

**SEVEN SIGNS**  
**#5: Lord of Provision**  
**May 13-15, 2006**

<sup>1</sup>Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), <sup>2</sup>and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. <sup>3</sup>Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. <sup>4</sup>The Jewish Passover Festival was near. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” <sup>6</sup>He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. <sup>7</sup>Philip answered him, “It would take almost a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!” <sup>8</sup>Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, <sup>9</sup>“Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” <sup>10</sup>Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). <sup>11</sup>Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. <sup>12</sup>When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” <sup>13</sup>So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. <sup>14</sup>After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” <sup>15</sup>Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

*John 6:1-14 TNIV*

Introduction: The fourth sign in John’s Books of Signs that Jesus is Lord appears shortly after the second and third, but apparently more time has passed between the stories than a simple reading might indicate. As Jesus feeds the multitudes, it is clear that people are seeing the signs and realizing that God is working through Jesus in an extraordinary way. Now that he has attracted their attention, Jesus teaches them about his provision.

- I. People Read the Signs
  - A. A crowd of thousands was now following Jesus, and Jesus proceeded to teach them from the shoreline.
  - B. The people had begun to see the signs, now performed in

- the open, as Jesus healed the sick.
      - C. There were perhaps 10,000 or more persons present, since the Bible records 5,000 men, not to mention women and children.
      - D. The fact that the Passover Festival was near is significant, because the people were coming to Jesus rather than making pilgrimage to the Temple.
- II. People Need Physical Provision
  - A. Jesus took note of the crowd and recognized that they needed to eat.
  - B. The Passover Feast celebrated God’s provision during the Exodus, and the people needed provision.
  - C. Jewish tradition held that the Messiah would repeat the miracle of manna from heaven as a sign of God’s providence.
  - D. Jesus had already decided that he would perform a sign to demonstrate God’s provision for His people.
- III. People Need Spiritual Provision
  - A. Jesus seized the opportunity to teach his disciples more about his identity.
  - B. He “sat with” his disciples on the mountainside, a phraseology that indicates Jesus addressed them as a sage or Rabbi (Jewish teacher).
  - C. Jesus asked a didactic question of his closest followers, which was the Rabbinic tradition.
  - D. Philip gave the simplest, physical answer; Andrew followed with a slightly more enlightened response.
  - E. Jesus offered spiritual truth in his actions.
- IV. People See the Sign
  - A. Jesus had the people sit as his pupils.
  - B. He took the little boy’s bread and fish and gave thanks.
  - C. He distributed the fish and loaves until everyone was filled, thus spreading the Messianic banquet.
  - D. Twelve baskets, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, were “ful-filled” by Jesus’ provision once the meal was done.
  - E. This time, the people clearly saw the sign, spoke of Jesus as “the Prophet,” and wanted to make Jesus king.

Conclusion: The feeding of the multitude is the clear sign that Jesus is the Lord of provision. If we see the sign, Jesus teaches us that we cannot outgive God, and that His provision is always sufficient. More importantly, we learn that Jesus is “The Bread of Life.” (John 6:25-40)