

Jesus Provided Bread from Heaven

Bible Passage: Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; John 6:1-14

Main Point: Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish.

Key Passage: John 20:31

Big Picture Question: Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.

Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jesus' disciples had been working hard, teaching people and healing them. Jesus called them to go away with Him to a desolate place so they could rest. By now, Jesus' popularity was so great that finding a place to be alone was difficult. When Jesus and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee, the crowd of people were already waiting for them on the other side.

Jesus saw the crowds. He wasn't frustrated or angry. He didn't tell them to go away. Instead, He had compassion on them because they were lost—like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who seeks and saves the lost. (See Luke 19:10; John 10:14.)

The miracle Jesus performed that evening—feeding 5,000 men plus women and children—is the only miracle during Jesus' earthly ministry that is recorded in all four Gospels. God was clearly at work. The same God who provided manna for the Israelites in the wilderness multiplied loaves and fish to satisfy the crowd.

But Jesus' didn't intend to only meet the people's physical needs. He came to satisfy their spiritual needs as well. In John 6:35, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." He said that no one who comes to Him will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Him will ever be thirsty again.

Jesus is the bread that came down from heaven. (See John 6:41.) God provided His Son as the perfect sacrifice to take away our sin. At the first Lord's Supper, Jesus broke bread—a symbol of His death on the cross. (See Matt. 26:26.)

As you teach kids this Bible story, help them know that God can and will provide for our needs. Kids can trust Him for their "daily bread." (See Matt. 6:11.) God met our greatest need in giving us salvation through Jesus. Will He not graciously give us all things? (Rom. 8:32)

The BIBLE Story

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Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; John 6:1-14 (bolded text can be read as a shorter version of the story)

Jesus' disciples had been hard at work. They had been healing people and teaching them. So many people came and went that the disciples did not even have time to eat! So Jesus said to them, "Come with me. Let's go to a quiet place where we can be alone and get some rest."

Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee, but many people saw them leaving. The people traveled by foot, and they ran ahead of Jesus. **When Jesus and His disciples got to the shore, the people were already there waiting for them. Jesus saw the crowd and He cared about them because they were like sheep who needed a shepherd. So Jesus taught the people many things about God's kingdom, and He healed people who were sick.**

By this time, it was late in the day. Jesus' disciples came to Him and said, "We are out in the middle of nowhere, and it's getting late. Tell the people to go away so they can go to the farms and villages to buy themselves something to eat."

But Jesus said, "They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat."

Jesus' disciples were confused. "We can't feed this many people," they said.

"It would cost a whole year's pay to buy enough bread for them to eat," Philip said.

Jesus asked them, "How many loaves of bread do you have? Go look."

Jesus' disciple Andrew said, "A boy here has five loaves and two fish, but what good will that do for so many people?"

Jesus told the disciples to instruct everyone to sit down. So all the people sat down in big groups on the grass.

Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up to heaven, and then He blessed the bread. He broke it into pieces and gave it to the disciples. He also divided up the fish. The disciples passed out the food to the people, and everyone ate until they were full.

Then Jesus told the disciples to collect any leftover food. **The disciples collected 12 baskets full of pieces of bread and fish. Jesus fed about five thousand men that day, plus women and children.**

Christ Connection: By feeding the five thousand, Jesus provided for the physical needs of the crowd. The next day, Jesus called Himself the bread of life. (John 6:35) Only Jesus is able to satisfy our souls forever by providing forgiveness, friendship with God, and eternal life.