

WEEK 15: MIRACLES & JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

HIGH SCHOOL

GOALS

What did Jesus teach us with the Feeding of the 5,000 & 4,000?
Who are the Pharisees and the Sadducees?

LESSON

Materials Needed: Bible

Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:

The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pgs 196-228

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Matthew by Blessed Theophylact, pgs 122-144

The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes - Jewish Virtual Library

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/pharisees-sadducees-and-essenes>

FEEDING OF THE 5,000 AND 4,000

Read Matthew 14:13-21 and then Matthew 15:32-39

The news about Jesus' teachings and miracles spread far and wide, which resulted in large crowds continually seeking Him out. Today, we are reading about the two miracles of Jesus feeding the multitudes. Thousands of people find themselves in the desert with Jesus and many of them have traveled a great distance. Remember, that at this point in history, they do not have restaurants, stores, or non-perishable food in the same capacity that we have today. This is a rough situation as food has run out!

Jesus has compassion on the needs of the people around Him. They had such great faith to travel all this way to be healed by Him. He, in turn, heals and nourishes them - both body and soul.

These stories make reference to the fact that they are located in a remote desert. There isn't any possibility for Jesus to have asked several nearby bakeries to make a bunch of bread and secretly hide it behind some big rocks. It's just not even in the realm of a possibility. Their outlying location all the more emphasizes that this was a great miracle.

Within these two stories, we are taught that we should always say a prayer of thanksgiving before every meal, just as Jesus did. St. Theophylact also tells us that we are taught a lesson in hospitality - when someone comes to your home, invite them to sit down and offer them something to eat.

Additionally, there are spiritual lessons offered to us within these stories as well. Jesus is the Creator of the sea (fish) and the earth (bread) and also the Giver of what we eat every day. In the feeding of the 5,000, there are twelve baskets of leftovers - one for each of the disciples to carry. "Twelve baskets were lifted up and carried by the apostles; for whatever we, the multitude, are unable to eat, that is, to understand, the apostles carried and held, that is, they accepted and understood." (St. Theophylact, on Matthew page 125)

JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

MATTHEW 16:1-4

It's important to understand who is part of the gospel narrative in order to have an understanding of what is happening. The Gospels often make reference to the Jews, but we need to know that there are different groups of Jews with some differing beliefs.

The Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots are all groups of Jews. The two main groups we read about in the Gospel of Matthew are the Pharisees and Sadducees, both of whom are trying to get rid of Jesus. They even put aside their different beliefs and unite to kill Him!

The Pharisees are Jews who represented the common people. They controlled the synagogues and accepted both oral and written law. (This means both their oral tradition as well as the first five books of the Old Testament.) They believed there was an afterlife, angels, and demons. They also resisted Roman rule in Israel. The Pharisees are referred to as the spiritual fathers of modern day Jews.

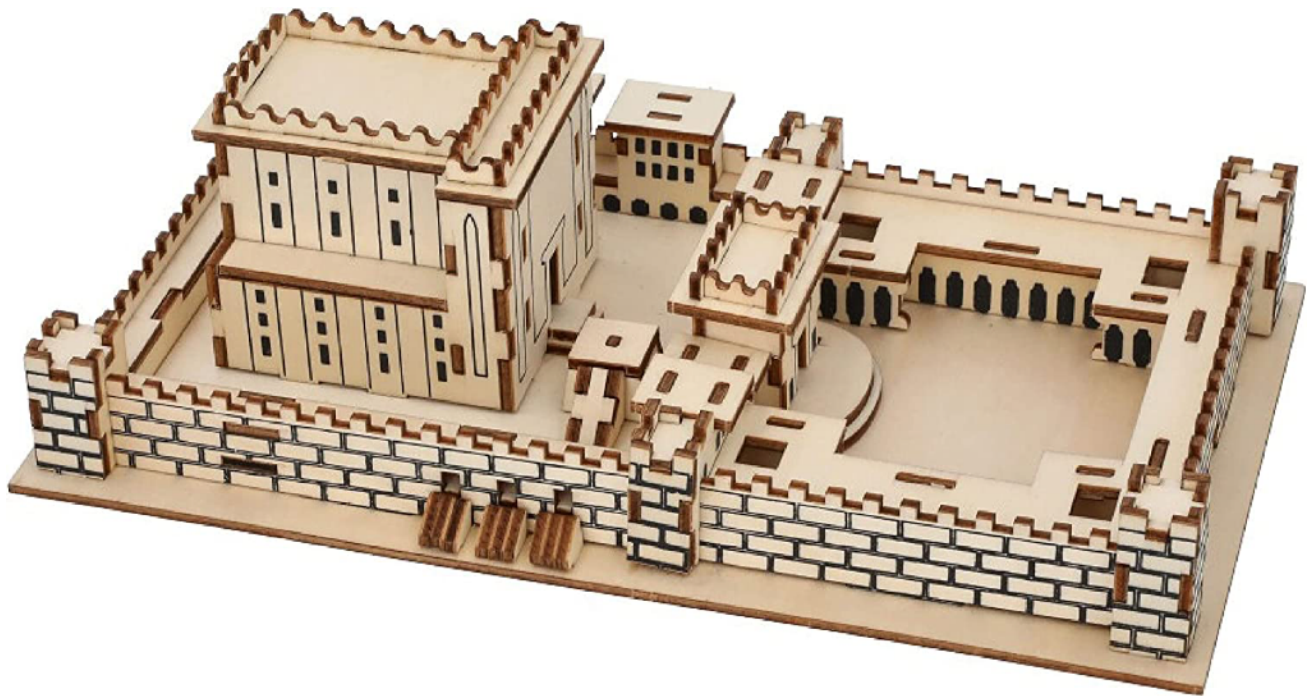
The Sadducees are Jews who were mostly wealthy, upper class and the priestly caste. They controlled the Temple and were in charge of the sacrifices at the Temple. They only accepted written law. So, if it wasn't in the first five books of the Old Testament, they didn't believe in it. Therefore, they did not believe there was life after death or that there were angels and demons. They also did not have any problem working along side of

the Romans. But...after the Romans destroyed the Temple in the first century, the Sadducees no longer existed anymore. None of their writings survived, so ironically, what we do know about them comes predominantly from the Pharisees.

There were some agreements between the Pharisees and Sadducees though: they both honored Moses and the Law; they were both part of the council of elders (the Sanhedrin - 70 men); and they both plot to get rid of Jesus.

OPTIONAL: JEWISH TEMPLE MODEL

If time allows, spend the last 5-10 minutes of class working on assembling the Jewish Temple model. This activity is intended to take more than one Sunday to complete. This is an opportunity for the kids to have a hands-on project, as well as a visual-aid, as we move forward and discuss the Jewish Temple within our future lessons.



FEEDING OF THE 5,000

MATTHEW 14:13-21



PHARISEES & SADDUCEES

MATTHEW 16:1-4

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES SHARED IN COMMON:

1.

2.

3.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES?

PHARISEES	SADDUCEES

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOALS

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Jesus has compassion on the needs of the people around Him. They had such great faith to travel all this way to be healed by Him. He, in turn, heals and nourishes them - both body and soul.

These stories make reference to the fact that they are located in a remote desert. There isn't any possibility for Jesus to have asked several nearby bakeries to make a bunch of bread and secretly hide it behind some big rocks. It's just not even in the realm of a possibility. Their outlying location all the more emphasizes that this was a great miracle.

Within these two stories, we are taught that we should always say a prayer of thanksgiving before every meal, just as Jesus did. St. Theophylact also tells us that we are taught a lesson in hospitality - when someone comes to your home, invite them to sit down and offer them something to eat.

JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

MATTHEW 16:1-4

It's important to understand who the people are in the Gospel of Matthew in order to have an understanding of what is happening. The Gospels often make reference to the Jews, but we need to know that there are different groups of Jews with some differing beliefs. Who are they?

The Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots are all groups of Jews. The two main groups we read about in the Gospel of Matthew are the Pharisees and Sadducees, both of whom are trying to get rid of Jesus. They even put aside their different beliefs and unite to kill Him!

The Pharisees are Jews who represented the common people. They controlled the synagogues and accepted both oral and written law. (This means both their oral tradition as well as the first five books of the Old Testament.) They believed there was an afterlife, angels, and demons. They also resisted Roman rule in Israel.

The Sadducees are Jews who were mostly wealthy upper class, the priests, and high priest. They controlled the Temple and were in charge of the sacrifices at the Temple. They only accepted written law. So, if it wasn't in the first five books of the Old Testament, they didn't believe in it. Therefore, they did not believe there was life after death or that there were angels and demons. They also did not have any problem working along side of the Romans.

There were some agreements between the Pharisees and Sadducees though: they both honored Moses and the Law; they were both part of the council of elders (the Sanhedrin - 70 men); and they both plot to get rid of Jesus.

If time allows, work on the Jewish Temple model for the last 5-10 minutes of class.

CREATE A CHART ON THE WHITE BOARD

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES SHARED IN COMMON:

1. Honored Moses and the Law
2. Were part of the Sanhedrin (council of elders)
3. Wanted to get rid of Jesus

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES?	
PHARISEES	SADDUCEES
Represented the common people	Represented the wealthy upper class and the priestly caste
Controlled the synagogues	Controlled the Temple
Had both oral tradition and written law	Only had written law (First five books of the Old Testament)
Believed in life after death	Did NOT believe in life after death
Believed in angels and demons	Did NOT believe in angels or demons
Resisted Roman rule	Welcomed Roman rule

FEEDING OF THE 5,000

MATTHEW 14:13-21



WEEK 15: MIRACLES & JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

3RD & 4TH GRADE

GOALS

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FEEDING OF THE 5,000 AND 4,000

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Jesus knows the crowd is hungry and has compassion on the people around Him. They had such great faith to travel all this way to be healed by Him. He, in turn, heals and nourishes them - both body and soul.

They are all in a remote desert, far away from any city. There isn't any possibility for Jesus to have asked several nearby bakeries to make a bunch of bread and secretly hide it behind some big rocks. It's just not even in the realm of a possibility. Their location all the more emphasizes that this was a great miracle.

Within these two stories, we are taught that we should always say a prayer to thank God before every meal, just as Jesus did. St. Theophylact also tells us that we are taught a lesson in how to take care of our guests - when someone comes to visit you at your home, invite them to sit down and offer them something to eat.

JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

MATTHEW 16:1-4

It's important to understand who the people are in the Gospel of Matthew in order to have an understanding of what is happening. The Gospels often talk about the Jews, but we need to know that there are different groups of Jews and they don't all believe the exact same thing.

The Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots are all groups of Jews. The two main groups we read about in the Gospel of Matthew are the Pharisees and Sadducees, both of whom are trying to get rid of Jesus. They even put aside their different beliefs and unite to kill Him!

The Pharisees are Jews who represented the common people. They controlled the synagogues. They believed there was an afterlife, angels, and demons.

The Sadducees are Jews who were mostly wealthy upper class, the priests, and high priest. They controlled the Temple and were in charge of the sacrifices at the Temple. They did *not* believe there was life after death or that there were angels and demons.

There were some agreements between the Pharisees and Sadducees though: they both honored Moses and the Law; they were both part of the Sanhedrin (the council of elders - 70 men); and they both plot to get rid of Jesus.

If time allows, work on the Jewish Temple model for the last 5-10 minutes of class.

FEEDING OF THE 5,000

MATTHEW 14:13-21



PHARISEES & SADDUCEES

MATTHEW 16:1-4

DIRECTIONS: Write a P for Pharisee or an S for Sadducees as you answer the following questions.

1. Who was in charge of the synagogues?

2. Who was in charge of the Temple?

3. Who represented the wealthy?

4. Who represented the common people?

5. Who did not believe in life after death?

6. Who did not believe in angels and demons?

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1ST & 2ND GRADE

GOALS

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CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer, collect money

FEEDING OF THE 5,000

Read Matthew 14:13-21

Assign roles to each student in the class: Narrator (Teacher #1), Director (Teacher #2), Jesus, Disciples (as many as you can), and the crowd of "5,000" (the rest of the class).

Read the story of the Feeding of the 5,000 in Matthew out-loud to the students. As the teacher is reading the story (and feel free to pause as instructions are given by teacher #2), the students can move as they act out the story.

For instance, one of the disciples will bring 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread to Jesus.

Jesus will look up to heaven and say, "Thank you."

The other disciples will have the miraculous multiplied bread and fish to pass out to the crowd.

ICON STUDY: FEEDING OF THE 5,000

- Where is Jesus in the icon?
- Where are His disciples?
- How many fish and bread is Jesus holding in his hands?
- Who are all the people sitting on the ground?
- Why do we pray before we eat? (What prayer do you say with your parents before you eat?)
- Jesus first healed the people and then fed them.
- Could your mom or dad run to the store today to buy more than 5,000 loaves of bread to feed a huge crowd of people sitting on the grass in your front yard (and the yards of your neighbors)? No! They couldn't do it back then either. This was a miracle by Jesus!

If time permits:

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Continue practice singing, "Lord, have mercy" in multiple languages

FEEDING OF THE 5,000

MATTHEW 14:13-21



WEEK 15: MIRACLES & JEWISH LEADERS TEST JESUS

PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN

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