

Philippians

God's Provision for Our Needs [4:10-20]

• **Being Content with His Provision [4:10-13]**

- But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; Ἐχάρην δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μεγάλως ὅτι ἤδη ποτὲ ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν,
 - The word “rejoiced” is from χαίρω (chairō) which means “rejoice” or “be glad”.
 - Rejoicing has been a theme of this letter (nine occurrences) [1:18_(x2), 2:17, 18, 28; 3:1; 4:4_(x2), 10].
 - The word “revived” is from ἀναθάλλω (anathallō) which means “grow again” or “bloom again”.
 - The emphasis here is on something that had been present previously, but had waned.
 - The word “concern” is from φρονέω (phroneō) which means “set one’s mind on” or “judge”.
 - This is a thinking word that occurs most often in Philippians [1:7; 2:2_(x2), 5; 3:15_(x2), 19; 4:2, 10_(x2)].
 - The majority of the remainder of the uses of φρονέω (phroneō) occurs in the book of Romans [8:5; 11:20; 12:3_(x2), 16_(x2); 14:6_(x2), 15:5].
- indeed, you were concerned about this *before*, but you had no opportunity to help. ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε, ἠκαίρεισθε δέ.
 - The Greek words ἐφ’ ᾧ (eph’ hō) are not translated in the NASB.
 - In this context this phrase means “about this” referring to Paul’s circumstances.
 - The phrase “lacked opportunity” is the past tense of ἀκαίρειομαι (akaireomai) which means “have no opportunity”.
 - The opportunity in view is to help Paul financially.
- Not that I speak from a position of need, οὐχ ὅτι καθ’ ὑστέρησιν λέγω,
 - The phrase “from want” is καθ’ ὑστέρησιν (kath’ husterēsīn) which means “in accordance with need”.
 - The idea Paul is communicating is that he is not in a *position* of need.
- for I myself have learned to be self-sufficient in whatever circumstances I find myself in. ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμι αὐτάρκης εἶναι.
 - The phrase “I have learned” is ἐγὼ ἔμαθον (egō emathon).
 - The verb ἔμαθον (emathon) itself means “I have learned”, so Paul added ἐγὼ (egō) for emphasis.
 - The word “content” is αὐτάρκης (autarkēs) which means “content” or “self-sufficient”.
 - Given the context, “self-sufficient” is a better translation of this word.
 - The verb “I am” is εἰμι (eimi) which means “I am”.
 - A very loose translation of εἰμι (eimi) that captures what Paul is communicating here would be “I find myself in”.

- I know how to get along with very little, and I also know how to live in prosperity;
οἶδα καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι, οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν·
 - The phrase “how to get along with humble means” is the infinitive of ταπεινόω (tapeinoō) which means “(how) to be humble”.
 - The translation “with humble means” is more literal, but “with very little” reads better.
 - The phrase “how to live in prosperity” is the infinitive of περισσεύω (perisseuō) which means “(how) to have an abundance”.
 - The idea is communicated with “prosperity”, but the notion of having an abundance is important.
- in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being well fed and going hungry,
ἐν παντὶ καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν μεμύημαι, καὶ χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πεινᾶν
 - The phrase “I have learned the secret” is from μυέω (mueō) which means “initiate”.
 - This word was used specifically of initiation into the “mystery” religions.
 - One who had been properly initiated would then be privy to the secrets of the “mystery” religion (and supposedly saved through the initiation process).
 - The phrase “being filled” is from χορτάζω (chortazō) which means “fed” or “filled”.
 - The context here makes the translation “being well fed” more appropriate.
- both of having abundance and experiencing need.
καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι·
 - The phrase “having abundance” is the infinitive of περισσεύω (perisseuō) which was translated “prosperity” earlier in this verse.
 - As we saw before, “having an abundance” is at the core of the meaning of this word.
 - The phrase “suffering need” is the infinitive of ὑστερέω (hustereō) which means “need” or “lack”.
 - The translation “suffering need” implies that Paul was suffering, so “experiencing need” is better.
- I have the ability to do all things in Him who increases my strength.
πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντί με.
 - The phrase “I can do” is ἰσχύω (ischuō) which means “have power” or “have ability”.
 - This word indicates the potential to do things and implies that volition is involved.
 - The phrase “through Him” is ἐν τῷ (en tō) which means “in Him”.
 - This describes our position in Christ as well as our abiding in Him.
 - The word “strengthens” is from ἐνδυναμόω (endunamoō) which means “grow in strength”.
 - The idea is that Christ increases our strength over time as we abide in Him.

- Principles of Philippians 4:10-13
 - Paul was very thankful for the support (prayer and financial) he had received from the Philippians.
 - They always had the desire to support Paul, but circumstances had prevented them from having the opportunity to provide him with support.
 - As soon as the opportunity presented itself, the Philippians stepped up [Phil 1:3-7].
 - Likewise, as long as we have opportunities to support missionaries we should do so through prayer and/or financial contributions.
 - Paul never begged the Philippians for their support because he knew God would provide for his needs no matter what circumstances he might encounter.
 - Paul could survive just fine with very little and he could maintain his humility and integrity when he had an abundance.
 - He had been “initiated” through his experiences into the “secret” of living with plenty of food and living without much to eat at all.
 - Life had taught Paul to be “self-sufficient” in the sense that he had come to know that God’s matchless grace was sufficient [2 Cor 12:9-10].
 - What allowed Paul to handle both abundance and need was not his own strength, but the strength that God supplied [Eph 3:16; Col 1:11].
 - The strength which God supplies is sufficient for the task at hand and increases in proportion as we continue in the faith [Acts 9:20-22].
 - True contentment in our lives will come as we learn this “secret” of relying upon God to supply increasing wisdom and strength to accomplish the work assignments He gives to us [Eph 2:10].

• He Provides Through Giving [4:14-18]

- Nevertheless, you have done well to share a contribution *with me* in my time of hardship.
πλὴν καλῶς ἐποιήσατε συγκοινωνήσαντές μου τῇ θλίψει.
 - The phrase “share with me in” is from συγκοινωνέω (sunkoinōneō) which is the verb κοινωνέω (koinōneō) and the prefix συν (sun).
 - The verb κοινωνέω (koinōneō) means “contribute” [Rom 12:13], “share” [Rom 15:27; Gal 6:6; Phil 4:15; 1 Tim 5:22; Heb 2:14; 1 Pet 4:13] or “participate” [2 John 11].
 - The prefix συν (sun) means “together with”.
 - In this context, this word refers to a grace gift of financial support from the Philippians.
 - The word “affliction” is from θλίψις (thlipsis) which means “trouble that inflicts distress”.
 - The idea here is that Paul had been experiencing a time of hardship.
- You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at my first preaching of the gospel to you, after I left Macedonia,
οἴδατε δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς, Φιλιππησίοι, ὅτι ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὅτε ἐξῆλθον ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας,
 - The phrase “the first preaching of the gospel” is ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (archē tou euangelion) which means “the beginning of the gospel”.
 - Paul visited Philippi on his 2nd missionary journey, so this wasn’t the beginning of his gospel ministry.
 - Instead, this refers to when Paul first preached the gospel to the Philippians.
 - Paul then specifies that he is talking about the time when he had already departed Macedonia.
- no local church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except for you alone;
οὐδεμία μοι ἐκκλησία ἐκοινωνήσεν εἰς λόγον δόσεως καὶ λήψεως εἰ μὴ ὑμεῖς μόνοι,
 - The word “church” is ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia) which means “assembly” or “church”.
 - This is the word for the Church universal, but refers to the local church in Philippi here.
 - The word “but” is εἰ μὴ (ei mē) which literally translates “if not”.
 - This is an idiom which means “except for” here.
- for even while I was in Thessalonica you sent a gift several times for my needs.
ὅτι καὶ ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ καὶ ἅπαξ καὶ δις εἰς τὴν χρεῖαν μοι ἐπέμψατε.
 - The phrase “in Thessalonica” refers to the time when Paul was in Thessalonica after leaving Philippi.
 - The phrase “more than once” is καὶ ἅπαξ καὶ δις εἰς (kai hapax kai dis) which literally translates “both once and twice”.
 - This is an idiom which means “several times” here.
- Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the spiritual fruit which abounds to your account.
οὐχ ὅτι ἐπιζητῶ τὸ δόμα, ἀλλὰ ἐπιζητῶ τὸν καρπὸν τὸν πλεονάζοντα εἰς λόγον ὑμῶν.
 - The word “profit” is from καρπός (karpos) which means “fruit”.
 - This is a reference to the spiritual fruit which the Philippians yielded in their giving.
 - The word “increases” is from πλεονάζω (pleonazō) which means “grow to an abundance”.
 - Paul equates his abundance which came through their giving with their abundance of spiritual fruit.

- The word “account” is from λόγος (logos) which means “word”, “reckoning” or “account”.
- Paul is speaking of the “account” wherein God reckons our spiritual production in this life.
- But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I have been fully supplied, οὐχ ἀπέχω δὲ πάντα καὶ περισσεύω· πεπλήρωμαι
 - The phrase “I have received everything in full” is ἀπέχω (apechō) which means “paid in full”.
 - This is a contribution, not a payment, but Paul is making it clear that he got all that they had sent.
 - The word “abundance” is περισσεύω (perisseuō) which is the word we saw twice in verse 12.
 - Paul wants the Philippians to know that their gift was even beyond what he expected.
 - The phrase “I am amply supplied” is the perfect of πληρόω (plēroō) which means “made full”.
 - This emphasizes that all of Paul’s needs were met by the gift the Philippians had sent.
- having received from Epaphroditus the things you have sent, δεξάμενος παρὰ Ἐπαφροδίτου τὰ παρ’ ὑμῶν,
 - The phrase “what you have sent” is τὰ παρ’ ὑμῶν (ta par’ humōn) which literally translates “the things from you”.
 - Given the context, “the things you have sent” is a good translation.
- a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας, θυσίαν δεκτὴν, εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ.
 - The phrase “a fragrant aroma” is ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας (osmēn euōdias).
 - Paul used this expression in Eph 5:2 referring back to the “soothing aroma” of the burnt offering in Exodus 29:18, 25.
 - The word “acceptable” is from δεκτός (dektos) which means “pleasing because it is approved”.
 - The idea is that God is pleased with the sacrifice because it meets with His approval.
 - Paul gives extra emphasis to this thought by stating specifically that their gift was pleasing in God’s sight.

- Principles of Philippians 4:14-18
 - Even though Paul had learned how to get along no matter what the circumstances, he was grateful for the support he received from the Philippians.
 - Those who serve in ministry should do their work as unto the Lord, not for money [Eph 6:7-8; Col 3:23-24; 1 Pet 5:1-3].
 - At the same time, believers should desire to support those who minister to them [1 Cor 9:14; Gal 6:6; 1 Tim 5:17-18; Heb 13:15-16].
 - The Philippians had this desire and had supported Paul financially on multiple occasions.
 - Paul rejoiced in this because they were bearing spiritual fruit in giving [2 Cor 9:10-13; Titus 3:14].
 - The relationship between local churches and missionaries is truly a partnership wherein both parties benefit from their participation in ministry.
 - After Paul fled Philippi and came to Thessalonica, the Philippians sent support to him.
 - These grace gifts came while Paul was working to support himself [1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:7-9].
 - The Thessalonians were wealthy and could have supported Paul, but instead it was the Philippians who stepped up and supported him.
 - It is not wealth that makes a giver – giving is a function of a spiritually healthy soul [Mk 12:41-44].
 - When we give from the heart, it results in eternal rewards [Matt 6:2-4] and pleases God [Eph 5:1-2].

- **He Supplies All Our Needs [4:19-20]**

- And my God will fully supply all your needs

ὁ δὲ θεὸς μου πληρώσει πᾶσαν χρείαν ὑμῶν

- The phrase “my God” in this verse connects the end of this letter back to its beginning [1:3-5].
- Paul uses this phrase more often than not when noting his thankfulness for others [Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:4-8; Philem 4-6 cf. 2 Cor 12:21].
- The word “supply” is from πληρόω (plēroō) which means “fill” or “complete”.
- As we saw in verse 18 this means that God will *fully* supply all of the needs of the Philippians.
- The word “needs” is from χρεία (chreia) which means “need”, “lack” or “necessary thing”.
- In the Bible this word always refers to real needs of individuals, not “perceived needs”.

- according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος αὐτοῦ ἐν δόξῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

- The phrase “His riches in glory” refers to the infinite riches which God eternally possesses.
- To capture the essence of this phrase it is probably better to translate this “His glorious riches”.
- The phrase “according to” tells us that God’s supply for our needs is not limited by human understanding or imagination.
- God’s provision is always perfect and unbounded.
- The phrase “in Christ Jesus” tells us that God’s supply for our needs is based upon the believer’s position in Christ, not because we deserve it.
- Some translations say “by Christ Jesus”, but that is not what Paul is communicating here.

- Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

τῷ δὲ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

- After talking about how the Philippians had provided for Paul [v. 18] and how God would supply their needs [v. 19], Paul emphasizes that God is their Father as well as his.
- The phrase “forever and ever” is literally “to the ages of the ages”.
- This is an idiom meaning forever [Gal 1:5; 1 Tim 1:17; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; Rev_{12x}].
- The “Amen” here tells us that giving God the glory is not limited to His gracious provision for Paul and the Philippians – it is a sentiment regarding the contents of this entire letter.

- Principles of Philippians 4:19-20
 - The Philippians provided for Paul's needs more than once and this was a source of joy for him.
 - Paul reassured the Philippians that his God (and theirs) would fully supply all of their needs.
 - This includes material needs and, even more importantly, spiritual needs.
 - We know God will faithfully provide for our material needs, but our focus should be on His abundant supply for our spiritual needs [Eph 3:14-21].
 - In the face of opposition [1:27-30] God will supply exactly what we need (joy, encouragement, hope, etc.).
 - In the need for unity in our mindset [2:1-4; 4:2] God will provide growth (through teaching and testing) which will lead to an attitude of grace and humility.
 - Instead of an attitude of grumbling [2:14] and anxiety [4:6] God will give us peace in our hearts which surpasses comprehension [4:7, 9].
 - Everything which God supplies, whether material [Ps 50:10] or spiritual [Eph 1:3], is according to His glorious riches based upon our position in Christ.
 - If we understand that all of our blessing are from God (even if people are His instruments), then all glory and honor goes to Him [Rom 11:36].