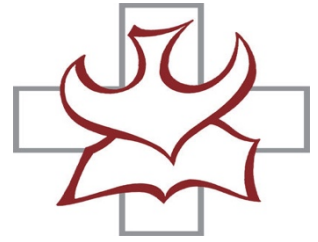


One Miracle: 4 Gospels

Mt 14:13-21 Ex 16:1-15, 31-35 Is 55:1-3

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In the New Testament, **37 miracles** of Jesus are recorded. These miracles show His power over **creation, disease, demons, and death**. Each miracle is like an *Epiphany spotlight* shining on Jesus that *reveals* to us that He is the Son of God and the Savior of the world and that His Word is trustworthy and true.

Of those **37 miracles**, ONLY ONE is told in all four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). That ONE MIRACLE is the Feeding of the 5,000. *Why would that be? Why is only one miracle reported in all four Gospels?* This ONE miracle stands out above all the rest; there is something **special, unique, and significant** about this ONE particular miracle.

The Feeding of the 5,000 is uniquely a **Messianic miracle** that connects Jesus to the Old Testament prophecies and anticipates the New Testament promises.

When Jesus fed the 5,000, He was in the wilderness area north of the Sea of Galilee. The Bible says that Jesus fed 5,000 “men”; the number doesn’t include their families. The number could actually be much higher...perhaps 10, 15, or 20,000 people!

The miracle was reminiscent of Moses feeding the people “Manna” in the Old Testament times. **Jesus is the promised prophet “like Moses” who speaks the very words of God¹**. The miracle of the food in the wilderness connects Jesus to Moses and is meant for people to **listen and believe** what He says.

The day after this miracle, Jesus preached about it. In that sermon He said,

[Jesus said,] For the bread of God is **He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world**. ... Then Jesus declared, “I am the **BREAD OF LIFE**. He who comes to Me will **never go hungry**, and he who believes in Me will **never be thirsty**.” John 6:33, 35

¹ One of the most significant “Messianic Prophecies” is that the Messiah will be a prophet like Moses, who speaks the very words of God. Here is the prophecy from **Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19** : And Moses said, The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. . . . The Lord said, “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. Teaching and Preaching – the work of a prophet – marked Jesus’ ministry. The feeding of the 5,000 links Jesus to Moses.

Jesus is the Bread of Life that we all need.

The “Bread of Life” is an image of salvation!

In this metaphor of the “Bread of Life”, sin is seen as starving to death. It’s not literally “starving” because of lack of physical food, but spiritually starving to death because of a lack of relationship with the one true God. **Life without Christ is a famine that will eventually kill you.** There is no life apart from your Creator. Sin leaves you without God. Sin separates you from God’s will and His Word. Sin leads you to crave the “spoiled food” and “poisoned water” that the world has to offer. In sin, you “starve” to death on a diet of pride and idolatry; lust and sexual immorality; greed, coveting, and envy. You die in false teachings and pagan theories. A life without Christ is “starving to death” spiritually!

**Jesus said that He is the “Bread of Life”
Who came down from Heaven and gives life to the world.**

Only Christ can give you life!

Only Christ can reconcile you with your Creator!

Only Christ can eternally satisfy your body & soul, spirit & life!

The Feeding of the 5,000 is an *Epiphany*: Jesus is shown -- **“revealed” in all 4 Gospels** -- to be the One sent by God to bring eternal life into the world.

Through faith in Christ, you will **never go hungry**, and you **will never be thirsty**. **THIS IS SPIRITUAL HUNGER AND THIRSTING.** It means that you are filled with the good things of God – starting with the forgiveness of your sins and eternal life! In Christ, you are given peace, hope, joy, grace, and mercy. Your sins are forgiven, your guilt is removed, and your relationship with God is restored. In Christ, you lack no good thing. In Christ, you have a full life and are satisfied. **Jesus promises that He who believes has eternal life, and Jesus Himself will raise you up on the Last Day!**

Jesus is the “Bread of Life” that came down from Heaven and gives life to the world. The miracle of the food in the wilderness connects Jesus to Moses, the great prophet, and teaches us that Jesus is even greater than Moses, and we are to listen and believe what He says.

So today, listen to Him and believe His words and promises. **Turn away from any thoughts or attitudes that are contrary to God's Holy Word.** Abandon false teachings and pagan theories. Take your thoughts under control and submit them to Holy Scripture. There is no life in the world: don't look for satisfaction in the things of the world. **Eternal life is found only in Jesus, the Bread of Life, who came down from Heaven. Only Jesus can satisfy you and give you the good things of God!**

The word picture is FEEDING PEOPLE BREAD.

Just as Moses fed the Israelites "Manna" in the wilderness, Jesus now "feeds" all people the "bread" of eternal life.

Jesus is "**the BREAD OF LIFE.**"

**Whoever believes in Him will never go hungry,
And Whoever trusts in Him will never be thirsty!**

Faith is pictured as "eating and drinking";

Believe that Jesus is the Bread of Life, and you will live forever!

In both the miracles of the Manna in the wilderness in the Old Testament, and the miracle of feeding the 5,000 people in the New Testament, God was providing food for His people in their journey. He does the same thing for you as well in these New Testament times. **God provides food for you in your "journey" to Heaven.**

We are not talking about physical food that you get in grocery stores; although, we do know that God does provide our daily bread.

But more significantly, God provides spiritual food for your journey to Heaven in Holy Communion. **Holy Communion is the miraculous food that Jesus provides for you that sustains you in your journey to Heaven.** The Old Testament "Manna" is a foreshadow of Holy Communion. Jesus feeding the 5,000 points forward to Jesus feeding us bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

In Holy Communion, you "take and eat" and "take and drink" the body and blood of Jesus for eternal life. Here in this Sacrament, the Lord forgives your sins and assures you that you have eternal life now, and you will rise from the dead on the Last Day!

Holy Communion is **NOT** a simple “memory of Jesus” **NOR** is it just a nice feeling so that you can feel good. Neither is Holy Communion is a good work that you do to earn God's favor. **FAR FROM IT!** This is God's meal where he serves you His Body and Blood in the bread and wine for the forgiveness of your sins!

- This is a **Holy Meal** where you receive the very real presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in bread and wine;
- this is a **miracle** where Christ's body and blood --- the same exact body and blood that was “given and shed for you” on the cross and rose from the dead on the third day --- is now **GIVEN TO YOU** in this meal of eternal life.
- This is our “**Manna,**” miraculous food provided by God
- This is **Jesus feeding us** in our “wilderness journey to Heaven”
- This is where you **eat the Bread of Life** and live forever!
- This is a **Sacramental Meal:** a mystery where God is at work through Bread and Wine to forgive your sins!

Motivated and sustained by this **Heavenly Food**, you now live a holy life in Christ. You belong to God and have eaten at **His Table**. You have a **Holy Communion** with God Himself! Everything changes when you eat the **Bread of Life!**

Live a holy life as God feeds you on your journey to Heaven!

The feeding of the 5,000 is the **only** miracle recorded by all four Gospels! *It stands out.* Jesus is revealed as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, a “prophet like Moses” but even greater!

He speaks the very words of God!

He feeds us on our journey to Heaven!

Believe Him and put your trust in Him!

Listen to Him and obey His Word!

Jesus declared, "I am the **BREAD OF LIFE**. He who comes to Me will **never go hungry**,
And he who believes in Me will **never be thirsty**."

AMEN!