

23S01 Mark 8:1-10 (Part 16)

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our study of the gospel according to Mark with Mark 8:1-10 (Part 16) Jesus feeds four thousand.

Before we start, we need to understand a little about this amazing book in the bible. Most historians believe Mark was the first written account of Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection. The identity of Mark is not known for sure, but most believe this is John Mark. John Mark is spoken of by Luke in Acts as the cousin of Barnabas, John Mark is mentioned in many other books on the New Testament. Many believe he spent time traveling with Peter, so it is thought that much of Mark's gospel is actually from the perspective of Peter. We also believe that John Mark knew Jesus. There are accounts that Jesus stayed at Mark's mother's home, there are also some unique story details in Mark that are not in either Matthew's or Luke's accounts. We will try to highlight some of these as we go through the stories in Mark.

I'm reading from the New American Standard version (NAS) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

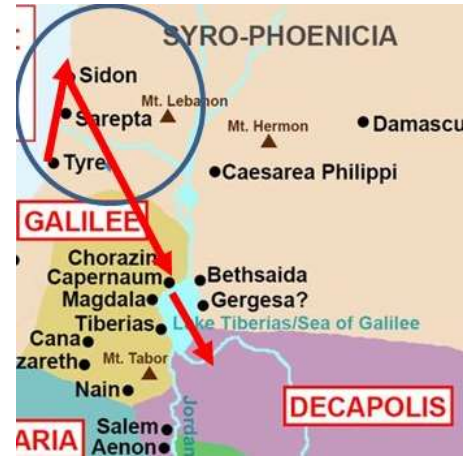
Let's read Mark 8:1-10 (NAS) *¹In those days, when there was again a large crowd and they had nothing to eat, Jesus summoned His disciples and said to them, ²"I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with Me for three days already and have nothing to eat. ³And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a great distance." ⁴And His disciples replied to Him, "Where will anyone be able to find enough bread here in this desolate place to satisfy these people?" ⁵And He was asking them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." ⁶And He directed the people to recline on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve, and they served them to the people. ⁷They also had a few small fish; and after He had blessed them, He told the disciples to serve these as well. ⁸And they ate and were satisfied; and they picked up seven large baskets full of what was left over of the broken pieces. ⁹About four thousand men were there; and He dismissed them. ¹⁰And immediately He got into the boat with His disciples and came to the region of Dalmanutha.*

Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your words from Mark, help us see what Mark wants his readers to understand and why. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay before we get started, I'm sure some of you are asking yourself didn't we study this story in Mark already. Well, the feeding of the five thousand is recorded in Mark 6:30-44 and also in Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 9:12-17 and John 6:1-14. The feeding of five thousand is recorded in all four gospels. The feeding of the five thousand was somewhere in Galilee and the crowd was probably almost all Jews. This story in Mark

8 is also in Matthew 15. We are not certain where this miracle takes place. Let me show you a map again. Jesus had been in the region of Tyre and Sidon north of Galilee and Mark records that Jesus had crossed the sea of Galilee to the region of Decapolis on the southeastern side of the Sea of Galilee. In Decapolis, Jesus healed a deaf and mute man which is in the end of Mark chapter 7. Now at the beginning of Chapter 8, Jesus is somewhere near the sea of Galilee.

Matthew's account only says along the Sea of Galilee, but we don't know where. I have always assumed Jesus is still in Decapolis. But the bible does not specifically say this. So, I don't think we should teach this like we know for sure, because we don't. If Jesus was still on the eastside of the Sea of Galilee, then most of the crowd here would have been Gentiles, not Jews. It might explain why the disciples seem surprised by this again. Most Bible Scholars assume this, but there is no way we can really know for sure.



Now, let's take a closer look at these verses, Mark 8:1-3 (NAS) *¹In those days, when there was again a large crowd and they had nothing to eat, Jesus summoned His disciples and said to them, ²"I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with Me for three days already and have nothing to eat. ³And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a great distance."*

This sounds very like the story of the feeding of the five thousand. But I think we should concentrate on the words of Jesus. Jesus felt compassion for the people. Jesus is using a very practical concern and question to focus the disciples on what He wishes them to learn.

Mark 8:4 (NAS) *⁴And His disciples replied to Him, "Where will anyone be able to find enough bread here in this desolate place to satisfy these people?"*

The bible does not record which disciples respond but you can imagine what the disciples were thinking. If they were in a gentile region, it is very likely the disciples did not feel compassion for the gentile people. They are Jews and they traditionally did not associate with gentiles. But again, we don't know if they are still in Decapolis or not, but we can be sure Jesus is pushing the disciples to have compassion for the crowds.

Mark 8:5 (NAS) *⁵And He was asking them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."*

Simple question, simple answer. Jesus and the disciples have been in this situation before. Now what?

Next Mark 8:6-7 (NAS) *⁶And He directed the people to recline on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve, and they served them to the people. ⁷They also had a few small fish; and after He had blessed them, He told the disciples to serve these as well.*

Jesus blesses the loaves and the fish, breaks them and the disciples serve the people.

Next Mark 8:8 (NAS) *⁸And they ate and were satisfied; and they picked up seven large baskets full of what was left over of the broken pieces. ⁹About four thousand men were there; and He dismissed them.*

Four thousand men and who knows how many women and children, fed and satisfied from seven small loaves of bread and a few small fish. And seven large baskets of leftovers. Truly amazing miracle. Then

Next Mark 8:10 (NAS) *¹⁰And immediately He got into the boat with His disciples and came to the region of Dalmanutha.*

This has puzzled Bible Scholars; Matthew's account says they came to the region Magadan. Most scholars believe this is on the west side of the Sea of Galilee near Magdala. But all of this is speculation based on the tradition that they are traveling from the eastside of the Sea of Galilee in



Decapolis to the westside of the Sea of Galilee or somewhere in Galilee. So, we are uncertain, but the exact location is not very important to the story

Let's review.

- 1) 7 loaves and a few fish? How many would this feed do you think? Not very many. I think we too often skip over these feeding miracles. Yeah, Jesus feeds a bunch of people on a mountain. Really. Jesus fed thousands of people to the point they are all satisfied with 7 small loaves of bread and a few small fish.
- 2) Leftovers? 7 large baskets of leftovers from the original 7 small loaves of bread and fish. Think about it. My family instantly think, "take away" I'm sure the leftovers did not go to waste, I wonder who took the leftovers for later. Because Jesus and the disciples "immediately left" afterward.
- 3) Dalmanutha? Okay we don't know where this is. But we should never get too worried about the things we don't completely understand. Is this detail important, well yes, it's in the Bible but is our understanding of Jesus message changed based on the location. Well, not really. We will learn next week the Pharisees come to meet Jesus there, so at least we know this is most likely a Jewish area. And I think that is enough.

Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for Bible. Help us to read and meditate on your words so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to ask you for wisdom when we don't understand. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

Let me leave you with this today. Jesus is the great provider. The stories of the feeding of the five thousand and four thousand should remind us of this. Jesus told us to ask, "give us this day, our daily bread". It's more than just food, it's exactly what we need when we need it. Not what we wish for or want.

What does this mean for you? Trust God. These stories in the bible are meant to show us who Jesus is. He has compassion for us. He cares for us. We need to trust God will provide what we need for this day and for every day. Put God first in everything we do, then trust Jesus for everything. Do the things Jesus wants us to do and Jesus rewards are faith with an amazing satisfying life of services to others in the name of Jesus.

Thank you for joining me for our study of the gospel of Mark. Please email me comments or feedback. And if you liked the message, please share the link with your friends. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.