

Gospel of John X The Lesson of the Feeding of the 5,000!

(John 6)
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John 5:46-47 has a tremendous importance for us in being able to understand the Bible. It reveals several things that give us the keys and the clues as to why there are varying degrees of understanding, with various groups that call themselves Christian, or how ever they want to list themselves. And why it is that the Jews—even they have the Old Testament—do not understand the Old Testament.

The New Testament gives us some really important keys, and here's one of them that Jesus said, John 5:45: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father..." That's interesting because Jesus had every opportunity to accuse, but He didn't. Many of the things where He did accuse, He did it straight to their faces by giving them warnings. Remember where he said, 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees,' you do this and you do that (Matt. 23). He gave it in the way of a warning, rather than a condemnation or taking what Satan does. Satan goes before the throne of God and he 'accuses the brethren day and night before God.' Jesus doesn't do the accusing!

"...There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses..." (v 45)—showing how God is going to be judging, as well. They claimed that they were following Moses. They claimed that they were the ones who were the preservers of the Scriptures of Moses, which was true, they were.

"...*even* Moses, in whom you have hope. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me" (vs 45-46). In other words, you cannot believe Jesus Christ unless you believe Moses.

We can show some other things about how we understand the Scriptures, because, obviously, it's not just where you pick up some book or you're in authority or a scholar—whatever it is—and you automatically understand the Bible.

Verse 47: "And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?"

Let's look at some other Scriptures that back up and show how to understand the Bible. In Luke 24 is the first key to understanding the Bible. A person can understand certain parts of it and not understand the whole Bible.

It's interesting that you only understand what you believe. That's all you understand. There is a key that has to take place. Remember, Jesus said that He was 'the Way, the Truth and the Life.' And He is the Word! So, you're not going to understand God's Word unless Jesus does the revealing and the opening to each person on an individual basis. Christ has to do that.

Here's what He did to His disciples, after Jesus was talking to the two by the way as they were going down to the village after He had been resurrected.

Luke 24:25: "Then He said to them, 'O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory?' **And beginning with Moses, and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures**" (vs 25-27). So, Jesus is the One Who has to open their minds to understanding. He did the same thing to the apostles.

Verse 44: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were **written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled.**'..." This shows the division of the Old Testament, or the Hebrew Scriptures as we know it: Moses/Law, Prophets, Psalms/Writings.

Verse 45: "**Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.**" That's the key! *Christ is the One Who has to open their understanding!*

That's why a lot of people do not understand things either in the Old Testament or the New Testament. The Jews don't understand things in the New Testament because they won't let Christ open their mind! If they would then Christ would open their mind. This is why certain of the Protestants and the Catholics don't understand the Old Testament or the New Testament, because they are not letting Christ open their understanding to it.

Often in prayer we ask that Christ would teach us in spirit. That's the thing that's important. I could sit up here and say I have understanding and I will teach you. But unless God's Spirit is moving me to teach you, and unless you're sitting there with

God's Spirit *in* you, so that Christ is teaching you, He is the One Who is teaching you. Here's the key right here: "...**He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.**"

Verse 46: "And said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary... [Greek: 'dei'—ordained, incumbent] ...for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For you are witnesses of these things" (vs 46-48).

Now let's look at some other Scriptures that tell us more about how we are to have this understanding. Let's see what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians telling them what he wished that God would do for them. This is why studying the Scriptures is an ever learning, never ending process. Christ has so many things to teach us.

Remember what He told the disciples before He was resurrected? *I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now!* But after the Holy Spirit comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you all things, and you can bear them. We have exactly the same thing here in Paul's teaching. This tells us how we get the understanding that comes from God:

Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing..." There is that belief! So, there's something you have to do first.

"...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the **purchased possession**, to *the* praise of His glory" (v 14). That is us; we are purchased through the blood of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice and we are not our own. That's clear New Testament teaching.

Verse 15: "For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give you..." (vs 15-17). Notice Who it comes from; it all comes from God. It's true, whatever we have God has given it to us. We literally really don't own anything.

God has allowed us, in this life, to have title to it—whatever it may be—until we die. There is nothing that we take with us! The rich man doesn't take any more than the poor man. They've tried that by burying rich people in their cars. In China they buried the emperor with all the monuments of the stone horses and stone men. They even found that

they have a chest of jewels and food and all this sort of thing. Of course, they have one thing in China that they do, they put out food for the ancestors and at night the rats take it. Now they have a solution to the rat problem in China, they're going to eat them.

God is the One Who has to give us understanding! The greatest brain in the world, thinking circles around us in so many things, you hand them the Bible and it's like it's a 'closed book' (Isa. 29).

"...the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him... [of God the Father and also of Jesus Christ] ...*And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened..." (vs 17-18).

You've all experienced that! When you've been reading or studying in the Bible or hearing a sermon or someone talk, or just conversing among yourselves, and all of a sudden DING! a light goes on and things just fall together so clear, where they didn't before. What do you think is actually happening? *God is giving us the understanding!* We learn and we grow! It says we're to 'grow in grace **and** knowledge' of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This happens, that "...the eyes of your mind [understanding] be enlightened ..."

- Who is the Light? *Christ is the Light!*
- Who is the Word? *Christ is the Word!*

See how all of these things come right back to Christ? Every one of them do.

"...in order that you may comprehend what is **the hope of His calling...**" That's a tremendous statement in itself. To understand that we're going to be the sons of God and live with God. That is just so mind-boggling that it's incredible. *To know what that hope is*, that is stunning!

We go along all week and then on the Sabbath we can sit and contemplate about God's way. When we really come to understand what God has held out for us, *the hope of the calling*, it is absolutely beyond words. It's beyond what our human mind can do, say or think! That's why we have to have our mind opened to it.

"...and what *are* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (v 18). This has all got to come from Christ, every bit of it.

Verse 19: "And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power."

Ephesians 3:16—it comes from God the

Father: "That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man... [person or being] ...that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love..." (vs 16-18). You have to have that attitude of love:

- love toward God
- love toward the brethren
- love toward your fellow man

"...you **may be fully able to comprehend**... [which comes from God] ...with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (vs 18-19). Those are tremendous and inspiring Scriptures.

In fact, this section right here is my favorite in the Bible. I go back there all the time. If you get to feeling down or overwhelmed you go over some of these Scriptures and just cry out to God and ask Him to help you"

- He's right there
- God is right there
- He will help you
- He will bless you
- He will encourage you
- He will strengthen you

in everything that you do!

How many times did Paul warn the Corinthians: 'O you hard of heart and slow of mind! How long do you disbelieve the Prophets and the Word of God?' Paul really read them the 'riot act' many, many times! I imagine that when Paul came in to preach that he could feel when there was a hostile attitude on one side and a believing attitude on the other side. He was up there preaching and teaching about Christ. You'd see this group of disbelievers over there just growing red, maybe pulling on their beard and how the high priest did; he just ripped his clothes one time. Here are the other group nodding their head.

In Acts 13 they had a riot in the synagogue. Some of the Jews believed with Paul and the Gentiles, and Paul said, 'We'll meet back here next Sabbath,' and the next Sabbath the whole town came. Boy! Can you imagine what that was. There were no loudspeakers, they shouted good back then.

Without that here is what it is, 1-Corinthians 1:18: "For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness..." If God doesn't grant the understanding it's foolishness!

"...but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the

wisdom of the wise..." (vs 18-19). Nuclear knowledge is a very good example of how God is going to destroy us with our own wisdom. There was a program on the nuclear proliferation and the comment was made, 'We have faith in technology.' Look what the faith in technology has done to us! God is going to use that as one of the main teaching instruments at the beginning of the Millennium.

Look at all this technical knowledge, but unless you have the character of God to understand what you're doing, all of this knowledge will destroy you. That's what God is doing. He's taking the wisdom to destroy the wisdom of the wise!

"...and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.' Where *is the* wise? Where *is the* scribe? Where *is the* disputer of this age? Did not God make foolish the wisdom of this world? For since in the wisdom of God **the world through its own wisdom did not know God**..." (vs 19-21). That's prophetic in itself! All these people claim how wise they are, and they believe in evolution. They don't believe in God.

"...it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. For *the* Jews require a sign, and *the* Greeks seek after wisdom; but we proclaim Christ crucified. To *the* Jews *it is* a cause of offense, and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness" (vs 21-23).

There were Greeks who didn't believe as well and Jews who didn't believe. Why? *Because they have to have a believing heart, then God will open their heart and mind to understand!* God is One Who has to do it! We find confirmation of that in:

1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written, '*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man*...' How many people want to understand God by turning inward?"

It's true: You cannot have identity of who you are unless you identify with God. God is the One Who gives you identity. Most of the those people who don't believe in God are still trying to find themselves. Wouldn't that be something, spend your whole life trying to find yourself?

Anthony Quinn—actor—was interviewed and said he still doesn't know who he is and is still trying to find himself. Look at all the things that he had done. The world looked upon him as very accomplished, very successful, yet, he was so frustrated inwardly that he couldn't find himself.

You can't find it within yourself! You have to find it from God, Who then puts—with His

Spirit—within you what is right.

“...neither have entered into *the* heart of man *the* things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has **revealed**...” (vs 9-10). It comes by *revelation*. Look at Paul, he is a classic example.

Here he was trooping on to Samaria with the order from the high priest, and he got knocked off his horse on the way. Christ had to reveal Himself. What a way to be revealed! It would be almost like going along the highway today and there’s a wreck and God is standing right in front of you, and He says, ‘What did you do that for? What are you running to do? What are all these machine guns in the back of the car for? Who are you going to put in jail?’ That was quite a conversion! God has to reveal them to us!

“...God has **revealed** *them* to us **by His Spirit**, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God” (v 10). It has to come from God!

Verse 11: “For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God **no one**... [Greek: ‘anthropos’—man or woman] ...**understands** except *by* the Spirit of God.” That’s very important.

Remember how that ties in with John 5:46-48. If you don’t believe Moses you can’t believe Christ. I’m sure it’s kind of one of those circular things. If you don’t believe Christ you can’t believe Moses. It works both ways!

Verse 12: “Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*” (vs 12-13).

How do we grow in knowledge? *Comparing spiritual things with the spiritual!* That’s how we do it. It’s very important and proper that when we come together, it’s not me teaching you. I could sit up here and talk until I’m blue in the face, but unless you have God’s Spirit and God is revealing those things to you, as we study; and God reveals those things to me as I study... I study all the time. I study every day and hope that I grow in grace and knowledge. I hope that God will inspire me so I can teach you. But it isn’t that I have something that you can come and I can teach you. It’s what Christ, with His Spirit, teaches us together.

That’s why the Sabbath is a Holy time, a Holy Day. When we get together and Christ is here in spirit, He is the One Who is teaching us. That’s

where we learn. That’s a key important thing.

I have a couple of messages here by a so-called ‘Christian’ Jew. There are some important things in here about the Passover and the way they take the Passover, and the parable of the ten virgins and the marriage and things like that. I’m sure that since they have believed in Christ they understand certain things. I’m sure that if they do believe in Christ they probably have God’s Spirit enough so that they can understand about salvation. That’s how we do it.

There’s one thing: you should not be afraid to listen to some messages from other people. They may have certain things that you don’t understand, but **with God’s Spirit you are to discern** what is right and what is wrong!

This is why, if we live in the grace of God and we have Christ’s Spirit, then we don’t need someone constantly looking over our shoulder to tell us to do this, that and the other thing. Let God’s Spirit lead us. That’s the peace we have within our group. God’s Spirit leads us, and we don’t have to have any of this nonsense of going around and trying to live someone else’s life; or try and direct and control them with our thoughts about how they ought to do. It doesn’t work that way. If there’s something that needs to be solved, then we can solve it together with God’s Spirit. If there is something that an individual is wrestling with in their mind in understanding then ask God to help them to understand—and *they will!*

Things will work out! All too often we were taking the letter of the Law and the letter of the Law kills. That’s how you destroy the brethren. You kill them with the letter of the Law. When we come together let’s let God’s Spirit be here with us. We’re certainly not frothing on the floor and waving our hands in the air and speaking in tongues and other things.

Verse 14: “But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God...” That’s a pretty select thing—isn’t it? God wants us to understand that we can’t take any credit for what we know, or for what God’s Word is. We give all the glory to God! All the glory to Christ! He’s the One Who is enlightening us with it.

“...for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because they are **spiritually** discerned. However, **the one who is spiritual discerns all things**...” (vs 14-15).

In other words, is able—through Christ—to discern all things. All things has to do, obviously, with things for salvation. We certainly don’t

understand about nuclear fission or fusion. We certainly don't understand all the engineering technicalities necessary to build a five story building. Some of us may have some knowledge to understand it. But this "...all things..." are those things necessary for salvation; all things that God reveals to us. We're able to judge that.

"...but he himself is discerned by no one" (v 15). Why? *Because Christ is our Judge. No man is judging us; Christ is our Judge!* All are going to come before the judgment seat of Christ, and judgment now is upon the house of God!

Verse 16: "For who has known *the* mind of the Lord? **Who shall instruct Him?** But we have *the* mind of Christ." How? *Because He's given us of His Spirit!*

2-Corinthians 3—we will see something here concerning the Old and the New Testament. I'm not going to go through the whole discussion about the Old Testament/New Testament; Old Covenant/New Covenant.

2-Corinthians 3:12: "Now then, because we have such hope, we use great plainness of *speech*; for *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory* that is *now* being set aside" (vs 12-13). Here it can refer to the glory, can refer to the abolishment of the Old Covenant, as well.

Verse 14: "But **their minds were blinded;** for to the present hour **the same veil has not been removed,** *but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant..." I've read in Jewish commentary. I have the whole *Soncino Text* on the commentary and Hebrew Interlinear with all the minor prophets, starting with Hosea and going all the way through Malachi. In reading through those, it is very clear that they don't have understanding as to what these Scriptures mean. They give their commentary, and their commentary is very clear that they don't understand it.

Why? *Because there is this veil toward Christ.* That at the reading of Moses, whom they do not believe, hinders them from believing about Christ. You have that same veil today. Even on some of these there's still some of the veil—the mental veil—which covers the mind of people who, when they read Moses, they're not willing to believe it.

If you study the four books of the Law—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy—the first book is not a book of the Law, it's the book of Genesis and is included in what is called the Pentateuch. You read those things, and rather than going through like so many people do, they read that

with a hatred toward God. How could God do this? They don't believe it.

But if you read it and pray for understanding, and see how good these would be, think how good the society would be if they ran it according to the laws that we find in those books I just mentioned. It would be fantastic; it would really be good. But because they don't believe it, there is this veil. "...**the same veil has not been removed,** *but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant..."

"...**which veil is removed in Christ....** [Christ has to open your understanding to it] ...For to this day, when Moses is read, **the veil lies upon their hearts**" (vs 14-15). I'm sure that's not only in getting rid of the carnal nature with the circumcision of the heart, but it takes away the enmity against God's Word. 'The carnal mind is enmity against the laws of God, is not subject to the laws of God, and neither indeed can be!' (Rom. 8)—because that veil is right there.

Try that sometime with some of your unconverted friends that you know that unless you just give them a few morsels of pabulum that sound rational to them. If you started going through some of these things here you would lose them very quickly and you would find that their phone calls would diminish, your friendship would get thin. The reason is that it's foolishness to them; they have the veil on their minds and Christ has not called them.

Verse 16: "But when *their hearts* turn to *the* Lord, the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of *the* Lord *is*, there is freedom" (vs 16-17). This is the liberty that Christ gives us. The main liberty is the freedom from sin through repentance and the remission of sins.

Let's see something else concerning the Holy Scriptures, the very Words of God and how we understand them. That's why it's not to the wise, it's not to the educated, it's not to those who are looked upon in the world as knowing everything. They may have certain knowledge in certain ways, but it takes God's Spirit to put it all together.

Notice what the Apostle Paul said here, 2-Timothy 3:14: "But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child..." (vs 14-15). What does he point to? He doesn't point to himself. **Paul points to God!**

"...you have known the Holy Writings... [the Old Testament] ...which are able **to make you wise unto salvation...**" (v 15). There are a lot of Jews today who think that they have salvation through it, without Christ. But notice what it says:

“...through faith, which is in Christ Jesus” (v 15). Then that faith and belief takes away the veil that is over the mind and the heart.

John 6—Lessons of Feeding of the 5,000:

John 6:1: “After these things, Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee (*or Sea of Tiberias*); and a great multitude followed Him, because they had seen the miracles that He worked upon those who were sick” (vs 1-2). That would be a great thing today, too; people would follow in droves.

Verse 3: “Then Jesus went up into a mountain and sat there with His disciples. Now, the Passover a Feast of the Jews, was near. And when Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and saw a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, ‘How shall we buy enough loaves to feed *all* these?’” (vs 3-5). We’re going to learn quite a few lessons out of this; the feeding of the 5,000. There are several lessons for us, but let’s go through the whole account first.

Verse 6: “But He said this to test him, because He knew what He was about to do. Philip answered Him, ‘Two hundred silver coins would not be sufficient to buy enough loaves for each of them to receive a little.’ *Then* one of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Him, ‘Here is a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fish; but what are these for so many *people*?’ Then Jesus said, ‘Have the men sit down.’ Now, there was much grass in the place...” (vs 6-10). It was like a slow sloping rolling hill with a lot of grass on it. He made them sit down on the grass.

“...therefore, the men sat down, about five thousand in number. And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to those who were sitting; and in like manner the small fish, as much as they desired. And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, ‘Gather together the fragments that are left over, so that nothing may be lost.’” (vs 10-12). That was really quite an event. You just keep breaking off the bread and there’s more and more and you feed all of the 5,000. A Tremendous thing!

Verse 13: “Then they gathered *them* together, filling twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten.” They ended up with more than they started with. There are a some tremendous lessons for us.

Verse 14: “Now, when the men saw the miracle that Jesus had done, they said, ‘Of a truth, this is the Prophet Who was to come into the world.’” They wanted to go ahead and make Jesus king.

Let’s analyze the feeding of the 5,000. A miracle is something that does not take place in the ordinary course of things. I have not yet seen a situation where there has been food that’s multiplied. With our family I wished it were; so do they, especially on certain things.

(go to the next track)

Think what would go through your mind, and probably what went through the minds of these people who wanted to make Jesus king. If He’s king, ‘hey, folks, we don’t have to work! We just go break off this bread continually, and we’ll have surplus.’

Of course, what is the thing that is given man to do all the days of his life? *To work by the sweat of his brow, and from dust you will return, and you’re going to eat of the dust of the ground by the things that you do!* (paraphrase of Gen. 3).

1. God will provide

So, let’s look at some of the lessons in it. The first and major lesson is that *Christ will always supply*. That’s a major lesson, in spite of the circumstances. I’ve seen this time and again, you get down and the pot looks pretty thin, and there’s hardly anything there. The checking account goes way down and you wonder where it’s going to come from and how is it going to be there? **God opens the door and provides the way!** That’s the first great lesson: **God will always provide!**

2. The physical things are secondary to the knowledge of God

He didn’t want to be king, and obviously, there are many reasons for it. We do need physical things to get along. When you get down to: What am I going to eat? What did Jesus say concerning the physical things? Here’s another example of a ‘good work’ that is *bad*. The hippies all use this Scripture; they all quote the authority of God. ‘We’re hippies because Jesus told us *we should give no thought...*; so we’re not giving any thought.’

Matthew 6:24: “No one is able to serve two masters...” That is sure true; quickest thing that will destroy any kind of job situation is when there are two fighting to be boss.

“...for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon**” (vs 24). There are certain things that we are to do with mammon. Even in one case He said that we are to ‘make friends with the unrighteous mammon.’ In other words, to use it properly.

Verse 25: “Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious...”—anxiously concerned, worried, fretting, stewing. What happens when you worry, fret and stew? I’ve done it! You’ve done it! What happens? *You don’t go ask God for it! You don’t go pray and ask God for it, and He’s the One Who is able to provide!*

As human beings it’s stupid— isn’t it? But that’s the way we work. ‘I wonder where it’s going to come from? O God, why did you bring us to this point.’ We go back and forth and God has never let us down! *Not once!* Don’t be anxious and worried about it. On the other hand, God doesn’t want you to just lay back under a tree and say, ‘Well, God said He would do it, therefore, I don’t have to work. I’m just going to lay under this tree and I’m going to watch it pile up.’ It doesn’t mean that either, because it says, ‘If you don’t work you shouldn’t eat!’ and ‘If you don’t provide for your own, you’re worse than an infidel.’

Obviously, all of these Scriptures then balance out and give us an understanding of what this says.

“...do not be anxious about your life *as to* what you shall eat and what you shall drink; nor about your body *as to* what you shall wear. Is not life more than food, and the body *more* than clothing?” (v 25). *Yes, it is!*

Verse 26: “Observe the birds of heaven: they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor do they gather into granaries; and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?” That’s why it’s good to get up early in the morning and listen to the birds sometimes. Just get out and think. Whenever the sun is rising around the world there is this tremendous sound: all the birds with their sounds and songs.

You know, it’s kind of like glorifying God. Here comes another day and here are all these birds out there chirping around, flying around to get whatever they need. God provides for them. We have on the roof, just under the tile, we have some little finches. We did have some swallows up there but they build these mud huts, so after they hatched we took the hose and hosed them down so we wouldn’t have them continually adding onto the house.

Sometime get up early in the morning and take a walk and listen to all the birds and remember this. They’re not working, plowing, planting, reaping or gathering; yet, God takes care of them. And then through them, God also takes care of our cats, they also get some birds. “...and your heavenly

Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?”

Verse 27: “But who among you, by taking careful thought, is able to add one cubit to his stature?” You almost can give a whole sermon on that itself. No, you can’t do it, so you wear elevated shoes and high hats, padded shoulders, and then the tall people stoop, because they don’t want to be thought of as so tall. You can’t do it! You’d love to. How many people, as they’re growing up, think they’d like to be ‘this person.’ They just go around trying to be something they’re not. *Can’t do it!*

Verse 28: “And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor, nor do they spin; but I say to you, not **even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these**” (vs 28-29). God looks at things completely different. We go back and re-read the account of Solomon and thin fabulous, fantastic, that’s great.

Look what Christ said; just go out and look at the flowers. Get out there with a magnifying glass and look down inside at the design of some of these flowers. It’s absolutely fabulous what God has done and created.

Those are just little things; we don’t look on them as important things. That’s why God uses the example of the birds and the flowers. They’re not important things to human beings, but they’re important to God. Yet, God’s whole plan hinges on what we are doing in His calling; so, it’s much more important. ***God will take care of us!***

Verse 30: “Now, if God so arrays the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven...” That’s sure true; beautiful and green one day, “...and tomorrow is cast into the oven...”

“...shall He not much rather clothe you, O you of little faith?” (v 30). That’s a good measurement of our faith! You don’t want to go to the other extreme and do like James 2, ‘I’ve got faith and I’m going to be saved’ And you don’t have any works.

Verse 31: “Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we be clothed?’ For the nations seek after all these things...” (vs 31-32). If you go over to China and see what they have, you sure would be seeking after all of that. They have to work all their life long for just enough to eat, just enough to be clothed, just enough to keep above the starvation line. What a shame!

“...And your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things” (v 32).

Verse 8: “Now then, do not be like them... [with all their public works of religiosity] ...for **your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him.**” That’s quite a statement!

This whole lesson with the feeding of the 5,000 is teaching us not to have faith in the physical things, which we can see, but to **have faith in the One Who is able to perform the miracle.** That’s the important thing! I don’t think there are any of us who can say that we have perfect faith. Not one of us!

Verse 32: “...And your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But *as for you, seek first...* [Greek—‘protos’ meaning *primarily, always*] ...the Kingdom of God and His righteousness... [which will imputed to you through Jesus Christ] ...and **all these things shall be added to you**” (vs 32-33). God will take care of what you need.

Let’s be sure and understand what we *think* we need and what we *want* may not be what God has in mind to give us. It’s not that God is trying to withhold from us, but God knows!

Verse 34: “Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow...” That does not mean we’re not to plan for the future. We are to plan for the future, but don’t be worried about it. It will come out in the long run. One way or the other, ultimately, you could take a look at it and just take a fatalist point of view: put it all in God’s hands and one of these days you’re going to die anyway. So, why worry all along? Might as well go to the grave happy. Why go with ulcers, diabetes, chewed off fingernails, all this sort of thing? Why go to the grave a nervous wreck?

“...for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day*” (v 34). That’s true! You’re going to encounter evil everyday! Ask God to help you get over that day-by-day and seek the Kingdom of God!

Let’s look at examples in the Old Testament that show that *God will provide!* That’s the key overall thing.

There are times when you get kind of an overwhelming feeling, or you get sort of a picked on feeling, or you feel that you’ve had enough of your troubles and trials. If you feel so, ask God to help you with it. Elijah felt that way. Remember after he performed a tremendous miracle, and then Jezebel came in wrath and he ran away fearful of Jezebel and went into the mountains and ‘O Lord, woe is me!’

If you have heard the music on *Elijah* it is

the most baleful song I’ve ever heard. ‘O Lord, just me all alone, *alone alone.*’ Elijah sure felt picked on at that point. God says, ‘Now now, Elijah, it isn’t that way. I’ve reserved 7,000, so come on, cheer up.’

1-Kings 17:8: “And the Word of the Lord came to him [Elijah], saying, ‘Arise, go to Zarephath which *belongs* to Sidon, and live there. Behold, I have commanded a widow to keep you there.’ Then he arose and went to Zarephath, and came in to the entrance of the city, and, behold, the widow was gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, ‘Please, bring me a little water in a vessel so that I may drink.’ And as she was going to bring *it*, he called to her and said, ‘Please, bring me a piece of bread in your hand.’ And she said, ‘As the LORD your God lives, I do not have a cake, but only a handful of meal in a pitcher and a little oil in a jar. Now see, I *am* gathering two sticks... [this is a pretty meager existence] ...so that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, so that we may eat it and die” (vs 8-12). That’s quite an answer.

Here this poor little widow woman with this picked on attitude. ‘I’ve had it, and who’s this guy coming over saying, ‘Feed me’ when I’m out here picking up sticks and we’re going to go home and cook our last meal.

Verse 13: “And Elijah said to her, ‘Do not fear, go. Do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it, and bring *it* to me. And then make for you and for your son, for thus says the LORD God of Israel, “The pitcher of meal shall not be emptied, nor shall the jar of oil fail until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.”’ And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah. And she and he and her house ate **many days**” (vs 13-15). How long was the famine? *Three and a half years!*

Verse 16: “The pitcher of meal was not consumed, and the jar of oil did not fail, according to the Word of the Lord, which He spoke by Elijah. And it came to pass that after these things... [it goes from bad to worse] ...the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick. And his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elijah, ‘What do I have to do with you...’” (vs 16-18). After all that time dipping out the flour every day and taking oil every day, what was her attitude? *Blamed Elijah for the death of her son!*

“...O man of God? Have you come to me to call my sin to remembrance and to kill my son?’ And he said to her, ‘Give me your son.’ And he took him out of her bosom and carried him up into a loft, where he stayed, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to the LORD, and said, ‘O LORD my

God, have You also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn by slaying her son?' And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried to the LORD, and said, 'O LORD my God, please let this child's life come to him again.' And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child came into him again, and he lived. And Elijah took the child and brought him down out of the room into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, 'See! Your son lives!' And the woman said to Elijah, 'Now *by this I know*... [it took all of that, after all the years there] ...that you *are* a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in your mouth *is* Truth.'" (vs 18-24).

There's another example of this with Elisha; God did almost the same thing when there was famine. But here's another example. What are you going to do? God brings you down to a certain point that you have no alternative but to trust God. Sometimes when we get down to that point that we have no alternative but to trust God, we feel awfully alone. We feel kind of deserted, kind of like this little widow woman. 'Well, I'll go fix my last meal, this is it.'

It's to show us that when we get down to those points then we are to have the faith and trust in God; *He'll provide!* Maybe not in the way that we think. I'm sure that woman didn't think that God would send Elijah. Surely a man as important as that, send him to the king, don't send him to a widow woman.

Remember, even Christ brought that up. He said, 'During the days of the famine, God sent Elijah the learned and the great, but to a widow woman and her son. That would be another interesting study: How many widows has God used in the Bible? I think we would be astounded how many times God has used a widow woman in the Bible. Quite an amazing thing!

Let's see one more example in the book of Haggai. Here's a tremendous example, which I feel is a prophecy of things that are going to happen in the area of Palestine today, if there's a type and antitype. This is the building of the temple.

Lot's of times we just get so busy trying to take care of ourselves that we forget God. This was the lesson that was given to the Jews at that time. They just came out of the tremendous Babylonian captivity, and they were regrouping as a nation. They were going to build a temple, but just felt so busy that they had to go do things for themselves and forget God.

Haggai 1:1: "In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the

month, the Word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, 'Thus the LORD of hosts speaks, saying, "This people says, 'The time has not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built'"' (vs 1-2). If there's any one thing that is true in Jerusalem. They say that even to this day. They know that something is going to have to happen before they feel it's time to build the house of God.

I am sure that God is going to send them: the latter day Haggai and Joshua the high priest and Shealtiel the governor, whomever they may be.

Verse 3: "Then came the Word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, '*Is it* time for you yourselves to dwell in your finished houses... [they're building houses today and populating the west bank] ...and shall this My house lie waste?' And now, therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Consider your ways'" (vs 3-5). There's going to come a time of trouble with the Jews... God is going to be correcting and teaching them things because the time is going to come when they're going to have to build a temple. All the circumstances will fall right in line.

Verse 6: "You have sown much, but bring in little..." This is what happens when you just concentrate on the physical. You are on a treadmill! Just get on a treadmill and somehow you can't get off. You keep going and the harder you work the less you have. The more you do the less you get back.

"...*you* eat, but you do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you dress, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes" (v 6). They've got inflation over there, sometimes 40% a month. In some cases 100% inflation a month. Talk about earning wages to put it in a bag with holes, that's a perfect description of rampant inflation.

Verse 7: "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Consider your ways.... [God is going to have to send a prophet whom they will hear] ...Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build this house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified,' says the LORD. 'You looked for much, and behold, it came to little! And when you brought *it* home, then I blew on it. Why?' says the LORD of hosts.... [here's a whole nation suffering] ...'Because of **My house that is waste**...' (vs 7-9).

They go to the Wailing Wall and they know, through research, that the Dome of the Rock is *not*

on the place where the altar was. The altar was in a different location and the temple was at a different angle than they had thought for years. There is good reason to believe that they could build a temple.

When they find the ashes of the red heifers, they will be ready to go. I'm sure that whomever the prophet is going to be, he's going to carry the message of Haggai to the Jews that they are also going to find the ashes of a red heifer. This will all come together quite quickly when it does happen.

"...and you, **each man runs to his own house**" (v 9). Same story: What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we be clothed with? That clothing means what are you going to put over your head for a roof, too.

Verse 10: "Therefore, the heavens above you have held back the dew..." That's very important in the Middle East. If they don't get the dew they don't get the growth. If the dew is gone, it's just a mindless desert out there.

"...and the earth has held back its fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the grain, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground brings forth, and upon men, and upon livestock, and upon all the labor of your hands" (vs 10-11). You talk about a frustrating thing to get to. When you forget and leave God, you're going to just wring your hands in despair and frustration if you try to solve your problems aside from God; it won't work!

Verse 12: "Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared before the LORD." *Fear means to have reverence toward God!*

Verse 13: "Then Haggai, the LORD'S messenger, spoke the message of the LORD to the people, saying, "I am with you," says the LORD." You need God with you! But you can't have God with you unless you do the things of God first.

Verse 14: "And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. And they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God."

The rest of it shows that this is going to be time when God is going to deal with Israel. I'm sure He will give them rest from their enemies while this

is taking place. They will build the temple. Then we can draw the spiritual analogy.

- Who are those of the *spiritual temple* of God?
- Are not all the people of God the *spiritual temple* of God? *Yes!*
- What should the people of God be doing to build that *spiritual temple*? *Take care of the things that have to do with building that temple by growing in grace, knowledge and the love of God!*

Then He will take care of the things that we need. That's the obvious lesson for us. This is the lesson of the feeding of the 5,000^[transcriber's correction], the lesson of feeding of the 4,000, and what Christ is trying to teach us.

- Who do we need to look to, to give it to us? *Jesus Christ and God the Father!*
- How is He going to do it? *Maybe in ways that we don't know or think, but He'll end up doing it anyway!*

Let's learn to trust God in that way, and learn the lesson of the feeding of the 5,000!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 5:45-47
- 2) Luke 24:25-27, 44-48
- 3) Ephesians 1:13-19
- 4) Ephesians 3:16-19
- 5) 1 Corinthians 1:18-23
- 6) 1 Corinthians 2:9-16
- 7) 2 Corinthians 3:12-18
- 8) 2 Timothy 3:14-15
- 9) John 6:1-14
- 10) Matthew 6:24-32, 8, 32-34
- 11) 1 Kings 17:8-24
- 12) Haggai 1:1-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted

- Matthew 23
- Isaiah 29
- Romans 8
- Genesis 3
- James 2

FRC:bo
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