

Andrew and the packed lunch

Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13
Another bright sunny day.

Everywhere they went there were crowds of people. They just took the day off **to be with Jesus**.

Jesus set off out of town and we all followed at a leisurely pace.

Andrew was in his element, wandering among the crowds, talking to the children. By the time they reached the hillside where Jesus chose to sit and teach, he knew that Mary's pet sheep had had two lambs and they would nibble her fingers. He knew that Josh had got a clip round the ear for cheeking the rabbi. That Aaron has two whole fishes in his lunch box and five rolls. That Benjamin had been to practice reading the holy scroll in the synagogue for his Bar Mitzvah.

And .. well I wouldn't tell you all the other things Andrew was told as he chatted to anyone and everyone.

But once Jesus started speaking, no one wanted to talk, **they wanted to listen**. The whole hillside covered with people and little but the occasional babies cry, a cough, the sound of the breeze through the grasses and the voice of Jesus.

When Jesus spoke, he was not boring, like the Rabbis. He smiled and laughed grew serious and then smiled again. He told stories about farming and shepherding and travelling and you listened because he kept your attention.

All Day.

And when he stopped suddenly everyone started talking. And they were all talking about the same thing. Food. They were hungry. Andre joined Jesus and the disciples told Jesus the crowd was hungry and they should be sent to the nearest villages to buy some grub before the shops shut. Jesus stunned them by saying *They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat.*

There was an instant uproar among the disciples. We haven't got any food. **It would cost £10 000 to feed this lot**, you could hardly give them one chip each!

Jesus sent them off to find out how much food they had.

Andrew of course already knew about Aaron, so he made a quick search and found him. Aaron and his mates were rolling down the hillside and chasing each other. Aaron had forgotten all about his lunch and it was still there, safely hidden from the sun by a rock. So Andrew asked Aaron to bring his lunch to Jesus.

When they got to Jesus the other disciples were very unhappy, they had found nothing. Andrew took Aaron to Jesus and showed Jesus the two fish and five loaves. Aaron was getting hungry now himself and those rolls and fish looked good. Jesus asked Aaron if he would share his lunch. Aaron said yes because he would do anything Jesus asked. Jesus was so wonderful. But he did not take his eyes off the lunch. He wasn't sure he was going to get much.

Jesus started organising the disciples to organise the crowd. He got the disciples to go round and get the crowds to sit in groups of 50. As if Aaron's lunch was going to feed the lot!

Then, having sorted out baskets for each disciple, Jesus held up the 5 rolls and two fish and thanked God for them. Then he started sharing them out. Andrew and Aaron watched but they could not make sense of it. As fast as Jesus filled one basket with rolls, there still seemed to be five rolls. The fish the same, Jesus always had two fish in his hands but Soon Peter was off with a whole basket going round and John adding fish to the bread John was giving out.

Andrew had to go off and serve the crowds but Aaron just sat and watched. **It took some time to serve everyone**, but eventually Jesus turned to Aaron and gave him five loaves and two fish. Aaron forgot to say thank you in his hurry to eat. They were the best lunch he'd ever had. And his mates joined him and they eat bread and fish until they couldn't eat anymore.

When Andrew turned up to collect leftovers and to say they must go home otherwise their parents would be more than worried. Andrew watched them charge off down the hill until they disappeared into the long lines of people heading home. By his count there were 100 hundred groups, each of about 50, that makes ... 5000 people fed with 5 loaves and two fish. Andrew looked at Jesus. All the disciples were standing there each with a full baskets of leftovers. Jesus had provided more than enough to feed everyone. But Andrew felt sure the

leftovers were not to be wasted as they loaded them into the boat to ferry back to Capernaum.