

THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES
AND FISHES

February 26, 1905

John 6 : 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 11, 12. Read John 6 : 1-71.

GOLDEN TEXT—I am the living bread which came down from heaven.—John 6 : 51.

1 After these things Je'sus went ¹ over the sea of Gal'ilee, which is the sea of Tibe'rias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Je'sus went up into ² a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.4 ³ And the passover, ² a feast of the Jews, was ⁴ nigh.5 ⁵ When Je'sus then lifted up his eyes, and ⁶ saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Phil'ip, Whence ⁷ shall we buy bread, that these may eat ?

6 And this he said to prove him : for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Phil'ip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, An'drew, Si'mon Pe'ter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves, and two ⁸ small fishes : but what are they among so many ?10 And Je'sus said, Make the ⁹ men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.11 ¹⁰ And Je'sus took the loaves ; and ¹¹ when he had given thanks, he distributed ¹² to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down ; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the ¹³ fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.13 ¹⁴ Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the ¹⁵ fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over ¹⁶ and above unto them that had eaten.14 ¹⁷ Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Je'sus did, said, This is of a truth ¹⁸ that prophet that ¹⁹ should come into the world.Revised Version—1 away to the other side of : ² the ; ³ Now ; ⁴ at hand ; ⁵ Jesus therefore lifting up ; ⁶ seeing that a great multitude cometh ; ⁷ are we to buy ; ⁸ Omit small ; ⁹ people ; ¹⁰ Jesus therefore ; ¹¹ having given ; ¹² Omit six words ; ¹³ broken pieces which remain over ; ¹⁴ So they gathered them up ; ¹⁵ broken pieces from ; ¹⁶ Omit and above ; ¹⁷ When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said ; ¹⁸ the ; ¹⁹ cometh.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Hungry Multitude, 1-6.

II. The Scanty Supply, 7-9.

III. The Plentiful Meal, 10-14.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Miracle of the loaves and fishes, John 6 : 1-14. T.—The Bread of life, John 6 : 25-40. W.—Believe, and live ! John 6 : 41-51. Th.—The seven loaves, Mark 8 : 1-9. F.—The manna, Ex. 16 : 11-18. S.—The handful of meal, 1 Kgs. 17 : 8-16. S.—Filled and satisfied, Ps. 107 : 1-9.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment ? A. The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against the honour and duty which belongeth to everyone in their several places and relations.

The Question on Missions—9. Did the early preachers meet with opposition ? The early preachers suffered much persecution : Stephen (Acts 7 : 59) and James (Acts 12 : 2) were put to death, as also, most likely, Paul and Peter.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 418 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 301 ; 14 ; (Ps Sel.) ; 18 ; 16 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 424.

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—April, 29 A.D. ; a plain near Bethsaida Julius (see Lesson III.), at the north-east corner of the Sea of Galilee.

Connecting Links—If the Feast of ch. 5 : 1 was a Passover, there is a year between last Lesson and this : and the Synoptic Gospels must be studied to fill the gap. If the Feast was Purim, as some suppose then there was only a month. John chooses such narratives and discourses as will show that Jesus, the Son of the Living God, is the Life-giver, ch. 20 : 31. At the same time he traces the growth of faith and unbelief. This miracle (the only one recorded in all four Gospels) brings on a crisis in Galilee, which results in unbelief on the part of the common people (vs. 41, 60, 66), and in faith among His immediate followers, vs. 68, 69.

I. The Hungry Multitude, 1-6.

Vs. 1, 2. After these things. Tidings of the Baptist's death (Matt. 14 : 12) and of Herod's perplexity about Himself (Luke 9 : 9) had

just reached Jesus at Capernaum. The Twelve had also just returned from their mission, Luke 9 : 10. Went over the sea of Galilee ; from Capernaum on the western, to Bethsaida, on the eastern shore. Our Lord and His disciples were seeking a sorely needed rest. Sea of Tiberias ; a name used by the Greeks, from the capital of Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, on the south-western shore, a large city never mentioned as having been visited by Jesus. A great multitude followed him ; although He wished to escape from His incessant labor. The crowds (Mark 6 : 33), marking the direction taken by Jesus, went round by land to Bethsaida, seven or eight miles from Capernaum. Because they saw his miracles ; not a pure faith, as is shown by what follows (see v. 26).

Vs. 3, 4. Went up into a mountain (Weymouth, "up the hill") ; the high land that rose from the shore. He sat ; in retirement and rest with His friends. The passover.