



# SPEAK

## LESSON FOUR: PROVIDER - MATTHEW 14:13-21, MARK 6:30-44

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If you are like me, your end of the week bag lunches could be categorized as being nothing less than “interesting.” By the time Friday arrives, I may be seen enjoying an eclectic blend of leftovers that I have stretched out to the end of the week. You see, it is because I come from a long line of frugality. In the family I grew up in, if something could be reused, we reused it. If there was any way that we could salvage something and repurpose it, we found a way to use the item in a unique way. Eventually, it became a game of sorts as we tried to outdo each other with our creative genius. This frugality also found its way onto the dinner table of my childhood home once a week which we called, “leftover night.” Our leftover nights were epic, and I recall them with great affection now. I am grateful for this lesson that my parents taught me, to be grateful for what we had and to not waste anything. “Waste not, want not” was a common theme in my childhood home. The abundance that ran over onto our table as we cleaned out the refrigerator each week, allowed us to enjoy heated up leftovers that deepened our connection to each other as they filled our stomachs.

Have you ever prayed a prayer you may have dubbed an impossible prayer? A need so great that there is just no feasible way in your mind that it could be answered or resolved without divine intervention? I think if we are honest with ourselves we would admit we have prayed at least one of these perceived impossible prayers during our lifetime. Do you remember when that prayer was answered? Did you gaze up to heaven with a silent thank you or perhaps the tears that ran down your cheeks whispered thanks to God.

Jesus is recorded in Matthew to have fed 5,000 people without having as much as a grain of bread with Him or His apostles. While we are not told the name of the little boy who brought the sack lunch that day, his sack lunch in the hands of Jesus changed many lives and this miracle is still talked about to this day. Many biblical scholars agree that the number of 5,000 was closer to 15,000 because of the 10,000 additional women and children who were present that day. A throng of people had come to hear Jesus speak, but the apostles found there was a serious problem, there was no food. When the apostles went to Jesus they urged Him to send the crowds away to buy food for themselves; however, His response in Matthew 13:16 was, “Jesus replied, *‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’*” Scripture is silent in the book of Matthew about how the apostles responded to Jesus’ statement. I imagine they began to immediately scurry around asking if anyone had brought food. They found that no one had except for a little boy who had brought five loaves of bread and two fish. Hardly enough to share among 15,000 people, but Jesus says, *“Bring them here to me.”* Scripture tells us that Jesus told the people to sit down on the grass as He took the five loaves and the two fish. He lifted them up to heaven, gave thanks, and broke the loaves. Then He gave them to the apostles who in turn gave them to the people. Scripture also records that everyone ate until they were satisfied and that there were twelve basketfuls of broken pieces left over.

He will provide. He can be trusted. He loves you and will help you.

**YOUR TURN:** Read Matthew 14:13-21 and Mark 6:30-44

1. The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 is found in two books in the bible known as the gospels. What do both accounts of this miracle have in common?
2. Scholars state that the slight nuances in the recording of this event leads more credence to its validity. List the differences between the accounts of the miracle.
3. Read the following verses that promises God's provision and care for you. Read each scripture verse or verses and note what God is providing and who He is providing it to.

Genesis 3:21

Genesis 9:3

Exodus 14:22

Psalms 34:10

Psalms 81:10

Psalms 84:11

Matthew 6:31-32

Luke 12:24

Philippians 4:19

4. Write God a letter thanking Him for what He has provided to you and tell Him what you are in need of.