

Filled full!

The Feeding of the 5,000, from Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9

THERE WERE ONCE 5,000 tired and hungry (and probably very grumpy) people sitting on a hillside wanting their dinner.

They'd come to hear Jesus that day. They came before breakfast, stayed all morning, all afternoon, and way past dinner. No one had meant to be out there that long but that's how it was, listening to Jesus—as if time didn't exist. People could listen to Jesus for hours, and, on this particular day, that's just what they did.



But they hadn't brought enough food, and they couldn't just go and buy themselves a burger and fries to go because, of course, they were in the

middle of nowhere with no shops or restaurants. (Besides, that kind of food wasn't invented yet.) What would they do? Jesus' friends had an idea.

“Let's send everyone home for dinner.”



“They don't need to go,” Jesus said. “You can give them something to eat.”

Did Jesus want them to travel all the way to town and buy food for everyone? Jesus' friends panicked. “But we don't have enough money!”

“What food do you have?” Jesus asked. “Go and see.”

Now, there was a little boy in the crowd. He had brought a lunch that his mother had made for him that morning. He looked at his five loaves and two

fish. It wasn't much—not nearly enough for 5,000—but it was all he had.

“I have some,” he said.

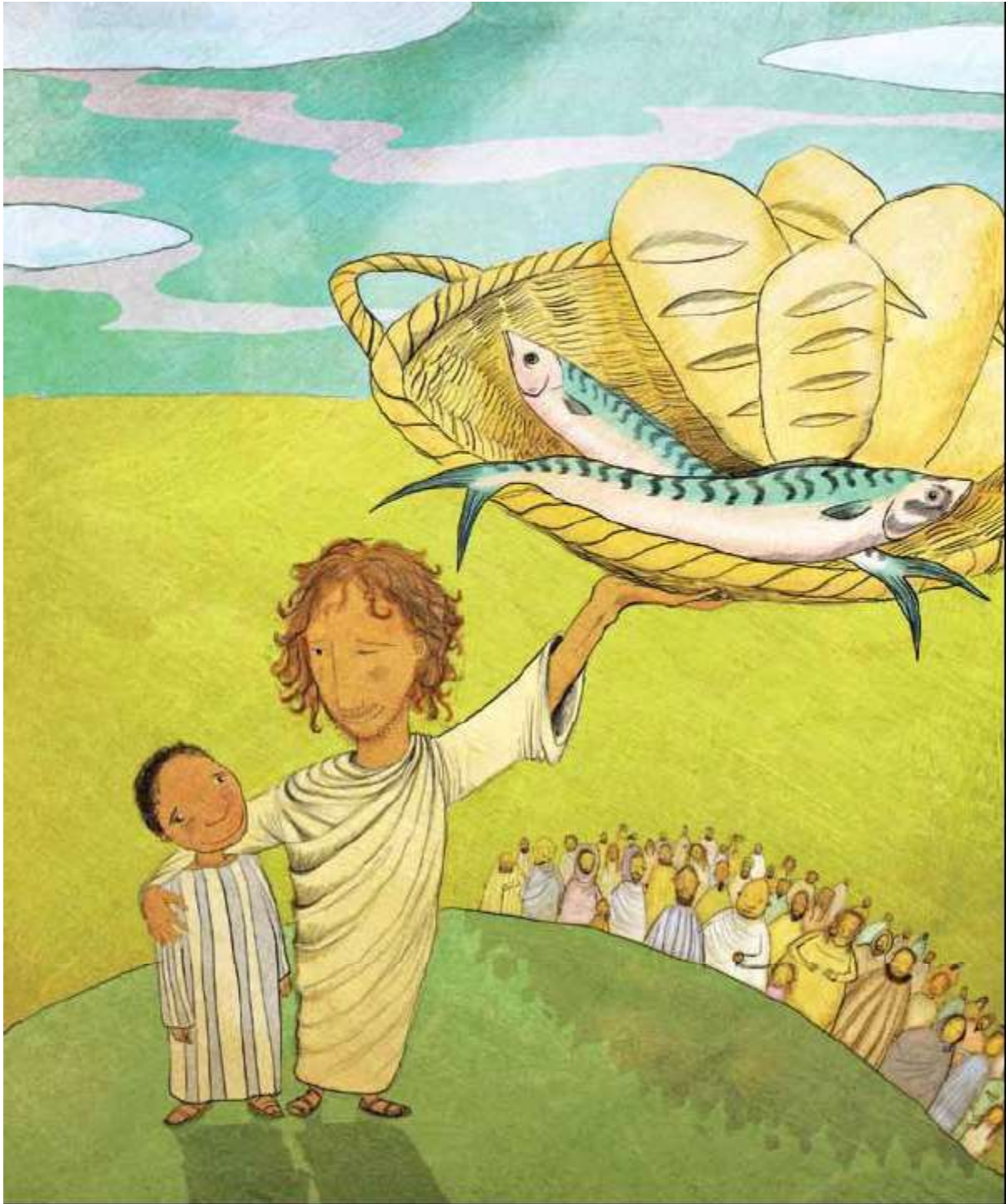
Jesus' friends laughed when they saw his little lunch. “That's not nearly enough!” they said.

But they were wrong. Jesus knew it didn't matter how much the little boy had. God would make it enough, more than enough.

Jesus said, “Bring me what you have.” And so the little boy gave Jesus his lunch. Jesus winked at the little boy and whispered in his ear, “Watch!”

“How in the world will Jesus feed everyone with just that?” Jesus' friends said, because they thought it was impossible.

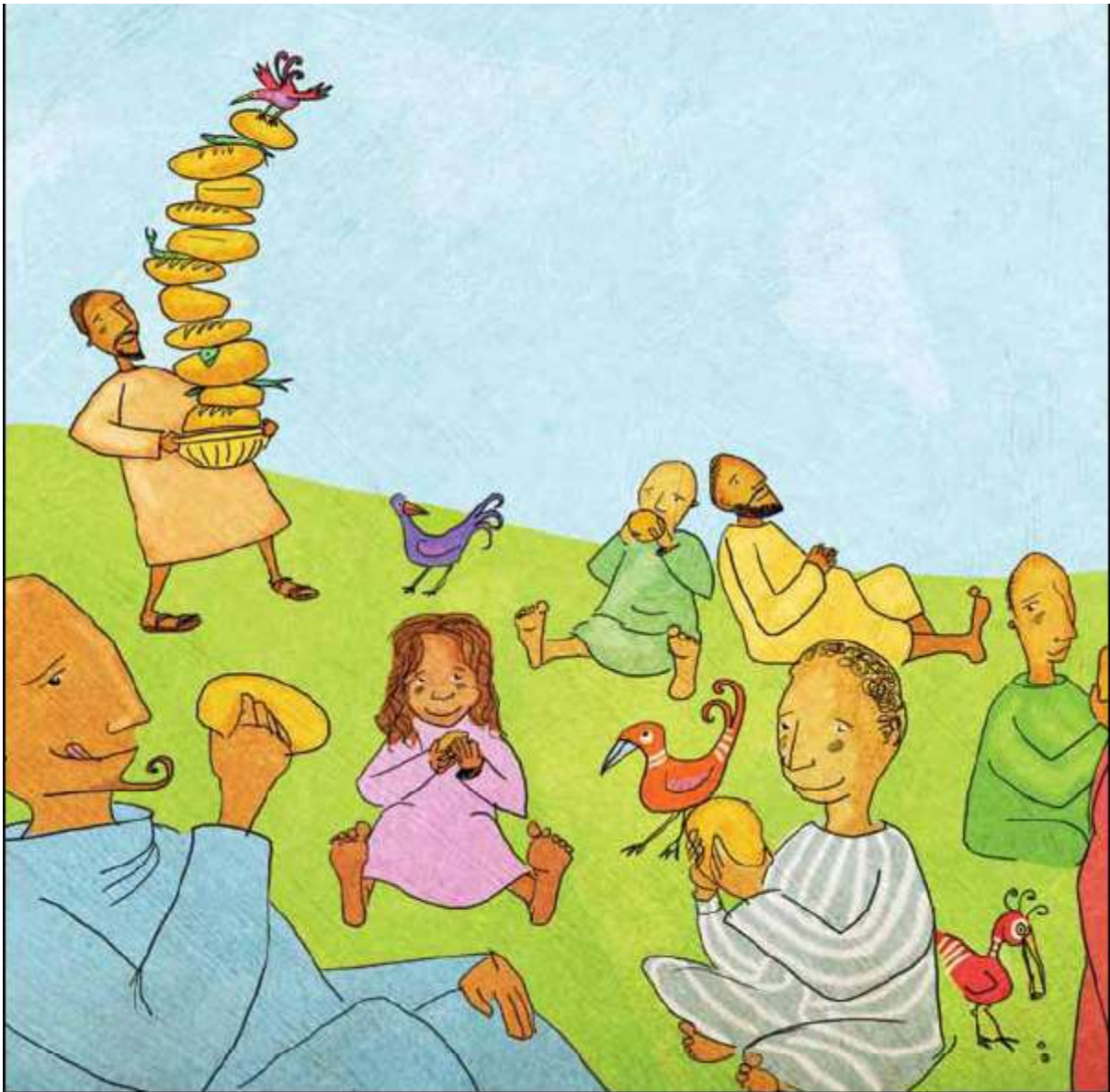
But Jesus knew the One who made all the fish in the oceans. And Jesus knew the One who in the very beginning had made everything out of nothing at all. How hard would something like this be for Someone like that?



Jesus took the little boy's lunch, looked up to heaven, and thanked his Father. Then Jesus gave the little lunch back to his friends.

As Jesus' friends started to hand out the food, do you know what? It was the strangest thing, no matter how much they broke off—there was always more. And more. And more. Enough for 5,000! Everyone ate as much as they

wanted—second helpings, third helpings, even fourths—until they were full. And still there were leftovers.



Well, Jesus did many miracles like this. Things people thought couldn't happen, that weren't natural.

But it was the most natural thing in all the world. It's what God had been doing from the beginning, of course. Taking the nothing and making it everything. Taking the emptiness and filling it up. Taking the darkness and making it light.

