

## "Jehovah Jireh" - Mark 6:30-44

I want to begin this morning by reading this entire passage. I think it is good for us to listen to the whole event, start to finish. Then we'll back up and drill down a bit.

### **Read Mark 6:30-44.**

As you read through the 4 Gospels, it is quickly obvious that Jesus performed a whole bunch of miracles. In fact, the Apostle John says this:

*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; (John 20:30)*

And later, he writes:

*And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen. (John 21:25)*

These supernatural works were given as signs that should have authenticated His message. Unfortunately, many folks, in fact, most folks still missed the message. They loved the miracles. The miracles made Jesus incredibly popular in and around the province of Galilee. This was amazing, marvelous, something nobody had ever seen. But they were so wrapped up in the miracles that they missed the message. They missed the eternal Word of God. They missed their Messiah. The vast majority would eventually turn against Him.

Of all the miracles performed by Jesus, only two appear in all four Gospels. The Gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John had to be selective. They couldn't put everything in their books; there was just too much. That's why we need four Gospels. We need these four different perspectives so we can get to know our Lord and Savior. But two events were so over-the-top, that all four knew they had to write about them. One was the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. That was the most important miracle of them all because without His resurrection, our faith would be futile and we would all still be in our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17)

The other miracle recorded in all four Gospels is the feeding of the five thousand. Why is it so important? This miracle clearly demonstrates the creative power of God the Son. The scope of this miracle is absolutely staggering. Please understand that when the Gospel writers identify 5,000 people, they are only talking about the men. Matthew tells us this explicitly.

*Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matthew 14:21)*

Assuming that there were probably as many women as men, and that most brought their families, there easily could have been twenty to twenty-five thousand souls on that Galilean hillside. And Jesus fed them all. He is Jehovah Jireh – The LORD who provides.

The first thing we see in this passage is that Jesus provides rest. Let me remind you of what has just happened. Jesus gave power to the 12 Apostles and sent them out two by two.

*So they went out and preached that people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them. (Mark 6:12-13)*

We don't have any account of exactly what they did, but essentially, they were to do what Jesus had been doing. It was exhausting work. The crowds would have been large and unruly, and I'm sure they experienced exactly what Jesus experienced:

*Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. (Mark 3:20)*

So, the Apostles were tired, and I'm sure Jesus was too. But at the same time, word came that John the Baptist had been executed. We can imply that from Mark, but Matthew confirms it.

*Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. (Matthew 14:12-13)*

And then the Matthew gives his account of feeding the 5,000.

So, they had been hit with a double-whammy. They are exhausted from ministry and the demands of the crowds. And John, the greatest of all Old Testament prophets, who pointed the way to the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world has been murdered.

*Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. (Mark 6:30-31)*

Have you ever been tired? I mean, really tired ... bone tired ... so exhausted that you couldn't even function? Physical exhaustion is debilitating. I think of our firefighters, sixteen-hour workdays, 7 days a week, back-breaking, dangerous, physical labor. 14 days on, a couple days off and back at it again. You think they might need a rest?

Spiritual labor is also exhausting. There is a physical stamina element to it, remember, these guys couldn't find time to eat. But there is also an emotional component. It is possible to become emotionally exhausted. These apostles were physically, emotionally, and spiritually tired.

Jesus said to them, "*Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.*" Jesus cares about His people. Jesus cares about you! And He knows what it is to be physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted. He will provide perfect rest.

*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)*

*So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves. (Mark 6:32)*

I can tell you from first-hand experience that is an effective way to rest. When we lived in the Puget Sound area, we were boaters. Sailors for about 16 years, then we went over to the dark side and bought a trawler, abandoned the wind for diesel. Being out on the water was so relaxing for me ... most of the time.

But this wasn't a particularly long cruise for Jesus and His boys. The Sea of Galilee is really a lake and the distance they traveled from Capernaum to the area around the little town of Bethsaida was only about four miles. I don't know how long it took them to get there ... but it certainly wasn't an extended cruise. If the disciples thought they were going to hang out on the beach playing frisbee for a few weeks, they would soon be disappointed.

*But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. (Mark 6:33)*

So much for the vacation! By land, it was only 8 miles from Capernaum to Bethsaida and so, a bunch of folks actually beat them there ... and thronged around Jesus.

*And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things. (Mark 6:34)*

Jesus provides doctrine. He had compassion on them. He taught them. He imparted heavenly wisdom. We don't know exactly what He said, but we can imply that it is the same message He preached everywhere. Maybe a repeat of the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes. We know for sure that whatever He taught, it was God's honest truth because Jesus is God!

When He saw that they were like sheep without a shepherd, he had compassion for them. Do you know what domestic sheep are like without a shepherd? They are helpless. Domestic sheep are really, really stupid! They need a shepherd to take care of them. And so do we. Jesus said:

*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. (John 10:27-28)*

Do you hear Jesus' voice? Are you one of His sheep? Jesus said:

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. (John 10:11)*

That is exactly what Jesus did because you are a sinner, you are a dead man walking or a dead woman walking. The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Not just physical death, but spiritual death an eternity of suffering in the hell that was created for the devil and his demons. But Jesus gave His life for you. He went to the cross to suffer the penalty for your sin, thousands, millions of eternities in hell concentrated on the sinless Lamb of God. He took your sin upon Himself and by His stripes we are healed. All you have to do is believe ... believe and trust. Trust Jesus for your salvation, because,

*... if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)*

Jesus provides the Gospel. Jesus provides salvation. He is Jehovah Jireh – The Lord who provides.

And now we get to this most amazing miracle.

*When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat." (Mark 6:35-36)*

Now, forgive me for reading something more into scripture, but knowing human nature, I'm thinking there was just a bit of a selfish agenda here. If the multitude was hungry, so were the disciples. I'm guessing they were ready to chow down! "Send them away, then we can eat."

*But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." (Mark 6:37)*

What? Where were they going to get any food? And their response is just a little sarcastic, don't you think?

*And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" (Mark 6:37)*

That wasn't going to happen. 200 denarii was about 8 month's pay for the average day laborer. They didn't have that kind of cash. And even if they did, where would they get that much bread? It wasn't like there was a Super 1 right around the corner.

*But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish." (Mark 6:38)*

Now, when Scripture says loaves, we're not talking about something the size of a loaf of Wonder Bread. These were little biscuits. And the fish probably consisted of a kind of fish paste that would be spread on the biscuits. So, five loaves and two fish were probably just one person's lunch and we know from John, that they got this food from a kid ...

Andrew said:

*"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish ... (John 6:9)*

I think they swiped the poor kid's lunch!

*Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. (Mark 6:39-40)*

Remember, this was a big crowd. Jesus told His disciples to get them organized. This was not to be a feeding frenzy ... this was to be an orderly event.

*And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled. (Mark 6:41-42)*

This was an act of creation. Jesus was producing food from ... nothing at all. I know He started with five loaves and two fish, but as He handed the food out to His disciples, it became enough to feed probably 25,000 people. And by the way, the word translated as "filled" ... "they all ate and were filled" ... is *chortazō* (χορτάζω), which means "to gorge". They ate until they could eat no more!

*And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. (Mark 6:43)*

They had more left over than what they started with, but what is significant is that the leftovers fit in 12 baskets. How many Apostles were there? Yeah, they each had a full basket of left-overs. These weren't bushel baskets. They were small baskets, the sort of baskets you would pack your lunch in. So, there was really very little waste.

i. Jesus provided exactly what was needed.

Guess what? He will do that for you too. Jesus is Jehovah Jireh, the LORD who provides.

Paul, writing to the Philippians, thanking them for their generous love gift to him, says this:

*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)*

He might not supply all you think you want, but He will provide everything you need. Everything you need to live a life that honors the Lord, by Christ Jesus.

Jesus is Jehovah Jireh!