

GOSPEL PEARLS

An irresistible fascination

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A great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat. So Jesus called his disciples to him and said to them, 'I feel sorry for all these people; they have been with me for three days now and have nothing to eat. If I send them off home hungry they will collapse on the way; some have come a great distance.' His disciples replied, 'Where could anyone get bread to feed these people in a deserted place like this?' He asked them, 'How many loaves have you?' 'Seven' they said. Then he instructed the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and handed them to his disciples to

distribute; and they distributed them among the crowd. They had a few small fish as well, and over these he said a blessing and ordered them to be distributed also. They ate as much as they wanted, and they collected seven basketfuls of the scraps left over. Now there had been about four thousand people. He sent them away and immediately, getting into the boat with his disciples, went to the region of Dalmanutha. (Mark 8, 1-10)

Jesus has compassion for those who follow Him because their desire to listen to His teachings is such that they forget even to feed themselves. For this reason, after having helped the people without a shepherd, He himself ensures they have a corporal meal, after having provided them with a spiritual one. When is the last time you were so absorbed in the teaching of Jesus that you even forgot to eat?