

Best We Do Remember

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In the last few weeks I've been very enthralled with some critical history, especially a portion of Christ's ministry. He was with the disciples for three and a half years. I want to focus on an approximate five-month period in 30 A.D., probably from after Passover in the spring, to just before the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall. This was within the last year that He was to be alive in the flesh; as this time moved on and He was preparing to go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, He would then visit those areas shown on the map—you'll find that chronicled as well. He would then go on into the Passover, the crucifixion, and the subsequent resurrection.

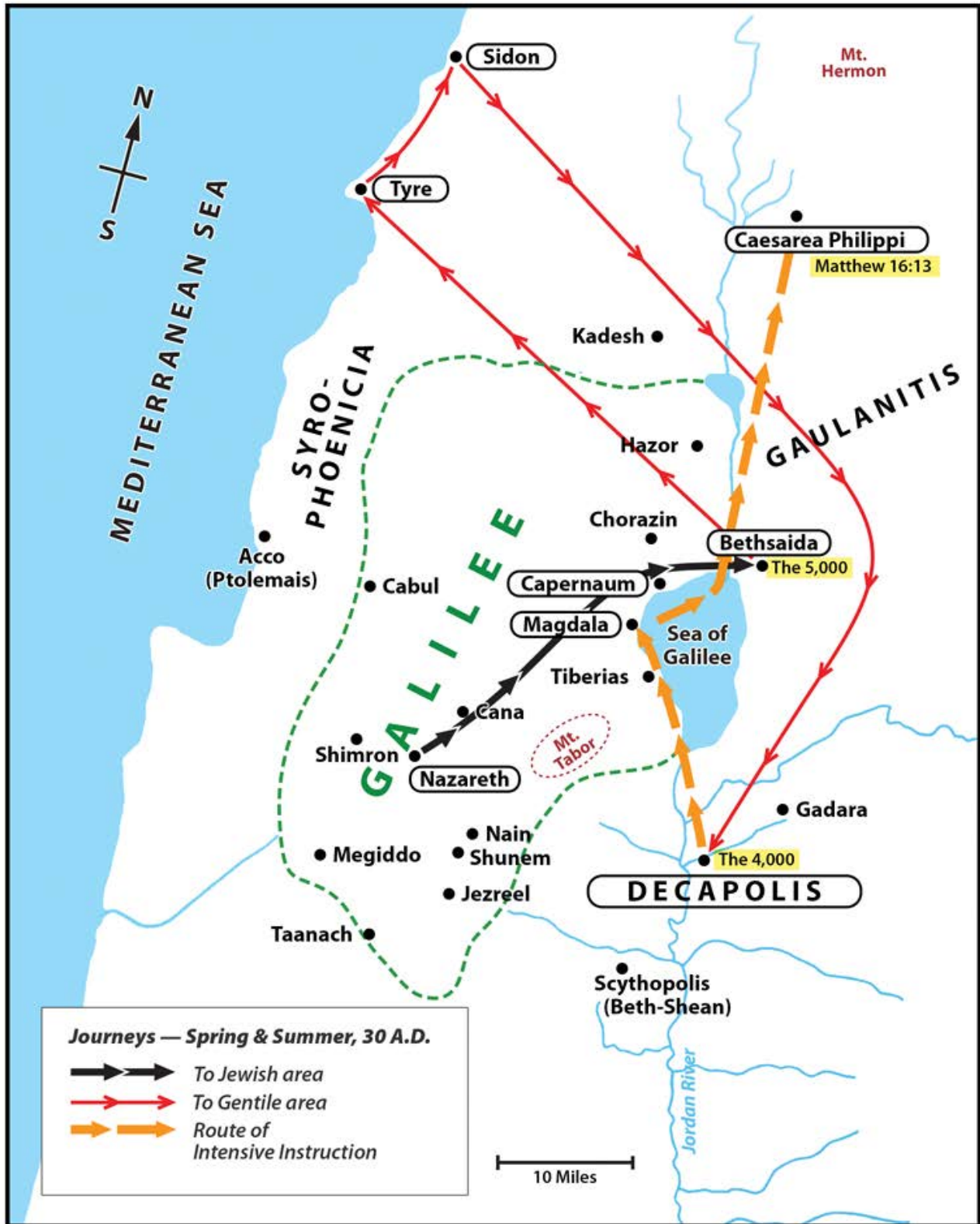
I'm going to stay basically between the bookends of Matthew 13 and Matthew 16 today. I'll jump into Mark a little bit and then occasionally into a commentary. The ministry of Jesus Christ I want to share with you. In researching Christ's work with the disciples, I started to wonder if many of us, especially our younger people, knew much about Galilee, the area from which Christ called and worked with the early disciples. He also visited and spent a great deal of time in the northern Gentile areas.

A number of things began to come up; I've tried to record them and break down this five-month period of His ministry into three specific journeys. I tried to reflect this in the handout that you have, and I'm probably going to have to stop for a little bit and explain some of these things for the folks listening in on the cybercast. [Please note that the map has now been updated and added to page 2 of the transcript.]

When I got into this material, I began to discover very quickly I didn't know as much as I thought I did. My disclaimer is that this is very basic; I know I've missed a few stops along the route, but this is a general overview, because what I want to focus on are two major, public miracles and talk about them to show how expansive they were. Jesus Christ later chided the disciples, asking them, don't you remember those miracles? There were some things they missed and I'm wondering if we'll pick them up as we go through this today. Later on I'll tell you what I feel they missed.

Almost every Bible has a map in the back; the New Living Translation has one that I think is quite clear. It's quite simple, but I realized I didn't have a definite picture in my mind about the parameters of Galilee because Galilee was a Roman designation of an area of land. If in fact you're following on the map with me, you may want to put your finger just north of the Sea of Galilee at Lake Huleh—that's the little lake just north of Bethsaida, up the Jordan River. The Jordan River will segregate Galilee from the eastern Gentile areas and it will run from Huleh down into the Sea of Galilee, out of the Sea of Galilee, down towards Jerusalem, and eventually to the Dead or the Salt Sea. Galilee is to the left, or west of the Jordan River [indicated by the green and dotted line].

MAP OF THE GALILEE REGION IN NORTHERN ISRAEL



To my surprise, the western border of Galilee didn't go all the way to the coast. It abuts a strip of land that at that time I'm guessing was about ten miles wide in places—that is the Syrophenician area—and to the north is Tyre and Sidon. To give you some sense of dimension, the width of the Province of Galilee is about twenty-five miles. The length from north to south of the Province of Galilee is fifty miles. All of this plays into the scriptures and shows a movement of peoples—the Sea of Galilee seems larger on this map, but the Sea of Galilee was only thirteen miles north to south, and eight miles wide. You could stand on its shore, and when you saw certain boats put out to sea on it, you could follow them for miles with your eyes. That's the reason many of the crowds got ahead of Christ and were waiting for Him in advance of His arrival.

I didn't fully realize the impact that Christ's ministry had upon the people. When you add in what Josephus recorded of the Galilean area, there were 204 villages, or cities, as they called them, at about 15,000 per city. Multiply that out and you have a little over 3 million people in that condensed area. This is all to the west of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River. There were Jews on the eastern side of the Jordan but it was heavily Gentile-influenced or populated—but there were Jews there as well. Maybe you knew all of this and I'm just repeating what you know, but the more I studied the more I began to understand what the scriptures were talking about.

Let's start off with the first leg of the journey—there are three—one from Nazareth up through (as you see on the map) Capernaum, and then they went across the northern portion of the Sea of Galilee, I believe, to just south of Bethsaida, to where Christ fed the 5,000. That's a very interesting event, because the scriptures tell us that there were 5,000 men, not counting women and children. It has been extrapolated by some of the commentaries that there were no less than 10,000, and possibly up to 20,000 people, at that miracle. Later on we'll see that that miracle was replicated further south in the Decapolis area, with 4,000 men present, mostly Gentiles—and some Jews, of course. If you double that figure for women and children, you come up with at least 8,000, and it could have been 12,000.

What I want to do is begin to look at the logistics of these special miracles. All the time Christ is training these men. He's bending over backwards, He's very patient with them, because, remember, they were not begotten with God's Spirit—that came later at Pentecost. God's Spirit was with them, there's no question, but they were still transitioning out of where they came from—their cultures, their preconceived ideas, and who knows what else. They didn't always understand what Christ was talking about. He was very patient but he was grooming them, one step at a time, toward the ultimate result where they would begin to go out and preach the gospel. I'll get to that a little later on.

I think in that first miracle, as He trained the disciples, He was teaching them, first of all, that the people are the most important. No matter how pressured or up against a wall Christ was, He took time for people. We'll read some scriptures that show that He wanted to get away. He wanted to find some peace and quiet, to spend time with the disciples. He was hard pressed and finally had to flee the Jewish area to go north

where He was less popular or less known, but He didn't find the peace and quiet that eluded Him.

All that time He is teaching, He has one eye trained on His disciples. Let's not exclude ourselves from this scenario either, because we are His disciples as well, and He is training us, too. I think we'll find that some of these verses are very dramatic: There were two major, outstanding, public miracles, and there is one other miracle—a third miracle; I think it pertains more to us and is very relevant even unto this day. Through this entire thread you'll see that there is an emphasis on memory. I'll get to that in a little bit—bear with me.

I'll be reading from the King James Version—I've been with the King James for so long, it's hard to depart. I'll do most of the reading out of the King James although I did bring my New Living Translation, and I want to fill in a bit here and there with that. Let's go to Matthew 13 as a starting point. Christ had been performing miracles and teaching them the parables and so on; that is the context. Then we come down to verse 53.

Matthew 13:53 *And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence [from there].*

54) *And when he was come into his own country [now He's returning to Nazareth], he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom [or education], and these mighty works? (KJV)*

He is an enigma to His own people. They're seeing Him through a humanistic filter.

55) *Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary?*

56) *And his sisters, are they not all with us?*

In other words, the family, including all these siblings, lives right here in the community, and they've known Him since He was young. For some reason this diminishes Him in their sight. They didn't recognize that God can use whomever He wants at any time. There was this familiarity, this visual thing, that made it difficult for them to see the fruits.

56 continued) *Whence then hath this man all these things? (KJV)*

How come this man has all this capability?

57) *And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.*

58) *And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. (KJV)*

I'll just add in Mark 6, verses 31 through 34, here. I think these are worth reviewing because they fill in some of the background of why Jesus would leave Nazareth. I'll read this passage from the New Living Translation.

Mark 6:31 *Then Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat.*

32) *So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone.*

33) *But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them.*

34) *Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. (NLT)*

The point here is that when He left Nazareth (referenced here and in other scriptures), as far as I'm able to determine, He and the disciples headed towards the Plain of Gennesaret [on the western border of the Sea of Galilee], and from there He went across into Bethsaida (that's my best guess), which is where we come to the first miracle of the bread and the fish. I want to read that passage to give us a sense of the crowd pressing in—the many people who were there.

Remember when Jesus said foxes have holes and birds have nests but the Son of Man has not a place to lay His head? He wanted time alone with His disciples but often there was no place for that. The only way I can see He could do it (again, I'm getting ahead of myself) would be to go on—as the Australians say—a walkabout. So after this miracle He'll head north to Tyre and Sidon and make a long loop back (that's leg number two of the journey), into Decapolis.

Decapolis is south of the Sea of Galilee. You can begin to log the miles—that's fifty to 100 hundred miles or even possibly 200 miles. I got to thinking, I know I lose a lot of time just driving a car and looking at asphalt. If someone is in the car with you, and you have an animated conversation, you get a lot of talking done. I wonder if much of the teaching that Jesus Christ was able to pass on to the disciples occurred when they were walking and sharing that time alongside of a road. In the Jewish area, He had almost no time to even breathe. Let me pick this up in Matthew 14:15.

Matthew 14:15 *And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place [in other words, it's away from the villages], and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals [or food].*

16) *But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. (KJV)*

He's a Master Teacher and He now has their attention. He's telling the disciples, you feed all these people. (I'm going to take the mean figure of 10,000 because I think that's safe—5,000 men, plus women and children, so 10,000.) The disciples must have been wondering what He meant, what His intentions were. He didn't say these things to put them on or to put them down. There's a way that people can talk to each other and get right to the heart of the matter.

17) *And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.*

18) *He said, Bring them hither to me.*

19) *And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass...*

This is why we feel this happened in the spring, because after a couple of months of that Galilean sun, grass is not green—it's straw, although the protein remains in it, making it good for goats and cattle.

19 continued) *... and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.*

20) *And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.*

21) *And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. (KJV)*

Let's explore that just a little bit because I think it's in the enormity of the miracle that we'll find some answers. If every individual there (and you mathematicians can weigh in on this) was given three square feet or one square yard on which to sit, and one calculates how big of a space would be needed for 10,000 people, it comes to about three acres (subject to criticism but that's okay). Three acres—how do we picture that in our minds?

Here in Spokane, if the average city lot is about one-fifth of an acre, and you come to a well-laid-out block of homes, drive up one street and count off eight houses, and realize that there are eight on the other side, with an alley in between—if you would sever that block in your mind, of sixteen houses, you would come up with the acreage we're talking about. How many of you know what is the seating capacity of the Spokane Convention Center? It's a big auditorium—any idea? I googled it; it's almost 2,700. If we are talking about 10,000 people, we're talking about an area more than four times the seating capacity of that nearby auditorium.

Let's do a little more estimating. If each person there got six ounces of fish, that would be about right, as a serving (of course, I would want more—I dearly love fish). The bread they had was baked in a circular shape, almost like an overgrown pizza, and was about **that** thick. When they broke it, they could break it into quadrants, and it was about two pounds of finished loaf, so each serving was about a quarter of that.

So if everybody got about six ounces of fish and six ounces of bread, do you know what that would weigh if you deposited it out there on pallets, before He told the disciples to pick it up and disperse it? It would be 5,000 pounds of fish and 5,000 pounds of bread. That's two and half tons. You would need a front-end loader to deliver it all at once. I don't think Christ said, okay, there it is fellas, but He instructed them and trained them in the following manner: First, you're a servant—you are going to wait on tables. Later on when He sent them out, they began to get into the spiritual experience, and by Acts 6, they were told, you tend to the spiritual and let somebody else take care of the physical.

To begin with, they had to, as we used to say, start on the janitorial crew and learn what that was like—in other words, how to be a servant in whatever capacity it took. As they learned, they could move on and God could use them in a teaching capacity. I think that's accurate. And remember, Christ referred to baskets—a Jewish basket is like some of those handbags ladies carry around; they are huge, you could get lost in them, and if your phone were to go off in one you wouldn't find it—and evidently the Jewish basket came up to a funnel, and if you wanted something, you reached in. I feel that He didn't say, here's a basket that weighs twenty or thirty pounds—load it up and take it out and disperse it, and come back for another one, because they would have been running back and forth.

Could it have been possible that they just took a basket and half of them delivered fish and the other half delivered bread? Then when they reached into the basket, they came up with the appropriate portion to give? Then the next person reached back in the next time, and sure enough there was another piece? That would have continued until every single individual was fed, because the number of people Christ was going to perform the miracle for wasn't predetermined, it was approximate. He would have had far more than twelve baskets if he had overshot the mark, or if He had been way under, someone would have gone hungry, right? No. The key, I believe, is that as long as there is a need, God will supply the answer or He will fulfill the need. One way or the other He is going to get the job done. But it takes God's intervention.

To me, that was a pretty dramatic miracle, especially when you take a look at the approximate size of the crowd, and of course people criticize those numbers to some degree. Critics say Josephus was overestimating—I don't know. It's sure bigger than the average garage sale. ((laughs)) I can tell you that. Once fed, I can almost imagine the disciples breathing a sigh of relief. This was a couple hours of pretty rigorous doing, and they must have thought, done! Then Christ said, no, go back and collect the leftovers—we're not leaving this place littered.

I'm going to leave the numerology to someone else, but they collected twelve baskets of remnants from that crowd. That meant something to the Jews—twelve tribes of Israel, governmental numbers and so on—but I'll leave that to somebody else.

Let's go on to verse 21 of chapter 15.

Matthew 15:21 *Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.* (KJV)

Then they headed north. He wanted to get them some place where they could share, because this was the last year before His crucifixion, and these men had to be made ready, or “on deck” as we say. He took them and headed north, and if you look at that it's at least a 40- to 50-mile walk into Tyre out of Bethsaida—the top of the Sea of Galilee. As we read through here, Jesus went and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. That's where the miracle occurred in which he healed the daughter of the

Syrophoenician woman. They were waiting for Him up there to some degree, but He had more time.

Let's pick up the account in verse 29 of Matthew 15.

29) And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee [so He came back by way of the Sea of Galilee around the coast, or sailed across it]; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30) And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: (KJV)

The Book of Mark says that He went to the area of Decapolis; in other words, Decapolis means ten—ten Greek cities, which were probably a holdover from the time of Alexander the Great, and the Romans took away most of that territory from the Greeks and from their descendants. I think this happened about 60 B.C. These cities were in an area named very specifically the Decapolis. This is where this second miracle, which was similar to the first major one, was performed. That's in Mark 7:31, if you want to make a note of that.

So they were waiting for Him. Christ again healed, in verse 31.

Matthew 15:31 *Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified [notice] the God of Israel. (KJV)*

This is more of a Gentile reaction: your God, whom we respect as the God of Israel. Today we would speak of God in a more familiar way, I believe.

32) 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: [they've run out] and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33) And his disciples said unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness [where are we going to find bread?—there is no place to buy it near here], as to fill so great a multitude? (KJV)

Their memory of the earlier miracle wasn't coming to mind, was it? Later on Christ brought this forcibly to their attention.

34) And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. (KJV)

It's amazing that a sea that small supported so many people at one time with fish—that's quite amazing. There were some heavy-duty fishing industries on that sea. Today we'd call something that size a lake.

35) *And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.*
36) *And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.*
37) *And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.*
38) *And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.*
(KJV)

That's where we get our figure.

39) *And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.* (KJV)

You will find that Magdala is on the left or west side of the Sea of Galilee. From Magdala He then returned up towards Bethsaida because now He is heading—of all places—to Caesarea Philippi, which is far to the north and is primarily a Gentile area. A lot of things are going to take place very, very quickly. We'll skip ahead to chapter 16 and verse 1. It's always inspiring to me when a leader takes on the opposition and confronts him face to face. This is what is about to happen. When they headed back towards Magdala in that area, notice what happened next.

Matthew 16:1 *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came ...* (KJV)

They even came up from Jerusalem (I assume it was Jerusalem) to be there to attack Christ. He had been creating quite a stir in all those communities for months and even years, and the Pharisees were extremely upset and in an uproar.

What pops into my mind, and you've heard some of this before in sermons—like the sermon by Rick Railston on the Pharisees and the Sadducees—is that both of these organizations were religiously illicit organizations. Their members were not descendants of the priestly line. They actually ruled over the common life and somehow got control of the Temple as well, and that's amazing because neither one of those groups believed what the other believed. So when Christ and the disciples arrived at Magdala, the powers that be were waiting for them.

1 continued) *... and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.* (KJV)

They didn't believe the healing, they didn't believe anything that had been done so far. Their point of view was determined by their belief that they were in charge: We're the bully boys on the block—you will conform. Christ didn't kowtow to them.

2) *He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.*

3) *And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring [gloomy]. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? (KJV)*

If you have an older King James, you will find a little “b” or similar notation right over the word “signs”; it refers the reader to the center margin where there is a list of the prophecies of the coming Messiah. He is saying, you can’t even read the signs of the times; in other words, the scriptures. The Pharisees weren’t really interested in the scriptures; does that sound reasonable? They had their own writings, made their own assumptions, and that’s where they circled the wagons, so to speak. This is what Christ is going to warn the disciples about, saying, in essence, leaders like these won’t go to the scriptures and seek out the truth.

Matthew 16:4 *A wicked and adulterous generation ... (KJV)*

Adulterous persons sell themselves to the highest bidder; they’re meat for hire. Christ put some heavy-duty labels on these folks.

4 repeated) *A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it ... (KJV)*

He’s saying, in effect, I’m not going to perform some kind of circus act for you. Here’s the one sign you will be shown:

4 continued) *... but the sign of the prophet Jonas. (KJV)*

So even here, He is saying, if you want to understand what this means, you’re going to have to go back to the scriptures. He always put that out there. It’s a marvelous thing; we have been given the privilege of understanding and actually defending, in a proper way, the scriptures that we do understand. And we are willing to be corrected, we are willing to learn. The Pharisees are not willing to learn, they will not bend. They have their tradition! I admire how Christ responded to them, and very tactfully. He never lost control, nor did He submit, ever, to anything that was wrong or evil.

4 continued) *... And he left them, and departed. (KJV)*

When they left, they headed toward Bethsaida and on up toward Caesarea Philippi, and there’s a very memorable occasion that we want to go through, right here in chapter 16.

5) *And when his disciples were come to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee] they had forgotten to take bread. (KJV)*

The author put in this little detail to show us where their thinking is going to go; they had forgotten to take any food.

6) *Then Jesus said unto them ... (KJV)*

You can imagine, here they are, in a boat and moving to the other side, and all of a sudden, unexpectedly, Jesus says,

6 continued) ... *Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*

Where did that come from? They were all concerned that they hadn't properly prepared for the journey. Their minds were still in transition.

7) *And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.*

As when somebody looks at you sternly and you think, what have I done?

8) *Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith ... (KJV)*

He didn't say they were faithless. He said, you have faith but it is small, or minuscule, at this time. Faith involves trust and belief. It takes time to go through and build belief, to get the understanding one needs; it takes a lot of study. And Christ was always doing what He needed to do, to build their trust in Him. He never once let them down; He never failed. Men fail, but Christ never did. This is rather interesting in verse 9.

9) *Do ye not yet understand, neither remember [notice the emphasis on understanding and remembering] the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

10) *Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? (KJV)*

He's bringing their minds back to these two miracles and trying to connect the dots for them. We'll come back to this in a minute because I want to explain verse 9 a little more.

11) *How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?*

12) *Then understood they ... (KJV)*

Sometimes just a bit more explanation is needed, then suddenly there is insight. Although there is one other miracle that must be entwined in here, and we'll get to that as well.

12) *Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine [the corrupted doctrine, spoiled and ugly, and the belief system and attitude] of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. (KJV)*

It is lethal and it is subtle.

What follows is just a little research that I went through, which meant a lot to me, and I'll share it with you. Back to verse 9.

Matthew 16:9 *Do ye not yet understand, neither remember ...*

He is saying, don't you yet understand and remember? If you go to biblehub.com and enter that verse in the search field, and click on the Interlinear link, you will see each word of that scripture with its original Greek, right below it—it will begin to separate and define each word for you. Right under the words *do you understand* is a coded link labelled V-PIA-2P. The same coded link is found, interestingly enough, under the word *remember*. What He is saying, and it bears out, is right now you don't remember nor do you understand—right now. He didn't say they wouldn't ever. The "V" in the coded link represents a verb—*understand* is a verb, *remember* is a verb. The "P" in the coded link represents the present tense, meaning, right now you don't. The "I" and the "A" also stand for tenses; "I" is imperfect, so that's the past, and the "A" is the Aorist tense; the Aorist classification of this refers to past action.

So you can properly translate this verse as: right now, you don't remember nor understand, but He didn't say they never would. It was the understanding they had right at the moment, but there was another element that was needed to really put this into their memories.

I feel the more we can visualize a scripture or a concept—like I tried to do to, in giving a sense of the scale of these public miracles and how much room was needed—the more likely we are to keep it in mind. Getting back to the coded link, the "2" refers to the second person—from one person to another, in this case from the teacher to the people; from the Christ to the disciples. The "P" means plural, so that when Christ said *you*, He meant every one of them. This will figure in a little later on when He asks the disciples a question, and even though Peter answers for the group, Christ is talking to every single disciple.

I have a little note here about the attitude of the Pharisees—the arrogant attitude of we know it all, we have collected it all, and we are the guardians of the truth. Thus we're the ones in charge. Therefore, they tried to demand of Christ, give us a circus, and He wouldn't do it. He said, no—not at all.

Many years ago we were taught—and we were to pass this on because this was fundamentally an edict from the church administration—that brethren were not to get together and discuss scripture, certainly not without a minister present. That is so demeaning in my opinion; I see it now very clearly. There were a few eccentric brethren who pushed their own agenda and they obviously stood out. But to generalize that all of the brethren were like that was to imply that we can't really trust you because you don't have the Spirit like we do.

I learned a long time ago when I got a new ministerial assistant—he came out to the field, and some of them really needed some guidance—I said, look, every person in this

room is converted and has the same Spirit you do; you may know more scriptures than they do, but they know how to live the ones they do know. The assistants who responded to that advice actually became helpful servants of the people. I learned a few things myself along the way. Now I understand that that very same ruling is being revived and coming back into force—not in Pacific—but in other groups. It's that same attitude, and it's really, really too bad.

Let's go on in chapter 16 and wrap this up. There's one other point I want to make. This is what I call the miracle that affects everyone. This is the third major one that popped out in this particular study. In verse 13 of chapter 16 of the book of Matthew,

Matthew 16:13 *When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi ... (KJV)*

This is now quite north and somewhat east of the Sea of Galilee. The Pharisees who felt threatened by Him were in a different area so Christ was keeping his distance. He knew that His time was running out and that He had about six or seven months left before His crucifixion. If you read chapters 17, 18 and 19, you'll find that Christ went back to the area of Galilee, and He visited several different places and performed miracles before He returned to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.

13 repeated) *When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*

14) *And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*

15) *He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? (KJV)*

Who do you say I am? The word "you" is plural, meaning all of you, and is emphasized by Christ. The question is addressed to every man there, not just one, even though it is Simon Peter who answers.

16) *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ [the Messiah], the Son of the living God. (KJV)*

What a mouthful, what a perceptive and important remark that was, and actually is. Notice the response in verse 17.

17) *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [or we can emphasize it as cannot reveal] it unto thee [this understanding, this conviction], but my Father which is in heaven. (KJV)*

In verse 21, it says,

21) *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (KJV)*

He returned to Galilee and then went down to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. After that He continued His ministry in various areas south of the Sea of Galilee, then once more went down to Jerusalem to complete His earthly ministry.

I hope what I've shared today has added to your understanding. There is one additional bit of information I would like to add that I feel is very important. I reviewed a documentary some time ago—I believe it was by Dr. Daniel Amen—in which films had been recorded of the human brain storing memories. The nerve ganglia—the connections—that were processing the information would plump out and swell as they stored the memories. In the case of new information, the brain would create new areas in which to store those memories being processed, if present storage areas were at capacity.

In the areas where the stored information wasn't recalled and used, over time, one could watch the ganglia centers disappear before one's eyes. Thus, memories that weren't recalled over time weren't retained. I just ask you to take some time to think about how important our study is, and try to visualize these dramatic events we've reviewed because they are true and important. Even with all of these created, specialized systems within us, there still has to be this third miracle—God's revelation, God's Spirit inside of us, which enables us to recall spiritual truths.

I want to leave you with just a simple but searching question, and you have to use your imagination here. If Jesus Christ stepped into the room and asked the very same question of us that He asked of the disciples and Peter, but introduced His question this way: I, Jesus, know what many people say I am. But you, in remembering the two profound miracles—the feeding of the large gatherings of the Jews and the Gentiles, with a few loaves and fishes—who do *you* say I am? As the Messiah, the Son of the living God, do you believe—will you remember—that I'm capable of anticipating and providing for your needs, especially in a time of want?

Of others, Jesus might say this: They say I am the Creator of all things. They say I'm the "I AM" quoted in the book of John. They say that I am the second in the Godhead and co-equal with the Father; that I'm the God of the Old Testament; the spokesman for a silent Father; the one who spoke at Mount Sinai, thundering the Ten Commandments; and that I am the dominant individual in the coming resurrection of the dead. But again, who do *you* say I am?

It's best we do remember, that in Matthew 16, verse 16, Peter gave an inspired answer to that question.