

More Than Feeding 5,000

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[0 : 00] The four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, have different purposes for writing! Because of that, the gospels include some things that the others omit. Each gospel also omits some things that the other gospels include. The passage we come to tonight is the gospel of a rarity. All four gospels actually include this miracle. This miracle and Jesus' resurrection are the only two of Jesus' miracles recorded in each of the four gospels. So turn to Mark chapter 6 verses 30 through 44. We'll go ahead and read the text. Here are Mark chapter 6 verses 30 through 44.

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while. For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.

Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat. But he answered them, You give them something to eat.

And they said to him, Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat? And he said to them, How many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they had found out, they said, Five and two fish. Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass.

[2 : 09] So they sat down in groups by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied.

And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men. This passage likely is familiar to you, especially if you grew up in church. It's a favorite passage for children's Sunday school and vacation Bible school. Sally Lloyd-Jones is a children's book author who is unrelated to the famous preacher.

But she writes, The Bible is not a book of rules or a book of heroes. The Bible is most of all a story. You see, the best thing about this story is it's true.

There are lots of stories in the Bible, but all the stories are telling the one big story, the story of how God loves his children and comes to rescue them. The story we will study tonight is true. But because this story is important enough to be the only miracle other than Jesus' resurrection to be included in every gospel, the story's meaning and significance must go deeper than what many of us learned as kids.

[3 : 36] That thought leads us to the main idea for this text. Jesus demonstrates his deity and compassion by providing for the people and by fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.

Once again, Jesus demonstrates his deity and compassion by providing for the people and by fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. Mark chapter 6, verse 30 picks up where Mark 6, verse 13 left off when we were here two weeks ago and covered that passage.

Here are Mark 6, 7 through 13. Mark 6, 7 through 13 say, talking about Jesus, And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff, no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.

And he said to them, whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.

[4 : 50] So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed them with oil who were sick and healed them. All of the apostles except Judas Iscariot were from Galilee.

And those Galileans would have been familiar with the villages to which they traveled to preach the gospel. Mark doesn't tell us how long the twelve were gone, but their mission probably lasted weeks, maybe even a few months.

Their ministry efforts created a buzz throughout Galilee, causing even Herod Antipas to take notice. We know that the apostles' journeys were successful because Mark 6, 12 and 13 tell us that they proclaimed repentance, casted out demons, and healed the sick.

Because of that success, we can imagine how excited that they must have been to return and to tell Jesus. We'll learn about their return as we start digging into tonight's passage.

And in tonight's lesson, we'll walk through the passage to see what happened. Telling the story about actual events is where most children's stories end. We won't stop at that point, though.

[6 : 01] This lesson includes one more section after that to show how the actual events relate to prophecies in the Old Testament. We'll break tonight's passage into five sections, starting with Mark 6, verses 30 through 32.

And in those verses, we see the fleeting pause. So the fleeting pause is your first set of blanks. Here are verses 30 through 32 again.

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.

For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Although we know the apostles had success on their mission, we know from Mark 6, 11 and Matthew 10, 16 through 23, that the apostles also faced some episodes of rejection.

Certainly, they needed time to rest and recuperate from their long journeys. And they'd been so busy that Mark 6, 31 says that they lack leisure time even to eat. Apparently, they'd been eating on the move as they roamed from town to town.

[7 : 22] Both verse 31 and 32 refer to Jesus and the apostles going to a desolate place. The word translated as desolate does not imply that the location itself was a desert, as some translations make it sound.

The Galilean countryside in springtime is beautiful. And the word translated as desolate here merely indicates that they were going to a remote and unpopulated area.

That was an area where food was not readily available. The New American Standard Version translates the Greek word well. The NASB translates the word as secluded.

So that's the idea that you need to get here. This section gives us some practical insights. It shows that there's a time to work.

We know that laziness has no place in the Christian life. But we should have periods of rest because Jesus tells us to do that too. Being a workaholic is not spiritual and actually can be sinful because some make working in the church an idol.

[8 : 27] Our rest should be for a specific period rather than for being permanent. And even while resting, we should be prepared for ministry if necessary. A devoted follower of Jesus is never off duty.

The fleeting pause was fleeting because of what happened next. And in Mark 6, 33 and 34, the second section of the passage, we see the fascinated people.

So the fascinated people is your second set of blanks. Here are verses 33 and 34 again. Now many saw them going and recognized them.

And they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

And he began to teach them many things. And of course, the he in those verses is Jesus. While the apostles and Jesus were rowing their boat gently down the lake, many people spotted them and recognized them.

[9 : 33] Those people ran along the shore and actually arrived at the destination before Jesus and his group did. We might have expected Jesus to be upset by this.

The fascinated people had ruined his and his apostles' vacation before it even got started. But look again at verse 34 to see how Jesus reacted. Speaking of Jesus, Mark 6, 34 says, When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

And he began to teach them many things. The verb translated felt compassion literally means to be moved in one's bowels where the feelings of pain are felt.

The ancients considered bowels to be the seat of emotions. We've seen the apostle Paul use a similar term in many of his letters. But R.C. Sproul noted that this particular version of the term is different.

Sproul said, The Greek word that is translated here as compassion is used to describe only Jesus in all of the New Testament. This was a compassion that reached a level that was far deeper than human concern and empathy for people in pain.

[10 : 49] James Brooks echoed what Sproul said and then he added, The Greek word suggests something more than pity. It suggests actual help. Verse 34 tells us that Jesus taught the people many things.

John's account confirms what you probably already suspect because of what we've seen earlier in Mark's gospel. The fascinated people were more interested in the possibility of seeing more miracles than they were interested in hearing Jesus teach.

Listen to John chapter 6 verse 2. John 6 2 says, Most in the crowd were thrill seekers.

They were motivated out of a desire to witness and perhaps personally experience one of Jesus' miracles. Those who were sick wanted to be healed. Those who were well wanted to be entertained.

And some were even fueled by political ambitions, hoping to press Jesus into becoming their king. Despite the people's misguided motives, Matthew's record shows that Jesus also demonstrated his compassion by healing people.

[12 : 07] Here's Matthew 14.14. Matthew 14.14 says, When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Luke's narrative of this event combines both the teaching and the healing aspects of what Jesus did for the people on this occasion. Here's Luke chapter 9 verse 11.

Luke 9.11 says, When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.

We see that the Lord's compassion extended beyond the spiritual needs of the people to include their physical needs as well. Jesus' ability to heal them from temporal ailments was evidence of his ability to offer them spiritual salvation.

From more than the debilitating effects of this life, he was able to heal them from spiritual needs as well. Jesus also taught them how to overcome the eternal effect of sin itself.

[13 : 15] The physical healing that Jesus provided was limited to this life only, but the eternal life he offered abounds with blessing and benefits both for this life and the next.

Having so many fascinated people in a secluded place leads us into the third section of tonight's passage. In verses 35 through 40, we see the formidable problem.

So the formidable problem is what comes next? This section reflects poorly on the disciples. They had good intentions of wanting to see the people fed, but their approach toward how to accomplish that exposed their lack of faith and showed that they still had a lot to learn.

Listen to Mark 6, 35 through 37 again. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late.

Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat. But he answered them, You give them something to eat. And they said to him, Shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?

[14 : 28] These verses are a case where we wish that the Bible gave us an indication of the tone of the words here. Regardless of the tone, the disciples' questions show that the disciples have yet to understand who Jesus really is.

Many commentators believe that the disciples were rude to Jesus here. You know, sometimes we can get miffed if a church service runs a little long so that the Methodists beat us to our favorite

restaurant.

The exchange here likely carries the same idea, but on a much more significant scale. The disciples note that the time is getting late, the people must be getting hungry, and the people soon will have no stores open where they can buy food, so the disciples actually order Jesus to send the people away.

The mere fact that the disciples tell Jesus what to do proves that those disciples have yet to understand who Jesus is. But perhaps we should lighten up on them a little bit.

After all, the disciples must be hungry too. And to top it off, their vacation has been ruined by all of these people. They probably were a little more than just grumpy. Jesus' reply must have stunned them.

[15:42] Look at the first sentence of Mark 6.37 again. It says, Jesus' reply here is less strange than it first sounds.

Remember that the apostles had just been bragging to Jesus about all they had done and said on their missionary journeys. Mark 6.13 told us that the disciples themselves performed many miracles.

But when they were faced with this formidable problem, the apostles revert to considering only human solutions. We see that from the end of verse 37 where it says, And they said to him, Shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?

The 200 denarii would have been a large sum. A denarius was a typical day's wage for a laborer. If that laborer worked six days per week, earning 200 denarii would take just over 33 weeks.

That would be equivalent to almost eight months worth of work. John's account adds some details.

Here are John 6.5-7. John 6.5-7 say, Lifting up his eyes then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, Where are we to buy bread so that these people may eat?

[17:08] He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, 200 denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.

Humanly speaking, the problem seemed insurmountable, far beyond the financial resources available to the apostles. The possibility that Jesus might create the necessary food never crossed their minds.

They were so focused on the problem and the need to find a human solution that they failed to consider the divine power of their Lord. Look now at Mark 6.38.

Talking about Jesus, it says, And he said to them, How many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they had found out, they said, Five and two fish.

Once again, John gives us more details. Here are John 6.8-9. John 6.8-9 say, One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?

[18:23] Do you hear the dejection and maybe even hopelessness in what the apostles tell Jesus here? Let's go back to our Mark account to see what Jesus does next.

Here are Mark 6.39-40. Talking about Jesus, it says, Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups by hundreds and by fifties.

These verses remind us of the authority with which Jesus spoke. The people are hungry. We saw from John 6.5 that the people were coming toward Jesus, but Jesus commands them to sit down, and the people obeyed.

Luke's account tells us that Jesus specified the way that the people were to sit down. Listen to Luke 9, verses 14 and 15. Luke 9, 14 and 15 say, For there were about 5,000 men, and he said to his disciples, Have them sit down in groups of about 50 each.

And they did so, and have them all sit down. Jesus' words made order out of what just a few minutes ago had been chaos. And does that remind you of something?

[19:40] Think all the way back to the first verses of the Bible. Listen to Genesis 1, verses 1 and 2. Genesis 1, 1 and 2 say, In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. We know what comes after these verses.

God created order out of chaos with just his words. Genesis 1, 3, 1, 6, 1, 9, 1, 11, 1, 14, 1, 20, and 1, verse 24, all start with, And God said.

Genesis 1, verse 26, begins with, Then God said. As we go into the next section of the lesson, keep in mind what the end of John 6, 6 told us.

The end of John 6, 6 said this about Jesus, For he himself knew what he would do. No human was alive to see the creation of the world.

[20 : 53] However, the God who created the world and everything in it was about to give a live demonstration of his power to create things. In verses 41 through 44, we have the fourth section of this passage.

Jesus solves the formidable problem, and he solves that problem with fantastic provision. So the fantastic provision is what comes next on your handout.

Let's read Mark 6, 41 through 44 again. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people.

And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish.

And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men. Martin does not tell us the words that Jesus prayed, but in all probability, he prayed the common Jewish prayer for meals at that time.

[22 : 04] That prayer went like this. Praise be to you, O Lord our God, King of the world, who makes bread to come forth from the earth and who provides for all that you have created.

So you can see that this prayer was praising the providence of God. Regardless of what Jesus prayed, he followed that prayer with a miracle.

Because there is no human explanation to a divine creative miracle, the Gospels don't attempt to describe the manner in which this miracle took place. It apparently involved continuous creation as Jesus kept producing meals and giving them to the disciples who were distributing them to the people until everyone had been fed.

Thousands of hungry people all ate and were satisfied. The word translated satisfied derives its meaning from the world of animal husbandry. It describes livestock eating until they are completely full.

The word speaks of being gratified to the point of not wanting any more. Jesus used this same word in the Beatitudes to describe those who hunger and thirst for righteousness when he said that they shall be satisfied.

[23 : 19] The food Jesus created from nothing was perfect, having never been tainted by the corruption of a fallen world. And Jesus made more than enough to satisfy the famished crowds.

J.C. Ryle said, Here was creative power beyond all question. Something real, solid, and substantial which did not exist before must plainly have been called into being.

There is no room left for the theory that people were under the influence of an optical illusion or a heated imagination. More than 5,000 hungry people would never have been satisfied if they had not received actual bread.

twelve basketfuls of broken pieces would never have been taken up if the five loaves had not been miraculously multiplied. The hand of him who made the world out of nothing was present on this occasion.

None but he who at first created all things could have done this. According to Jesus' instructions, the disciples picked up any leftover food using small baskets to collect it.

[24 : 27] You notice that there were exactly twelve baskets full of the broken pieces and also of the fish and this obviously was no coincidence. As a result of Jesus' provision and precision, the apostles each had their own basketful of food and surely they shared their provisions with their master who had created it all.

When we put the will of God first, he will take care of our needs and he'll provide us our daily bread. God desires daily dependence on him.

And we know that Jesus fed more than 5,000 people on this occasion because of Mark's word choice and because of the other accounts. The word translated men in Mark 6.44 means males and not human beings.

Matthew 14.21 makes this clear by adding besides women and children. Here is Matthew 14.21 And those who ate were about 5,000 men besides women and children.

The huge crowd shows how popular Jesus was, but popularity and commitment have little in common. Mark probably wanted his readers to think of something more than physical satisfaction from all that Jesus gives, but we'll learn some sad news about the disciples when we get to Mark 6.52 in two weeks.

[25 : 58] Mark 6.52 says this about the disciples, For they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened. So far we've seen the fleeting pause, the fascinated people, the formidable problem, and the fantastic provision, and this is usually where children's Sunday school lessons and vacation Bible school studies stop.

Those things we already have seen are amazing, but this passage has more for us to see. We've seen that Jesus fed more than 5,000. As we look through key parts of the passage again, we'll see that this passage is about more than feeding 5,000.

The things remaining for us to see are perhaps the best part. That's a bold statement to make considering we've already seen that Jesus prove again that he is God. So what could be better than that?

Well, here's the answer. In the last section, we'll see the fulfilled prophecies. The fulfilled prophecies. The miracle of feeding the multitude is great.

Being reminded that Jesus is God is even greater. But perhaps every gospel writer included the event we've studied tonight because of the number of Old Testament pictures and prophecies that Jesus fulfills in this passage.

[27 : 24] First of all, we see that Jesus is the greater Moses. Jesus feeds people with teaching from God and bread from heaven, just like Moses.

As Moses met Israel's physical needs with manna and quail, a greater Moses, who is not only the good shepherd, but also the bread of life, fed his people with an abundant feast unlike they had ever known.

Jesus also organized the people into sections so that they could be fed in a more orderly way. This reflects Moses' instructions for the camp of Israel.

Listen to Exodus 18, verse 25. Here is Exodus 18, 25. But Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.

When we look at John's account of the feeding of the 5,000, we learn that Jesus used the miracle to set up his teaching that he, Jesus, is the bread of life. John 6, verses 22 through 35 show us that Jesus made his bread of life statements on the very next day.

[28 : 41] That comes from John 6, 22. Go ahead and turn over to John 6, and we'll look at John 6, 25 through 35. After feeding the 5,000, Jesus went back across the sea without many people noticing him.

The next day, the people started looking for Jesus, and that is where John 6, 25 picks up. Here are John 6, 25 through 35.

when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, Rabbi, when did you come here? Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.

Then they said to him, What must we do to be doing the works of God? Jesus answered them, This is the work of God that you believe in him who he has sent.

[29 : 55] So they said to him, Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness.

As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. We should pause here for a second. Do you see how determined the people are in their unbelief?

They had just seen Jesus feed 5,000 men plus women and children with just five loaves of bread and two fish. Yet they say, Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe in you?

What work do you perform? And then they even talk about the manna in the wilderness. So let's pick up the dialogue in John 6, 32 and read through verse 35.

Jesus then said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my father gives you the true bread from heaven.

[30 : 56] For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. They said to him, Sir, give us this bread always. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Mark 6, 34 told us that the people in the crowd were like sheep without a shepherd.

The phrase sheep without a shepherd recalls Moses' prayer asking that God would appoint a successor for him so the people would not be left like sheep without a shepherd.

That comes from Numbers 27, verses 12-23. Listen to just part of Moses' prayer there. These verses are Numbers 27, 15-17.

Numbers 27, 15-17 say, Moses spoke to the Lord saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them who shall lead them out and bring them in that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.

[32 : 14] Of course, we know that God provided a short-term answer to Moses' prayer by providing Joshua as the Israelites' next leader. But Joshua, whose name means God is salvation, pointed forward to the ultimate shepherd, who, of course, is Jesus.

In our text tonight, Jesus also provided rest in a desolate place, just as God, in the time of Moses, provided rest in the wilderness. Listen to Jeremiah 31, verses 2 and 3.

Jeremiah 31, verses 2 and 3 say, Thus says the Lord, The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness when Israel sought for rest.

The Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you. That same everlasting love carried over to our passage tonight, and it will continue to carry over all the way through eternity.

For other cross-references of how God provided rest in the wilderness, you can look at Psalm 95, verses 7 through 11, Isaiah 63, 14, and Hebrews chapters 3 and 4.

[33 : 33] So we've seen that Jesus is the greater Moses. Jesus is also the greater Elisha. When Elisha asked his servant to feed all the prophets with just 20 loaves, the servant replied, how can I set this before a hundred men?

And Elisha's response was, thus says the Lord, they shall eat and have some left, and they did. And to check that out, listen to 2 Kings 4, verses 42 through 44.

2 Kings 4, 42 through 44 say, a man came from Baal Shashah, bringing the man of God bread of the first fruits, 20 loaves of barley, and fresh ears of grain in his sack.

And Elisha said, give to the men that they may eat. But his servant said, how can I set this before a hundred men? So he repeated, give them to the men that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, they shall eat and have some left.

So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left, according to the word of the Lord. Does the phrase, they ate and had some left, sound familiar?

[34 : 50] But the fulfillment of prophecy doesn't stop there. Jesus is also the fulfillment of Ezekiel chapter 34. Ezekiel's prophecy brings a charge against the shepherds or the rulers of Israel for not caring for their flock.

The people were suffering because there was no shepherd. So God was going to come in judgment against those who should have been acting as shepherds, and God himself would come and seek out the lost sheep, providing food for them, and making them lie down in rich pastures.

So if you want to follow along, go to Ezekiel chapter 34 verses 1 through 15. This is a longer passage, but it has some things we need to see.

Here are Ezekiel 34, 1 through 15. Ezekiel says, The word of the Lord came to me. Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel.

Prophesy and say to them, even to the shepherds, thus says the Lord God, Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves. Should not shepherds feed the sheep?

[36 : 02] You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with wool. You slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them.

So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered, they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them. Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord. As I live, declares the Lord God, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord.

Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand, and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves, I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

For thus says the Lord God, behold, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. That last sentence is Ezekiel 34, verse 11, and here it is again.

[37 : 47] For thus says the Lord God, behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. God continues speaking in Ezekiel 34, verses 12 through 15.

He says, As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel.

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. Later on in Ezekiel 34, Ezekiel 34, verse 23, and verse 24, show us something else.

[39 : 07] In these verses, God promises a new shepherd, David. So here are Ezekiel 34, verses 23, and 24. God says, And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them.

He shall feed them and be their shepherd, and I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord, I have spoken.

Based upon these verses in Ezekiel 34, you might be wondering whether this new shepherd will be God himself, or whether the new shepherd will be another David. Well, the answer to that question of whether the shepherd will be God or David, is yes.

The incarnation makes it clear that the answer is yes. Jesus is the Son of God, and he is the Son of David, the descendant of David. He has come to shepherd his people.

But here's another fulfillment of our passage tonight in Mark. Jesus also is the shepherd of Psalm 23. The people are not in want.

[40 : 22] He completely satisfies them. Jesus makes his sheep lie down in green pastures. So now we know why Mark emphasized in Mark 6 29 that the grass was green.

Psalm 23 is the key here. The shepherd has found good pasture for his flock. He makes them lie down in green pastures here beside the lake. Jesus has come to restore their weary souls with teaching that guides them into the right path.

So truly the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. If you need even more proof of how feeding of the 5,000 fulfills Old Testament pictures and prophecies, how about Psalm 78 verse 19?

Psalm 78 verse 19 is speaking of the Israelites when they were grumbling in the wilderness. And here is Psalm 78 19. They spoke against God saying, Can God spread a table in the wilderness? Well, we see that God did spread a table in the wilderness for his people, the Israelites, in the Old Testament. Here in the New Testament, Jesus spread a table in the wilderness for the people that he fed.

[41 : 39] Jesus did that because he also is God. So how about one more example of how the feeding of the 5,000 fulfills Old Testament prophecy?

Here are Isaiah 40 verses 10 and 11. You knew Mark would have to have a reference to Isaiah at some point. Isaiah 40 10-11 say, Behold, the Lord God comes with might and his arm rules for him. Behold, his reward is with him and his recompense before him. He will tend his flock like a shepherd. He will gather the lambs in his arms.

He will carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are with young. Earlier, we looked at John chapter 6 verse 6, the verse that said that Jesus knew what he would do.

Jesus knew what he would do because he knew that he needed to fulfill Old Testament prophecy. The miracle that we've seen in the Mark passage tonight was great, but perhaps now you understand that the amazing fulfillments of prophecy make the passage even better.

[42 : 52] Remember the main idea. Jesus demonstrates his deity in compassion by providing for the people and by fulfilling Old Testament prophecy.

We saw how Jesus is the shepherd of Psalm 23 and that shepherd comparison continues throughout the New Testament as well. Jesus is the rejoicing shepherd of Luke 15 verses 4 through 6, the one who goes after the one sheep who is lost.

Jesus is the good shepherd of John 10, 11, who lays down his life for the sheep. Jesus is the chief shepherd of 1 Peter 5, 4, who honors his servants.

Jesus is the great shepherd of Hebrews 13, 20. Jesus is the shepherd lamb of Revelation 7, 17, who guides us to springs of living water.

Here is Revelation 7, 17. For the lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

[44 : 03] If you have repented of your sins and trusted in God's grace alone to save you, Revelation 7, 17 applies to you.

If you have yet to repent, Romans 10, 9 tells you how you can be forgiven of your sins. Those forgiven of their sins are rescued from an eternity in hell and granted eternity in heaven.

Romans 10, 9 says, So the question for all of us tonight is, can each of us wholeheartedly say, the Lord is my shepherd?

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for yet another reminder in Mark's gospel that Jesus is God.

Thank you also, Lord, for showing us how Jesus came to earth and fulfilled Old Testament pictures and prophecies. Let this knowledge make us even more and more mindful and grateful of exactly who Jesus is.

[45 : 17] And let us be even more willing to share that knowledge with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.

you