

Jesus feeds a big crowd (John 6)

Jesus travelled around a lot and, as he travelled, he taught the people who gathered around him. Many people became Jesus's followers and they were called his disciples. Jesus had chosen twelve men from these disciples for a special purpose. Do you know any of their names? There was Andrew and his brother Simon (who was later called Peter), James and his brother John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, another James, Thaddaeus, another Simon and Judas. They left their old jobs and spent a lot of time with Jesus, watching what he did, listening to what he said and, when the right time came, they would teach and heal people too. At this stage, they still had a lot to learn about Jesus themselves.

Jesus and his disciples had been very busy. They had been traveling around and teaching people about God. Lots and lots of people wanted to see Jesus and hear him. They had heard about the amazing things he had done. Some wanted to be healed and some wanted to see others being healed.

Jesus and his disciples spent quite a lot of time around a big lake called the Sea of Galilee and, on this occasion, they sailed across the lake away from the crowds and crowds of people but lots of people followed them. Sometimes Jesus needed a quiet place to teach his closest followers so they climbed up a big hill but Jesus could see that the crowds were following him up the hill. They wanted to be with him all the time. Jesus wasn't cross; he didn't send the people away. He knew they were like sheep without a shepherd; they needed someone to look after them and take care of them. Jesus taught the people about God.

Jesus turned to Philip and asked him where they could buy bread for the people but really he had a plan. The disciples were worried because so much food would cost a lot of money. Philip said to Jesus, "We don't have enough money. It would take eight months wages to feed all these people".

Andrew saw a boy in the crowd with a picnic and said, "Here is a boy with five small loaves of bread and two small fish, but they won't feed many people!"

Jesus asked them to tell the people to sit down on the grass, so the disciples went around organising the crowd to sit down on the grass. There were about 5,000 men and probably many more women and children, too. The disciples went back to Jesus and waited. They must have wondered what was going to happen next.

Jesus took the bread and the fish and said thank you to God for it. Then he began to break up the food. He gave some to each of his disciples to give to the people so they did and the food kept coming.

Amazingly, Jesus did not run out of food. There was enough for everyone. They were not hungry any more and there was still food left over.

Jesus told the disciples to go and collect what was left and they did. The disciples went around the huge crowd and filled twelve baskets with the remaining bits of bread and fish.

Jesus had shown just how amazingly powerful he was. He could provide all the food that a huge crowd of people needed from just five small loaves of bread and two fish. Only God could do that.