

God With Us

A Study of Matthew: "The Lord of Increase"

Matthew 15:29-39

"Then Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with Me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." (Matthew 15:32)

I. The Master's Compassion

- a. The Lord's compassion is on full display in this narrative. He traveled to a primarily Gentile area, to heal and touch the Gentile community.
- b. The Jewish communities did not believe Him, but the Gentile communities responded with praise. (v.31) *They glorified the God of Israel.*
- c. The word *compassion*, in this scripture, literally means "to have one's inner being stirred."
- d. If the Lord has compassion on us, should we not have compassion toward others?
- e. This text illustrates that Jesus has compassion even for those who do not know Him as the Christ.
- f. From healing to feeding, Jesus not only knows *what* we need, He can *meet* that need.

II. He Did it Again! Jesus Feeds 4,000 Plus

- a. 5,000 fed with 5 loaves; 2 fish; and 12 baskets of leftovers were collected. (Matthew 14:13-21)
4,000 fed with 7 loaves; few fish; and seven baskets of leftovers were collected. (Matthew 15)
- b. Why were the disciples so perplexed about what Jesus would do? After all, He fed five thousand people previously from a few bread rolls.
- c. Aren't we like that at times? We may see Jesus work in another's life, but we doubt Him doing the same for us.
- d. We simply do not expect him to act the second time! If Jesus can *forgive* without measure, why wouldn't He bless us without measure simply motivated by compassion?
- e. The disciples may have remembered the feeding of the five thousand, but they could have also remembered when they were in real need and those needs remained unmet, so their faith and expectancy shrank. Is it not so with us?
- f. A lack of trust often causes us to forget past blessing.
- g. Women and children were present, but were not counted in the original 4,000, which suggest that 10,000-20,000 were fed. (v.30)
- h. Two straight "feeding stories" in two consecutive chapters (14 and 15) teaches us that Jesus really does care about the physical well-being of people.
- i. Jesus often uses the underequipped and the underappreciated to do the miraculous. God will use the least to bless the "least of these" with abundance. Unfortunately, we must be reminded of this.

III. Lessons on Expectation

- a. For the child of God, the Lord's abundance begins with obedience. (Numbers 11:4-6)
- b. If you *know* what God has done, is it impossible for Him to act again? He can do it for you. Always consider the Lord before saying something is impossible.
- c. It takes supernatural ability to wait on something that you were told would be, yet nothing around you says that it would be. Consider Isaiah 40:31 and Psalm 27:14.
- d. In Scripture, the Hebrew word "wait" of "to wait on the Lord" means to "bind together." As servants of Christ, our attention is bound to Him and His Word.
- e. Jesus cares about your natural condition, but He wants you to trust His supernatural power.