

Matthew 15 - Jewish Traditions vs Commandments of God; Jesus Travels to Tyre, Sidon; Jesus Heals Many; Jesus Feeds 4,000

III. King's interim kingdom program (Matt 13:1–20:28)

(3) Christ trains the disciples (Matt 14:13–20:28)

(D) Christ defends the disciples' violation of the Sabbath regulations (15:1-20)

(E) Christ heals the Canaanite woman (15:21-28)

(F) Feeding of the 4000 (15:29-39)

Matthew 15

(D) Christ defends the disciples' violation of the Sabbath regulations (15:1-20) (Cf. Mark 7:1-23)

1 Then some Pharisees and scribes *came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said,

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1 Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

- These scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem. They likely had more authority than the local Galilean religious leaders who opposed Jesus earlier.

— This delegation came because of Jesus' continuing popularity

2 "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

2 "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

2 "Why do your disciples disregard the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands when they eat."

2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

- The critics again raised a question about the behavior of the disciples, not His own behavior (Cf. 9:14)

- In view of Jesus' popularity, questioning the behavior of His disciples was a less direct means of attacking Jesus Himself and safer in regard to public opinion
- The critics objected to the disciples' disregard for the traditions of the elders, not their disregard for the Mosaic Law
- The Mosaic Law contains specific laws for the priests, yet here we are dealing with everyday orthodox Jews (the disciples), of which there is nothing about washing your hands in this sense.
- These "traditions" were the rabbinic interpretations of OT law that accumulated over the centuries. In Jesus' day, most of these traditions were not yet in written form, but later the rabbis compiled them into the Mishnah (135-200 AD). Pharisaical Judaism raised the importance of these oral traditions over the Mosaic Law; they held the Torah in honor, but viewed it through the lens of the Talmud or Mishnah (i.e. Ex 34:26 led to kosher laws)
- For the Pharisees, these traditions carried almost as much authority, if not more, than the Mosaic Law itself
- The hand-washing complaint was only a specific example of a larger charge
- One entire tractate of the Mishnah dealt with proper hand washing procedures for ceremonial purposes

3 And He answered and said to them, **"Why do you yourselves also break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?**

3 And He answered and said to them, **"Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?**

3 But he answered them, **"Why do you also disregard the commandment of God because of your tradition?**

3 But he answered and said unto them, **Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?**

- Jesus responded with a counterattack. He made a basic distinction between God's commandments and the Jews' traditions, charging them with breaking the former (God's commands) to keep the latter (Jewish tradition)

Traditions of Judaism vs. Commandments of God

4 For God said, 'HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,' and, 'THE ONE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH!'

4 For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death.'

4 Because God said, 'You are to honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever curses father or mother must certainly be put to death.'

4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

- Jesus quoted Ex 20:12; 21:17

5 But **you** say, 'Whoever says to *his* father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,"

5 But you say, 'Whoever says to *his* father or mother, "Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,"

5 But you say, 'Whoever tells his father or his mother, "Whatever support you might have received from me has been given to God,"

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

- "...you" - emphatic in the Greek text

6 he is not to honor his father or mother.' And by *this* you have invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

6 he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by *this* you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

6 does not have to honor his father! Because of your tradition, then, you have disregarded the authority of God's word.

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

- The scribes and Pharisees forsook the spirit of the 5th commandment, that children should take responsibility for their needy parents

— Rabbinic tradition held that if someone vowed to give something to God, he should not break the vow. Jesus said that the law taught a more fundamental duty: to withhold from one's parents what one could give to help them, because of what the rabbis taught, was greedy hypocrisy.

— Jesus is teaching that the error was not using the money for oneself or donating it to a good cause, but failing to give it to the needy parent.

- Jesus had previously taught the disciples to put commitment to Him above family responsibilities (8:21-22; 10:38). The traditions of the Jews did not carry that much authority.

— The situation Jesus addressed previously involved family members opposing His disciples, not His disciples opposing their family members (Cf. 10:37-39)

Corban

There was a tradition that goods could be set aside for either of two purposes: as a dedication to the Temple, or in reserve for the performance of a vow. These "set aside" funds were designated *korban*, a gift offered (or to be offered) to God; a sacred treasury (Mark 7:11).

"Corban" was excluded from any other requirements. But they used this tradition as a ruse to evade the commandment to care for their father and their mother. From this came a practice: say grandpa and grandma were hungry; you were to provide for them. But if you had a big steak you could declare it "corban" as being exempt from having to take care of your grandparents with it. So Jesus is saying that these traditions are not only wrong, but they have been contrived as to make the commandment of God of no effect!

- 7 You **hypocrites**, rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you, by saying:
- 7 You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you:
- 7 You hypocrites! How well did Isaiah prophesy of you when he said,
- 7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,'
 - "...hypocrites" – chronologically, this is the first time Jesus called the Pharisees and teachers of the law by this title
 - Their hypocrisy consisted of making an external show of commitment to God, while at the same time giving human tradition more importance than God's Word
- 8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.
 - 8 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.
 - 8 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.
 - 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.
- 9 'AND IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.'"
 - 9 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'"
 - 9 Their worship of me is empty, because they teach human rules as doctrines.'"
 - 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.
 - Isaiah addressed these words to Jerusalem Jews, who sometimes allowed external acts of worship to corrupt principle. Instead of continuing God's will, the Jews' traditions perpetuated the spirit of the hypocrites in Isaiah's day.
 - Isaiah is criticizing the replacement heartfelt worship with mere ritual; he called this type of religion "vain"
 - Resemblance to Church of Sardis, Rev 3: denominationalism

- Every one of the major heresies started with a germ of truth that got exaggerated, overemphasized, over embellished and eventually became a heresy
- Scriptural protection from this sort of trap is to absorb the whole counsel of God

Jesus Teaches About Man's Heart

10 After Jesus called the crowd to Him, He said to them, "**Hear and understand!**"

10 After Jesus called the crowd to Him, He said to them, "**Hear and understand.**"

10 Then calling out to the crowd, he addressed them, "**Listen and understand!**"

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, **Hear, and understand:**

- Instead of responding to questions from His critics, Jesus now taught the crowds the same lesson (in a parable, v15), while at the same time giving a direct answer to the Pharisees and scribes.
- The point of this parable was not to veil truth from the crowds, but rather to urge them to hear and understand what He said. The parable was a comparison for the sake of clarification, but some still did not understand (v15-16).

11 *It is not what enters the mouth *that* defiles the person, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles the person."*

11 *It is not what enters into the mouth *that* defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man."*

11 *It is not what goes into the mouth that makes a person unclean. It is what comes out of the mouth that makes a person unclean."*

11 *Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.*

- Jesus is speaking of ceremonial defilement when He said that eating certain foods does not make one unclean

- Jesus is canceling all the food laws of the OT. He is terminating the dietary distinction between clean and unclean foods, which was a huge part of the Mosaic system of worship (Cf. Acts 10:15; Rom 14:14-18; 1 Cor 10:31; 1 Tim 4:4; Titus 1:15).

- Matthew's concern here is not to highlight this termination, but to stress the point of Jesus teaching: what comes out of your mouth (words) are more important than what you put into your mouth (food). Motives and attitudes are more significant than food and drink.

12 Then the disciples came and *said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"

12 Then the disciples *came and *said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"

12 Then the disciples came and asked him, "Do you realize that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

- Mark recorded that this exchange between the disciples and Jesus happened in a house, after they had retreated there from the public confrontation that preceded (Mark 7:17)

- The disciples, like all Jews, held the Pharisees and teachers of the law (scribes) in high regard. Since Jesus' words had "offended" His critics, the disciples were curious why.

— Jesus proceeded to disillusion His disciples on the reliability of the religious leader's spiritual leadership

13 But He answered and said, **"Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted.**

13 But He answered and said, **"Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted.**

13 He replied, **"Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be pulled up by the roots.**

13 But he answered and said, **Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.**

- Jesus compared the non-elect, including the unbelieving religious leaders (scribes and Pharisees) to plants that God had not planted (Cf. 13:24-30,36-43)

— There are several passages in the OT that compare Israel to a plant that God had planted (Ps 1:3; Is 60:21). Isaiah also described God uprooting rebellious Israel as a farmer pulls up a worthless plant (Is 5:1-7).

— Jesus point was that God would uproot the scribes and Pharisees, and other unbelievers, because they were not people that He had planted. Furthermore, they were worthless leaders.

— This would have been a shocking revelation to the disciples. Jesus had previously hinted at this (3:9; 8:11-12), but now, since the leaders had definitively rejected Him, He made the point clear.

14 **Leave them alone;** they are **blind guides of blind people.** And if a person who is blind guides *another* who is blind, both will fall into a pit."

14 **Let them alone;** they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

14 **Leave them alone.** They are blind guides of the blind. If one blind person leads another blind person, both will fall into a ditch."

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

- "Leave them alone" - just as Jesus said God would leave the tares that the enemy had planted in the field (13:28-29)
- "...blind guides of blind people" - the Pharisees considered themselves as guides of the spiritually blind, since they knew the law and understood its traditional interpretation.
- However, Jesus called them blind guides of the blind because they failed to comprehend the real meaning of the Scriptures they took so much pride in understanding.

15 Peter said to Him, "Explain the parable to us."

15 Peter said to Him, "Explain the parable to us."

15 Then Peter told him, "Explain to us this parable."

15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

- Peter again takes a leadership role among the disciples (Cf. 14:28)

16 Jesus said, **"Are you also still lacking in understanding?**

16 Jesus said, **"Are you still lacking in understanding also?**

16 Jesus said, **"Are you still so ignorant?**

16 And Jesus said, **Are ye also yet without understanding?**

- Jesus again rebuked the disciples for not understanding what He meant (Cf. 14:31)

— The crowds were understandably ignorant, but the disciples should have known better: Jesus had taught them the priority of reality over ritual before (3:9; 12:1-21)

17 Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated?

17 Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and is eliminated?

17 Don't you know that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then is expelled as waste?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and those things defile the person.

18 But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.

18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and it is those things that make a person unclean.

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

- Jesus is contrasting tangible food with intangible thoughts

19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, *acts of adultery, other immoral sexual acts, thefts, false testimonies, and* slanderous statements.

19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

19 It is out of the heart that evil thoughts come, as well as murder, adultery, sexual immorality, stealing, false testimony, and slander.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

- The list of the byproducts of our heart follows the order of the Ten Commandments

- None of us can lay claim to not having any one of these occur in our heart

20 These are the things that defile the person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the person."

20 These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

20 These are the things that make a person unclean. But eating with unwashed hands doesn't make a person unclean."

20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man.

- Jesus' point was: what a person *is* determines what they *do* and say (Cf. 12:34-35; Rom 14:14,17; 1 Cor 8:8; Heb 9:10)

— Jesus presupposes the biblical revelation that the heart (the seat of thought and will) is evil (Cf. 7:11)

— True religion must deal with people's basic nature, not just with externals. The scribes and Pharisees had become so preoccupied with externals that they failed to deal with what is more basic and important: a genuine relationship with God.

In this passage, Jesus rejected the Pharisees and scribes as Israel's authentic interpreters of the OT, and He claimed that role for Himself. This was a theological issue, which ultimately led to Jesus' arrest and crucifixion.

(E) Christ heals the Canaanite woman (15:21-28) (Cf. Mark 7:24-30)

Since 13:54, Jesus began to withdraw and train His disciples. However, this time He didn't just withdraw to Galilee...He left Jewish territory completely. The response of the Canaanite

woman in this passage contrasts with the Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes in the previous passage (v1-20). She was a Gentile, with no pretensions about knowing the law, but she came to Jesus in humble belief, trusting only in His grace. This event helped the disciples to know how to deal with people who believed in Jesus, including Gentiles.

21 Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the region of **Tyre and Sidon**.

21 Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon.

21 Then Jesus left that place and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

— "...Tyre and Sidon" - this is an area in present-day Lebanon, on the Mediterranean coast, about 30 and 50 miles north of Galilee

— It was a pagan Gentile territory

— This was not a mission to preach the kingdom; it was simply to get away with His disciples for some rest.

22 And a **Canaanite woman** from that region came out and *began* to cry out, saying,

"Have mercy on me, **Lord, Son of David**; my daughter is severely demon-possessed."

22 And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and *began* to cry out, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed."

22 Suddenly, a Canaanite woman from that territory came near and began to shout, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed!"

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

— "...Canaanite woman" - a Canaanite woman and a Gentile; she was of a specifically cursed group, a descendant of Israel's ancient enemy

— Joel 3:17; Zech 14:21: two prophecies that point to the fact that the Canaanite will be driven out of the land

— The Canaanites were not supposed to be spared by Joshua

— "...Lord" - may have just been respectful (Cf. 8:2)

— "...Son of David" - a title of the Messiah; she clearly expressed belief that He was Israel's promised Messiah. She obviously had knowledge of the messianic hopes of Israel.

23 But He did not answer her *with* even a word. And His disciples came up and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us!"

23 But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us."

23 But he didn't answer her at all. Then his disciples came up and kept urging him, "Send her away, because she keeps on screaming as she follows us."

23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

- The disciples probably wanted Jesus to just heal the woman's daughter so she would leave them alone

24 But He answered and said, "**I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"

24 But He answered and said, "**I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"

24 But he replied, "**I was sent only to the lost sheep of the nation of Israel.**"

24 But he answered and said, **I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

- Jesus had previously healed many demon possessed people (4:24; 8:16,28,33; 9:32; 12:22), but He declined to do so here because His mission was to the Jews

A good teacher may sometimes draw out a student's insight through a deliberate challenge that does not necessarily represent the teacher's own view. While not an appropriate phrase in this context, Jesus was being a "devil's advocate."

25 But she came and *began to bow down* before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

25 But she came and *began to bow down* before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

25 Then she came and fell down before him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

- She was desperately helpless, with confidence in Jesus' ability to meet her need

- "...bow down" - *proskyneo*, imperfect tense, meaning she stayed kneeling in a bowed position

26 Yet He answered and said, "**It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.**"

26 And He answered and said, "**It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.**"

26 He replied, "**It's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the puppies.**"

26 But he answered and said, **It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.**

- Jesus again clarified the difference between Jews and Gentiles, in order to challenge her

— Parents feed their children first, and house dogs (pets) get whatever might remain

— God is the Person providing the spiritual Bread of Life to His chosen people

- "...dogs" - *kunarion*, a little dog; a pet

— Refers to Gentiles in this verse; Jews popularly regarded Gentiles as "dogs"

27 And she said, "Yes, Lord; but please help, **foreven** the dogs feed on the **crumbs** that fall from their masters' table."

27 But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

27 She said, "Yes, Lord. But even the puppies eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables."

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

- "...for even" - *kai gar*, she was not challenging what Jesus had said. She acknowledged the truthfulness of what He said, then appealed to Him on the basis of its implications.

— She did not ask for help because her case made her an exception, or because she believed she had a right to Jesus' help.

— She did not argue about God's justice in seeking the Jews first. She simply threw herself on Jesus' mercy without pleading any merit.

- "...crumbs" - *psichion*, the diminutive form, expressing her unworthiness to receive a large blessing

The woman was confident that even if she was not entitled to sit down as a guest at the Master's table, the Gentile "dog" that she was, at least she may be allowed to receive a crumb of the uncovenanted mercies of God. The metaphor that Christ had used as a reason for rejecting her petition she turned into a reason for granting it. She bowed to God's will regarding Jewish priority, but she also believed that God would extend His grace to believing Gentiles.

28 Then Jesus said to her, "**O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you desire.**" And her daughter was healed at once.

28 Then Jesus said to her, "**O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish.**" And her daughter was healed at once.

28 Then Jesus answered her, "**Lady, your faith is great! What you want is granted.**" That very hour her daughter was healed.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, **O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.** And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

- The woman's faith was "great" because it revealed humble submission to God's will, and expressed confidence in Jesus to do what only God could do.

— Jesus healed the woman's daughter with only His word

- Jesus had healed Gentiles before, but this was the first time He healed one in Gentile territory

- Both people whom Jesus commended for their great faith in Matthew were Gentiles, this Canaanite woman and the Roman centurion (8:5-13)
- In each case, Jesus initially expressed a reluctance to heal because they were Gentiles. In both cases, Jesus provided healing for an acquaintance of theirs, from a distance. In both cases He said their faith was greater than that of any Jew.

In a spiritual sense, Gentiles were "far off" until the Cross, when Jesus reconciled them. Then they enjoyed equal footing with Jews in the Church (Eph 2-3).

(F) Feeding of the 4000 (15:29-39) (Cf. Mark 7:31-37)

Matthew again summarizes Jesus' healing ministry (Cf. 4:23-25; 9:35-38; 12:15-21; 14:34-36) following opposition (13:54-14:12; 15:1-20) and discipleship training (14:13-33; 15:21-28).

The Public Ministry to Gentiles

29 Departing from there, Jesus went along the Sea of Galilee, and after going up on the mountain, He was sitting there.

29 Departing from there, Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee, and having gone up on the mountain, He was sitting there.

29 Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a hillside and sat down.

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

- There are several clues in this passage that indicate that Jesus went to the eastern (Gentile) side of the lake (Cf. Mark 7:31)

30 And large crowds came to Him bringing with them *those who were limping, had impaired limbs, were blind, or were unable to speak*, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them.

30 And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them *those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others*, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them.

30 Large crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, those unable to talk, and many others. They placed them at his feet, and he healed them.

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:

- Once again, large crowds brought their sick to Jesus for healing. Jesus performed these acts of healing freely.

31 So the crowd was astonished as they saw those who were unable to speak talking, those with impaired limbs restored, those who were limping walking around, and those who were blind seeing; and they glorified the **God of Israel**.

31 So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

31 As a result, the crowd was amazed to see those who were unable to talk speaking, the crippled healed, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. So they praised the God of Israel.

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.

- "...God of Israel" - this is one clue that the people were mainly Gentiles. They saw a connection between Jesus and the God of Israel.

Why did Jesus so freely heal Gentiles here, when in the previous passage He was reluctant to do so? Very likely, He said what He said to the Canaanite woman for the benefit of the disciples, as well as give her an opportunity to demonstrate her great faith.

Jesus Feeds 4,000 (Cf. Mark 8:1-10)

32 Now Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, "I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way."

32 And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, "I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way."

32 Then Jesus called his disciples and said, "I have compassion for the crowd because they have already been with me for three days and have nothing to eat. I don't want to send them away without food, or they may faint on the road."

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.

- Jesus again had "compassion" (Cf. 9:36) on the crowds

- Evidently, the crowds did not go home at nightfall, instead sleeping on the hillsides to be close to Jesus. This portrays a picture of huge crowds, standing in line for days at a time, to obtain Jesus' help.

- Jesus had previously fed 5,000 men near the northeast coast of the Sea of Galilee, who were mainly Jewish (14:13-21). Now, He fed 4,000 men on the east coast of the Sea of Galilee, who were mainly Gentiles.

33 The disciples *said to Him, "Where would we get so many loaves in *this* desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?"

33 The disciples *said to Him, "Where would we get so many loaves in *this* desolate place to satisfy such a large crowd?"

33 The disciples asked him, "Where in the wilderness are we to get enough bread to feed such a crowd?"

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

- The disciples' question is amazing, considering they were present when Jesus recently fed 5,000 men—plus women and children. Some reasons for their question could have been:

— It may have been the fact that the crowd was predominantly Gentile led the disciples to conclude that Jesus would not do the same for them that He had done for the Jews.

— This may have been especially true in view of what He had said to the Canaanite woman about Jewish priority in God's kingdom program.

— If they thought of the feeding of the 5,000 as a foretaste of the kingdom banquet, they probably would have thought that it was a uniquely Jewish experience.

— Since Jesus rebuked the crowd for just wanting food after the feeding of the 5,000, the disciples did not consider that He would duplicate the miracle (Cf. John 6:26).

— Likely the disciples' limited faith was also a factor (Cf. 16:5-12)

34 And Jesus *said to them, "**How many loaves do you have?**" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish."

34 And Jesus *said to them, "**How many loaves do you have?**" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish."

34 Jesus asked them, "**How many loaves of bread do you have?**" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish."

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

35 And He directed the people to sit down on the ground;

35 And He directed the people to sit down on the ground;

35 Ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground,

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks, He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples *gave them* to the crowds.

36 and He took the seven loaves and the fish; and giving thanks, He broke them and started giving them to the disciples, and the disciples *gave them* to the people.

36 he took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks. Then he broke them in pieces and kept giving them to his disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

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.

37 And they all ate and **were satisfied**, and they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, seven large **baskets** full.

37 And they all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, seven large baskets full.

37 All of them ate until they were filled, then the disciples picked up what was left of the broken pieces—seven baskets full.

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

– "...were satisfied" – again, everyone got enough to eat

– "...baskets" – *spyridas*, different baskets than used during the feeding the 5,000. These baskets were made of rushes that Gentiles used to carry fish and other food (Cf. Acts 9:25)
— In 14:20, the disciples used *kophinous*, baskets Jews used to carry kosher food

38 And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

38 And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

38 Now those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the region of **Magadan**.

39 And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan.

39 After he sent the crowds away, he got into a boat and went to the region of Magadan.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

– "...Magadan" – likely in an area just north of Tiberias on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee

Feeding the Multitudes

Feeding the 5,000	Feeding the 4,000
Primarily Jews	Primarily Gentiles
In Galilee near Bethsaida	In the Decapolis
Five loaves and two fish	Seven loaves and a few fish
12 baskets of scraps	7 baskets of scraps
People with Jesus one day	People with Jesus three days
Spring season	Summer season
Jews tried to make Jesus king	No popular response

Note that this time there are seven loaves, and the fishes aren't numbered. The Holy Spirit is drawing our attention to the number seven. This time more loaves (7 vs. 5), less people (4000 vs. 5000 men+women and children), and less left over (7 vs. 12 baskets). In the first case, it was a small boy that had the basket (the basket was actually a small hand pail). The word basket here in the Greek is a large hamper, at least twice and up to five times bigger. So the seven baskets here may have been a lot more than was left over last time. This event would have impressed the disciples with God's graciousness in dealing with the Gentiles. His kingdom plan definitely included them, albeit a secondary role. Their role as disciples would include ministry to the Gentiles as well as Jews. They had the same ministry responsibility to both groups.