

Lesson 4

Feeding the Multitudes

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39; Mark 6:33-44; 8:1-10; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14

Fast Facts

- The miraculous feeding of the 5,000 is found in all four the gospels. There was a separate occasion when Jesus fed 4,000.
- The word language “5,000 men” means adult males. The actual number of people fed could have been tripled (when you count the women and children present).
- Jesus fed the 5,000 near Bethsaida in Galilee. He fed the 4,000 several months later in Decapolis (a region on the southeast side of the Sea of Galilee). Both of these miracles seemed to have taken place during the last year of Jesus’ life.
- With both miracles, Jesus multiplied a few fish and loaves of bread. After eating, the multitudes left satisfied. They were even enough for leftovers!
- After feeding the 5,000, the people said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world” (John 6:14). They then intended to take Him by force and make Him a king. Jesus withdrew from the crowd and went to a mountain to pray.

Study Questions

1. What moved Jesus to feed the multitudes?
2. How did the 5,000 respond to the miracle they experienced from Jesus?
3. Where in the Old Testament, does God perform a similar miracle? How long did God perform this miracle among Israel?
4. How much food was left following each of the miracles? Why do you think the leftovers were collected?
5. What were these miracles designed to prove about Jesus?