

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

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Reading: John 6:1-14

On His journeys the Lord was often accompanied by great crowds of people. These people had seen Him perform wonderful miracles—healing the sick and making the blind see—and they had listened to His teachings—full of love and wisdom. The people were amazed and impressed, so impressed, we may imagine, that sometimes they just forgot everything else and followed the Lord on His journey, without bringing anything to eat.

That is what happened on the day the Lord fed the five thousand. Nobody had brought anything to eat. Nobody, that is, except a young boy, and all he had was five loaves of bread and two small fish. It was enough for his own supper, but certainly not enough to feed five thousand people, who had all walked a long, long way and were very hungry.

Can you imagine how great a crowd five thousand people are? If you close your eyes and think really hard you can probably imagine what a crowd of ten people looks like, perhaps even twenty, though that may be a bit difficult, but five thousand? That is really impossible!

How long do you think it would take to say hello to five thousand people? Five minutes? Ten minutes? Well, even if you just said hello and shook their hands, it would probably take about four or five hours. Can you imagine saying hello to people for that long? Five thousand people certainly make a big crowd. No wonder the disciples didn't know how to feed them all!

But the Lord knew. He took the bread and fish that the little boy had brought and began handing it out to the disciples, so that they could give it to the people. It probably took quite a while to feed everybody, but no matter how often the disciples came back for more bread and fish, there was always more left. Even when everybody had had all they wanted to eat, there was still a lot of food left. There were twelve baskets full of bread—much more than the little boy had brought in the first place!

This was a great miracle indeed. The Lord actually created more bread and fish as the people were eating. By doing this the Lord showed people, both then and now, that He is the One God of heaven and earth, the Creator Himself, and that we can always trust in Him. The Lord is always with us; He knows all our needs, and He will provide for us both now and to all eternity.

Amen.