

# Jesus Feeds the Multitudes (the 5,000 and the 4,000)

Matthew 14:13-21



New Testament 2  
Part 1: Miracles Show Jesus' Great Power

## SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 2 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-13

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "[God] gives food to the hungry" (Psalm 146:7b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble..." (James 1:27a).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["My Hands"](#)
- ["This Little Child"](#)
- ["When I Grow Up"](#)
- ["Little Feet Be Careful"](#)
- ["A Helper I Will Be"](#)
- ["Five Loaves and Two Fishes"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be scriptural.]
- [Miracles & Teachings of Jesus](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 2 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- Apologetics Press' [Bible Timeline](#)
- "Summary of the Bible" from ["Kids Prep"](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- "Matthew Chapter Summary" from ["Kids Prep"](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- ["Map of New Testament World"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- ["Map of Palestine"](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- AP's short videos, ["Jesus and Miracles"](#) and ["6 Reasons to Believe in Jesus"](#) by Kyle Butt and ["One Proof of God: Jesus"](#) by Eric Lyons
- Jesus Feeds 5,000 flannel graph (in Miracles of Jesus flannel graph)
- Jesus Feeds 5,000 (in Our Friend Jesus bulletin board set)



- **Jesus Heals and Helps** picture set from A Beka (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- **Plastic or paper maché fish and loaves of bread**

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can learn to help others in need just like Jesus did.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

## INTRODUCTION:

Have you ever been really hungry, but it wasn't snack time or meal time? What if you went all day without eating? Do you think you would be hungry? During Bible times, Jesus taught a group of over 5,000 people, and at the end of the day, everyone was hungry. How would you feel if you were one of those people?

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Shortly before the Passover feast in Jerusalem, Jesus found out that His relative, John the Baptizer, had been killed by Herod. Jesus wanted some time alone to pray. He also wanted time for Himself and His disciples to rest. They sailed across the Sea of Galilee [also called the Lake of Genessaret by the Jews, and the Sea of Tiberias by the Romans] to an isolated place near Bethsaida. They had been so busy helping and teaching people that they had not even had time to eat. But thousands of people heard about them getting in the boat. So, they walked and ran to the other side of the lake to find Jesus. When He saw the multitudes, Jesus didn't send them away or tell them He was too tired to do anything for them. Jesus had **compassion** on them. All that day He taught the people and healed the sick that were brought to Him.



**Compassion:** sharing someone's sorrow; wanting to help others who are in trouble or who need help

2. At the end of the day, the disciples thought Jesus should send the people away so they could find food and shelter. The people had not come prepared with food. Apparently, they had lost track of time as they listened to Jesus, because they were so interested in what He had to say and what He might do. Remember that in Bible times, there were no motels, no fast food restaurants, no grocery stores, and no cars to drive into town. Instead of sending the people away, Jesus said, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat."
3. The disciples knew that they did not have enough food to feed the thousands of people there. And they did not have money to buy that much food, even if there had been markets nearby. Jesus asked Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people?" Philip could only say that he knew it would take at least eight months' wages (200 **denarii**) to buy that much food. Jesus did not really expect Philip to buy food for all those people. He was trying to make Philip think about who He was and what He could do. Jesus already knew that He would provide the necessary food.



**NOTE: Denarius:** a silver Roman coin. One denarius was the typical daily wage of a laborer or farm worker. The plural form of the word is "denarii."

4. After all the miracles that the disciples had seen Him perform, and after hearing His lessons on God's care (like Matthew 6), isn't it amazing that they didn't realize that He would take care of the people's needs? It was easy for them to forget that they had nothing to worry about, just like it is easy for us to forget that God will also provide for our needs.
5. Unlike the other disciples who didn't know what to do, Andrew brought a small boy to Jesus. The boy had a lunch of two fish and five small loaves of **barley** bread.



**Barley:** the grain most often used by the poor to make bread

6. Jesus told all the people to sit down on the grassy hillside in groups of 50 and 100. Then He took the little boy's lunch, looked up into heaven, and prayed to God, thanking Him for the food. He broke the five loaves of bread and the two fish into pieces and gave them to the disciples to distribute. Everyone ate until they were full, and there were still twelve baskets full of food leftover! Through this miracle, Jesus fed 5,000 men—not counting all the women and children who were also there. [This is one of the few miracles of Jesus that is recorded in every one of the four Gospels.] Because of this miracle and many others that He did, Jesus' reputation spread. Many people believed He was the Son of God.
7. Jesus was willing to help when He saw anyone in need. What can you and I do to help people who don't have enough food and clothing? How can we help others like Jesus did? [Discuss age appropriate ways that children can help others. Be specific, maybe even asking them to tell on Wednesday or the following Sunday what they did.]
8. OLDER CHILDREN: Discuss the meaning of the memory verse. "Pure religion" (James 1:27) is believing in the God of the Bible and Christianity, and wanting to obey Him in the way the Bible says to. In the Old Law, God commanded the Jews to take care of those who needed help the most (children without parents, women whose husbands had died, and the poor). God expects us to do the same.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** One of the key principles to keep in mind when reconciling the apparent age of the Earth from observation with the age of the Earth as implied in Scripture is the fact that the Universe originally had to be created with an immediate appearance of age (i.e., a "mature creation"). "Each component of creation was brought into existence in its full and functioning state; the rivers were running, the sun was shining, the plants were growing, and so on. In addition, one might note that even the miracles of the New Testament serve to parallel this concept. The miracles of Christ and His apostles had the appearance of age. When Jesus fed the 5,000, He did not grow the wheat from seeds, or wait for fish eggs to hatch. He fed the multitude with bread and fish that had the appearance of having gone through the growing and harvesting process, when in reality, they had not. Many other examples could be given. For the Christian, therefore, there is no real dilemma in the question, 'which came first, the chicken or the egg?' When God commanded the plants, animals, and man to be fruitful and multiply, they were in a physically mature state to carry out that command immediately" [Major, Trevor (1987), "Questions and Answers," *Reason & Revelation*, 7:5-7, February].

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS** (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- “[Jesus Feeds 5,000 Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Help children make badges with the caption, “I Can Help Others Like Jesus Did.” Add his or her snapshot to the badge if possible.
- Have a construction paper basket, two fish cut-outs, and five pieces of bread cut-outs per child. Let the students glue their basket, fish, and bread onto a piece of cardstock or construction paper with the lesson title, scripture reference, or memory verse printed on it.
- Have Goldfish® crackers and hard crusted rolls
- Have the children read the following:
  - *Miracles of Jesus*, by Pamela Broughton, A Little Golden Book
  - *The Story of the Loaves and Fishes*, by Alice Joyce Davidson, An Alice in Bibleland Storybook (DISCLAIMER: on p. 15, change “people” to “men”)
  - *Jesus Feeds the Hungry*, by Crystal Bowman, The Beginner’s Bible

**1st–2nd Graders:**

- “Bible Alphabet Soup”: Divide the class into teams. Give each team identical sets of plastic letters. Ask one-word review questions that the kids must answer by spelling the word with the plastic letters. The team to spell the correct answer the quickest wins that round.
- “Bible Bowling”: Write review questions on small slips of paper and put them inside toilet tissue tubes. Line the tubes up in a straight line and let each child have a turn knocking over one tube at a time with a ball. Give him/her the opportunity to answer the review question inside the tube.
- “[Jesus Feeds the Multitudes Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Jesus Feeds the Multitudes Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - *Five Small Loaves and Two Small Fish* book, by Diane Stortz (Standard Publishing)
  - *Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand*, by Crystal Bowman, Zonderkidz “I Can Read!” Series
  - *Jesus Does Miracles and Heals People*, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing House, pp. 24-29

**3rd-4th Graders:**

- “[Jesus Feeds the Multitudes Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Jesus Feeds the Multitudes Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Tic Tac Toe, Hang Man, or Bible Bowling with review questions from this and previous lessons (see [N.T. 2 Review Questions](#) for example questions).
- “[Fishing and Fishermen in the Bible](#)” activity (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Food in Bible Times](#)” activity (provided in activity sheets)
- “Bible Bowling”: Write review questions on small slips of paper and put them inside toilet tissue tubes. Line the tubes up in a straight line and let each child have a turn knocking over one tube at a time with a ball. Give him/her the opportunity to answer the review question inside the tube.
- Have the children read the following:

- Matthew 14&15; Mark 6&8; Luke 9; John 6
- *Discovery* magazine issues (NOTE: [Advanced Bible Reader](#) quizzes exist for many issues of *Discovery* magazine): [August, 2021](#); “Jesus Raised Lazarus From the Dead” ([February, 2000](#)); [June, 2020](#)
- “The Miracles of Jesus” article (from *Discovery* Magazine, [September, 2016](#)) (NOTE: [Advanced Bible Reader](#) quizzes exist for many issues of *Discovery* magazine)
- “A Feast for 5,000” article (from *Discovery* Magazine, [December, 2002](#))
- *Meal for Many* Arch Book, by Eric Rottmann
- *Jesus Feeds the 5,000*, by Mark Ammerman, Little Bible Books

## FINGERPLAYS:

### “MY HANDS”

(Illustrate with magazine pictures)

My brother’s hands are busy.  
 My father’s hands are strong.  
 My mother’s hands are gentle.  
 They teach me right from wrong.  
 My sister’s hands are playful.  
 My two hands are small.  
 And when our hands are helping hands,  
 They are the nicest of them all.

### “THIS LITTLE CHILD”

This little child has happy feet (point to feet), helping to keep his home nice and neat.  
 This little child has happy hands (hold up hands), helping with work whenever he can.  
 He hangs his shirt, his coat, his cap (follow each with appropriate motion) where they should go.  
 And at night when he stops to pray (fold hands together), He thanks the Lord for his good day.

### “WHEN I GROW UP”

When I grow up big and tall (stand on tiptoe and stretch arms high), a good helper I will be.  
 A helper to Daddy (hold up first finger) who is kind and good.  
 I’ll do for my Mother (hold up second finger) the things I should.  
 A helper to Sister (hold up ring finger) and to Brother, too (hold up pinky finger).  
 God’s helper I will try to be, by loving others as He loves me (hands folded across chest).  
 I want to be a helper to all (wide sweep with arms),  
 when I grow up, big and tall (stretch arms, tiptoe).

## SONGS:

### **“LITTLE FEET BE CAREFUL” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: J.H. Rosecrans

I washed my hands this morning, so very clean and bright,  
and lent them both to Jesus to work for Him ‘till night.

#### CHORUS:

Little feet be careful where you take me to;  
Anything for Jesus only let me do.

I told my ears to listen quite closely all day through,  
For any act of kindness such little hands can do.

(CHORUS)

### **“A HELPER I WILL BE” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

A helper I will be, a helper I will be.  
There’s work to do, there’s work to do,  
In our family.

A helper I will be, a helper I will be.  
There’s help to give, there’s help to give,  
To those who are in need.

### **“FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISHES” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Sharon Broome

(Tune: “Ten Little Indians”)

One little boy shared his lunch.  
One little boy shared his lunch.  
One little boy shared his lunch.  
And Jesus fed five thousand.

Five little loaves and two little fishes,  
Five little loaves and two little fishes,  
Five little loaves and two little fishes,  
Jesus fed five thousand.

Took the food, prayed, and broke it.  
Took the food, prayed, and broke it.  
Took the food, prayed, and broke it.  
Then passed it to the apostles.

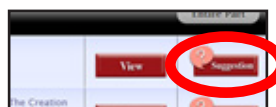
Each one ate until he was full.  
Each one ate until he was full.

Each one ate until he was full.  
And there were still leftovers.

Twelve baskets full were left over.  
Twelve baskets full were left over.  
Twelve baskets full were left over.  
After each had eaten.

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

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# Jesus Feeds the Multitudes (the 5,000 and the 4,000)

Matthew 14:13-21



New Testament 2  
Part 1: Miracles Show Jesus' Great Power

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

New Testament 2 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Matthew 15:32-38; Mark 8:1-9

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "[God] gives food to the hungry" (Psalm 146:7b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble..." (James 1:27a).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

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- Plastic or paper maché fish and loaves of bread

## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can learn to help others in need just like Jesus did.

## INTRODUCTION:

- Briefly review Sunday morning's lesson (see [N.T. 2 Review Questions](#) for example questions)
- [N.T. 2 Bible Facts Flashcards](#) (provided under "N.T. 2 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. According to Matthew, not long after He fed the 5,000+ people, Jesus found Himself in a similar situation. This time there were 4,000+ people who needed food after coming to hear Him. This huge crowd had been with Jesus, not one day, but three, and had eaten all the food they had brought. Jesus told His disciples, "I feel compassion for the multitude...." He saw a need and wanted to help.
2. Even though the disciples had seen Jesus perform miracle after miracle, and even though they had seen Jesus feed an even larger crowd before, they still questioned, "Where will anyone be able to find enough to satisfy these men with bread here in this lonely place?" Surely Jesus was very disappointed in their lack of faith. But the Bible doesn't tell us that He scolded them this time. He only asked how many loaves of bread they had. This time they had seven loaves of bread and a "few" fish.
3. Again, Jesus told the multitudes to sit on the ground, offered a prayer to God, and broke the bread and fish into many pieces, until everyone had eaten all they wanted. This time there were seven baskets full left over.
4. Like before, Jesus saw a need and reached out in compassion to help. His disciples saw the hungry crowd, but did not think that they could make a difference. We have to be willing to look for ways to help, and then be willing to follow through, knowing that God will help us.



## NOTE: COMPARING THE TWO MIRACULOUS FEEDINGS OF MULTITUDES:

### Feeding the 5,000+

- \*Were with Jesus one day
- \*In Galilee, near Bethsaida
- \*5 loaves, 2 fish
- \*12 baskets full left over

### Feeding the 4,000+

- \*Were with Jesus three days
- \*Near the **Decapolis**
- \*7 loaves, a few fish
- \*7 baskets full left over

**Decapolis:** a district of Palestine consisting of 10 cities, which is what the word “decapolis” means. All but one of the cities were east of the Jordan. The district extended from near Damascus to near the north end of the Dead Sea.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

#### Ages 2-5:

- Help children make badges with the caption, “I Can Help Others Like Jesus Did.” Add his or her snapshot to the badge if possible.
- Have a construction paper basket, two fish cut-outs, and five pieces of bread cut-outs per child. Let the students glue their basket, fish, and bread onto a piece of cardstock or construction paper with the lesson title, scripture reference, or memory verse printed on it.
- Have Goldfish® crackers and hard crusted rolls

#### 1st–2nd Graders:

- [“In the Right Order”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- [“What a Picnic Word Search”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

#### 3rd-4th Graders:

- [“Fishing and Fishermen in the Bible”](#) activity (provided in activity sheets)
- [“Food in Bible Times”](#) activity (provided in activity sheets)
- [“In the Right Order”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
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