

Preaching Through the Bible Chapter 13 Mark 6:30-56

A short holiday with Jesus...

Jesus feels that He needs a rest. John has just been executed. It is time for fresh thought and prayer. Jesus decided to take His disciples away for a short holiday^{¶1}. But Jesus never gets His rest. When He gets to the other side a great crowd is waiting for Him^{¶2}. He feels compassion for them and begins to teach them^{¶3}. Then, He feels sorry for them because it is late and the people are hungry. The disciples want to send the people away^{¶4}, but Jesus says **“You yourselves give them something to eat”**^{¶5}. He gives the disciples the first opportunity of performing the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand.

¶1 6:30-32

¶2 6:33

¶3 6:34

¶4 6:35-6

¶5 6:37

1. An Invitation to rise in faith

1. The occasion was an invitation to the disciples to rise in faith and do what Jesus wanted done.

This miracle was obviously a very crucial event in the story of Jesus. It occurs in all four gospels. Matthew and Mark also report a second story of miraculous feeding^{¶1}. Because the disciples did not see its significance, they failed to understand Jesus' walking to them on the water^{¶2}. And the point would be made even more emphatically later on^{¶3}. Obviously, they would be growing or not growing in the kingdom according to the way in which they understood this miracle.

¶1 see 8:1-10

¶2 6:52

¶3 see 8:17-21

When the disciples saw the need of the people, the thought of a miracle did not cross their minds. They were thinking only of money and the difficulties of feeding such a crowd^{¶1}. So Jesus performs the miracle instead of them. But He makes use of them. It is the bread that they go out and find that Jesus uses^{¶2}. The miracle takes place in an orderly manner. The people sit down in groups^{¶3}, and the miracle is performed^{¶4}.

¶1 6:37b

¶2 6:38

¶3 6:39-40

¶4 6:41-44

What would Jesus do?

Yet Jesus had hoped that *they* would perform the miracle. The need of the people was itself an invitation to the disciples to sense what Jesus would do. They had at least sufficient practical concern to see that the people were in need^{¶1}. Could they not go one stage further and have sufficient spiritual discernment to do what Jesus would do? **“You yourselves give them something to eat,”** said Jesus. They had been with Jesus for some time now. They had seen the way in which He responded when He saw people in need. Could they not see what Jesus would want to do? Jesus would like the idea to occur to the disciples, of wonderfully and miraculously feeding the people, rather than have Jesus to do it for them.

¶1 6:35-36

Having His mind

Of course, disciples today cannot *switch on* at will the faith to perform such miracles. Yet for us, and perhaps less dramatically, Jesus wants us to have His mind so that we know what He wants almost before He tells us what He wants.

2. Jesus can do much despite feeble resources

2. Jesus wanted them to learn how much could be done through Him despite feeble resources. Jesus chose to use the disciples. He chose to use a small and insignificant amount of loaves and fishes. Why did Jesus do this? He brought into being such a massive amount of food and there were twelve baskets of food surplus. So He did not need to use the loaves and the fishes at all; yet He did. He chose to use what the disciples would find to put at Jesus' disposal.

3. The King of Israel

3. Jesus wanted them to see that He is the King of Israel. They were in a wilderness. Mark mentions it three times^{¶1}. It was like the time

¶1 6:31,32,35

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when the Israelites were in the wilderness and the people were like sheep without a shepherd. At that time, Moses prayed for a leader for the people “...so that the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd.”¹. In that same wilderness time, Moses had appointed men who would be in charge of groups, including groups of one hundred and of fifty². At that same time manna fell from heaven to feed the people.

¹2 see Numbers 27:17

³ see Exodus 18:21

A King yet greater than Herod or Moses

Jesus wanted the disciples to see who He is. God’s King greater than Herod and greater than Moses. We know from John’s Gospel that some people did know Jesus was a King, but the kind of king they wanted was more of a soldier and a politician than a Saviour.

4. A test

4. Their grasp of Jesus is soon to be tested. The next story is linked with the feeding of the five thousand. The disciples are sent ahead of Jesus to Bethsaida¹. Jesus Himself will walk around the lake and spend time praying as He does so.² He is in the hills and is able to pray for them as they cross the small sea.

¹ 6:45

² 6:46

The disciples – slow to grasp who Jesus was and slow to believe

But as the disciples cross the lake again, the weather becomes difficult¹. Jesus trusts the Father to enable Him to get to them, and He walks on the water to them². He acts as if He is about to walk by them. He is not so much walking to them to help them, as showing them what He can do by His Father’s power³. But they shout out in terror⁴. So Jesus encourages them⁵ and gets into the boat⁶. They are amazed⁷, but Jesus makes the point that they ought not to have been amazed⁸. If the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand had been rightly understood, they would have recognised Jesus as God’s King able to do wonders. It was because they were still slow to grasp who Jesus was, that they were slow to believe such things as His walking on the water. Soon they arrived at their destination and again a multitude of the sick were healed⁹. Even one touch from Jesus’ clothes was sufficient to be a blessing to them.

¹ 6:47–48

² 6:48a

³ 6:48b

⁴ 6:49–50a

⁵ 6:50b

⁶ 6:51

⁷ 6:51b

⁸ 6:52

⁹ 6:53–56

Study 13

Abundant Provision from Jesus

Read Mark Chapter 6 verses 30 to 56

Read: *Preaching Through the Bible: Mark, Chapter 13*

A. An invitation to rise in faith

1. Jesus felt that He needed a r..... .
2. **True** or **false**?
 - a. Jesus turned away the crowd because He was tired.
 - b. Jesus rebuked the crowd for not bringing something to eat.
 - c. The disciples wanted to send the crowd away hungry.
 - d. Jesus gave the disciples an opportunity to work a miracle.
 - e. There were 500 people altogether.
 - f. Jesus' miracle is recorded in all four gospels.
 - g. The distribution of the bread and fish was very chaotic.
3. The disciples go and find some b..... but they do not find e..... to feed all the people.
4. Jesus would have liked His disciples to see the need for a m..... and to have performed it themselves.
5. Jesus wants us to have 'H..... m.....' so that we know what He wants us to do.

B. Jesus can do much despite feeble resources

1. Jesus wanted the disciples to know how much He can do, even when we have f.....
r..... .
2. **True** or **false**?
 - a. To serve Jesus we need to feel totally equipped.

- b. Only people with great resources can be used by God.
- c. To be used by Jesus, we need to lay before Him what we have.

C. The King of Israel

1. What does Mark mention three times?
2. What Old Testament event is Mark reminding us of here?
.....
3. For what did Moses pray at that time?
4. What did Moses do?
5. What did God do?
6. Here, Jesus wanted the disciples to see that He was greater than M..... and also greater and a different kind of k.....to H..... .

D. A test

1. Jesus sent the disciples on ahead to Bethsaida by boat, giving Himself some time to walk and p..... .
2. The weather became d..... and the disciples' b..... was caught in a s..... .
3. Jesus walked on the w..... to them, demonstrating what He could do with His Father's power.
4. **True or false?**
 - a. The disciples were pleased to see Jesus.
 - b. The disciples were terrified.
 - c. The disciples were slow to recognise that Jesus, as God's King could work such wonders.
 - d. The disciples had finally understood who Jesus was.
5. When they arrived at the other side, Jesus healed the m..... .
6. Just one t..... of the e..... of His c..... was enough to receive h..... .

