

The Barley Loaf Boy

"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"
John 6:9 (NKJV)

After a day of miracles; of challenge to His authority and life by a lynch mob (John 5:8-18), and gruesome death of His cousin John the Baptist (Matthew 19:9-14), Jesus sort for a deserted place on a mountain for solitude. However, a crowd of over 5,000 people who had witnessed His miracles of healing were hot on His heels.

When Jesus saw the crowd coming to Him, He did not complain of their imposition on His privacy, but rather He received them with compassion. He spent the entire day teaching and healing the people. At the end He asked His disciples to set a table for the people in the wilderness camp meeting! He must have them fed so they could have strength to walk back home!!! The crowd never thought of taking packed lunch and McDonalds had not yet set up shop.

Sadly, the faith of the disciples was at the same level with that of their ancestors in the wilderness when they queried whether God could prepare a table in the wilderness (Exodus 16; Psalm 78:19). In utter desperation Apostle Andrew gave Jesus the the ledger tally: "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?" (John 6:9 NKJV). He made sure he told Jesus the type of bread that the young boy had. They were Barley loaves! Barley loaves were for the really poor folks. Barley flour was like sawdust compared to Wheat flour. It was a third the value of wheat flour (Revelation 6:6).

Five Barley Loaves and two fish was all the young boy had. His parents might be there in the audience feeling very embarrassed that their poverty was in public glare. Some times as parents you feel so inadequate in caring for your God given children. You don't have as much as other seeming superstar parents have. Hello!!! Just like the little boy in John's gospel, all you have for your child is all that Jesus needs from you. Do not despair my friend. The value of anything depends in whose hands they are. Look at what came out of five barley loaves and their condiments when they were placed in the hands of Jesus:

- ✚ 5,000 hungry men (not counting women and children) were fed (Matthew 6:21). If you go by today's church demography, you could say about 15,000 – 20,000 souls were fed!
- ✚ 12 Baskets of bread was left over! (John 6:12-13)
- ✚ The eyes of the people opened to see Jesus as the "Prophet to come" (Messiah) (John 6:14)
- ✚ The people wanted to forcefully make Jesus King of Israel! (John 6:15)

So it shall be for your children as you surrender them to God and serve Him with all you have: Unimaginable number of people will be blessed through your meagre strength. Your offering will be multiplied unto you. The generation of your children will testify that Jesus is indeed The Lord and they will submit to His Kingship. Those who despise your barley loaf will surely be amazed at God's marvellous work in your household. Arise and offer your all to Jesus without fear or shame.

Jesus reigns forever!

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