

Matthew 15:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

Analysis

And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground (καὶ παραγγείλας τῷ ὄχλῳ ἀναπeseῖν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν)—The verb παραγγέλλω (parangellō) means 'to command, to charge' with authority. The verb ἀναπίπτω (anapiptō, 'to recline, to sit down') suggests the posture of dining guests at a banquet, not desperate refugees scrambling for food. Jesus orchestrates order before provision—teaching that God provides through structure, not chaos. The ground (γῆ, gē) would have been desert dirt, yet Jesus transforms wilderness into banquet hall.

This command parallels the feeding of the 5,000 (14:19), showing Jesus's consistent methodology: organization precedes distribution. God is a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40). The sitting posture demonstrates trust—they obeyed before seeing food, believing Jesus's word sufficed. Faith often requires acting on God's promise before seeing its fulfillment.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern culture, reclining or sitting was the posture of festive meals, not hurried eating. By commanding them to sit, Jesus signals this will be a leisurely, abundant meal, not rationed survival food. The wilderness location recalls Israel's manna (Exodus 16), but Jesus provides a fellowship meal, not merely sustenance. This foreshadows the Messianic banquet prophesied in Isaiah 25:6-9.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's requirement of order and structure in your life prepare you to receive His provision?
2. What does obeying Christ's command before seeing results teach about the nature of faith?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐκέλευσεν	τοῖς	ὄχλοις	ἀναπεσεῖν	ἐπὶ	τὴν
And	he commanded	G3588	the multitude	to sit down	on	G3588
G2532	G2753		G3793	G377	G1909	
γῆν						
the ground						
G1093						

Additional Cross-References

John 6:10 (Parallel theme): And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.