

# Matthew 6:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

## Analysis

Jesus uses creation as object lesson: 'Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?' (Greek: οὐχ ὑμεῖς μᾶλλον διαφέρετε αὐτῶν, 'are you not much more valuable than they?'). 'Behold' (ἐμβλέπω) means 'look carefully, observe.' Birds don't practice agriculture yet survive. This isn't advocating irresponsibility but highlighting God's faithful provision in creation's order. The argument is from lesser to greater (qal vahomer in Hebrew logic) - if God feeds birds, how much more will He provide for humans made in His image? This reveals God's character as faithful provider.

## Historical Context

Palestinian birds included ravens (Luke 12:24), sparrows, and doves. In agrarian society, birds were sometimes viewed as pests eating grain, yet they survived on God's provision. Jewish wisdom literature celebrated God's providence in creation (Psalm 104:27-28, 147:9). Jesus' teaching echoes Job 38-39 where God points to His faithful ordering of creation. This wouldn't minimize human responsibility to work (2 Thessalonians 3:10) but reframes it within trust, not anxiety.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does observing God's provision in nature strengthen trust in His care for us?
2. What does this teaching reveal about God's character and priorities?
3. How can we balance diligent work with trust in God's provision rather than anxious striving?

## Interlinear Text

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ἐμβλέψατε εἰς τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὅτι οὐχ

**Behold** **into** G3588 **the fowls** G3588 **of the air** G3772 **for** G3754 **not** G3756

σπείρουσιν οὐδὲ θερίζουσιν οὐδὲ συνάγουσιν εἰς

**they sow** **neither** G3761 **do they reap** G2325 **neither** G3761 **gather** G4863 **into** G1519

ἀποθήκας καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τρέφει

**barns** **yet** G3588 **Father** G3962 **your** G5216 **heavenly** G3770 **feedeth** G5142

αὐτῶν; οὐχ ὑμεῖς μᾶλλον διαφέρετε αὐτῶν;

**them** **not** G3756 **ye** G5210 **much** G3123 **Are** G1308 **them** G846

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 147:9** (Parallel theme): He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

**Job 38:41** (Parallel theme): Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

**Matthew 6:32** (Parallel theme): (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

**Job 35:11** (Parallel theme): Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

**Matthew 7:9** (Parallel theme): Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?