

## Matthew Chapter 15 Continued

Verses 29-39: (see also Mark 7:31 – 8:10). The supposition that this is a confused duplicate account of the feeding of the five thousand must be rejected. Both Matthew and Mark include the accounts of the two events in a way that indicates they quite clearly knew them to be two separate miracles.

The incident evidently took place on the southeast shore of Galilee, near Gentile Decapolis. Therefore, many Gentiles seem to be among His listeners who “glorified the God of Israel.”

This feeding took place after the crowd had been with Him for “three days” and were fed with “seven” loaves and “few little fishes” which were then distributed in a manner similar to the other feeding.

This time “seven baskets full” remained. These baskets (Greek *spuridas*), were much larger than those (in 14:20). Each basket could hold about 50 loaves, and was the kind used to lower Paul down the city wall (in Acts 9:25)

In (16:9-10), Jesus refers to both feedings as separate events, even referring to the different numbers and using the different words for the baskets.

**Matthew 15:29 "And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there."**

“Came nigh unto the sea of Galilee”: He actually traveled north from Tyre to Sidon and then cut a wide path around the eastern shore of Galilee to Decapolis (Mark 7:31), a primarily Gentile region. He may have taken this route to avoid the territory ruled by Herod Antipas (14:1-2). The events that follow must have occurred in Decapolis.

Jesus was near the Sea of Galilee quite a bit. Peter's home was on the banks of the sea. Jesus was followed by such a large group of people that it was easier for them to gather out of town.

**Matthew 15:30 "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them [those that were] lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:"**

In this particular case, multitude was not a graphic enough word to describe the huge number of people who thronged Jesus, so "great" was added to stress how many. They followed Him everywhere He went; by people who wanted to receive a miracle from Him.

“And great multitudes came unto him”: From the adjacent places; having heard of his being where he was; and who had either attended on him before. However the fame of him and his miracles, had reached their ears: these flocked to him, having with them, in their hands, or arms, or upon their backs, or shoulders, leading some, and carrying others, in some form or another.

Those that were lame, either in their legs or arms; blind in one eye or both and that either from their birth or since. Dumb, the word signifies both deaf and dumb, these often meet in the same person: and if a man is born deaf, he is always dumb.

Maimed, having lost a limb, an arm, or a leg, or so enfeebled by some disease or another, as the palsy, that their limbs were useless to them. The Persian version reads it "leprous"; and many others who were afflicted with various other diseases, too many to be mentioned particularly.

And cast them down at Jesus' feet to ease themselves of their burdens, and with a view to move his compassion believing he was able to cure them. Nor do they say a word to him, or desire him to relieve these miserable objects; thinking it was enough to present them to him, and not doubting at all, but he would show favor to them.

And he healed them either by a word, or by touching them, or by putting his hands on them. Or without any such outward sign, through a divine power proceeding from him, which at once removed all their disorders and complaints.

**Matthew 15:31 "Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."**

The multitude of the spectators, who, though they came in expectation of seeing miracles wrought, yet these were so much beyond what they could have imagined. They were amazed and surprised to see cures so instantly performed, in such a miraculous manner: these were such glaring proofs and evidences of the wonderful power of God, that they were astonished.

The Ethiopic version adds, "which had given such power to the son of man", or "unto men", which seems to be taken out of (Matthew 9:8). This must be understood both of the multitude that saw these miracles, and the persons on whom they were done, who were both affected with them, and gave God the praise and glory of them, by whose power alone such things could be done.

**Matthew 15:32 "Then Jesus called his disciples [unto him], and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way."**

"Then Jesus called his disciples unto him": Who were at some little distance from him, to impart his mind unto them, and to try their faith, and raise their attention. And also to prepare them for the following miracle and to teach them by his example and to accustom them to show bowels of mercy and compassion to persons in any kind of want and distress.

Jesus said, I have compassion on the multitude; which must be understood of him as man, whose bowels yearned towards them, having been so long without any food for their bodies, or very little.

He had compassion on the sick, and diseased, and healed them, and was willing to feed them. Christ, our high priest, is a merciful one and is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of men, of every sort, both of soul and body.

**Matthew 15:33 "And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?"**

Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness? No wonder our Lord called them men of little faith (8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20), when they asked a question like that in the light of the recent feeding of the 5,000 (14:13-21).

**Matthew 15:34 "And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes."**

"And Jesus saith unto them": In a very mild and gentle manner, taking no notice of their stupidity, nor upbraiding them with their forgetfulness of the late miracle, and willing to exercise their patience, and try their faith, asks, how many loaves have ye? Meaning in the common stock and that which they brought along with them for their own supply.

And they said seven, and a few little fishes; which they mention as so small a provision, that it was as nothing for such multitudes; their loaves of bread were but seven, and their fishes, which were ready dressed, dried, or boiled, etc. were few in number, and small, as to quantity and size.

Again, the Lord had them confess for the record how little food they had in comparison to the size of the crowd. This made clear that the feeding was miraculous evidence of His deity.

**Matthew 15:35 "And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground."**

And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. Not regarding the smallness of the provisions, nor any further consulting with his disciples; but knowing his own power to increase this food, and determining to feed the multitude before he dismissed them.

Jesus in an authoritative way ordered them to sit down upon the ground in rows, that they might be the better seen, and served.

**Matthew 15:36 "And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake [them], and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."**

Into his hands, and lifted them up, that it might be seen, and observed, that there were no other food than these, that so the miracle might appear in its true light. And gave thanks; to God for the provision.

Thus teaching us to do so likewise; and to be thankful for and content with our portion, be it more or less.

“Then He ... and brake them”: Which also was the custom of the master of the family to do and gave to his disciples as a fresh trial of their faith. To reprove their unbelief, to put them in mind of the former miracle, and that they might be witnesses of this, and, in order to distribute to the people, which they accordingly did.

**Matthew 15:37 "And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken [meat] that was left seven baskets full."**

“And they did all eat, and were filled”: Everyone had a share of the provision, and that to full satisfaction; no one was overlooked and neglected, and everyone had as much as he could eat:

And they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full. The disciples, after they had distributed to everyone his portion, went round, and collected the remaining fragments, and filled seven baskets therewith, according to the number of the loaves which were broken; and so had a full return for the loaves and fishes they spared on this occasion.

**Matthew 15:38 "And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children."**

Christ ended His ministry in Galilee with the feeding of the 5,000 (14:13-21). Here, He ended His ministry in the Gentile regions by feeding the 4,000. He later would end His Jerusalem ministry with a meal in the upper room with His disciples.

"Were four thousand men": This number of men, as well as of the baskets of fragments, clearly shows this to be a distinct miracle from the former of this kind, recorded (in Matthew 14:15). There the number of men was five thousand, here four thousand.

There the quantity of food was five loaves and two fishes, here seven loaves and a few fishes; there the number of the baskets of fragments was twelve, here seven; though the quantity might be as large; since the word here used for a basket is not the same as there, and designs one of a larger size.

"Besides women and children": Who were not taken into the account, though they ate as well as the men, and whose number might be very large.

**Matthew 15:39 "And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala."**

"And he sent away the multitude": Dismissing them, either with a prayer for them, or with a suitable word of exhortation, to be thankful for the mercies, both spiritual and temporal, they had received, and behave agreeably in their lives and conversations.

“And took ship”; being near the sea side, the Sea of Galilee, and came into the coasts of Magdala: not far from Tiberias; for often mention is made of Magdala in the Talmud.

## Matthew Chapter 15 Continued Questions

1. What Sea did Jesus go to, to minister?
2. Why did He go to the mountain?
3. Why had He left the city?
4. What did the Scripture indicate when it said Jesus sat down?
5. What disciple had a home near the Sea?
6. Name four types of people the multitude brought.
7. Why did they follow Jesus?
8. Who did the multitude glorify?
9. How long had the multitude fasted?
10. The called of God or disciples, are what?
11. What is a fast? (two things)
12. How many loaves did they have?
13. What do we automatically know was different here?
14. There was a miracle provision of what?