

Context: Danevang Lutheran Church Newsletter September 2024

Pondering

During the study of the readings for July 21st, the discussion about Mark 6:30-43 (also Matt 14:13-21, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-15), the Feeding of the 5,000, included the significance of some of the numbers mentioned in that account. We compared the account of Feeding of the 4,000 in the Mark 8:1-10 (also Matt 15:29-39). While one must take care to avoid both the manufacturing of a meaning to fit an intended narrative, and straying into non-Christian numerology, there are some things we should consider:

1. In the ancient world, storytelling was an art, and specific numbers were often very important to the subtle meaning in these stories.
2. Surely, the stories we have in the Bible were told many times long before they were written down.
3. It is reasonable to assume that, when numbers are specifically included, they may have been significant to the original audience. Briefly pursuing that might provide fruitful insight. However, an obsession with numbers may simply be a distraction.
4. When reading Scripture, since it is the inspired Word of God, we need not be concerned that we will somehow “miss out” or “miss the point” if we do not, on the surface, understand the cultural significance of a number or a phrase, which might have given the original listener an “ah-ha” moment. God’s Word is powerful. Therefore, via His Spirit and Word, what is needful for us is provided, even if we do not have the same cultural perspective as the author.
5. However, asking, “What did an original audience ‘hear’ when this story was told?” is fruitful for a more in-depth study, and includes much more than numbers (example: a cultural understanding of how Jews detested Samaritans reinforces the story often titled “the good Samaritan” (Luke 10:25-37)).
6. A brief overview of other ancient Hebrew perspectives:
 - a) Squaring a number can indicate perfect completeness,
 - b) “10” is perfection of divine order – multiplying a number by powers of 10 can indicate divine perfection,
 - c) “2” means difference, division or a double portion.
 - d) “3” indicates God’s completeness,
 - e) “7” is often called the number of God, or more generically, the number of spiritual perfection and fullness or completion. Sometimes it represents a Covenant or the Holy Spirit. A non-religious aspect for the Hebrews is that when referencing non-Jewish nations, or gentiles, “7” represents all gentiles, for there were 7 gentile nations in the promised land when the Israelites arrived,
 - f) “12” is perfection of government (most often represents the 12 Tribes of Israel – or all Israelites as a nation),
 - g) “5” is the number of power and Divine grace

So, using information in “a” through “g”, above:

- 12 squared (12x12) times 10 to the 3rd power (10x10x10) = 144,000 in Revelation 7:4 (ESV) “And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: ...” {12,000 each tribe list follows} = Not an actual #, but rather indicating the exact total of all Israel that God, in His perfection, intended.

Some would tell you that the feeding of the 5,000 and 4,000 are the same event, they are wrong: Matthew 16 (ESV) “... Don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered?”

It is difficult to unpack the potential meanings of the numbers 4,000 vs 5,000. Therefore let us look at the simple differences in these stories --

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- Feeding of the 5,000 – “5” loaves, and “2” fish = theme is divine power and grace, a double portion. This happened in Jewish territory and the 5,000 were Jews, and “12” baskets were left over = the double portion of grace spills over to ALL of the Jews, all 12 tribes. Side note: We seldom pay attention to little details like the people setting in groups of 50 or 100. It is mentioned for a reason: those seeking to kill Jesus as a rebel can now point to him feeding his followers in the same manner one would feed an army in the field.

Now, why two stories. Keep in mind Jesus is training his followers, who are Jewish and basically believed that God’s grace did not extend to Gentiles. The second event happens in Gentile territory (the 4,000 are gentiles), as do other stories in that series meant to teach his disciples that God is the God of the Gentiles as well (Look at the preceding Matthew 15:21-28, the Canaanite Woman – crumbs from the master’s table).

- Feeding of the 4,000 – “7” loaves and a few fish = the theme is “spiritual perfection and fullness or completion”, and it is about a covenant (Jesus’ disciples are about to find out that God’s fullness and grace extends to the Gentiles). The “7” baskets left over indicate God’s grace & love, in spiritual perfection spills over to ALL the Gentiles (the 7 nations as perceived by the Jews): this inclusion of Gentiles, along with the Israelites in the previous story is God bring things to spiritual perfection and completeness. Side note: 2 fish in the first story, a nonspecific “few” in the second: “2” can also signify division: Is that telling us the disciples let the first story reinforce the false perception of grace only extending to the Israelites (world divided into Jew and Gentile) – And the second story, via the non-specific “few” erases that previously viewed division from their mind. See Romans 1:16 (ESV) “... the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Avoid the tendency to get trapped in some numerology obsession, but acknowledge many times the numbers provided the original hearer with things, of value, to ponder.

- “6” is the number of man (created the sixth day, and falls short of “7”, which is the perfection of God). Remember 3 is God’s completeness, so 666 (3 sixes) is a completeness of falling short; hence the number of the beast in Revelation.
- God created for 6 days and rested on the 7th – leading us to a week of 7 days, so every 8th day is a day of new beginnings; the number of salvation, resurrection, and new birth/regeneration. “8” people were saved in the ark, for a new beginning for humankind. Jewish males are circumcised on their 8th day.
- Often used “40” (days, years), typically a time of trial or temptation – it signifies that something took a long time, and the exact time was that which God determined was the perfect time. 4 (God’s Creative Work in) X 10 (divine perfection), and power/devine grace (5) X a new beginning (8).
- “11” is disorder: 10 + 1 or 12 - 1; also disorganization, lack of fulfillment, imperfection.
- “14” = 2x7, so consider:
 - Matthew carefully divides the genealogy of Jesus into 3 groups of 14 generations: (Matthew 1:17). The 3 generations of 14 is the equivalent of, “Jesus came into the world with a double measure (2) of spiritual perfection (7) via (3) an act of Divine Grace in the perfection of the Godhead.”

Happy Pondering, Chuck

Try searching for “Jewish understanding of numbers in the Bible”. Some results will be useful, just watch out for those pushing an agenda. These sites proved *mostly* helpful:

<https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/documents/The%20Significance%20of%20Numbers%20in%20Scripture.htm>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/judaism-numbers/>

<https://loveisrael.org/hebrew-numerology/number-fourteen/>

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Announcements

We are thankful for grants from Lutheran Disaster Assistance allowing us to move forward with repairs for damages from Hurricane Bery. The Education Building has new shingles, and repairs have been made to the bell tower siding, and some damaged roof areas. Plans are moving forward with other roofing repairs.

Serving This Month:

Altar Guild – Maria Barnes

Greeter – Cullen Barnes

Readers for Sunday Services

1 - Doyle Schaer

8 - Linda Alderson

15 - Maria Barnes

22 - Doyle Schaer

29 - Karen Kight

Learning with Fellowship

Ladies Bible Study: We resume our studies on Mondays from 9:00 – 11:00 am starting September 9, 2024. All ladies are welcome to join.

Men's Group: Men of the surrounding communities meet for some fellowship and a bite to eat at 6 PM on Wednesdays in the Community Hall.

Sunday School: Each Sunday, 9 am to 9:45 am in the Educational Building. Open to all adults and children before church service. Coffee will be served. We will discuss the scripture readings for the current Sunday. NO Sunday School on Sept. 15th

Meetings

Council Meeting September 9th at 6 PM – NOTE the NEW Time

Pot-Luck Meal – September 22nd - 4th Sunday after service now for Po-Lucks

Services - Sunday 10 AM.



Mission Moment

by Pastor Bryce Formwalt
Director of Mission Growth



Too Busy NOT to Pray

I don't know about you, but I am tired. I'm not the kind of tired that can be managed by an extra hour or two of sleep. Rather I am talking about the rhythms of a full and busy life where there are simply not enough hours in the day, days in the week, or weeks in the month to get everything done. The day-to-day activities of life, even life in ministry, can result in a weariness that can steal our joy of living the life that we are so busy living that we really aren't actually living! Have you ever felt this way?

As I think about my weariness and the endless "To Do" lists, I recall a conversation I had with my mom 20 years ago. She had called me just to chat and I didn't really have the time. I told her I was busy, and she asked what I had going on that day. I rattled off all the things I had to get done and she replied: "Oh, my! You are busy. It sounds like you probably need to pray." I was frustrated with her: "Mom, I don't have time to pray!" As soon as I said it, I realized how foolish I was. My mother answered, "Bryce, listen to yourself. You're a pastor! You are too busy NOT to pray!"

As was often the case, my mom was right. No matter how busy I am or how much is on my calendar, my "To Do" list pales in comparison to Jesus': there were always more sick people to heal, more demons to cast out, more sins to forgive, more disciples to teach, and more towns to visit. Remarkably, Jesus never seemed to be in a hurry and yet made an impact everywhere he went.

In Luke 5:14-15, we read this about Jesus: *But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Yet he often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.* No matter what demands of ministry Jesus faced, he regularly retreated for quiet time with his Father in heaven. Do I really think I don't need this in my life?

Once again, I must come to terms with the ways that I fall short of what I think I should be as a follower of Jesus, as a husband and a father, and as a pastor. In the busyness of my life, I need to remember that I am too busy not to pray. I long to live an unhurried and yet impactful life like Jesus did. And that means I need to regularly withdraw for prayer and fellowship with God. Whenever I do, God restores my soul and fills me up to continue to carry out the work he created me for. I invite you to join me in this and expect that we will be amazed at all the Lord accomplishes in us and through us.

Pastor Bryce Formwalt is the Director of Mission Growth for LCMC Texas District and Program Director of Harvest Workers, an online ministry training program (learn more at www.harvestworkers.net). Residing in Georgetown, Pastor Bryce is available to coach congregations on mission. Please contact him with any questions or comments: 512-942-7776 or bryce@lcmctexas.org.

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Save the Date!

WINTER RETREAT

One Another

February 2-4 or 5-7, 2025 + Concan, Texas

A LeaderCare Retreat for Pastors, Ministry Staff,
Seminarians, Congregational Leaders & Spouses

*"A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
John 13:34*



www.lcmctexas.org/winter-retreat



Context: Danevang Lutheran Church Newsletter June 2024

2nd Half of 2024 Lectionary Year Calendar -- Three-Year Series : “B” thru end of Nov., then year “C”						
Church Season	Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
Pentecost	Sept 1. (Prop. 17)	Fifteenth S. a. Pentecost	Deut. 4:1–2, 6– 9	Psalm 119: 129–136	Eph. 6:10–20	Mark 7:14–23
	Sept. 8 (Prop. 18)	Sixteenth S. a. Pentecost	Is. 35:4–7a	Psalm 146	James 2:1–10, 14–18	Mark 7:(24–30) 31–37
	Sept. 15 (Prop. 19)	Seventeenth S. a. Pentecost	Is. 50:4–10	Psalm 116:1–9	James 3:1–12	Mark 9:14–29
	Sept. 22 (Prop. 20)	Eighteenth S. a. Pentecost	Jer. 11:18–20	Psalm 54	James 3:13—4:10	Mark 9:30–37
	Sept. 29	St. Michael and All Angels	Dan. 10:10–14; 12:1–3	Psalm 91	Rev. 12:7–12	Matt. 18:1–11 or Luke 10:17– 20
	or (Prop. 21)	Nineteenth S. a. Pentecost	Num. 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–29	Psalm 104: 27–35	James 5:(1–12) 13–20	Mark 9:38–50
	Oct. 6 (Prop. 22)	Twentieth S. a. Pentecost	Gen. 2:18–25	Psalm 128	Heb. 2:1–13 (14–18)	Mark 10:2–16
	Oct. 13 (Prop. 23)	Twenty-first S. a. Pentecost	Amos 5:6–7, 10–15	Psalm 90:12–17	Heb. 3:12–19	Mark 10:17–22
	Oct. 20 (Prop. 24)	Twenty-second S. a. Pentecost	Eccl. 5:10–20	Psalm 119:9–16	Heb. 4:1–13 (14–16)	Mark 10:23–31
REFORMATION	Oct. 27 (<i>observed</i>)	Reformation Day (Oct. 31)	Rev. 14:6–7	Psalm 46	Rom. 3:19–28	John 8:31–36 or Matt. 11:12–19
	or (Proper 25)	Twenty-third S. a. Pentecost	Jer. 31:7–9	Psalm 126	Heb. 7:23–28	Mark 10:46–52
ALL SAINTS' DAY	Nov. 3 (<i>observed</i>)	All Saints' Day (Nov. 1)	Rev. 7:(2–8) 9–17	Psalm 149	1 John 3:1–3	Matt. 5:1–12
	or (Prop. 26)	Twenty-fourth S. a. Pentecost	Deut. 6:1–9	Psalm 119:1–8	Heb. 9:11–14 (15–22)	Mark 12:28–37
	Nov. 10 (Prop. 27)	Twenty-fifth S. a. Pentecost	1 Kings 17:8–16	Psalm 146	Heb. 9:24–28	Mark 12:38–44
	Nov. 17 (Prop. 28)	Twenty-sixth S. a. Pentecost	Dan. 12:1–3	Psalm 16	Heb. 10:11–25	Mark 13:1–13

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2nd Half of 2024 Lectionary Year Calendar -- Three-Year Series : “B” thru end of Nov., then year “C”						
Church Season	Date	Festival	First Reading	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
THANKSGIVING	Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Day	Deut. 8:1–10	Psalm 67	Phil. 4:6–20 or 1 Tim. 2:1–4	Luke 17:11–19
	Nov. 24 (Prop. 29)	Last S. of the Church Year	Is. 51:4–6	Psalm 93	Jude 20-25	Mark 13:24–37
New Church Year Starts Here (Series C)						
ADVENT 2024	Dec. 1 2024	First S. in Advent	Jer. 33:14–16	Psalm 25:1–10	1 Thess. 3:9–13	Luke 19:28–40 or Luke 21:25–36
	Dec. 8	Second S. in Advent	Mal. 3:1–7b	Psalm 66:1–12	Phil. 1:2–11	Luke 3:1–14 (15–20)
	Dec. 15	Third S. in Advent	Zeph. 3:14–20	Psalm 85	Phil. 4:4–7	Luke 7:18–28 (29–35)
	Dec. 22	Fourth S. in Advent	Micah 5:2–5a	Psalm 80:1–7	Heb. 10:5–10	Luke 1:39–45 (46–56)
	Dec. 24 <i>Eve</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord <i>(Christmas Eve)</i>	Is. 7:10–14	Psalm 110:1–4	1 John 4:7–16	Matt. 1:18–25
CHRISTMAS 2024	Dec. 25 <i>Midnight</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord <i>(Christmas Midnight)</i>	Is. 9:2–7	Psalm 96	Titus 2:11–14	Luke 2:1–14 (15–20)
	Dec. 25 <i>Dawn</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord <i>(Christmas Dawn)</i>	Is. 62:10–12	Psalm 98	Titus 3:4–7	Luke 2:(1–14) 15–20
	Dec. 25 <i>Day</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord <i>(Christmas Day)</i>	Is. 52:7–10	Psalm 2	Heb. 1:1–6 (7–12)	John 1:1–14 (15–18)
	Dec. 29	First S. a. Christmas	Ex. 13:1–3a, 11–15	Psalm 111	Col. 3:12–17	Luke 2:22–40
	Dec. 31	Eve of the Circ. and Name of Jesus <i>(New Year’s Eve)</i>	Is. 30:(8–14) 15–17	Psalm 90:1–12	Rom. 8:31b–39	Luke 12:35–40

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Events in September 2024

Grid Cards List Month Week Day September 2024 Go < Today >

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Sunday School </div> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black; padding: 5px;"> 10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight) </div>			<div style="background-color: #ff69b4; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 6:00 pm: Men's Group </div>	<div style="background-color: #32cd32; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Serving This Month Altar Guild, Greeter and Readers, see event discription </div>		
<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Sunday School </div> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight) </div>	<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM </div> <div style="background-color: #ffcc99; color: black; padding: 5px;"> 6:00 pm: Council Meeting on 2nd Monday </div>		<div style="background-color: #ff69b4; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 6:00 pm: Men's Group </div>			
<div style="background-color: #ff0000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: No Sunday School Today </div> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black; padding: 5px;"> 10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight) </div>	<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM </div>		<div style="background-color: #ff69b4; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 6:00 pm: Men's Group </div>			
<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Sunday School </div> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight) </div> <div style="background-color: #ff69b4; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 11:00 am: Potluck after Church 4th Sunday of the Month </div>	<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM </div>		<div style="background-color: #ff69b4; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 6:00 pm: Men's Group </div>			<div style="background-color: #cccccc; color: black; padding: 5px;"> Community Hall Booked </div>
<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Sunday School </div> <div style="background-color: #ffff00; color: black; padding: 5px;"> 10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight) </div>	<div style="background-color: #00b09b; color: white; padding: 5px;"> 9:00 am: Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM </div>					

Canceled event
 Church Service
 Classes
 Community Hall Booked
 Fellowship
 General
 Meeting
 Music Practice

Serving This Month
All Categories