

Church of God Sunday School

JESUS FEEDS THE MULTITUDES

Matthew 14:1-21; 15:29-38; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13

Jesus had been teaching and performing miracles for about two years. Herod the tetrarch (*TE-trark*), or chief governor, heard of Jesus. Because of His mighty works, Herod thought Jesus was John the Baptist "risen from the dead." It might have been that Herod's conscience was bothering him.

Sometime before, John the Baptist had told Herod that it was unlawful for him to have his brother's wife, Herodias (*hih-ROH-dee-uhs*). Herod did not like hearing that, so he put John in prison. On Herod's birthday, in order to keep a promise to the daughter of Herodias, Herod had John beheaded.

When Jesus heard that John was dead, He and His disciples tried to get away privately by boat to a desert place. But many people saw them departing, and they followed Him on foot and met Him at His destination.

When Jesus saw what a great crowd of people had followed Him, He said they were like sheep having no shepherd. He had compassion on them. (Compassion is a deep feeling of sympathy for the suffering of others and a desire to help.) Because of His compassion, Jesus healed the people who were sick.

When it was evening, the disciples came to Jesus and asked Him to send the people away so they could go into the cities to buy something to eat. Jesus told the disciples to give the people some food: He wanted to see what they would do. The disciples said, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?"

Jesus then asked the disciples to go and find out what food was available among the people. The

disciples came back and told Jesus they had found only two small fish and five loaves of bread. These had been donated by a small boy. How could such a small amount of food feed such a large crowd of people?

Jesus told the disciples to bring the food to Him. (Notice that a child had a part in this miracle. This shows us that all of God's children—little children as well as adults—can have a part in the work of God.)

The multitude was made up of five thousand men,

not counting all the women and the children. Everyone was commanded to sit on the grass in groups of hundreds and fifties.

As soon as all the people had sat down, Jesus took the bread and fish and looked up to Heaven and blessed them. After that, He began breaking the food and passing it to His disciples. They gave the food to the multitude of people. Everyone ate until they "were filled." There was enough food left over to fill twelve baskets!

At another time, Jesus was near the sea of Galilee. He went up into a mountain and sat down. There a different multitude of people came to Him. In that multitude

there were four thousand men besides the women and the children. That group of people was not as large as the other multitude, but the people were very hungry, for they had continued with Jesus for three days without anything to eat.

Also among that multitude of people were some who were lame, blind, dumb, and maimed, as well as many others. When Jesus healed them, the people were amazed to see the dumb talk, the blind see, the lame walk, and the maimed made whole. They all glorified God.



Again, Jesus called His disciples to Him. He told them that He did not want to send the people away hungry, "lest they faint in the way." The disciples began to wonder where they would get enough bread in the wilderness to feed such a great crowd of people. (Did they forget the wonderful miracle Jesus did when He fed the multitude of more than five thousand?)

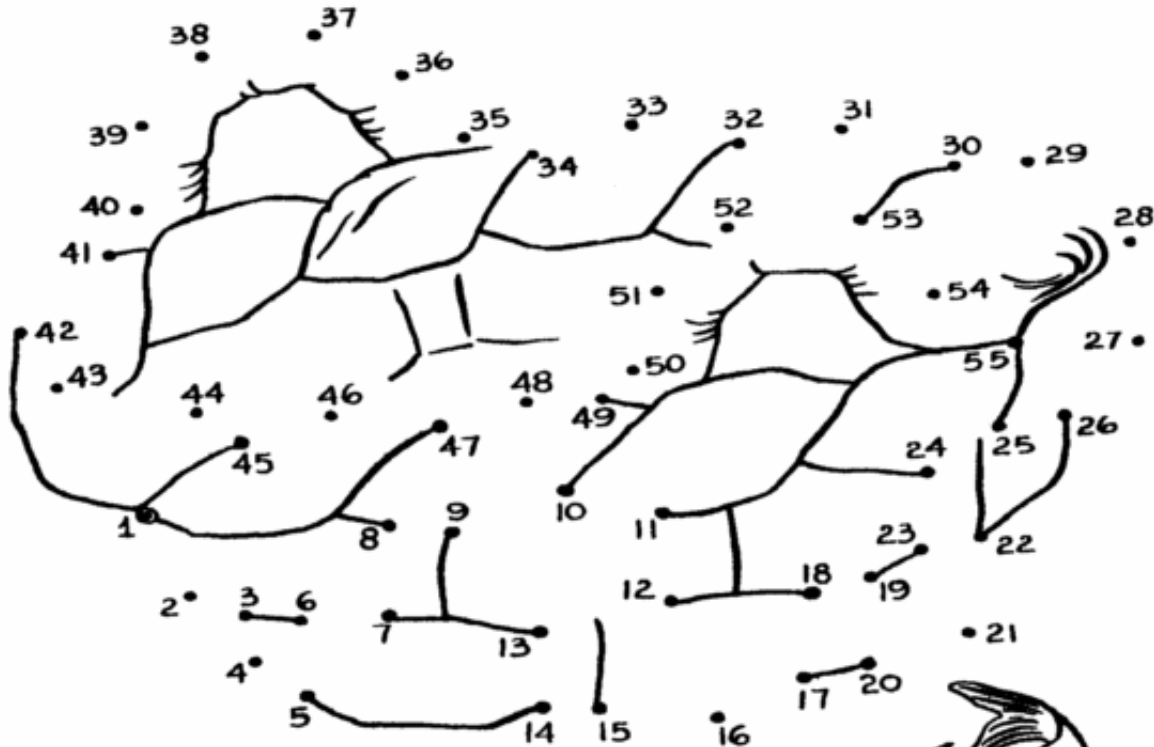
Just as He had done before, Jesus asked the disciples to find out how much food was on hand. After they had searched through the crowd, the disciples returned and told Jesus they could find only seven loaves of bread and a few little fish. Once again, Jesus took the food and gave thanks for it. Then He broke up

the fish and the bread and gave them to His disciples, and they passed them out to the people.

In Jesus' hands, the food He blessed became more than enough to satisfy the hunger of everyone there, from the first to the last. As in the miracle of the feeding of the first multitude, there was food left over—enough to fill seven baskets.

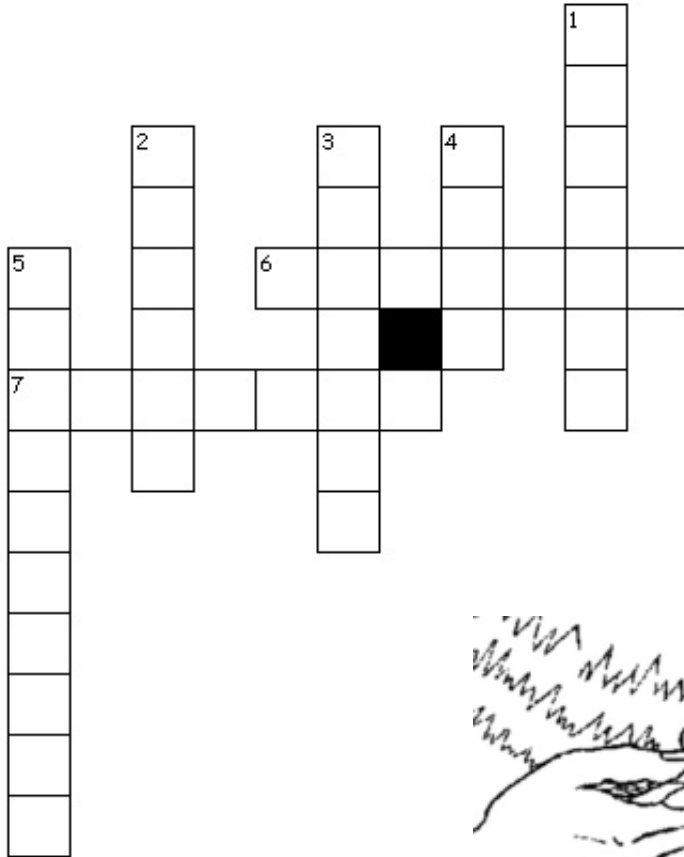
MEMORY VERSE:

"The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."
—Psalm 126:3



**There was
enough food
left to fill
twelve of
these!**

JESUS FEEDS THE MULTITUDES



Across

- 6. Jesus _____ the food
- 7. This was a _____

Down

- 1. The extra food was placed in _____
- 2. The people were _____
- 3. Jesus was near the Sea of _____
- 4. The people ate this: _____
- 5. Jesus felt this for the people: _____

Word Bank

- miracle
- fish
- baskets
- Galilee
- compassion
- hungry
- blessed

