



January 10, 2019 - David Sullivan



God's Provision - God as Multiplier, Part 1



Luke 9:1-17

Yesterday we looked at Joshua and how the LORD had already provided the victory over Jericho; Joshua and the children of Israel only had to worship, listen, and obey to receive that which the LORD had already made provision for. Today we'll look at another example from scripture.

The feeding of the 5,000 is one of the better-known stories in the New Testament. The story of this miracle is found in Luke 9:10-17 (and is paralleled in Matthew 14, Mark 6, and John 6). The gospel writers must have viewed this as a very significant event since it is the only miracle recorded in all four of the gospels. We know from the accounts that there were 5,000 men plus women and children present that day. Most theologians believe the number of people fed was somewhere between 15,000 – 20,000.

The timing of this miracle is as significant as the miracle itself. Matthew, Mark and John share that John the Baptist was beheaded just before sharing about this miracle. Throughout the Old Testament John was prophesied to be the one to prepare the way for the LORD. He was perhaps the first true and best-known evangelist of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Luke, however, doesn't mention this part of the story. Luke 9:1-6 shares that Jesus called together the twelve disciples, gave them some brief instructions, and then sent them out empty-handed to preach the kingdom of God. They obeyed and they "went from village to village preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere (9:6)." He multiplied one missionary into twelve missionaries! Jesus had been preparing and discipling the twelve for this purpose. But the lesson continues in verses 10-17 of Luke 9.

We all know the story, Jesus and the twelve tried to slip away for some rest, but they were sought out and found by the huge crowd. As the day wore on, the disciples came to Jesus and asked that he send the people away so they could eat and find lodging in the city as they were in a remote place. Jesus simply answered and said, "you feed them." Can you imagine the thoughts that surely ran through the disciples' minds? Phillip even said "Seriously??? – that would take 8 months' salary!" Okay, I took some liberty in my interpretation of what he said, but you get the point – it was a tall order! While this seemed like an impossible situation for the disciples, much like Jericho did to Israel back in the day, Jesus had a plan.

God always has a plan and a provision for us. Maybe you're thinking to yourself, "Seriously???

– how can I give right now?" Just remember, the same God who provided for Israel to get to the Promised land, who provided for the disciple to go and preach the gospel at Jesus' command, and who provided for the crowd, is the same God that you and I serve. God will provide; pray for how He will use you!



*Journey On*