



ALABASTER
GUIDED MEDITATIONS

MATTHEW

READ | REFLECT | RESPOND | REST



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they will faint along the way.”³³ The disciples replied, “Where would we get enough food here in the wilderness for such a huge crowd?”³⁴ Jesus asked, “How much bread do you have?” They replied, “Seven loaves, and a few small fish.”³⁵ So Jesus told all the people to sit down on the ground.³⁶ Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, thanked God for them, and broke them into pieces.

He gave them to the disciples, who distributed the food to the crowd.³⁷ They all ate as much as they wanted. Afterward, the disciples picked up seven large baskets of leftover food.³⁸ There were 4,000 men who were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children.³⁹ Then Jesus sent the people home, and he got into a boat and crossed over to the region of Magadan.

JESUS FEEDS FOUR THOUSAND

MATTHEW 15:32-39

READ

1. Read Matthew 15:32-39 slowly (aloud, if it's not intrusive to others).
2. Notice the photo stretching across pages 58-59. Notice the similarities between the crowd Jesus was addressing and a crowd that would sit in seats (such as those pictured).
3. Pause.

REFLECT

1. Read the passage again.
2. Reflect on how the photo portrays the passage:
 - the wideness of the crowd
 - how small individuals appeared as Jesus looked out at them
 - the distractions of individuals sometimes facing forward and other times facing backward
3. Read the passage again and put yourself in the scene.
4. How might you have felt
 - When Jesus felt sorry for them?
 - As Jesus broke the pieces of bread and fish—and more kept coming?
 - As you perhaps tasted the bread and fish yourself, marveling at its existence?
 - As you perhaps stood near Jesus and watched people go home satisfied (vv. 38-39, their backs, reflected in the photo)?

5. Read the passage again and notice what stands out to you. What words or phrases resonate with you?
6. Ask God why that might be. If nothing comes, simply stay with the words or phrase.
7. What, if anything, do you sense God inviting you to consider? To feel? To do?

RESPOND

1. Say to God whatever you need to say.
2. Consider offering praise for Jesus' divine ability to create abundance. The crowd went from having "nothing left to eat" (v. 32) to all four thousand households being fed! Beyond that, food filling seven large baskets was left over. How does this make you want to respond?

REST

1. Read the passage one more time. Soak in the reality of the abundance of life in Christ.
2. Exhale.

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