

Feasting on the Bread of Life

Mark 8:1-10 and Matt 15:29-39

I. Presentation Summarized:

A. Context: Following His healing of the Syrophenecian woman's daughter in Tyre, Jesus travels to the East and South of the Sea of Galilee to minister to the Gentiles of the Decapolis (10 Greek cities). Christ feels compassion for, and feeds a multitude of 4,000, plus women and children. He once **again** (8:1; 6:30-44) demonstrates that **He is "the Bread of Life"** (John 6:35; 28-40).

B. Content

1. The problem 8:1-5
 - a. Of the multitudes (vv. 1-3)
 - b. Of the disciples (vv. 4-5)
2. The solution 8:6-10
 - a. The supply (vv. 6-7)
 - b. The satisfaction (vv. 8-10)



Jesus feeds 4,000 (+)

II. Interpretation

Jesus, the bread of life, is now ministering in Gentile territory just as he had in Jewish territory. By the gracious work of God, **Jesus provides eternal life for all who believe.**

III. Applications

1. Jesus has compassion on us, and provides for our every need.
2. I, like the disciples, must be careful not to lose compassion for the needs of others.
3. Jesus can meet my every need regardless of my location.
4. Sometimes we need repeated lessons (trials) to learn (recognize) the truth (James 1:2-5).
5. If Jesus thanked God for provisions (bread and fish), shouldn't I?
6. Start with what you have. Don't wait until you think you have enough. Move out in faith!
7. If I reject Jesus (Jews), I will be replaced by another (Gentiles).

Contrasts between the feeding of the 5000 and the 4000

Some feel this miracle is the same as the earlier feeding of the 5,000, this is not possible. Jesus refers to these as two separate events: Matt 16:9-10 and Mark 8:19-21.

| | 5000 (+) | 4000 (+) |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| <i>location:</i> | at Bethsaida | in region of the Decapolis (10 Greek cities) |
| <i>scene:</i> | sat on the grass | sit on ground (no grass mentioned – desert) |
| <i>prior events:</i> | Jesus wanted rest before; followed death of John Baptist | Jesus traveling before – no mention of rest; returned from healing Syrophonecian's daughter |
| <i>events after:</i> | afterward there is a storm | no storm afterward |
| <i>people's origin:</i> | multitude from nearby | multitude from a long distance away |
| <i>nationality:</i> | Jewish | Gentiles |
| <i>number fed:</i> | 5000 (+) fed | 4000 (+) fed |
| <i>time w/Jesus:</i> | with him 1 day | had been with him 3 days |
| <i>food on hand:</i> | 5 loaves and 2 fish | 7 loaves and a few fish |
| <i>problem:</i> | not enough money | can't find enough food to satisfy |
| <i>different basket:</i> | hand basket | big basket |
| <i>leftovers:</i> | 12 baskets full | 7 baskets full (not tied to Israel's number 12) |
| <i>recorded:</i> | found in all 4 gospels | found only in Matt 15:32-39 and Mark 8:1-10 |

Charles Ryrie provides an alternative outline for this miracle based on contrast:

I. Contrasting Attitudes

- A. Christ's attitude: *compassion for the people and their needs* = hungry.
- B. Disciples' attitude: *controlled by circumstances and limitations* = helpless.

II. Contrasting Abilities

- A. Jesus *lacked nothing*
- B. The disciples *lacked faith*
- C. The crowd *lacked food*

III. Contrasting Actions

- A. The Master *supplied bread*
- B. The men/disciples *served the bread*
- C. The multitude *was satisfied by the bread*

However one views this miracle, one sees the Lord Jesus, all-sufficient and filled with compassion for the needs of the people. *People may disappoint us, but God never will!*