

Philip, Andrew and Jesus with the 5000

Jesus performed many miracles that caused the incredible crowds to realize that he was not just any man, but indeed was from God. The feeding of the 5000 was so huge. In Luke 9:14 it says that there were 5000 men. This does not count the women and children. The same story is told in all four Gospel accounts. (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15)

When you think about some of Jesus' miracles over the course of his ministry, this does not seem too hard to imagine. He raised people from the dead, made the blind to see and the lame to walk. He walked on water. So, having fish and bread multiply in order to feed people is not too difficult to put our minds around.

Scripture: John 6: 1 - 13 Sometime after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), ² and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. ³ Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. ⁴ The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages^[a] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, ⁹ "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). ¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." ¹³ So they gathered them

and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

Questions?

1. Where was Jesus when the 5000 were gathered to hear him speak?
2. How many loaves of bread were there to start and how many once all had finished eating and had their fill?
3. Why would Jesus perform this particular miracle?

What to do next? Read each scriptural account about Jesus feeding the 5000 and look for similarities in each set of passages.