

JESUS FEEDS BILLIONS

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21 NIV // MATTHEW 14:3:13-21 NIV

**MONDAY 8/7/23**

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21 //8The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. 9 The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.

MATTHEW 14:3;13-21// 3 For Herod had arrested and imprisoned John (John the Baptist) as a favor to his wife Herodias (the former wife of Herod's brother Philip).13 As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left in a boat to a remote area to be alone. But the crowds heard where he was headed and followed on foot from many towns. 14 Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

REFLECTION Jesus was deeply saddened by the arrest of John the Baptist, his relative. The Jewish knew of John and were also disturbed. They had faith in John the Baptist calling for repentance, but they were still weak in their faith. They were terrified by his arrest and seeking a new shepherd, so they turned to follow Jesus. One day Jesus got into a boat to leave the region that was controlled by Herod. He withdrew into a wilderness area to keep Himself and his disciples safe. A crowd estimated to be 5000 followed him there. We do not know how long they remained in the wilderness, but it was certain for a long time. The people did not want to leave that place because they thought they found themselves in the presence of one of God's Prophets because Jesus was healing the sick and teaching them about His Father. His divine power was on full display. Like us today, they were seeking a true shepherd, a leader who loves and gives us a powerful purpose. We know that Jesus was not a prophet but a Savior. One who sacrificed His life so we may have eternal life. He guides our hearts daily and sends us His Spirit. It was no small thing for them to leave their own homes, and work. Yet they stayed with Him, and he served them a meal of barley loaves and fish. That was Jesus' first miracle, and he eventually feeds billions of people. Christian churches around the world celebrate the Lord feeding us by offering the Lord's Supper. This Sacrament is not so much a memorial service, but an active uniting between heaven and earth. The Body of Christ, the Blood of Christ, given for you.

PRAYER Heavenly Father thank you for giving us the holy signs and seals of the Lord's Supper. Thank you for giving us Jesus Christ, your Son, who feeds and nourishes our souls. Praise your name for sending the Holy Spirit to help us commune with our Savior. This week I will remember your promises as I share his holy meal with my fellow Christians. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

TUESDAY 8/8/23

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21//15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.16 You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

MATTHEW 14:3;13-21// 15 That evening the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves." 16 But Jesus said, "That isn't necessary—you feed them."

REFLECTION This story is found in the Books of Mark, Luke, and John and Matthew. Mark tells us Jesus began to teach the Jewish people many things concerning God. He spent a considerable amount of time preaching, teaching and healing. Luke tells us Jesus spoke to them concerning that the Kingdom of God is now at hand. Matthew tells us the miracles of Jesus establishing His divine powers are from God. Later in Jesus ministry the Jewish people accepted Jesus was the Messiah. However, the rulers of the temple did not accept Jesus. Jesus begins His ministry in a way the Jewish people would be familiar. The whole Israelite community knew the Exodus stories of God feeding the 12 tribes in the desert. In Exodus 16: 4 "Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you." Ex 16:12 "12 "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'" Jesus now has lead the people to this deserted wilderness. He is also claiming to be the true bread of life who has come down from heaven. Through these miracles He is showing them He is the incarnation of God. He too, never ceased to care for them, just like God took care of His people after the wondered in the desert. We can be assured of God continuing to feed our souls with the heavenly bread and wine. In the Book of John we learn this miracles of feeding the 5000 was near the time of the Passover meal. John 6:4 4 "The Jewish Passover Festival was near." Jesus is the one true Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

PRAYER Lord the food you give is everlasting food that will never go stale. I know where to find this food, it is in your word, thank you that my soul can feast on your word. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

WEDNESDAY 8/9/23

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21// 17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does.

MATTHEW 14:3;13-21// 16 But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.”17 “But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered.18 “Bring them here,” he said.

REFLECTION Being in a remote area has its challenges but Jesus uses it to His advantage. In part He sailed there to be unrestricted in delivering God’s gospel message. What was this message? Jesus is the Messiah, the true Lamb of God. To reinforce this message He preformed the miracle of feeding over 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes. Jesus was also incorporating His disciples to “you feed them”. Late into the evening the disciples asked Jesus to send the people away to the nearby towns for food. Let’s remember the disciples would have known about God feeding the Israelites in the desert. We see the disciples had little faith in Jesus’ ability to feed so many. John 6 7 Philip answered him, “It would take more than half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” 8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, 9 “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” God’s Son. Our Lord was sent from heaven to feed our souls.

PRAYER What a miracle it is, even today, knowing through our Lord and Saviors examples. I too must feed those in the world, show them your face, your hands, your love. May I do what you ask of me. In Jesus' Name, Amen



THURSDAY 8/10/23

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21// 18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

MATTHEW 14:3-5;13-21// 19 Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, and looked up towards heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people.

REFLECTION In verse 19 it says, “Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people”. Does this language sound like Jesus is preforming the first Holy Communion with the people? Jesus takes the five loaves of bread and two fish and gives thanks to God. Jesus gives thanks to God for the food because it honors His Father. We too ought give thanks to God each time we eat a meal. “Thank you God for the bounty of food you provide for us daily”. When we do, we eat our food with holiness and purity. In my mind I picture Jesus telling the people to sit down in the grass in an orderly fashion. Maybe in circles with their families and friends. This miracle creates an excitement among the crowd as they see they never run out of bread and fish. It’s obvious Jesus is breaking all the laws of physics. What is really touching is Jesus incorporates His disciples as a part of the miracle. Each time they return to Jesus they gather another basket of food and carry it out to the people. John 6 12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. This obviously represents the 12 tribes of the Israelites. (Gen 49) When we first express our gratitude to God we become more aware that every morsel, of every kind of food, comes from God. St Paul writes to Timothy a prophetic message about food and foolish people. 1 Timothy 4”4 They’ll tell you not to eat this or that food, perfectly good food God created to be eaten heartily and with thanksgiving by believers who know better!” God’s grace is poured out upon the food He provides. The brutish people of our day do not regard the blessings of God, nor do they offer thanksgiving. Christ has given us guidance in the proper way of consuming food. Each morsel is a gift of God. So take a silent pause and bow your head in reverence to God. You will be aroused from your sluggish minds that is fixed only on the earthly things and receive with joy these heavenly gifts.

PRAYER Thank you Father for the bounty and beauty of the food you have created for us. Your love has taken care of every detail of our lives. What a blessing. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



FRIDAY 8/11/23

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21 //19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. 20 The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

MATTHEW 14:3-5;13-21// 20 They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers.

REFLECTION After they ate their fill these Israelites wanted to make Jesus their King. John 6 14 After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” 15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountains by himself.” These people lived under a tribal system of government. God gave them the twelve tribes, one for each of Jacobs sons. (Gen 49) This crowd would certainly know from which tribe they belonged. The disciples collected the 12 baskets full of food, was a sign of God’s abundant love for His people. Take sometime this day to reflect on God’s support of the annual production of food around the world. God is sovereign and we should honor God from where our food comes from. Jesus declares that all good things have been delivered into His hands by the grace of our Father. Even the simplicity of eating just one meal proceeds from God’s grace.

PRAYER Your grace reminds me to say grace when I have a meal before me, in thanksgiving of you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

SATURDAY 8/12/23

PSALM 145:8-9, 14-21 //21 My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

MATTHEW 14:3-5;13-21//21 About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

REFLECTION Today let us recognized billions of people have been fed by the hand of our Lord Jesus. Every Sunday, in many denominations, people celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The purpose is to feed our souls and give us assurances of being united with God through Jesus Christ. As His children, we sit before Him and share in His body and blood. Christ has commanded us, as believers, to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup, We, are like those in the crowd of 5,000 who see, with our own eyes, the bread of the Lord broken for them. As we receive Jesus’ body this week we are seeing the bread and tasting it with our mouths the true bread of life. The Spirit gives us a sure sign that this is Christ’s body and blood. He nourishes us and refreshes our souls for now and eternity.

PRAYER Forgive me Lord, sometimes I take for granted this beautiful supper of your body and blood is for me. May I never take it for granted. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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