

August 2 – Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost Readings: Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 136:1-9 (23-26); Romans 9:1-5 (6-13); Matthew 14:13-21

Resources in this PDF

Note: The Gospel lesson was Lesson 13 back in Unit 2 (end of February), so that's where some of these ideas came from.

Lesson 13 Opening

Lesson 13 Activity Page – What's for Lunch? Children could use magazines to find and cut out pictures for each area. More than a few activity pages related to Jesus Feeds the 5000 – if you want more, just Google it, there are millions

Key Verses:

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever. Psalm 136:1

Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Isaiah 55:1

God...richly provides us with everything. 1 Timothy 6:17

Ideas based on the Old Testament and Psalm Readings

Read Psalm 136 responsively with your child(ren). If they are not readers themselves, have them say "His love endures forever" after you say the first part of each verse.

The beginning of the Isaiah reading reminds us of other Bible verses about coming to God or Jesus when we are thirsty or weary. [This is a lesson](#) that includes part of our Isaiah reading as well as the Beatitude, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst."

[Isaiah 55:1-7 Ministry-to-Children Lesson](#) – Come and Get it...for Free! Isaiah reminds us to focus on what satisfies

Gospel Lesson Resources

[Kristen from Ministry-to-Children](#) – includes a Children's Sermon and links to [crafts](#) and other teaching resources

[Ministry-to-Children's Bible Lesson on Matthew 14:13-21](#)

[Another Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand Paper Plate Craft](#) with templates for the fish and bread

Scripture Snapshot

A crowd of at least five thousand men, plus women and children, had gathered to hear Jesus preach. When challenged to find a way to feed the crowd, the disciples question how this is possible. But Andrew brings one boy's lunch – five barley loaves and two fish. Miraculously multiplying this meager meal, Jesus feeds them all, with abundant leftovers.

Discussion Ideas

The feeding of the five thousand shows how God meets all our earthly needs. Talk about the "bread and fish blessings" God has multiplied in your family.

What did Jesus do before He handed out the bread and fish? How might this action affect your behavior before you begin a meal?

In the Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." When we pray this, we are asking God for food. But it is more than just food. It is all the good gifts, or blessings, God gives us. What are some of those gifts? What is the most important gift God gives us? Jesus!

How long does it take someone to make supper for you? Have you ever been to a big party or had a big party at your house? Imagine feeding all those people; now imagine five thousand men plus women and children to feed. How long would it take you to make them supper? Having enough food is a big deal, isn't it?

God provides for our daily needs, but more than that He provides us with faith and forgiveness and gives us eternal life in Jesus—not just daily life.

Jesus performed this miracle not to prove how fast He could make food or even just to feed the hungry crowd that might have become unruly if they were not fed. He did it to strengthen the faith of the disciples. His daily feeding of us will also strengthen our faith and sustain us in times of trouble.

God feeds the hungry whether they are Jew or Gentile. He didn't distinguish between the two types of people on the hillside. He does the same in our world. He provides the things that sustain daily life in our world (crops, farmers, industry, government, good roads, stores) to all people, believers or not.

This true account from the Bible was a miracle. Only God could feed all those people with five loaves and two fish. Just as the disciples could not have fed those people on their own, we cannot earn heaven on our own.

How would you have reacted to Jesus if you had been one of Jesus' disciples?

What if you had been the boy with the fish?

What if you were one of the people in the crowd listening to Jesus, and then He fed you with fish and bread?

Can you think of a time in the Old Testament when God provided food for His people? (He provided manna for the Israelites in the wilderness; manna is also a kind of bread.)

How does Jesus "feed" His people today?

Songs

[What a Mighty God We Serve](#) (with actions)

[Jesus is My Treasure](#) (with actions)

[This Little Light of Mine](#) – with actions

[Power in Your Word](#) – with actions

[Let's Go, Go, Go!](#)

[Jesus Loves Me](#) – with lyrics and actions

[God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It](#) with lyrics

Even in difficult times, God's Word and His promises give us a peace that's much better than any kind of peace we can get on our own. Sometimes we call that the **peace that passes all understanding**. [I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy](#)

Prayers

Dear Lord, thank You for dying and rising to cleanse me from my sins. Because of the blessings You richly provide, I have all I need now and forever. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Dear Jesus, You are so powerful, and You take care of us all the time in so many ways. Thank You for Your love and care. Thank You for being our Savior. Amen.

LESSON 13 OPENING

THE FISH-AND-BREAD SIGN—JESUS FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND

Before the students arrive, set the bread, cutting boards, and knives on the table. Put the paper and marker within reach.

Welcome the students as they arrive.

It's so good to see you today. I hope you had a good breakfast and a good night's rest, because today I need three sharp volunteers to help us determine if something is possible or impossible. *Raise your hand if you would like to help.*

Ask three volunteers to come forward. One of them stands behind the table. The other two stand on either end of the table near the bread, cutting boards, and knives.

Before we begin the contest, let's count off one by one and find out how many students and teachers are here today. *Help the students count off one by one. Then, write the number on the large piece of paper for everyone to see. Ask the volunteer behind the table to hold the paper.*

To the contestants, say, When I say the word "go," take the pieces of bread out of the bag and cut them into enough pieces so that each person we counted gets one. Point to the number on the paper and say, You will need that many pieces.

I will time you by counting off thirty seconds. When I say the word "stop," put down your knife. Do you have any questions? *Answer any questions.*

Boys and girls, quietly tell your neighbor if you believe it is possible or impossible for our chef friends to cut enough pieces so we can all eat a bit of bread.

Do the experiment; then, check the results. No doubt, it was impossible for your contestants to cut enough pieces. Before continuing, thank your volunteers for trying.

It's a good thing we weren't starving, because it just wasn't possible for our volunteers to cut the bread into enough pieces so we could each have even one little smidgen. They tried, but for them, it was impossible. They didn't have the power to make one piece of bread feed so many people.

In today's Bible story, the unbelieving disciples have an experience with bread. What seems impossible to them becomes possible because of Jesus. As you listen to today's Bible story, find out how the impossible became possible with Jesus. Learn how that is true for you too.

Pray: Dear heavenly Father, as I listen to the Bible words and hear what Jesus did so long ago, help me believe that You also promise to care for all my needs. Amen.

LESSON TEXT

John 6:1–15

BIBLE TRUTH

Our God Jesus provides for us.

FAITH FOCUS

The Fourth Petition

LAW & GOSPEL

Our faith is weak, and we fail to trust in God to give us what we need.

For the sake of Jesus, God promises to provide for all our earthly and spiritual needs.

BIBLE VERSE

God . . . richly provides us with everything. 1 Timothy 6:17

VISUAL HELPS

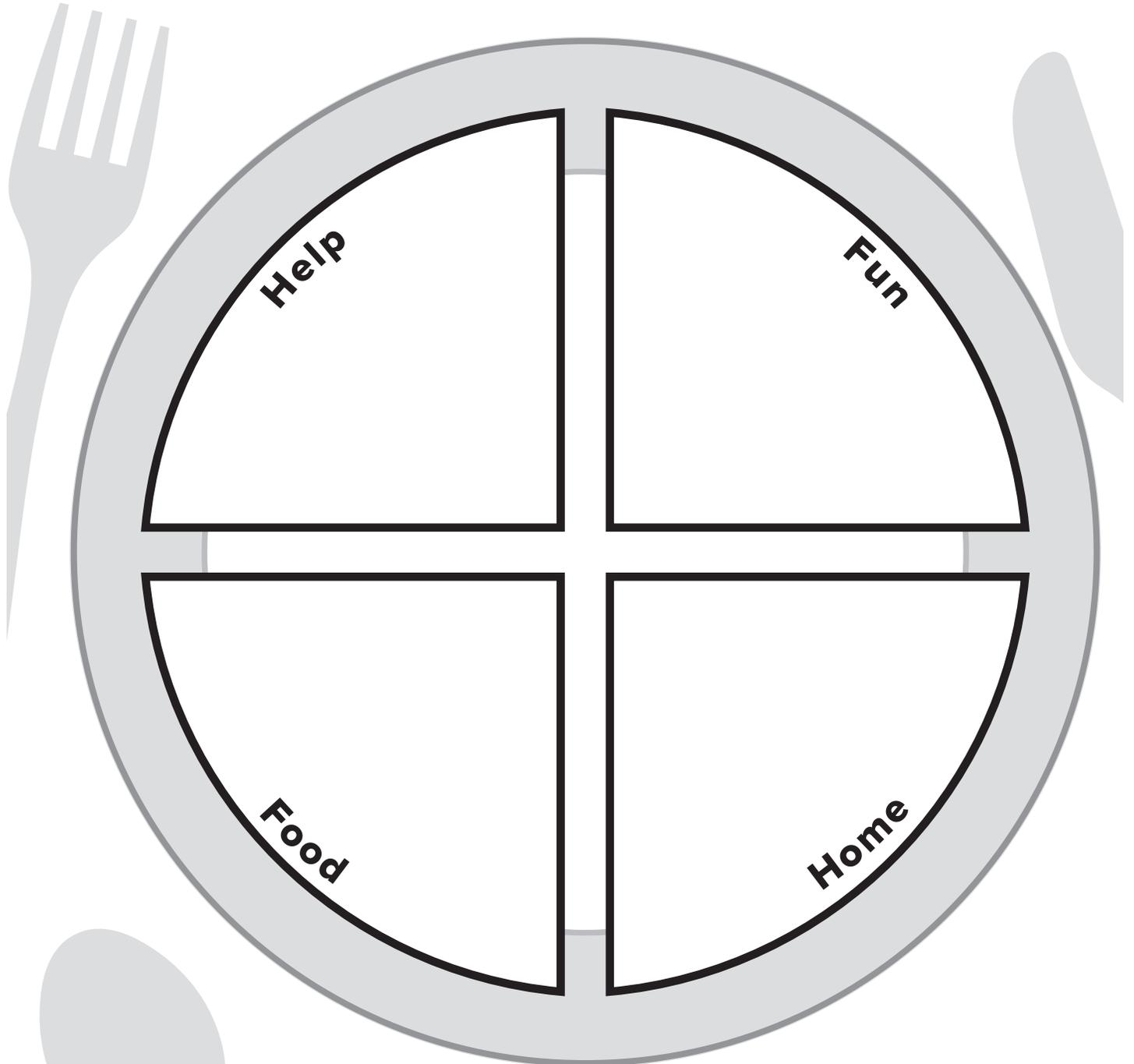
A large piece of craft paper; a marker; two pieces of bread, each in a plastic zipper bag; two cutting boards; two plastic knives; and a table. Note: Adjust the size of the bread if you have a small number of children.

THE FISH-AND-BREAD SIGN—JESUS FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND

Unit 2, Lesson 13

What's for Lunch?

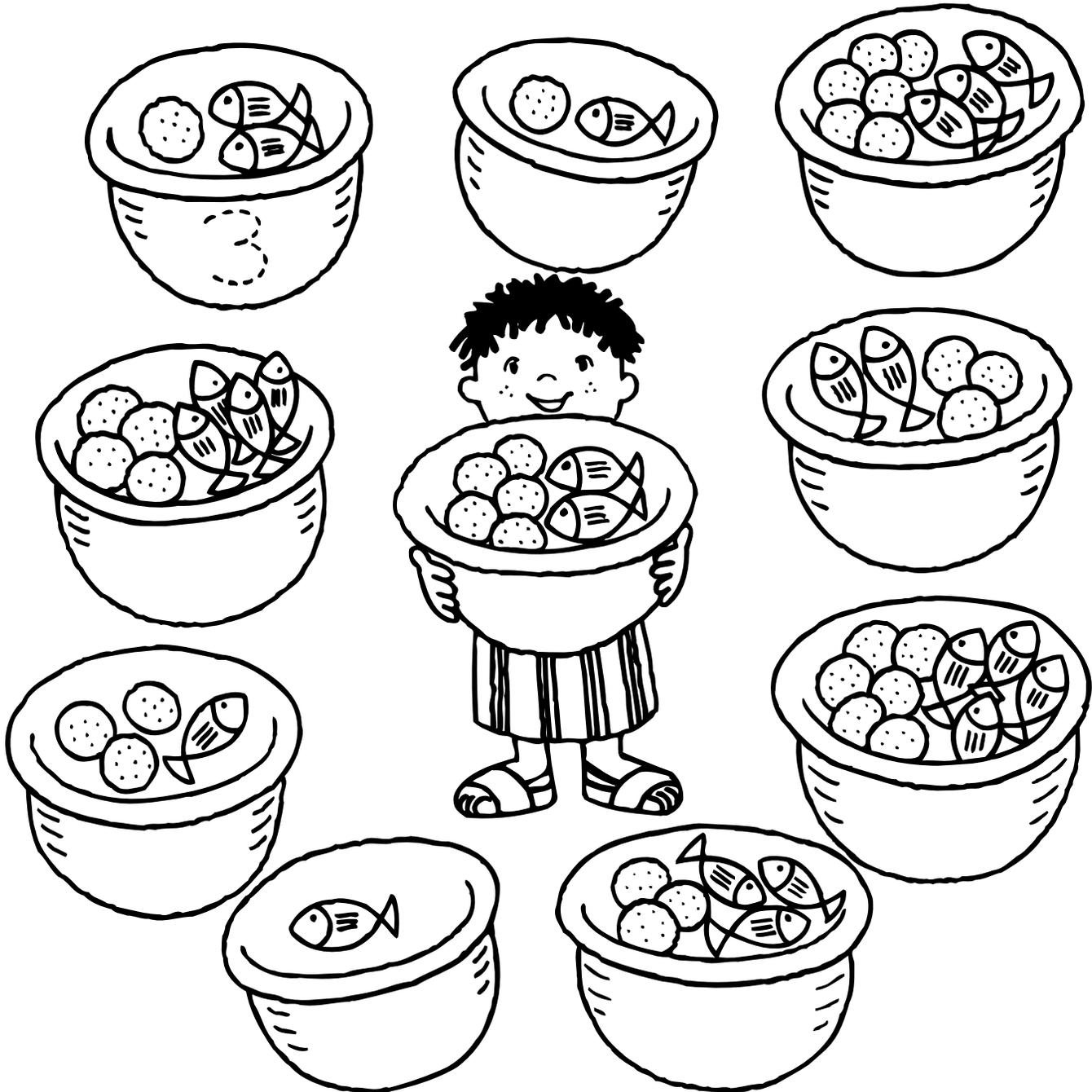
Directions: Draw a picture on this dinner plate to show how God provides for you in these areas. Write or copy a prayer below to thank God for these gifts.



My prayer:



Count the number of  and  in each basket.
Write the total number on the basket.



One day Jesus fed many people with bread and fish from a little boy's lunch. We can thank God for His love and for the good things He gives us. Our Bible says, "God gives us what we need." (See Philippians 4:19.)



Draw 5  by tracing around the bottom of a container or cup.
Decorate the  to look like .
Write a number from 1 to 5 on each .
Cut out the  and put them in order by number.

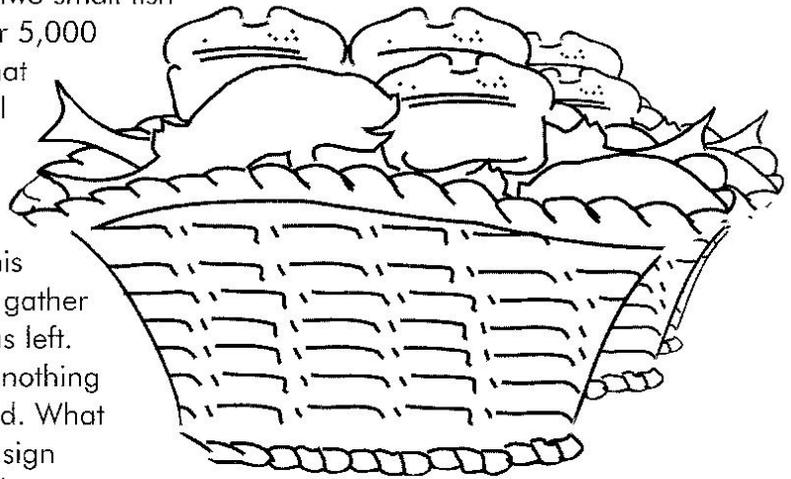
JESUS FEEDS 5,000

Matthew 14:13-21

A	86 - 63 = _____
B	78 - 48 = _____
C	66 - 14 = _____
D	38 - 24 = _____
E	99 - 52 = _____
F	82 - 39 = _____
G	74 - 25 = _____
H	67 - 28 = _____
I	96 - 12 = _____
K	47 - 19 = _____
L	73 - 29 = _____
M	84 - 11 = _____
N	95 - 27 = _____
O	82 - 67 = _____
P	69 - 34 = _____
R	92 - 17 = _____
S	54 - 14 = _____
T	88 - 78 = _____
V	64 - 26 = _____
W	51 - 32 = _____
Y	99 - 10 = _____

.....
 Subtract the numbers in the box to get the code number for each letter. Then solve the puzzle.

Jesus used five small barley loaves and two small fish to feed over 5,000 people. What a wonderful miracle this was! Afterward, Jesus told his disciples to gather up what was left. He wanted nothing to be wasted. What miraculous sign happened then?



____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _
 40 15 10 39 47 89 49 23 10 39 47 75 47 14 10 39 47 73 23 68 14

____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _
 43 84 44 44 47 14 10 19 47 44 38 47 30 23 40 28 47 10 40 19 84 10 39

____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _
 10 39 47 35 84 47 52 47 40 15 43 10 39 47 43 84 38 47 30 23 75 44 47 89

____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _
 44 15 23 38 47 40 44 47 43 10 15 38 47 75 30 89 10 39 15 40 47 19 39 15

____ _ ____ _
 39 23 14 47 23 10 47 68

.....
 Subtract the numbers in the box to get the code number for each letter. Then solve the puzzle.

THE BIBLE TIMES HERALD

A SPECIAL REPORT ON MATTHEW 14:13-21

JESUS FEEDS 5,000



Jesus got on a boat by himself and went to a quiet place. The crowds followed him on foot. When Jesus landed and saw what a large crowd there was, he had

compassion on them. He began to heal their sick.

Evening was coming so the disciples came to Jesus and said, "This is a far off place and it is getting late. Tell the crowds to go back to their villages to buy food for themselves."

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

"The disciples said, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish."

"Bring them here to me," Jesus said. Jesus told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves of bread and two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks. Then Jesus broke the loaves. The disciples gave the bread and fish to the people. Everyone had enough to eat and there were 12 basketfuls of food leftover! The number of those who ate was about 5,000 men, besides women and children!

To find out more, read Matthew 14:13-21 in your Bible.

QUESTIONS

1. How many loaves of bread and how many fish did the disciples have?
2. What did Jesus do with the loaves of bread and the fish?
3. How much food was leftover?
4. Why do you think people followed Jesus from town to town?

MEMORY VERSE

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19

BREAK THE CODE

4 3 7 14 7 1 3 5

10 11 3 12 3 15 12 13 3

2 16 3 6 5 6 9 5

1 8 7 11

1=F	2=B	3=E	4=J
5=D	6=A	7=S	8=I
9=N	10=T	11=H	12=P
13=L	14=U	15=O	16=R

Jesus Feeds 5,000 Coloring Sheet



“And they said to Him, ‘We have here only five loaves and two fish.’ He said, ‘Bring them here to Me.’ Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass.

And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children” (Matthew 14:17-21).

Fishing and Fishermen in the Bible

Instructions: Read the following article and complete the “fill in the blank” and “true or false” activity on the next page.

In New Testament times, most Jewish people ate fish every day because it was easy to get and inexpensive. It was sold fresh but was often smoked or pickled.

There were several ways used to catch fish. Fishing rods were not used, but sometimes fishermen put out lines with baited hooks (Matthew 17:24-27). Sometimes they used spears (harpoons). Fishermen went out in a boat at night with a lantern held over the side of the boat. The light would attract fish so that they could be speared as they came close to the boat. John 21:3-11 tells us that some of the apostles fished all night and caught nothing. When they threw their net out on the other side, as Jesus told them to do, they immediately caught so many fish that they could not lift their net!

The most common way to catch fish was with nets. There were two kinds of nets. One was a dragnet about 8 or 9 feet wide and a hundred feet long (or longer). The dragnet had corks or floats on the top of the net and weights on the bottom. One boat would make a huge circle with the net, or two boats would hold the net between them. When the net was in a tight circle, the fishermen pulled the sides of the net together (like a huge bag) and pulled it to the shore.

The second kind of net was the casting net which was used mainly in shallow water. One or two men could throw this net from the shore or from a boat (Matthew 4:18). The casting net was round (about 15 feet in diameter) and had weights around the edge. When the net was thrown out into the water, the weights made it fall to the bottom of the lake, trapping fish beneath it. With a long rope connected to the center, the net could be pulled shut.

When nets were brought to shore to be emptied of their catch, fish that were good to eat were separated from the fish that weren't good to eat (bad fish) (Matthew 13:47-48). When fishing was over for the day (or for the night), the nets were spread out on the shore to dry. If their nets were torn, fishermen had to spend time repairing them before they were used again. James and John were repairing their nets when Jesus asked them to follow Him (Matthew 4: 21).

Being a fisherman was very hard work. Four of Jesus' apostles were fishermen: Peter, Andrew, James, and John. They were from Bethsaida, which was one of the fishing towns around the Sea of Galilee.

Fill in the Blank

Instructions: Fill in the blanks with words from the Word Bank. One word will be used twice.

WORD BANK: Spread, James, Peter, Lantern, Dragnet, Dry, Andrew, Cast net, John, Nets

- 1) The most common way to fish was with _____.
- 2) The _____ was about 8 or 9 feet wide and at least a hundred feet long.
- 3) The _____ was round and had a long rope attached to the middle.
- 4) The _____ was thrown out over the water by one or two men.
- 5) When fishing with a spear, fishermen would hold a _____ over the side (or front) of the boat to attract fish.
- 6) When Jesus called _____ and _____ to be His followers, they were using cast nets in the Sea of Galilee. (Mark 1:16)
- 7) When Jesus called _____ and _____ to be His followers, they were mending their nets. (Mark 1:19)
- 8) At the end of the day, nets were _____ out on the shore to _____.

True or False

Instructions: Write "T" beside each true statement and "F" beside each false statement.

- 1) _____ Fishing rods were often used by fishermen in New Testament times.
- 2) _____ Many Jews ate fish every day.
- 3) _____ All 12 of the apostles were fishermen.
- 4) _____ To attract fish to their boats at night, fishermen would hold shiny metal objects over the side.

Instructions: Read the following article and complete the “Food in the Bible” fill in the blank activity on the next page.

Bread

Bread was the most important food in Bible times, and a lot of time was spent preparing it. Women would start early each morning, grinding wheat or barley on a millstone to make flour. The flour was then mixed with water to make dough. Sometimes, the dough was rolled out very flat and thin (like tortillas); after it was cooked, it was used to scoop up food. At other times, the dough was made into rolls or round loaves, like those in the little boy’s lunch which Jesus used to feed 5,000 men plus women and children. While Jeremiah was in prison, he was given a loaf of bread every day (Jeremiah 37:21).

Very thin bread was cooked on hot, flat stones or laid across the bottom of a large metal pan over an open fire. Other breads were cooked in outdoor ovens that were shared by several families. The dough was baked slowly overnight and taken out before the coals were stirred (Hosea 7:4-6) so the hot, fresh bread wouldn’t be covered with ashes.

Wheat made the best flour, which made the best bread. Bread made from barley was not as tasty, so it was cheaper. Barley bread was the bread of poor people in Bible times, but it was also common during famines and other times when food was scarce.

[The King James Version often uses the word “corn” for the grains used to make bread. “Corn” was an Old English word for any common grain or cereal, including wheat and oats. Today, when we say “corn,” we mean maize or Indian corn, like corn on the cob.]

Jesus: the Bread of Life

After Jesus fed more than 5,000 people (Matthew 14:21), He left the crowds to find a quiet place where He could rest and pray. But the people followed Him. They wanted Jesus to perform another miracle and feed them again. But Jesus told them, “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him” (John 6:27). He said the “work” was to believe in Him—the One God sent from Heaven (6:29). “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.’ Then they said to Him, ‘Lord, give us this bread always.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst’” (John 6:32-35).

Jesus did not want the crowds to follow Him just to fill their bellies. He wanted them to listen to His words and believe that He was the Son of God. He was willing to help them, but He knew that ordinary bread wasn’t what they needed. Jesus wanted the people to understand that believing in Him was more important than just having something to eat or seeing another miracle.

Believing in Jesus, and then obeying His words, would give them life now and life after death. The same is true for us today. Remember what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount? “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness [being right with God], for they shall be filled [satisfied]” (Matthew 5:6). Jesus is the Bread of Life for us, too, and we will also be satisfied and pleasing to God if we believe in Jesus and obey His words.

Food in the Bible

Fill in the Blank

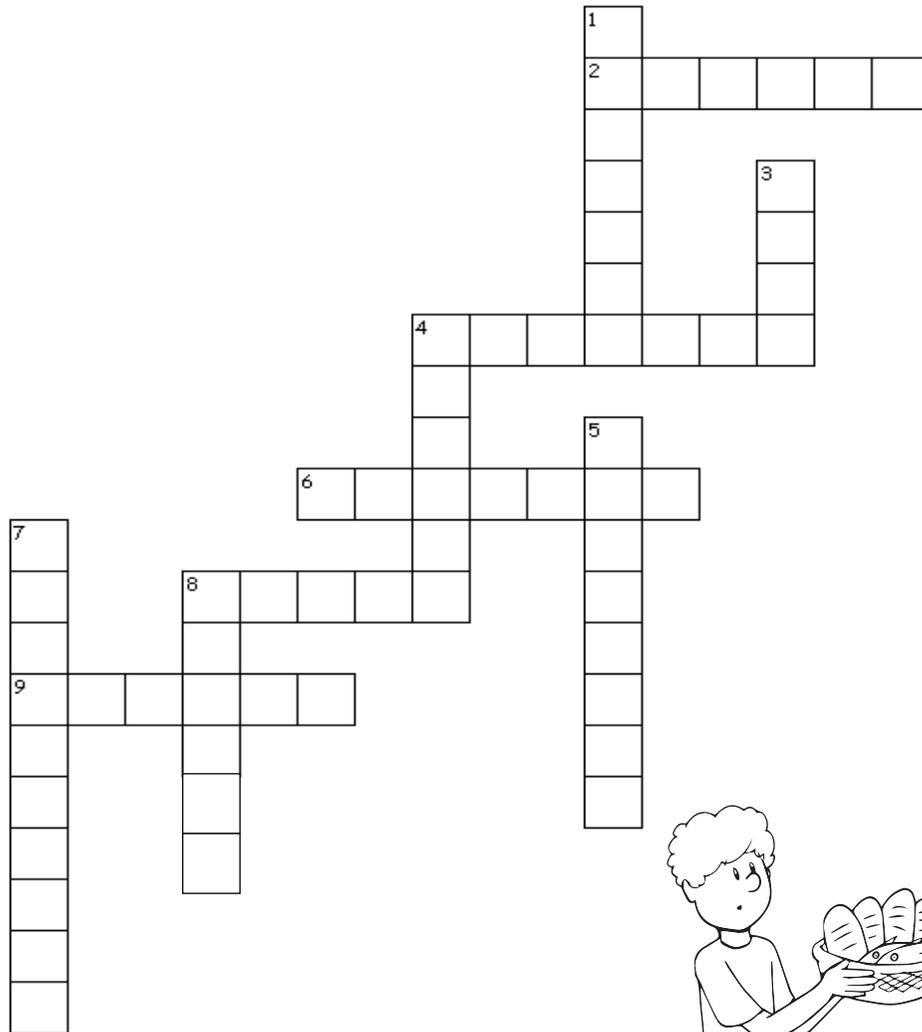
Instructions: Fill in the blanks from the paragraphs about bread and the Bread of Life.

1. Very thin, flat bread was cooked on _____.
2. _____ or _____ were ground to make flour.
3. _____ was ground for the best flour and the best bread.
4. _____ started early in the morning grinding grain for bread.
5. Grain was ground on a _____ to make flour.
6. _____ was the grain used to make a cheaper and less tasty kind of bread.
7. _____ bread was used to scoop up food.
8. Sometimes several families in a village shared _____.
9. In John 6:35, Jesus called Himself the _____.
10. Jesus did not want people to follow Him just to see miracles or be fed. He wanted them to _____ to His words, _____ He was the Son of God, and _____ Him.



Jesus Feeds the Multitudes

Crossword Puzzle



Across

2. Brought boy to Jesus. (John 6:8-9)
4. Jesus ___ and broke the food. (Luke 9:16)
6. The miracle happened near the Sea of _____. (John 6:1).
8. Jesus told people to sit down in groups of _____. (Luke 9:14)
9. To whom did Jesus say, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" (John 6:5)

Down

1. There were 12 _____ full of leftovers. (John 6:13)
3. The disciples wanted to send people away to buy _____. (Luke 9:12)
4. A boy had 5 _____ loaves. (John 6:8-9)
5. Many people _____ in Jesus because of His miracles. (John 6:14)
7. Jesus had _____ on the people. (Matthew 14:14)
8. Everyone ate until they were _____. (Luke 9:17)

Jesus Feeds the Multitudes

Word Search

Instructions: As you search for and circle the words from the word bank, think about what those words have to do with the lesson.

R
 J C F
 S G O G R
 J V H M K F B
 U D P C P N S T M
 G E D E N A R I U S O
 N O J E S U S N L K B M W
 V S Q Z T H L S T E K S A B P
 Q P R P F S B M I M O V F D R C Z
 C S C B D B O A T O M L E L Y E L I I
 V W X O V L Y U U J N F J E S E A E E L R
 T N O K T K F H D J T V A L L M H D R F Y W Q
 N I A J B G K I E M L G N J L M E D E P I R U V K
 Y R S P H F K E S K L D A J J O W S U F H V P E E I Q
 P D Y O L G Q H O H G J I H G R D L X X V M E U D A Z H D

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| Barley | Jesus |
| Baskets | Lunch |
| Boat | Multitudes |
| Boy | Feeds |
| Bread | Fish |
| Compassion | Five |
| Denarius | |



In the Right Order

Instructions: Read the sentences. Then put them in the order that they happened by writing a number in the blank beside each sentence. (If it is okay with your teacher, you can cut the sentences into strips and then put the strips in order.)

Did you know that this is the only miracle of Jesus
that is recorded in all four of the Gospels?

That's right!

Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14

- _____ Jesus said, "You give them something to eat."
- _____ Andrew, Peter's brother, brought a young boy and his lunch to Jesus.
- _____ Many people believed in Jesus because of this miracle.
- _____ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down in groups of fifty."
- _____ The disciples wanted to send the crowds away to buy the food.
- _____ Jesus blessed the loaves and fish before He broke them into pieces.
- _____ Everyone ate until they were full.
- _____ Jesus had compassion on the crowds.
- _____ Jesus told His disciples to gather up all the leftover pieces of food.



What a Picnic Word Search

Instructions: As you search for and circle the words from the word bank, think about what those words have to do with the lesson.

O	R	M	D	V	R	Y	X	F	Q	W	O	Q
N	B	Y	A	Z	I	Y	C	X	D	C	B	M
X	U	H	E	N	Q	E	F	H	N	A	X	R
J	M	E	R	S	D	V	E	R	S	P	T	P
M	T	N	B	O	Y	R	P	K	F	I	V	E
P	G	X	O	M	R	F	E	W	M	V	F	H
F	G	F	L	K	B	T	T	W	T	U	P	K
B	J	E	S	U	S	N	E	Y	S	P	X	X
Q	Z	M	R	H	N	S	R	L	E	Z	Y	Y
M	M	O	F	V	G	C	Z	E	C	Q	O	Z
I	Z	V	V	Z	C	X	H	U	S	F	S	L
Q	A	E	O	X	A	Y	B	R	S	K	V	J

Andrew	Five
Baskets	Food
Boy	Jesus
Bread	Lunch
Fish	Peter



What a Picnic Word Search

Instructions: As you search for and circle the words from the word bank, think about what those words have to do with the lesson.

C U P K D C S P T J Q F P B K
 X S V H Z A O W R V O E B N U
 M P R P I R E U Y C R I H Z E
 C A O E J L X R F D N E X D M
 N F U T V X I N B I C Y S R Z
 S C Q E C O M P A S S I O N A
 F D I R V E T Y S C E H H R L
 J S M Y Y D S F K I V B V F K
 C Y U E O B U E E P A N R G N
 Y D S O H W S D T L O I S N A
 U M F E E D E S S E L B V D R
 T Q M K W Y J R Q S O U O H T
 R F U O A X Q M D J M S N Y S
 L Q R R M R L E H N K W W C L
 G C P B N Z T K V J A K G C H

Andrew
 Baskets
 Blessed
 Boy
 Bread
 Broke
 Compassion
 Crowds
 Disciples
 Feed

Fish
 Food
 Jesus
 Leftovers
 Loaves
 Lunch
 Peter
 Philip
 Prayed
 Twelve

