

Mark 8:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

Analysis

When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?—Jesus employs Socratic questioning to awaken memory and understanding. He doesn't immediately explain but guides disciples to recall specific details. **They say unto him, Twelve**—their correct answer proves the issue isn't cognitive deficiency but spiritual blindness. They remember facts but miss meaning.

The twelve baskets (κόφινοι, kophinoi) signify complete provision for twelve tribes of Israel—Jesus abundantly feeds God's covenant people. The specific numbers aren't incidental—five loaves feeding five thousand with twelve baskets remaining demonstrates mathematical impossibility apart from divine creative power. Jesus forces disciples to confront this evidence: if He multiplied bread twice before, why worry about provisions now? Their anxiety after experiencing supernatural provision reveals unbelief's irrationality.

Historical Context

The feeding of the 5,000 occurred in Jewish territory near Bethsaida (Mark 6:30-44), making it the 'Jewish feeding.' The small wicker baskets (kophinoi) were typically carried by Jews traveling in Gentile lands to maintain kosher food. Rabbinic tradition counted twelve baskets as significant—one for each apostle, symbolizing abundance for all Israel. Jesus' interrogation method recalls rabbinic

catechetical practice—teachers asked questions to stimulate student reasoning rather than simply delivering information.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does remembering specific past provisions (twelve baskets) combat present anxiety about needs?
2. What does the disciples' ability to recall facts while missing meaning reveal about the difference between information and transformation?
3. How might keeping a detailed record of God's past faithfulness strengthen faith during present trials?

Interlinear Text

ὅτε τοὺς πέντε ἄρτους ἔκλασα εἰς τοὺς
When G3588 the five loaves I brake among G3588
G3753 G4002 G740 G2806 G1519

πεντακισχιλίους πόσους κοφίνους πλήρεις κλασμάτων
five thousand how many baskets full of fragments
G4000 G4214 G2894 G4134 G2801

ἥρατε λέγουσιν αὐτῷ Δώδεκα
took ye up They say unto him Twelve
G142 G3004 G846 G1427