

Matthew 16:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

Analysis

O ye of little faith (οὐλιγόπιστοι)—oligopistos, Jesus's signature rebuke in Matthew (6:30, 8:26, 14:31), literally 'little-faiths.' Not faithless (apistos), but stunted, immature faith that knows truth yet fails to apply it. Jesus **perceived** (γνούση) their whispered reasoning—divine omniscience sees anxious hearts.

Why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Jesus exposes their faithless logic. After feeding thousands, worrying about one meal reveals profound spiritual blindness. The question format emphasizes the absurdity: 'Why are you calculating when you've witnessed divine multiplication?' This prepares for verses 9-10's reminder of recent miracles.

Historical Context

Jesus had just fed 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21) and 4,000 (15:32-39) miraculously. The disciples participated in distributing multiplied bread both times—they held the evidence in their hands. Yet crossing the lake without provisions triggered immediate anxiety, showing how quickly miracle-memory fades under pressure.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Where is your faith 'little'—believing doctrinally but failing practically when tested?
2. What 'reasoning among yourselves' do you engage in that ignores God's demonstrated faithfulness?
3. How can you move from 'little faith' to mature trust that remembers past provision?

Interlinear Text

γνοὺς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τί¹
perceived Which when G3588 Jesus he said unto them why
G1097 G1161 G2424 G2036 G846 G5101

διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ὀλιγόπιστοι ὅτι ἄρτους
reason ye among yourselves O ye of little faith because bread
G1260 G1722 G1438 G3640 G3754 G740

οὐκ ἐλάβετε
no ye have brought
G3756 G2983

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 6:30 (Faith): Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Matthew 14:31 (Faith): And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Mark 16:14 (Faith): Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

Matthew 8:26 (Faith): And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Revelation 2:23 (Parallel theme): And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Hebrews 4:13 (Parallel theme): Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

John 16:30 (Faith): Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.