just enough to keep from starvation. The LORD promises to meet the *needs* of the righteous, but not their *greeds*. If you consider yourself to be one of the righteous, are your financial expectations based on needs or greeds.
- Open one application of Wisdomwithwealth.org and search for the words "the righteous" and then open another and search for the words "the wicked". Compare these two lists. Note how differently God treats each group.

Which of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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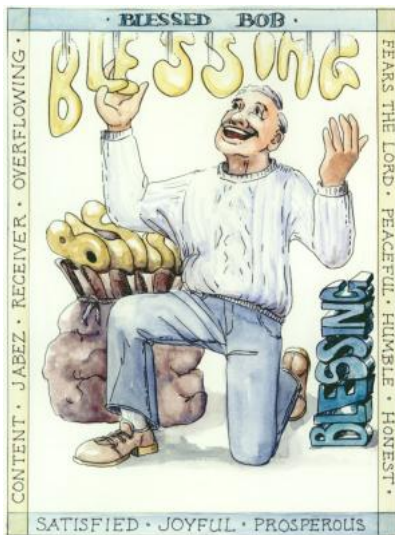
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KEY WORDS

hunger, LORD, more assets (quantity), poverty, prayer, righteous, social assistance, virtue, wicked, famine, bf saving

ILLUSTRATION

[Who is Blessed Bob?](#)



Blessed Bob is very fortunate. He recognizes that good things come from God! God is shunned by many, but not by Bob. Bob loves God. He wants to receive all the good things that God has for him. He's not too proud to ask God for help. In fact, Bob prays often. Some think that he prays without ceasing. But he is not without fault. Blessed Bob makes many mistakes, and when he does, he admits his errors. He corrects them and presses on.

Bob gets so many blessings he feels overwhelmed. His cup overflows. But he doesn't hoard his blessings. Like Generous Genevieve, Blessed Bob likes to give to others. He is truly prosperous, even though there are many who are financially richer than he is.

We see examples of Blessed Bob in the Bible in the lives of Job and Joseph. Job went through some very good times (Job 29:2-25) and some very bad times (Job 2:7-8). Joseph had similar financial cycles (Genesis 39:2,21). Both men kept their focus on God, not on their financial condition (Job 1:21, Genesis 50:19-21).

More recently we have examples of those who have lived with the same life focus. R. G LeTourneau was the inventor of the largest earth moving machines in the 1930's and 1940's. He credited God for his tremendous success. He gave away much of his wealth while he was



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still living saying that, "When I shovel money out to God's interests, God shovels money back to me, but God's shovel is bigger than mine." He was called the mover of men and mountains because of his great work and influence. On his gravestone, R. G. LeTourneau left all visitors with these words, SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU MATTHEW 6:33.

Blessed Bob is full of joy. He is satisfied with life!



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FOOTNOTES

¹ Roger Steer, *Heroes of the Cross: George Muller* (Basingstoke: Marhsall Morgan & Scott, 1984), 58-59.

