

Mark 6:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

Analysis

And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: The disciples' practical concern creates setup for the feeding miracle. 'When the day was now far spent' (օψίας ἡδη γενομένης, opsias ēdē genomenēs) indicates late afternoon approaching evening. 'This is a desert place' (ἔρημός ἐστιν ὁ τόπος, erēmos estin ho topos) notes their isolated location—no nearby towns or food sources. 'The time is far passed' (ἡδη ὥρα πολλή, ēdē hōra pollē) emphasizes the urgency: too late for crowds to reach towns before dark. The disciples' concern was legitimate—thousands needed food and shelter. Yet their practical assessment missed divine possibility. This pattern repeats throughout Scripture: human logic sees impossibility where faith sees opportunity for God's power. The disciples saw overwhelming need and limited resources (v. 37-38); Jesus saw occasion for miraculous provision. Reformed theology emphasizes God's sovereignty over creation—He who created ex nihilo (from nothing) can multiply loaves and fish. This miracle demonstrates that Christ's provision exceeds natural resources; His sufficiency transcends human capacity.

Historical Context

First-century Palestine lacked modern food distribution systems. Traveling to and from towns required hours of walking. The 'desert place' (ereēmos topos) was uninhabited area—likely grassy plain near Bethsaida (Luke 9:10) on Sea of

Galilee's northeast shore. Without modern lighting, nighttime travel was dangerous—robbers, wild animals, and inability to see paths made journeying after dark risky. The disciples' concern reflected practical realities: darkness approaching, thousands needing food, no nearby resources. Their suggestion that Jesus dismiss the crowds (v. 36) was reasonable by human standards. Yet Jesus had spent hours teaching (v. 34)—why would He send people away hungry, both physically and spiritually? Early church saw this miracle as foreshadowing the Eucharist: Jesus taking, blessing, breaking, and distributing bread. The language (v. 41) mirrors Last Supper language (Mark 14:22). This connection suggested Jesus feeds His people both physically and sacramentally.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the disciples' legitimate practical concern ('desert place... time far passed') illustrate how human logic can become obstacle to experiencing God's miraculous provision?
2. What does this scene teach about bringing overwhelming needs to Jesus rather than merely assessing them by available human resources?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἦδη ὥρα πολλή· γενομένης προσελθόντες αὐτοῦ

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