

## **A Study in the Miraculous**

I have often given thought that what is easy for me is easy for God. What is hard for me is hard for God. This type of reasoning is used because we too often forget what God said, in Isaiah 55:8: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD." Jeremiah 32:17 tells us: "Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee."

There are three accounts recorded in the Gospels of Jesus feeding the multitude of five thousand men, along with their families, who came to hear Jesus preach. Matthew 14:21: "And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children." This was a day when large families were commonplace. It has been estimated that the crowd could have been upwards of 15 to 30 thousand in total number. If today, someone were to say, "Pastor, we have some very special guests with us in church and they want to get to know you and Mrs. Pope better." Therefore, I talk to my wife and I say, "There is a husband and wife and six children visiting in church today. Let's feed them!" Feeding a family of eight would be feasible and doable. If, on the other hand, fifteen thousand people showed up for church today expecting to be fed by my wife and me and be done by our evening service, I don't see how that could be accomplished. Not only did Jesus do exactly that, there were twelve baskets left over! Our Lord can and has done many things that we cannot do.

Let's examine this miracle and learn when and, God willing, why Jesus does something, not only beyond our frame of reference, but beyond our natural capability.

### **1. THE DISCIPLES WERE TIRED AND DISCOURAGED.**

Mark 5:30-32

In Mark 6:7-13 Jesus sent the disciples out two by two to minister. It appears they gave this work their all. In Mark 6:14-29 we see that John the Baptist, the most famous representative of God in the earth, had been put to death. This was verified by the words of our Lord who said of John, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist..." (Matthew 11:11a).

So the disciples were called by Jesus to come and rest.

### **2. JESUS ADDRESSES THE SPIRITUAL HUNGER OF THE PEOPLE.**

Mark 6:33, 34

Deuteronomy 8:3: "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Amos 8:11: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.”

Our world is dark; we need light. Psalm 119:130: “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

We need to appeal to a higher form of government for life’s governing principles. John 18:36: “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” James 2:5: “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” Luke 17:21: “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” Ecclesiastes 8:4: “Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?”

### 3. THE DISCIPLES GIVE THEIR LOGICAL OPINION ON HOW TO FEED THE PEOPLE.

Mark 6:35-37

Here is the situation and what they were facing:

- A. The hour was late: “...the day was now far spent...and now the time is far passed” (Mark 6:35a, c).
- B. They were in the middle of nowhere: “...This is a desert place...” (Mark 6:35b).
- C. The crowd was huge: “And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children” (Matthew 14:21).
- D. There was not enough money to buy bread, if they could find the stores: “Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little” (John 6:7). Vincent’s Word Studies says this was approximately 30 to 35 dollars.

The opinion of the disciples was to send the multitude away so they may find some places to buy themselves a meal (Mark 6:36).

By the time these negatives add up, you could easily talk yourself out of a miracle. Unbelief is lethal to seeing God’s miracles. This was the failure at Kedesh-barnea: “But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature” (Numbers 13:31, 32). Forty-five years later Caleb said, “Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God” Joshua 14:8).

### 4. JESUS COMMANDED THE DISCIPLES TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

Mark 6:37-40

Faith is never tested until we are asked to reach beyond our natural resources. Jesus was not asking the disciples to turn five fish and two small

loaves into enough to feed the multitude. He was asking them to give to the crowd what He will be giving to them.

We are reminded of the parable of the importunate friend (Luke 11:5-13). The resources of Heaven are open and available to the children of the kingdom. Luke 11:13: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Matthew 19:26: "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Mark 9:23: "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

#### 5. JESUS TOOK MAN'S CATCH AND HARVEST AND EXTENDED WHAT WAS GIVEN TO HIM INTO A MIRACLE.

Mark 6:41-44

Before the miracle, Jesus blessed the food. Examine John 11:41-44. Here we see that Jesus gives praise and thanks for what was about to take place, which was the rising from the dead of Lazarus. John 11:40: "Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" We do not see to believe; we believe to see. Psalm 27:13: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." II Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

#### Conclusion:

Directly following this miracle, the disciples were afraid they would die in the storm. Jesus walked out upon the water and stilled the sea. Then the Bible lays down a strong rebuke: "For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened" (Mark 6:52). How soon we forget the supernatural! Here is one reason Jesus displayed His supernatural abilities: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Corinthians 10:11).

-Pastor Pope-