

The Lesson of the Leftovers

A man...brought...twenty loaves of barley...His servant said, "What, should I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give the people, that they may eat; for thus says Yahweh, 'They will eat, and will have some left over.'" – 2 Kings 4:42-44

[Mark 6:35-44] When it was late in the day, When evening had come, his disciples came to him, and said, "This place is deserted, and it is late in the day."

Jesus therefore lifting up his eyes, and seeing that a great multitude was coming to him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?"

"Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages, and lodge, and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat and we are here in a deserted place."

But he answered them, "They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat." This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.

They asked him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread, and give them something to eat?"

Philip answered, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that everyone of them may receive a little!"

He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go see."

You give them something to eat

When they knew, they (Andrew, Simon Peter's brother) said, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these among so many?"

He said, "Bring them here to me." He commanded them that everyone should sit down in groups on the green grass. Now there was much grass in that place. They sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves, and he gave to his disciples to set before them, and he divided the two fish among them all. They all ate, and all were filled. When they were filled, he said to his disciples, "Gather up the broken pieces which are left over, that nothing be lost."

They took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and also of the fish. Those who ate the loaves were* five thousand men, besides women and children. When therefore the people saw the sign which Jesus did, they said, "This is truly the prophet who comes into the world." [Matthew 14:15-21, Luke 9:12-17, John 6:4-14]

1. What did Jesus ask you that seemed impossible? Did you respond like Philip or Andrew?
2. Why did Jesus have them get the leftovers? How has he used this lesson in your life?
3. Jesus, you constantly taught the 12, even as you had compassion on the crowd; please...