

## Episode #815 Matthew 14 Part 2-Feeding the Multitude

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. Today we will consider the final fate of John the Baptizer (Identifier) and consider the outrageous actions of the usurper king Herod.

III. The Five Loaves and Two Fish. Matthew 14:13-21.

- A. Verse 13. This departure was probably so that He could withdraw and grieve. The “ship” here is *plouion*, a decked ship, as in Matthew 8 in the calming of the storm.
- B. Verse 14. The Greek says He was moved in the bowels, which were thought to be the seat of emotions. Consider what your emotions can do to your digestive system and you will get the idea. The healing was as simple as that. There was no show to go along with it. This demonstrated what to expect when heaven governs.
- C. Verse 15. These villages being small and the crowds great, for many this may not have been a successful quest, yet this seemed the best and only course to the disciples. Having gotten used to the Lord’s “normal miracles,” they do not expect a new and abnormal one.
- D. Verse 16. They were so busy reckoning the number of people and the vast amount of food it would take to feed them that they forgot the most important fact of all: that the Lord was with them! Nothing is impossible if we reckon with Him in the equation.
- E. Verse 17. These “loaves” were flatbread or biscuits. This was a boy’s lunch, John 6:9. The fishes were tiny fish, like a herring or sardine. Perhaps a tilapia at the biggest.
- F. Verse 18. Far too often we are concerned with what we don’t have to bring to the Lord. Instead, we should take what we do have and bring it to Him. Let Him have it and He will worry about the increase.
- G. Verse 19. Mark tells us this was in groups of hundreds and fifties to make the distribution of the food easier, as well as to allow space for walking between groups, rather than a hazardous weaving. Mark, presenting the Lord as the Servant, notes this detail, but Matthew, presenting the King, allows His servants to worry about such things. Most know from picnicking that sitting on grass can be quite pleasant. “Blessed” is *eulogeo*, He spoke well of the food. We can sometimes “give thanks” for the food in a prayer ahead of time, and then speak poorly of it (this doesn’t taste good. I hate this! Etc.) Their bread at the time was hard, not the soft bread we are used to, made by modern methods. Their bread had to be broken, not cut or torn. Matthew does not mention the fish, leaving that to our good sense. John 6:11 tells us these were distributed as well as people wanted them.
- H. Verse 20. These were poor people living hand to mouth. They probably had many a meal that was only of a size to stave off hunger, not to truly be satisfied. They might have eaten two meals’ worth of food or more! The fact that there was food left at all tells us they ate until they couldn’t eat another bite. These were wicker baskets, smaller than the baskets used in the feeding of the four thousand. Probably twelve because each disciple carried a basket. These were filled from five loaves and two fish that probably would have barely covered the bottom of one of these baskets!

- I. Verse 21. “Men” is Greek *aner*, an adult male. If we assume a female for each male, and then a number of children, this was a great crowd indeed! This is all a foretaste of the kingdom of God, Psalm 145:16.

IV. Conclusion: The Lord is not limited by the laws of nature He put in place. When He chooses to open His generous hand, no shortages will plague men and no hunger will exist on earth. Our Lord Jesus demonstrated this in His powerful healing of the multitude. Let us all look forward to that powerful, coming kingdom!