

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

No. 27. FEEDING THE FOUR THOUSAND, ETC.

To read—*St. Matthew xv. 27; xvi. 12.*

I. **MIRACLES OF HEALING.** (29-31.) The faith of Gentile woman just been rewarded—now miracles wrought for large numbers of Gentiles. Place was near east side of Sea of Galilee—having passed through Decapolis. (St. Mark vii. 31.) Christ, as often, on a mountain side. His fame has spread—large crowds come—stay three days—all their sick brought to Christ—at once healed. Notice :

(a) Their *faith* in Christ's power.

(b) Their *help* to each other in bringing helpless.

(c) Their *gratitude*, in praising God.

Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6), and Gentiles taught to believe in Israel's God. Thus Christ lightened the Gentiles. (St. Luke ii. 32.)

II. **MIRACLE OF FEEDING.** (32-39.) Five thousand Jews lately fed, now four thousand Gentiles.

Differences between miracle of 5,000 and 4,000 :

MIRACLE OF FIVE THOUSAND.	MIRACLE OF FOUR THOUSAND.
(a) People been with Christ one day.	Three days.
(b) Those fed were Jews.	Were Gentiles.
(c) They sat on the grass.	Sat on the ground.
(d) Disciples asked Christ.	Christ asked disciples.
(e) Five loaves, two fishes.	Seven loaves, a few fishes.
(f) Twelve baskets left.	Seven baskets left.
(g) Baskets were small.	Baskets were large.

Blessing the food ; sitting in order ; giving to disciples to distribute ; Christ sending away multitudes—same in both. Lessons also the same.

III. **LEAVEN OF PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.** (xvi. 1-12.) Pharisees before this tempted Christ, seeking signs (xii. 38), now join Sadducees to tempt Him. Bitter enemies of each other join against Christ. What signs had they had ?

(a) Prophecies of place of His birth, Virgin Mother, adoration of Gentiles, etc.

(b) Miracles of healing, feeding, etc.

But wanted special sign at special time at their bidding. Christ would give no more except point out Jonah as type of His resurrection. Sadducees disbelieved resurrection, so Christ repeats previous saying (xii. 39, 40) for their benefit—refuses further answer.

Christ uses Pharisees and Sadducees as warning.

Leaven (or yeast) makes dough to rise.

Its *spreading* used as type of spread of Christ's Church (xiii. 33). Here, its *decay* used as warning.

Leaven of Pharisees—pride, hypocrisy, formalism.

Leaven of Sadducees—profanity, forgetting God.

Also the *doctrine* of these false teachers (ver. 12).

Disciples thought Christ was speaking of ordinary bread, forbidding them to eat with the Pharisees. What does their question show ?

(a) *Want of faith* in Him to supply their want.

(b) *Forgetfulness* of His recent miracles.

(c) *Spiritual blindness* in not understanding.

LESSON. We walk by faith, not by sight.