

REFLECTION GUIDE

JOHN 6:1-14 | MORE THAN ENOUGH

KEY TERMS

Signs – John’s Gospel often uses the word “signs” instead of “miracles” to emphasize that Jesus’ works point beyond themselves to reveal his identity. The feeding of the five thousand is the fourth sign in John’s Gospel.

Passover – John mentions that this event happens near the time of the Passover (v. 4). This festival commemorated Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and involved eating unleavened bread. John is making a connection between Jesus and God’s past provision.

Prophet – The crowd identifies Jesus as “the Prophet” (v. 14), likely referring to Deuteronomy 18:15, where Moses prophesied that God would raise up a prophet like him.

DID YOU KNOW?

The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle (besides the resurrection) recorded in all four Gospels (Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-15). This highlights the fact that the earliest Christians thought it was very significant in revealing Jesus’ identity and mission.

SYNOPSIS

John 6:1-14 records one of Jesus’ most well-known miracles—the feeding of the five thousand. This event takes place near the Sea of Galilee around the time of the Jewish Passover, a detail that links this miracle to God’s past provision for Israel. A large crowd follows Jesus, drawn by the signs he has performed. When Jesus sees the crowd, he tests Philip by asking where they can buy bread for so many people. Philip responds with a practical concern—*two hundred denarii* wouldn’t be enough to feed them (v. 7). Andrew mentions a boy with *five barley loaves and two fish*, but adds that this small amount of food would never be enough to feed the crowd (v. 9).

Jesus then takes the small offering of five loaves and two fish, gives thanks, and distributes the food. John tells us there were 5,000 men present, which could be translated “5,000 people,” but, more than likely, shows there were 5,000 men present and likely thousands more women and children. Miraculously, everyone eats as much as they want, and twelve baskets of leftovers remain. The details of the miracle makes it clear that what happened was not that the crowd divided five loaves and two fish into tiny portions, but that Jesus provided a full meal to everyone. The crowd, seeing this sign, declare Jesus to be “the Prophet,” recognizing the connection to Moses. In the same way that God provided sustenance through Moses, he is again showing them his power and provision.

GOING DEEPER

Read Exodus 16:4-15 and John 6:32-35. How does Jesus’ miracle of feeding the five thousand connect with God’s provision of manna in the wilderness? What does Jesus mean when he says, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35)? How does this deepen our understanding of his role as the ultimate provider?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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LEARNING THE WORD

1. Read John 6:1-4. What stands out to you about the way John tells this story?
2. In John 6:6, Jesus asks Philip how they will feed the people, even though he already knows what he will do. Why do you think Jesus tested Philip? Have you ever experienced a similar test (maybe from an supervisor, parent, coach, etc.)?
3. Read Philippians 4:6-7 and 1 Peter 5:6-7. What do these verses invite us to do with our anxiety? What does that look like for you?
4. How does John emphasize the abundance of Jesus' provision in this miracle?

LIVING THE WORD

5. This story shows us that Jesus invites us to trust him with our daily needs. What are some areas of your life where you struggle to trust God for provision?
6. Share a story about when God provided for you in a difficult situation or in an unexpected way. How can remembering God's past faithfulness help us trust him in the present?
7. Jesus not only provided dinner for this crowd, he also gives eternal life through his death and resurrection for all who believe, and has promised to return and make all things new. How does knowing this help us when we experience the ordinary difficulties of life in a fallen world?
8. This week, what would it look like practically to bring your everyday needs to Jesus?