

Have You Heard the Story of My Life?

Part 11: The Boy from Capernaum and the Feeding of the Multitude

Dora Beck

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The Boy from Capernaum and the Feeding of the Multitude



Crowds of people were hurrying through our village. I noticed a small group bearing a sick person on a rack. I also saw a woman leading her blind husband. Where were they off to, I wondered? What was the reason behind this unusual occasion?

I heard a man call to our neighbour, "Come with me to the other side of the lake where Jesus and His disciples are. Both of these men boarded a boat and prepared to cross the lake.

Everyone was hurrying to where Jesus was. I wanted to see and hear Him too. So I quickly called my neighbour and his friend: Please, wait for me. I would like to go with you.

I ran into my house to ask my mother if I could go to see Jesus: O mother, let me cross the lake with our neighbour to where Jesus is. We have heard so many good things about Him, but I have not seen Him yet. Let me go, and do not worry about me. Our neighbour will take care of me.

My mother gave in to my request, and I was very happy. Before I left, she said: Wait a minute! Take these five loaves of bread and two fish with you, for the journey is long and you will surely be hungry when you arrive.



I did not want to wait, because I was in a hurry. But I obeyed and did as my mother said.

Our neighbour was still waiting for me with his friend. As soon as I got into the boat, we set out across the lake. My mother stood in the doorway to make sure that I was off safely with my neighbour.



On the way, I was amazed as I listened to what the two men had to say about Jesus. The friend of my neighbour was present when Jesus restored the sight of a blind man; he also saw Him heal a lame man so that he could walk and jump, rejoicing.

My neighbour's friend told of another miracle which was hard to believe: A few days earlier, Jesus brought a twelve-year-old girl back to life after she had died. This had great impact on the people and made them flock to Jesus by the multitude.



I could hardly wait to see this great physician and prophet for myself. But when we finally arrived, I was disappointed; so many people were gathered that I had difficulty seeing Jesus. I was not very big, and the many tall people blocking my view only added to my frustration.

How I wished to be a giant at that moment! Then I would have been able to see over everyone else. But since I was no giant, I had to look for another way. I wanted to be as close to Jesus as possible. I also wished to meet Him personally and listen to His dear words.

After making my way through the multitude, I found a small, raised platform from which I could see everything clearly. To my great joy, I discovered that I was not very far from Jesus. There was no question that this man was Jesus, because everyone was surrounding Him. He was healing the sick and comforting the sorrowing.



Jesus talked about God, His Heavenly Father. He spoke to us in clear pictures, as if He had been in heaven Himself. Could it be that He was more than a prophet? It seemed the people could not listen to Him enough. Time passed quickly, and before we noticed it, evening had set in.



Some of Jesus' disciples came up to Him and said: "Let the people go into the neighbouring villages and marketplaces and buy bread for themselves, for they have nothing to eat here. They can also look for lodging for the night, for here there is no place to sleep.

But Jesus answered and said, You give them something to eat! because He knew what He was going to do. He said this to test their faith and make them believe. His disciples were confused and astonished, and they asked, How are we to go and buy bread for such a large number, because we have no more than 200 dinars with us? Jesus asked them: How many loaves of bread do you have with you? Go and see.

When I heard Jesus speak these words, I remembered the five loaves and two fish which my mother had given me. I wanted to give my food to Jesus, so He could make use of it. But what could five loaves and two fish do for thousands of people? My food was barely enough for two!

At this moment, Andrew, one of Jesus' disciples, came close to me and looked around. I hurried to

him and showed him the five loaves and two fish. He was happy, and without much talk, he took me by the hand and brought me to Jesus.



My heart beat loudly for joy and anxiety, because my deep wish became reality: I was meeting Jesus personally. Jesus looked at me kindly when Andrew told Him: Here is a boy with five loaves and two fish. But what could this little bit do to feed this large multitude?

Andrew thought the same way as I, for my little bit of food appeared as nothing when we considered all the people that were gathered. Surely, I thought Jesus must have realised this too.



I looked at Jesus and wondered what He would say or do now. But the Great Master accepted my little portion of food. He did not doubt, as I and the other disciples did. He was so different from all the rest, and His peace settled on the whole place.

Jesus commanded His disciples, saying, Have the crowds sit down in groups of fifties and hundreds.

So everyone sat down on the grass.

It was not easy for the disciples to count the seated multitude. There were at least 5,000 there! What a huge assembly! How did Jesus intend to feed them all on only five loaves of bread and two fish? It seemed so impossible.

When the disciples finished and gathered around Jesus, He took the bread and lifted His eyes toward heaven. He thanked His heavenly Father in a loud and clear voice for the small amount of food He had received from me. He trusted God to multiply the little into much, through a heavenly blessing.



A miracle took place! Jesus broke the bread with His hands and gave the pieces to His disciples. They, in turn, distributed the bread to the people sitting on the grass. He did the same with the fish.

I could not believe my eyes! Whenever Jesus broke the bread or fish and handed the portions to His disciples, the food never ran out. Instead, there was more and more food to eat. Everyone ate his fill and was satisfied. I was glad that I had given Jesus what I brought; because the little had become so much that it fed the whole multitude.

Do you also think that the little you have is of no use? Give all you have to Jesus as I did, and He will accept it and bless your humble gift, making it a blessing for all.

After the thousands had eaten, many pieces of food lay on the ground, and no one bothered to pick them up. The people were so satisfied that no one cared for the remains. So Jesus said to His disciples: Collect all that is left over, so that it will not be wasted."



How many baskets full of leftovers do you think were collected? If I had not seen for myself, it would have been hard for me to believe it. The disciples gathered twelve baskets full. It was a multiplied quantity of what I had given to Jesus. I could not comprehend it. But what I did understand was that Jesus had fed us all through a miracle.

When the multitude realised what had happened, they were amazed, and fear came upon them. They were not only pleased about having eaten their fill, but they were also impressed that there was more food left over at the end than there was at the beginning.



The people began to say to one another, Truly, this is the prophet whom the Torah prophesied would come into our world." Others said, Yes, Moses has written: "The Lord your God will raise from your midst a prophet like me for you'" (Deuteronomy 18:15). God, in the days of Moses, fed His people in a miraculous way, giving them bread from heaven freely. The people suddenly cried out, Let us crown Him king, and all our pains and burdens will be ended.



When Jesus became aware what the crowd intended, He left us and went to the mountains.

The multitude disbanded when they saw that Jesus had gone. Their hopes did not materialise. I also left with my neighbour and went home. When I got back, I thought a lot about what I had experienced and seen that day.

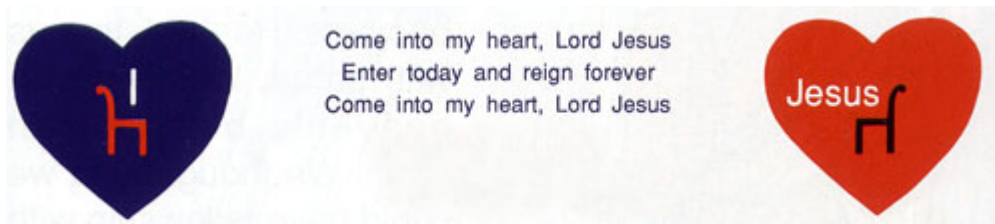
Why did Jesus escape from the multitude? Why did He not let them make Him king? How I wished that Jesus would have become king, so that He could rule over us. Wouldn't you also like to be under the lordship of Christ?



After some years, I understood why Jesus did not pay attention to the wish of the people. We had wanted to crown Him king, because He had fed us with bread. We wanted a heavenly blessing on earth. We thought that we would have fellowship with Him, without needing to be reborn spiritually. Our aims were selfish and worldly, and this does not agree with the will of God.

Jesus once said to Nicodemus, a respected elder of the people, "If you are not born again, becoming changed in your heart, you cannot see the kingdom of God." How I thank my God for granting me this rebirth in my life. I confessed my sins to Jesus. He accepted me, and His spirit came to dwell in my heart. He is now the Lord and King of my life. He guides me daily, and one day I will be with Him in the kingdom of heaven.

In the story, the young boy received Jesus as Lord and King of his life. Has this happened in your life too? Does Jesus sit on the throne of your life and control your actions, or does your own "self" decide what you say and do? We can know His will if we read the Gospel. Ask Him to enter your life and sit on the throne of your heart, so that you can obey Him and carry out His Word.



Quiz

We hope you have enjoyed reading this story. Below are some questions about it. When you have answered them, mail them to us. We will send you the next booklet from this series as a gift.

1. Why did the crowds hurry to Jesus?
2. What was the young boy's deepest wish?
3. Why did the disciples want Jesus to send the people away?
4. How many loaves of bread and fish did the boy have?
5. What did Jesus do before breaking and distributing the bread?
6. How many people ate and were filled?
7. What made the boy happy most of all?
8. What made the people really excited?
9. Why did Jesus not allow the people to crown Him king?
10. Has Jesus become lord and king over your life?

Send your answers to us. Do not forget to print your full name and address clearly on your answer sheet as well as on the envelope. Our address is:

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