

# Five Loaves and Two Fish

*John 6:1-15*

**Thought for the Day:** "A little becomes a lot when you put it in the hands of God." (*Marcus Lamb, Founder, President and CEO of the Christian Daystar Television Network*)

The Feeding of the Five Thousand is the fourth of seven miracles recorded in the Gospel of John. "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:30-31)

This miracle is preparing us for Jesus' declaration that He is the Bread of Life who came to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. (John 6:22-59)

## **1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.**

- The Sea of Galilee is a lake which measures about 13 miles long and 7 miles across.
- The other Gospels indicate that they traveled to the other side of the Sea by boat.

## **2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.**

- A large crowd took off, on foot, to follow Jesus to the other side of the lake.
- This great miracle, which was intended to produce saving faith in those who witnessed it, is sandwiched by statements that indicate they were more interested in the physical blessings Jesus could provide than the spiritual blessings He came to provide. (Cp. vs. 15)

## **3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.**

- Jesus was not only concerned about the spiritual welfare of people; He was also very concerned about their physical well-being, as well.
- Jesus commanded His disciples to do something that was humanly impossible.
- Why Philip?
  - Philip was from the city of Bethsaida (John 1:44), which was about nine miles away.
  - God will intentionally place us or allow us to be in challenging circumstances that will put our faith to the test and develop our character. Will we trust in God to supply what we need, or will we depend on our own abilities?
  - Philip learned that the Lord would provide every resource he needed to complete the mission God had given him to accomplish.
  - How many of us, when asked to serve the Lord, decline because we look at our own inabilities rather than the Lord capabilities? God wants to stretch us, to grow our faith, and show us what He is capable of doing, if only we will make ourselves available and trust Him for the resources we need to do what He's asked us to do.

## **7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said**

**to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?"**

- Two hundred denarii was about eight month's worth of a man's wages. There was not enough bread available, nor enough money to buy it!
- A young boy approached Andrew and voluntarily offered all he had. He had the privilege of seeing the Lord multiply his gift many times over.

**10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted.**

- Jesus sets the example for us: Whenever we see Him eating, He always gives thanks first!
- Where did the multiplication of the fish and loaves take place? In the hands of Jesus? Yes! In the disciples' baskets? Probably! This miracle made a great impression on the disciples!

**12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." 13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten.**

- Here is the proof that a great miracle had taken place! Each disciple had a full basket of leftovers, further impressing in their minds the Lord's ability to supply their needs.
- Eight lessons for us to learn:
  - 1) Obey the Lord's commands, *especially* when they appear impossible!
  - 2) Recognize your limitations. Genuine faith is realistic faith; don't ignore the facts.
  - 3) Take inventory. Identify the gifts, talents, and resources God has given you.
  - 4) Give everything you have to Jesus. Everything we have comes from the Lord.
  - 5) Act in faith. Genuine faith looks beyond our inabilities to God's capabilities.
  - 6) Give thanks for what God has provided and share it with others.
  - 7) Recognize and accept the resources the Lord provides.
  - 8) Use the resources God has provided to minister to people's needs. (*Ray Baughman, The Life of Christ Visualized*)
- "We can learn from the leftovers. God gives in abundance. He takes whatever we offer him in time, ability, or resources and multiplies its effectiveness beyond our wildest expectations. If we take the first step in making ourselves available to God, he will show us how greatly we can be used to advance the work of his kingdom. Most of us want to see a great work of God, but [will] we take the first step of sacrifice." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)

**14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"**

- The Prophet whom Moses had predicted would come in Deuteronomy 18:15-18.
- They were looking for a Political Prophet who would deliver them from the Romans, and a Profitable Prophet who would give them free food.

**15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.**