

FOUR THOUSAND PEOPLE FED

Mark 8:1-26.

LESSON 76 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7).

Following Jesus

Great crowds followed Jesus when he was upon earth. Many people brought their sick unto Him to be healed. Some who came unto Him could not see; some could not hear; some could not talk; some could not walk. But Jesus made them all well. Others came to listen to what Jesus had to say. He taught the people about Heaven, and told them about God, His heavenly Father.

Four thousand people gathered around Jesus – they stayed with Him one day; they stayed two days; they stayed three days. It seemed that they had forgotten they were tired and hungry. But by the end of three days Jesus called the disciples to Him and said that if the people went home without eating they might faint, as some had come from afar. He asked the disciples how many loaves they had. They answered, "Seven."

Many Fed

Just as He had done once before when He was up in a mountain and the crowds followed Him, Jesus took the bread and gave thanks. Then He broke it and gave to the disciples, and they gave it to the people. There were also a few fishes and Jesus did the same with the fishes. All the people ate and were filled, and there were seven baskets of food left.

Jesus then sent the people away. No doubt they went back to their homes loving Jesus more than ever. We read in the Bible, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." That does not mean only the food which Jesus fed the people but also the saving of their soul. The most important of all is to be saved and to be ready to meet Jesus. If we are saved, He has promised to take care of us and all our needs.

The Same Jesus

Jesus is still working miracles today. He still gives food to the needy and starving people who trust in Him. Many mothers and fathers have trusted God to send food to them when they had nothing to eat and nothing to feed their children. No so very many years ago a Christian family who trusted God saw Him answer their prayer. While the mother worked, the grandmother cared for the children. One evening after supper the grandmother said to the children's father, "Son, do you realize that there is nothing in the house to feed the children in the morning?" The father replied, "But, Mother, it isn't morning yet." His faith and trust were in the God who never fails. In the morning they found a box of groceries on the porch!

Grace at Table

Since Jesus gave thanks before He fed the people, we should also remember to return thanks before we eat our meals. After all, it is from Him that we receive everything. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He told them to say, "Give us this day our daily bread." If we remember to be thankful to Jesus for the good things he gives us every day, He will continue to give us everything we need. We should give "thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20).

Sometimes parents will let the children return thanks at the table. Here are a few short prayers which may be taught to children:

**"Be present at our table, Lord;
Be here and everywhere adored.
Thy creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in paradise with Thee."**

**"Thank You for the world so sweet,
Thank You for the food we eat,
Thank You for the birds that sing –
Thank You, God, for everything."**

**"Father, bless the food we take,
And bless us now, for Jesus' sake."**

QUESTIONS

1. How many days had the people been with Jesus? Mark 8:2.
2. How many loaves did the disciples have? Mark 8:5.

3. What did Jesus do before He fed the people? Mark 8:6.
4. How many people were fed? How much food was left? Mark 8:8, 9.
5. How many people were fed at another time? How much food was left? John 6:10, 13.