

gested, that, being a native of Bethsaida, which was not far away, he would know the country best and where to find food. But Dods, following Cyril, is doubtless right when he finds the explanation in Philip's character, and in the word "prove" of verse 6. "Philip was apparently a matter-of-fact person (14: 8), a quick reckoner, a good man of business, and therefore, more ready to rely on his own shrewd calculations than on unseen resources. This weakness Jesus gives him an opportunity of conquering." (Expositor's Greek Testament.) *Whence?* From what village, or with what money? *Bread*; literally, loaves.

V. 6. *To prove him.* See on preceding verse. *He himself knew what he would do.* "With God all things are possible." (Matt. 19: 26.) It was the intention of Jesus from the first to perform the miracle. He was, therefore, not in need of suggestions from any one.

V. 7. *Philip answered him.* Prudently he makes his calculations, thus showing that Christ's estimate of him was correct. *Two hundred pennyworth.* The penny was the Roman silver coin known as the *denarius*, worth about 17 cents. The whole amount would be about \$34.00, which would represent a much larger sum now. A *denarius* at that time represented a day's wages. No such amount of money was available; nor was there any store of provisions near by to be bought. It was, therefore, impossible, according to Philip, to provide for the multitude. It was a common sense answer, but it lacked the element of faith.

V. 8. *One of the disciples, Andrew.* They had been discussing the Master's question to Philip amongst themselves in a sort of committee of supply. Andrew's mind, as well as Philip's, was of a practical bent. It was he who brought Peter to Jesus. (1: 41.) With Philip, he carried to His Lord the message of the Greeks in the Temple who were seeking for Jesus. (12: 22.) Philip had emphasized the difficulty. Andrew now points out the very limited resources. He is one step in advance of Philip, in that, whilst Philip sees only impossibilities,

Andrew points out what is available, little though it be. He has a constructive mind. A valuable sort of man in any enterprise.

V. 9. *A lad*; literally, "one little boy." *Barley loaves.* Small, thin, coarse cakes, the food of the poorer classes; the cheapest kind of bread. (Ezek. 13: 19.) *Two small fishes.* The word means literally a relish or "kitchen," eaten with bread, like our sardines, or the Russian "caviar," or the pickled herrings of Holland and Germany, or a peculiar kind of small dried fish, eaten with the bones, in the north of Scotland. (Eldersheim.) The Lake of Galilee abounded in small fish, which when dried or pickled were eaten along with bread. They were probably the boy's lunch, and he must have been much absorbed in what was going on not to have eaten them before. *But what are they?* "Showing the helplessness of the disciples and the inadequacy of the means, as the background on which the greatness of the miracle may be seen."

II. Enough and to Spare, 10-14.

V. 10. *Make the men sit down.* With what calm self-possession Jesus speaks, as though preparing for an ordinary meal. Their obedience showed their faith in His power. There was much grass. It was in April, the time of the Passover (v. 4), and the earth was covered with spring-time verdure. *The men sat down* reclined on the grass. John does not rec. in the women and children. Matthew mentions them. (ch. 14: 21.) Says a commentator with a fatherly heart: "Some of the children might steal up to Jesus, to receive from His own hand."

V. 11. *When he had given thanks*; the usual grace before meat offered by the head of a Jewish family. Even pagans gave thanks before meals. The blessing of God was necessary to the miracle. *He distributed to the disciples.* They were co-workers with Jesus. It was a fitting symbol of the work to which Jesus was calling them, to break to the multitude the Bread of Life. *As much as they would*; until all were satisfied.

Vs. 12, 13. *When they were filled.* They had received a full meal, in contrast with the little bite suggested by Philip. (v. 7.)