

# Mark 8:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

## Analysis

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**They reasoned among themselves** (διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἄλλήλους, dielogizonto pros allēlous)—the imperfect tense suggests ongoing confused discussion. **It is because we have no bread**—the disciples completely misunderstand Jesus' metaphorical warning, interpreting it literally. This exposes profound spiritual dullness—they think Jesus is scolding them for forgetting provisions rather than warning about ideological corruption.

Their misunderstanding reveals the human tendency toward materialistic thinking—defaulting to physical interpretations of spiritual realities. They had just left Pharisees who demanded signs (v. 11), yet the disciples miss Jesus' teaching about Pharisaic corruption. This cognitive dissonance demonstrates that physical proximity to Jesus doesn't guarantee spiritual comprehension. Only Spirit-enabled illumination penetrates minds darkened by sin (2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Ephesians 1:18).

## Historical Context

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Rabbinic teaching frequently employed metaphor and parable, so disciples should have recognized Jesus' figurative language. However, Jesus' consistent focus on material provision (feedings, healings) may have conditioned them to expect literal meanings. Their confusion illustrates the challenge of spiritual pedagogy—moving people from concrete thinking to abstract theological understanding requires

patience and repeated instruction. Early church fathers saw the disciples' slowness as encouragement for believers struggling to grasp spiritual truth.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does the disciples' literal misinterpretation reveal your tendency to reduce spiritual warnings to material concerns?
2. What does their confused reasoning teach about the necessity of the Spirit's illumination for understanding Scripture?
3. In what areas might you be 'reasoning among yourselves' in confusion rather than seeking clarity from Jesus?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἄλλήλους λέγοντες, ὅτι  
And they reasoned among themselves saying It is because  
G2532 G1260 G4314 G240 G3004 G3754

Ἄρτους οὐκ ἔχομεν

bread no we have  
G740 G3756 G2192

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