

(36) Return of 12, Jesus Withdraws, 5000 Fed (Mt. 14:13–21; Mk. 6:30–44; Lk. 9:10–17; Jn. 6:1–14)

1. The setting for this episode is the Passover one year before the crucifixion (Jn. 6:4).
 - a. The Passovers recorded in the Gospel of John help us to establish a timeline for the ministry of Jesus Christ (Jn. 2:13; 6:4; 12:1 & probably 5:1).
 - b. This marks the first Passover that Jesus failed to appear in Jerusalem (cf. Lk. 2:41).
 - c. In the fall there would be much speculation that Jesus will skip the Feast of Tabernacles as well (Jn. 7:1–2,10–13).
2. The report of John the Baptist's death prompted the Lord to withdraw into "seclusion" (Matt. 14:13).
 - a. John accomplished the Father's purpose for his life, and remained faithful until death.
 - b. Jesus accomplished the Father's purpose for His life, and the Passover season became a huge test in anticipating His coming death.
3. The return of His Apostles presented additional opportunities for their training (Mk. 6:30–32; Lk. 9:10; Jn. 6:6).
 - a. They had to give an account for their ministry (Lk. 9:10 cf. Rom. 14:12; 1st Pet. 3:15; 4:5).
 - b. They needed their own seclusion, rest, and food (Mk. 6:30–32).
 - c. They needed to learn the 24/7 nature of their ministry (Jn. 6:6).
4. The seclusion did not last long as crowds from the cities followed them.
 - a. They followed the Lamb to His secluded place rather than taking their Passover lambs to Jerusalem.
 - b. They brought nothing for themselves and received what only He could provide.
 - c. When His rest was cut short by additional demands of ministry the Lord felt compassion for the needs of others (Matt. 14:14; Mk. 6:34), and welcomed them (Lk. 9:11).
 - d. The crowds needed healing (Mt. 14:14; Lk. 9:11) and teaching (Mk. 6:34; Lk. 9:11). They came because they observed the signs of His Divine commission (Jn. 6:2,14) but will lose that perspective after this event (Jn. 6:15,26).
5. When evening came the disciples wanted the crowds to fend for themselves (Mt. 14:15; Mk. 6:35–36; Lk. 9:12).
 - a. They had just completed a training assignment where, as workers, they were worthy of their "hire" and took no bread for themselves (Mt. 10:10; Mk. 6:8; Lk. 9:3).
 - b. In this episode they will learn that providing earthly food is entirely appropriate after the provision of spiritual food (Mt. 14:16; Mk. 6:37; Lk. 9:13; Jn. 6:5; cf. Jas. 2:15–16).
6. The crowd of 5,000 men plus women and children would have cost 200 denarii for the meal (Mt. 14:21; Mk. 6: 44; Lk. 9:14). The total crowd with women and children may have been 20,000.
 - a. The disciples could only think in earthly terms of what they could afford (Mk. 6:37; Lk. 9:13; Jn. 6:7).
 - b. Christ illustrated that the Father is not limited to what we can afford.
 - c. Our resources are insufficient, but it is our resources that the Father makes use of.
 - d. The "lad" that Andrew brings forward has barley loaves—food for the poor.
παῖδάριον paidarion ^{#3808}_{Нап.} (Jn. 6:8 cf. 2nd Kgs. 4:38–44).
7. The Father's provision of bread in the wilderness reminded the crowds of Moses and the promised Prophet that was to come (Dt. 18:15–19; Ps. 132:15).