

The Story of the feeding of the 5,000



Read the Bible story

Today's story takes place by lake Galilee, at a time when Jesus was busily travelling around teaching and healing people. He was ready to have a rest!

³¹ Then Jesus said, "Let's go to a place where we can be alone and get some rest." ³² They left in a boat for a place where they could be alone. ³³ But many people saw them leave and figured out where they were going. So people from every town ran on ahead and got there first.

³⁴ When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw the large crowd that was like sheep without a shepherd. He felt sorry for the people and started teaching them many things.

³⁵ That evening the disciples came to Jesus and said, "This place is like a desert, and it is already late. ³⁶ Let the crowds leave, so they can go to the farms and villages near here and buy something to eat."

³⁷ Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat."

But they asked him, "Don't you know that it would take almost a year's wages to buy all of these people something to eat?"

³⁸ Then Jesus said, "How much bread do you have? Go and see!"

They found out and answered, "We have five small loaves of bread and two fish." ³⁹ Jesus told his disciples to have the people sit down on the green grass. ⁴⁰ They sat down in groups of a hundred and groups of fifty.

⁴¹ Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven and blessed the food. Then he broke the bread and handed it to his disciples to give to the people. He also divided the two fish, so that everyone could have some.

⁴² After everyone had eaten all they wanted, ⁴³ Jesus' disciples picked up twelve large baskets of leftover bread and fish.

⁴⁴ There were five thousand men who ate the food.

Mark chapter 6 verses 31–44 (CEV)

The story says that from just two small fish and five loaves of bread, hardly enough food for two people let alone a huge crowd, Jesus amazingly fed 5,000 men. That doesn't include any women or children who were there as well, so maybe it was actually up to 10,000 or 15,000 people who were fed!

The feeding of the 5,000 was a miracle, an extraordinary event which is a sign of the power of God.

The miracles of Jesus are very important for Christians. They believe that miracles show that Jesus was the Son of God, and that they help to show us what God is like.

Questions to answer

1. Why did Jesus get into the boat?

2. When he arrived, who did he find waiting for him?

3. Fill in the gaps to complete what Jesus and the disciples said to each other in verses 36–38.

“This place is like a _____, and it is already late. Let the crowds _____, so they can go to the _____ and _____ near here and buy something to _____.”

“You give them something to _____.”

“Don’t you know that it would take _____ — _____ _____ to buy all of these people something to eat?”

“How much _____ do you have? Go and see!”

4. How much food did the disciples find that they had?

5. What did Jesus do to the food before he gave it to the disciples to hand out?

6. How much food was left over when all of the people had eaten all that they wanted?

If you have done the Bible Society homeschool lesson on 'Jesus' special friends', can you remember ...

what happened on lake Galilee in that story?

the name of the disciple (Jesus' special friends and followers) who Jesus helped?

Do you know the names of any of Jesus' other disciples?

Some maths practice!

The form of money used in Jesus' time was called the denarius. One denarius was the amount of money someone would be paid for one day's work. In verse 37, the disciples say that it would take almost a full year's pay to feed everyone there.

Can you work out how much that might be in today's money?

Use these facts to help you answer:

Assume that someone works for seven hours each day, and that they are paid £8.00 an hour.

There are five working days in a week

There are 52 weeks in a year.

This story is told in the Bible four times

In the Bible, there are four stories of Jesus' life. They are known as Gospels, and are called by the names of the people who wrote them – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The story of the feeding of the 5,000 is told in all of the four Gospels. Each Gospel writer includes some different details. You can read the other re-tellings of the story in:

Matthew chapter 14 verses 13–21

Luke chapter 9 verses 12–17

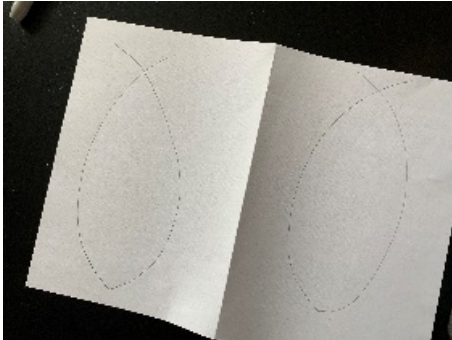
and

John chapter 6 verses 1–14

How many extra details can you spot in these stories, that aren't in Mark's re-telling?

Make your own fish

Supplies: paper, permanent felt tips or crayons, scissors, pencil, kitchen foil



Fold your paper in half and draw two fish. An easy way to make a fish is to draw a big smile, then a big frown. Then cut out your fish.



Lay your paper fish on a piece of kitchen foil and draw around the fish slightly bigger than the paper. Cut the foil on the marked line.



Wrap the foil around your fish. You may need to cut in at the tail. Turn your fish over and decorate your fish with felt tips or crayons

Why not bake a loaf to go with your sparkly fish? A recipe is on the next page.



Baking bread

In the story of the feeding of the 5,000, there were five loaves of bread. Here is a recipe for one loaf.

Make sure that you ask a grown-up to help you with this activity.

Easy Soda Bread

Ingredients:

350g plain white flour

1 ½ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

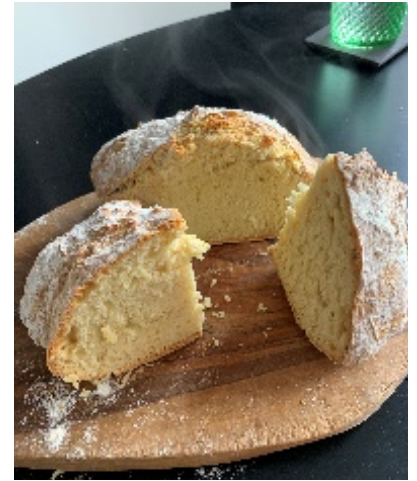
285 ml buttermilk (or regular milk with 1 tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar added)

Method:

1. Preheat an oven to 180c/160c fan/gas mark 4
2. Dust a baking tray with flour
3. Mix all of the dry ingredients together thoroughly. Tip in the milk and stir.
4. Keep stirring until all the ingredients come together as a dough, then shape into a ball. If it is too sticky, add more flour until you can make a ball.



5. Place the ball of dough on a baking tray and cut a deep "X" in the centre. (This helps the bread cook properly)
6. If you wish, you can dust the loaf with flour, then place in the oven for 30 minutes.
7. Enjoy!



Can you present your foil fish and loaf of bread dinner time to your family at dinner time and tell them the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000?

Word search

t	d	d	r	v	m	i	o	p	l	w	e
f	i	v	e	t	h	o	u	s	a	n	d
v	s	y	s	p	l	h	v	y	k	f	s
j	c	r	t	a	a	c	b	r	e	d	d
t	i	a	m	n	j	u	o	a	g	p	l
m	p	y	e	f	c	t	a	u	a	b	t
b	l	e	s	s	e	d	t	c	l	v	w
a	e	y	z	x	a	h	j	i	i	b	o
r	s	y	e	f	t	i	m	n	l	p	f
g	g	h	z	q	w	r	v	b	e	v	i
v	b	x	c	v	b	a	s	k	e	t	s
f	i	v	e	l	o	a	v	e	s	w	h

lake Galilee

boat

rest

disciples

eat

five loaves

two fish

baskets

blessed

five thousand

Colouring page



Some questions to think about or discuss as a family

Have you ever been on a day out and got really hungry and needed something to eat? How did it make you feel to be full again?

When was the last time when, like Jesus at the beginning of this story, you were tired or sad? What did you do to help make yourself feel better? How would you have felt if a crowd of people had turned up at that time?

Why do you think that the people followed Jesus even when he tried to get away to get some rest?

Why do you think he wanted to feed them, even though he was tired?

When John re-told the story of the feeding of the 5000 in his Gospel, he says that the five loaves and two fish were given to the disciples by a small boy who had them and would share them with others. A small thing made a big difference. Can you remember a time when someone did something small for you that made a big difference?