

Matthew 15:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Analysis

Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude (Ο δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ εἶπεν, Σπλαγχνίζομαι ἐπὶ τὸν ὄχλον)—The verb σπλαγχνίζομαι (splanchnizomai, 'to be moved with compassion') comes from σπλάγχνα (viscera, inward parts), indicating deep emotional response. Jesus felt compassion in His innermost being—not mere pity but gut-level mercy. This divine compassion preceded His provision, showing God's gifts flow from His character.

Because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat (ὅτι ἦδη ἡμέραι τρεῖς προσμένουσίν μοι καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν τί φάγωσιν)—They had remained (προσμένω, prosmenō, 'to remain with, to continue with') three days. Their hunger proved their hunger for Jesus surpassed physical appetite. **I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way**—Jesus's concern for their physical welfare shows His incarnate care. He ministers to whole persons, not merely souls.

Historical Context

This is the feeding of the 4,000 (distinct from the 5,000 in 14:13-21). The three-day timeframe shows extended teaching/healing, suggesting people brought provisions

initially but exhausted them. The predominantly Gentile crowd's persistence contrasts with Jewish rejection, illustrating that God's salvation extends beyond ethnic Israel. The desert location emphasizes dependence on God's provision.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus's compassion for physical needs teach about incarnational ministry versus solely 'spiritual' ministry?
2. Have you ever been so hungry for Jesus's teaching that you neglected physical needs?

Interlinear Text

Ὥ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοὺς
G3588 Then Jesus called G3588 disciples them
G1161 G2424 G4341 G3101 G846

εἶπεν Σπλαγχνίζομαι ἐπὶ τὸν ὄχλον ὅτι ἦδη
unto him and said I have compassion on the multitude because now
G2036 G4697 G3588 G3793 G3754 G2235

ἡμέρας τρεῖς προσμένουσίν μοι καὶ οὐ ἔχουσιν τί⁵¹⁰¹
days three they continue with me and not have
G2250 G5140 G4357 G3427 G2532 G3756 G2192

φάγωσιν· καὶ ἀπολῦσαι αὐτοὺς νήστεις οὐ θέλω
to eat and away them fasting not I will
G5315 G2532 G630 G846 G3523 G3756 G2309

μήποτε ἐκλυθῶσιν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ
lest they faint in the way
G3379 G1590 G1722 G3588 G3598

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 9:36 (Parallel theme): But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Acts 27:33 (Parallel theme): And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.