

Jehovah-Jireh in 2026

Matthew 14:13-21

Introduction

Porter Halyburton was shot down over North Vietnam in October, 1965. The crash left his co-pilot dead and Halyburton as a prisoner of war at the Hanoi Hilton – for the next 7 years

He wondered how he would survive – and if God would take care of him here – in this hell hole

While there – many Americans learned to tap coded messages to each other

“On Sunday we had Church Call, and through our communication system the senior guy would signal Church Call,” said Halyburton. “So if you weren’t in leg irons or something, you would stand up and face the direction you thought the United States was, say the Pledge of Allegiance, say the Lord’s Prayer and then conduct whatever service you wanted to do yourself, because everybody was different.”

There was one incident in particular – reminded Halyburton of God’s presence with him

He was a southern white boy – who was placed in a cell with a black man named Fred Cherry who had been shot down around the same time as he. At first – neither man liked nor trusted the other – but Fred was in bad shape. His arm / shoulder and ankle were all broken – and he had received no medical attention. He was feverish – His flesh wound was rotting where infection had set in.

Porter took a deep breath and started taking care of Fred. He fed him / bathed him / carried him to the waste bucket – cleaned his wounds and helped Fred with whatever personal hygiene they could manage amid the squalor and filth of their surroundings. Over time – the two men became closer than brothers.

While Cherry gave him credit for saving his life – Porter insisted Cherry had given his life purpose in that wretched place - - -

Even here – God was with him – met his need for purpose and service in that place

Both men were eventually released in 1972 and returned home

This morning, we come to one of the more famous miracles of Jesus in the Gospels – the feeding of the 5000

This miracle is found in all four gospels

We see Jesus miraculously providing food for a large group of people – meeting their physical needs

This story reminds us that: God is our Jehovah-Jireh – our provider

The name Jehovah-Jireh comes from the OT account of Abraham

God tested Abraham – gave him a son in his old age – the miracle baby Isaac – God then called him to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice – to give him back to God

It was an agonizing test – in which at the last moment the angel of the Lord stopped Abraham from going thru with the sacrifice

Genesis 22:12 – 'And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.'

God then provided a ram to be offered up in place of Isaac – a substitute

Genesis 22:14 – 'And Abraham called the name of that place The Lord will Provide, [Jehovah-Jireh] as it is said to this day, 'In the mount of the Lord it will be provided.'

The message of the feeding of the 5000 – goes beyond the mere physical provision of bread to sustain life – but points to Christ as our spiritual provider as well

Just as God once provided a ram in place of Isaac – so now He provides His Son to be our Savior

John 6:51 – 'I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh'

I. The Compassion of Jesus – vv. 13-15

Context: Jesus has just heard of the death of John the Baptist – who was killed by Herod

He seeks to get away for a while with the disciples – but the crowds follow Him

Mark 6:31-32 – 'And He said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while.' For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. And they went away in a boat to a lonely place by themselves.'

So – this is a lonely or desolate place – but the crowd follows

Jesus has compassion on the multitude – begins to teach them / heal their sick

It's an unusual set of circumstances where we are given the impression – this was not Jesus' first choice – He wanted to get away and rest – but the crowds showed up

R.C. Trench: 'This presence of theirs entirely defeated the intention with which He had sought solitude; yet, nonetheless He receives them, and spoke unto them of the kingdom of God and healed them that had need of healing.'

Jesus is showing His complete embracing of the Divine will for Him at all times

This is the One who would later pray: 'Not my will but Thine be done'

I read over the break – Charlie Kirk's book – 'Stop in the Name of God'

Charlie Kirk: 'The world says, 'Exalt yourself.' Christ says, "Deny yourself." Choose wisely.'

The natural bent of the flesh is to exalt self – put self first - - - to pamper and please the self - - but Christ calls us to consider others as more important than ourselves [just as Halyburton considered Fred Cherry]

That's what Jesus is doing here

I remember I once had a professor and he said – 'these are my office hours' – don't call me outside of these hours to talk about your grade or how your dog ate your homework

But – if it's about kingdom business - - - you can call me any hour of the day

C.S. Lewis: "The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one's 'own,' or 'real' life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one's real life – the life God is sending one day by day."

Samuel Brengle was a Methodist leader in the Salvation Army [1800s] – who had written a book on holiness that many Christians have found useful over the years

In his early years – with the salvation army – he was working in the slums of Boston and returned home – only to find some drunk rowdies waiting for him – one of the young men threw a brick at his head – striking him in the face at close range

For several days – Brengle hovered between life and death – as his young wife prayed earnestly for his life. When he began to show signs of recovery – he was sent to a Health Center in NY for 6 weeks – then back home for 18 months.

During this time – he began to write articles for the Salvation Army magazine – these columns were later collected into the book – 'Helps to Holiness'

For the rest of his life – people often stopped him and thanked him for that little book

He always responded – ‘If there had been no brick – there would have been no little book!’

One day – he found his wife to have inscribed on the brick that nearly took his life – Genesis 50:20 – ‘Ye meant it for evil – but God meant it for good.’

Was that the will of Samuel to be hit in the face with a brick? [of course not]

But – he rolled with the punches – found God’s will in the midst of it

Three are some things in your life – may not have been your first preference – or perhaps – even your preference at all - - - but you see God bringing good out of it

Fanny Crosby - - - who has given the church many treasures in our hymn book – ‘To God be the glory’ / ‘Redeemed’ – ‘Near the Cross’

She became blind as a young child - - - thru the malpractice of a physician

She was asked: ‘Why aren’t you angry at God?’

Her answer: ‘Because – when my sight is restored – the first thing I’ll see is the face of Jesus’

II. Jesus Tests the Disciples - vv. 16-18

As the day wears on – the disciples notice a problem – there is no food / but a large crowd

There is no McDonald’s / no Sam’s Club / not even a Casey’s

There are a lot of people here – and they haven’t eaten – we are in a desolate place - they need food soon – or they won’t make it to their homes – this is a problem!

John 6:5, 6 - '[Jesus] said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?' And this He was saying to test him; for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.'

Jesus was testing the disciples here
Great need - - - - What should we do class?

When I was in High School – I took an electronics class

Mr. Plith the teacher – would let us come to class with different projects
If you wanted to work on a broken tv – you could do that
If you wanted to repair shorted guitar chords – you could do that

If you asked Mr. Plith for help – he’d say – ‘I don’t know – you figure it out’

Then about 10 minutes later – he would come back and tell you what to do

Jesus here is throwing this in the lap of the disciples for a few minutes – here work on this problem – figure it out

Andrew comes forward with the little boy and the Ninja Turtle lunch box [5 loaves / 2 fish]

John 6:9 - 'There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people.'

It was not nothing – but it's next to nothing – given the great need

Philip breaks out the calculator – crunches the numbers - 200 denarii is not enough – a denarius was a day's wages for a common worker

So – the disciples just want Jesus to send the people away

It's like He has given them a riddle that seemingly has no solution

The Lord's Prayer is a fascinating prayer with a rich history in the church

E.F. Scott: 'The Lord's Prayer has come to us from Jesus Himself, and has always lain at the very heart of His religion. Churches have differed widely in every matter of doctrine and ritual and government, but all unite in the Lord's Prayer . . . if the words convey any meaning to those who so utter them it is that our lives depend upon God and that we ought to honor Him.'

The Lord's Prayer reflects our dependence upon God

Matthew 6:11 - 'Give us this day our daily bread.'

Thomas Manton: 'What is the reason Christ saith 'Give us this day?' That every day we may pray to God. Therefore, it is not, 'give us this month, or year, but day; because every day God will hear from us - God will not have us too long out of His company . . . the Lord would have us come every day to the throne of grace.'

You are going to have needs this year - - - will you bring them to God in prayer?

I don't know what the next 12 months holds for you - - - but I do know that you will have needs

We are made to be dependent

Embrace it / roll with it / take your needs to God – your Jehovah-Jireh

R. C. Sproul: 'The grand difference between a human being and a supreme being is precisely this: Apart from God I cannot exist. Apart from me, God does exist. God does not need me in order for Him to be; I do need God in order for me to be. This is the difference between what we call self-existent being and dependent being. We are dependent. We are fragile. We cannot live without air, without water, without food. No human being has the power of being within himself. Life is lived between two hospitals. We need a support system from birth to death to sustain life. We are like flowers that bloom and then wither and then fade. This is how we differ from God. God does not wither, God does not fade, God is not fragile.'

God knows the human body is designed to function on food – food which He created

He is also the giver of every good gift

*** Here we find: The disciples looked everywhere for a solution but to Jesus!

He was the answer He wanted them to come up with

What Jesus is trying to show His disciples and us: we have all we need in Him

Romans 8:31, 32 - 'What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?'

He is our Jehovah-Jireh

We have but five loaves and two fish - - - what are these for such a multitude?

'Bring them to me' – v. 18

What we have – give it to Jesus

We have to make a choice with our lives – even daily

Does my life belong to me - - - or to God?

Does your life belong to you or to God?

We have a certain amount of time / talents / treasures

Paul understood the implications of this in sanctification

I Corinthians 6:19-20 - 'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.'

The Christian life is a daily recognition of this truth – ‘I am not my own’ – I belong to God
I should willingly give myself to God for His use and service

The story is told of a wealthy Englishman who had a collection of rare violins. There was one violin that was of such eminent quality and value that a famous violinist – Fritz Kreisler desired to have it. But the owner was reluctant to let it go. One day Kreisler asked for permission to play the violin – just once. The request was granted and Kreisler played as only he could play. As he played – the Englishman was captivated by the sound. When Kreisler was finished – not a word was spoken as he loosened the bow and the strings and placed the instrument in the case with the gentleness of a mother putting her baby to bed. Then the owner exclaimed, ‘Take the violin, Kreisler – it is yours – I have no right to keep it. It ought to belong to the one who can make such beautiful music on it.’

When we look at what we can do with our lives and what God can do with them – we ought to respond like that wealthy Englishman – take it Lord – you can do much more with it than I can!

When we’re in control – we’re chasing the world – its wealth / its riches / its fame / its pleasures / etc. - - - we crash and burn like the prodigal

Salvation is coming back to God and saying – ‘Jesus – you take the wheel’ - - - I am yours

III. The Miracle Provision - vv. 19-21

He blessed the food – He gave thanks

When we give thanks – we acknowledge this is God’s world – He is the provider / the giver and we receive from His hand

Jesus took 5 loaves and two fish and fed 5000 men – probably a crowd somewhere between 15-20,000 including women and children – a divine miracle occurred

More was left at the end than when Jesus started

Somebody once wrote a little reflection on this [I’ve updated the people a little]

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$20
A basketball in Steph Curry’s hands is worth about \$60 million.
It depends on whose hands it’s in...

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$5
A baseball in Aaron Judge's hands is worth \$40 million.
It depends on whose hands it's in...
A tennis racket is useless in my hands.
A tennis racket in Novak Djokovic's hands is a Wimbledon Championship.
It depends on whose hands it's in...
A rod in my hands will keep away a wild animal.
A rod in Moses' hands will part the Red sea.
It depends on whose hands it's in...
A sling shot in my hands is a kid's toy.
A sling shot in David's hand is a mighty weapon.
It depends on whose hands it's in...
Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches.
Two fish and 5 loaves of bread in God's hands will feed thousands.
It depends on whose hands they're in...
Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse.
Nails in Christ Jesus' hands will produce salvation for the lost world of sinners
It depends on whose hands they're in...
As you see now it depends whose hands it's in.

So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your families, and your relationships in God's Hands.

Because, it depends on whose hands they're in.

He is the Jehovah-Jireh

He will meet your needs in 2026 - - - if you trust Him / put yourself in His hands

Conclusion

In 2009 - - - Tiger Woods was sitting atop the golf world [a ten time PGA player of the year] - had won the Master's 4 times - - - the US Open 3 times - - - but - then - - - his life unraveled off the golf course. Media reports exposed him as having been involved in numerous extra-marital affairs / he was then involved in a mysterious car crash near his home / his wife Elin Nordegren divorced him - - - and he was losing endorsements right and left - he decided to take a break from golf

Brit Hume [a Fox News anchor at the time] gave a word of counsel to Tiger on air, 'My message to Tiger would be: Tiger, turn to the Christian faith and you can make a total recovery, and be a great example to the world.'

Afterwards Hume was ridiculed by several other news outlets for his comments

MSNBC's David Shuster called Hume's comments 'embarrassing'

Washington Post critic Tom Shales said Hume ought to apologize for saying such things- and added that his comment would rank as one of the most ridiculous of the year

Hume – responded to the criticism – not backing down one inch: ‘I think Jesus Christ offers Tiger Woods something Tiger Woods badly needs.’

John 6:51 - 'I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh'

Jesus meets our great need of salvation – He went to the cross and gave His life an atonement for sinners – that all who put their trust in Him will be saved

He is our Jehovah-Jireh

Lord's Supper