

**Title: “Jesus Multiplied the Bread to Open Their Eyes”**

Scripture: John 6:1-15

Facilitator: Louise P. McQueen

**I. Introduction**

The multiplication of the loaves is the fourth sign that appears in the Gospel according to John. It is the only miracle story found in all four Gospels, (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17). “Jesus took the loaves of bread, gave thanks and distributed them”. This ritual reminds us of the daily bread we ask for when we pray “Our Father, which art in heaven...” This story symbolizes the food that is readily available through Jesus. This miracle also looks backward to the feeding of Israel with manna in the desert at the time of the Exodus (Ex. 16) and God using the ravens to feed Elijah in 1 Kings 17.

Today three significant messages are shared in the lesson:

- a) Some Jews, who believe in a God that always provides for His people is reflected in this miracle.
- b) The difference is that Jesus did not let the disciples just watch. He made them participate.
- c) God never abandons those who share from their poverty to nourish others.

Read the other three accounts of this event in Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44 and Luke 9:10-17. Signs and Wonders in Scripture demonstrate the Power of God. They are meant to open the Spiritual Eyes of those who hunger for the Bread of Life! Jesus said, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God’” (Matthew 4:4). *Jesus multiplied the*

*bread and fish to open their eyes to see the God who can feed their souls for eternal Salvation.*

- Do we share what we have with the hungry?
- How are we helping to satisfy the deeper spiritual hunger and thirst that haunts people today?

God used signs and wonders not only to demonstrate His Awesome power, *but to help the unbelievers see beyond the desires of their flesh!*

## **II. The Lesson: Jesus Multiplied the Bread to Open their Eyes.**

### **1. vv. 1-3.**

John tells of a large crowd that followed Jesus because of His healing power of the diseased or those who were sick. They seem to be more attracted by the miracles that Christ performed than anything else. Jesus and His disciples went across the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Tiberias) to the other side. However, when the crowd saw where they were going, they followed. From time to time, we see Jesus going off alone with His disciples to meditate or pray to His Father. The author also mentioned that the Jewish feast, the Passover, was near.

### **2. vv. 4-7.**

Along with many people needing physically healing, they were also hungry, and there was probably no where or place to purchase food. Specifically, The LORD asked Philip in John 5:6, “where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat”? Philip stated that there was not enough money to purchase enough bread for such a large multitude. **Christ was testing Philip to see how he would respond.**

It was not bread or money that Jesus was seeking from Philip, but faith. Jesus will test His servants so that they can learn to trust Him more. Christ already knew how He would deal with the problem. He was in complete control. Christ is not limited by our meager resources. The cattle on a thousand hills belong to Him (Ps. 50:10). Christ does not just barely meet needs. He abundantly supplies all that we need and sometimes what we want.

### 3. vv. 8-11.

When Jesus fed the 5,000, everyone was satisfied; there were twelve baskets full of leftovers. This miracle shows us that people are needy, and the LORD's people are inadequate to meet those needs. Jesus Christ is powerfully sufficient to meet the needs of all people. John showed how Jesus involved Philip and Andrew. Through John's narrative, we found out that the five barley loaves of bread and fish were a boy's lunch. Jesus could have easily prayed and called down bread from heaven without involving anyone else. This reminds us of God sending manna for the Israelites in the desert and "Every man gathered as much as he should eat" (Ex. 16:18).

The men sat on the grass, eating as much bread and fish as they wanted. Here we can say that Jesus fulfilled the role of the loving Shepherd in Psalm 23:1-2. Although Jesus had only a few loaves and a few fish, He gave His Father thanks for what He did have. The miracle resided in His hands. Little is much in the hands of Christ. The disciples did not do the miracle; they simply distributed the miraculous work of Jesus. Jesus deliberately chose a method that involved the disciples.

#### 4. vv. 12-15.

Jesus demonstrated to them the giving character of God, the same character God desires to build within us. “There is one who scatters, yet increases more; there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty” (Proverbs 11:24). Jesus was generous but never wasteful. We should learn from this to be frugal with what God supplies. Even though He can provide far more than we need, we should not waste it.

The people realized that Jesus is the Prophet whom Moses spoke about in Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God shall raise up unto you a prophet like me”. Once Jesus perceived that they were about to take Him by force and attempt to make Him a King, He separated Himself from them and went back to the mountains alone. Hunger was common and a Messiah who could and would supply food was the One most people were ready to follow. God is our Father, and He has chosen us to be the instruments of His blessing, to work in us and through us what He wants us to do. This is the greatest joy and privilege in our lives.

### **III. Conclusion**

We need both natural bread and spiritual bread to sustain us in this life. More importantly, we need to feed on the Bread of Life which is the Word of God. God has provided both for our bodily and spiritual nurture. God provided both. Often time, we focus on earthy needs while neglecting our spiritual needs. If we would only feed on Him, through His word, we will have spiritual food to eat that will sustain us in our daily walk with the Savior. *Jesus Multiplied the Bread to Open Our Spiritual Eyes!*