

# Week 41: Jesus Feeds the 5,000 - Provision and Compassion

A Sabbath Family Bible Study

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## Introduction

The feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle of Jesus that is recorded in all four Gospels. In this account, we see both the compassion of the Shepherd and the authority of the King. A vast crowd has followed Him and assembled in a remote place. They are hungry, tired, and completely dependent. The disciples see a logistical problem, but Jesus sees sheep without a shepherd.

This miracle shows us that Christ is not only powerful; He is attentive. He cares for physical needs, yet He also teaches that man does not live by bread alone. He provides abundantly, but He also tests faith before He provides. This week reminds households that the Lord who commands obedience is also the Lord who sustains, multiplies, and supplies - in His timing, in His way, and for His purposes.

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## Scripture Reading (KJV)

(John 6:5–9, John 6:10–13, John 6:26–27, Psalm 145:15–16)

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### John 6:5–9 - The Human Limitation

*5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*

*6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.*

*7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.*

*8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,*

*9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?*

## Commentary

Jesus was not confused, and He was not asking for information. He was testing faith.

Philip immediately calculates cost and concludes there is not enough, and Andrew identifies what little they have but doubts it will be useful for the task at hand. Both responses are reasonable by human standards, and both are limited by human vision.

We must learn that God often asks questions not to discover answers, but to reveal our hearts and our faith. When faced with need, do we default to anxiety and despair? Or do we trust that Christ already knows what He will do? The boy's small offering becomes the instrument of abundance because God frequently works through what appears inadequate to reveal His sufficiency.

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## John 6:10–13 -The Miracle of Multiplication

*10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.*

*11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.*

*12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*

*13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.*

## Commentary

Notice the order:

The people sit down (there is the structure), Jesus gives thanks (there is gratitude before provision), the disciples distribute (there is delegated service), all are filled (there is the sufficiency), nothing is wasted (there is the stewardship) The miracle reflects Kingdom order.

Christ does not provide barely enough, He provides until they are filled. Twelve baskets remain afterward (one for each disciple). The very men who doubted his sufficiency now carry the overflow. This once again reminds us that obedience always precedes multiplication. While gratitude precedes abundance and stewardship follows blessings.

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## John 6:26–27 - The Greater Lesson

*26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

*27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

### Commentary

The crowd missed the deeper meaning. They wanted more bread, not the Bread of Life. Jesus exposes their shallow motives. Many follow God for provision, but not His transformation. They seek comfort, not repentance, and they want benefits without submission.

Our families must teach children that God's greatest gift is not food, health, or success, it is eternal life through Christ. Physical provision is temporary, but spiritual nourishment is eternal. Christ satisfies hunger of the body, but He came to satisfy hunger of the soul.

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## Discussion Questions for All Ages

### Young Children

- What did the boy bring to Jesus?
- Did Jesus make enough food for everyone?
- Why should we thank God before we eat?

### Older Children & Teens

- Why did Jesus test Philip?
- What small things can God use in your life?
- Why did Jesus warn people not to seek Him only for bread?

### Adults

- When facing need, do you respond with faith or doubt?

- Are you teaching your household gratitude before provision?
  - Is your family seeking Christ for comfort or for transformation?
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## Psalm Reading - Psalm 145:2–17 (KJV)

- 2** Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.
- 3** Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.
- 4** One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.
- 5** I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.
- 6** And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.
- 7** They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.
- 8** The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.
- 9** The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.
- 10** All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.
- 11** They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;
- 12** To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.
- 13** Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.
- 14** The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.
- 15** The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.
- 16** Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.
- 17** The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

### Commentary

God provides “in due season.” Provision is tied to timing. Waiting cultivates our dependence on Him. Our satisfaction flows from His open hand, not from human effort. The feeding of the five thousand reflects this psalm, eyes lifted upward, hands opened in blessing, and needs satisfied by divine generosity.

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## Hymn: “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

By Robert Robinson (1758)

1.

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
Sung by flaming tongues above;  
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,  
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

2.

Here I raise mine Ebenezer;  
Hither by Thy help I'm come;  
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,  
Safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
Wandering from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger,  
Interposed His precious blood.

3.

O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.

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## **Family Application Points**

1. **Trust God with the Little**  
Offer what you have (however small) and trust Christ to multiply it.
  2. **Practice Gratitude Before Provision**  
Teach children to give thanks before the blessing appears abundant.
  3. **Maintain Order in Blessing**  
Provision in Scripture flows through structure and obedience, not chaos.
  4. **Seek the Bread of Life**  
Guard your home from pursuing God only for material benefit. Seek eternal nourishment.
  5. **Steward the Overflow**  
When God provides, gather the fragments. Waste reveals ingratitude; stewardship reflects maturity.
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## **A Sabbath Feast Prayer**

Father, we thank You that You are the God who provides. As we sit at this table, bless this food before us and bless the loving hands that prepared it. Teach our family to trust You with little and to remain grateful in abundance. Guard us from seeking Your gifts more than Your presence. Multiply faith within our home as You multiplied bread in the wilderness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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## **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, Bread of Life, we confess that we often measure by what we see. Teach us to trust Your sufficiency. Remove anxiety, pride, and calculation from our hearts. Help our household depend on You daily, give thanks faithfully, and steward wisely what You provide. Nourish our souls with truth and anchor us in eternal things. May our home rest confidently in Your compassionate and sovereign care. In Your holy name we pray, Amen.