

Suzi Chooses Lunch / Feeding the 5000

Dolly: Suzi's mother asked her to go to the market and choose something for her to cook for their lunch. ...Now what should she choose?...

Tammy: Welcome to Women of Hope, I'm Tammy. Here we are again – looking forward to spending some time with you...time where we can talk together about how to be healthy.

Carol: Hello, I'm here too – I'm Carol. I love talking about healthy living. It's so important for our own health and our family's health isn't it!

I want to welcome Dolly here today. She's going to keep telling us the story about Suzi...as she chose some good food for her mother to cook for their lunch.

Dolly: Thanks Carol...

At school, Suzi had learned about food, and she'd learned that our bodies are like a house. If someone wants to build a house that's good and strong, they need to collect good building materials.

The same is true if a mother is pregnant. She's making a new baby's body and she needs to eat all the good things that will help to make that baby strong and healthy. The building material for making a strong body is called *protein*.

Then, if the house owner wants to make his house bigger, he needs to collect more of that good building material...more wood, more roofing, more cement, more nails. And the same is true of a child who is growing. He needs to eat lots of different food that contains protein, so his body will grow big and strong and healthy.

And later, when that house is damaged, the owner needs to collect more of the good building materials so he can repair it. A person's body is the same. If he's sick, his body needs lots of protein so it can heal itself properly and quickly.

So someone who is *pregnant*, someone who is *growing*, and someone who is *sick* all need lots of protein.

Dolly: Suzi understood that she needed to find food today that had lots of protein for her family. But which foods were those? She remembered what she'd learned at school. The foods that contain a lot of protein are milk, all types of beans, eggs and all types of meat.

Suzi loved going to the market because it was really interesting... So many people, lots of sounds and bright colors...and so many things arranged on tables...and hanging from ropes...and stacked in boxes. She walked over to a table where a seller had meat displayed. There was a lot to choose from, but Suzi didn't have much money. If she bought meat, her money would all be gone. She felt disappointed.

But then she remembered that she had seen someone selling bean curd. *Ah! That's a good idea*, she thought! Bean curd has a lot of protein, but it's cheap to buy, and she loved it cooked with onions!

Yes, she decided to buy two bars of it. She bargained with the seller until she got a good price, so she was very proud of herself!

Then she asked the same seller how much he wanted for his eggs. They cost more, and he said, “Yes, they *are* more expensive, but just think about an egg... If your chicken lays an egg and you wait for three weeks, what comes out of that egg?”

“A baby chicken,” answered Suzi.

“You’re right!” said the seller, smiling at her. “We don’t add anything to an egg for it to produce a chicken – complete with feathers, bones, muscles, eyes, blood, feet, everything, right?”

“Yes!” answered Suzi, laughing.

“So...” continued the seller, “an egg has inside it everything that’s needed to make good bones, eyes, skin, muscles, blood ...everything to make a healthy body! How wonderful is an egg! The most complete food!”

His face became serious, and he said, “But there are people who try to tell us that eggs are not good, that we shouldn’t eat them, children shouldn’t eat them, and pregnant mothers and sick people shouldn’t eat them. But does that make any sense to you?... Those are the very people who need the protein the most! They’re the people who *really need* all the good things that are inside an egg!”

“It seems that eggs are a wonderful gift from God,” answered Suzi. “I want to buy six, so that each person in my family can have one for lunch later.”

They bargained until Suzi was happy with the price, and the seller wrapped six eggs for her and put them carefully into her bag.

“Thank you, Sir!” she said, and then continued walking around the market to see what other things people were selling. She had something that contained a lot of protein or building material, but she wanted to find something else that had a lot of vitamins and minerals.

Carol: Isn’t it good to hear the story of Suzi choosing food for her mother to cook for their lunch. Hmm – vitamins and minerals...

Different foods contain different types of vitamins and minerals that we all need to keep our bodies working smoothly. There’s a lot of iron for making good blood in meat and liver, but there’s also a lot in dark green leafy vegetables.

Tammy: Carrots and papaya and seafood have a lot of vitamin A, which is good for our eyes. Tomatoes, chilies and bananas have a lot of potassium. Sea fish and seaweed have a lot of iodine, and so on... Each type of fruit and vegetable has it’s own important things. We’ve heard about eggs and beans – they’re special because they contain lots of *protein* but they also contain lots of the different *vitamins and minerals* as well! And our bodies need a little of all those things. So it’s important to eat different types of fruit and vegetables on different days, so that our bodies get all of them.

Carol: Who wants to eat the same thing every day, anyway? God made many types of food so that we can enjoy eating! Now, I wonder what Suzi chose next? Let’s hear some more of the story, thanks Dolly...

Dolly: Not far from the man who sold her the bean curd and eggs, Suzi found a lady sitting on a nice, clean grass mat. She had cabbage, long beans, onions, potatoes, cucumber and other things all arranged neatly around her. This lady had been listening to the egg-seller talking to Suzi. Now she offered her a bunch of long beans and said, “Hey, girlie! Buy some beans from me! They are very healthy to eat! And they’re fresh. Come! Buy some!”

Suzi had to make another decision... Which vegetables should she buy? Hmm – she tried to remember what she’d learned in school. She did remember that they still had some chillies and tomatoes at home, so she didn’t need to buy those. *Cabbage is not dark green, so it doesn’t have so many vitamins in it. And my father doesn’t like cucumber,* she thought.

“Your mother must be very proud of you!” said the seller lady. “I heard what you said to that man about how important it is to choose food that contains a lot of protein and vitamins. You’re a very smart girl! If you buy these long beans, you’ll get protein from the seeds, and plenty of vitamins, too, because they’re dark green. Isn’t that great? And they’re cheap. Come on, how many bunches do you want?”

Yes, the long beans she was offering were fresh, and that would be a good choice. So Suzi bargained with the lady and bought two bunches, and some onions to make them taste even better...and to cook up with the bean curd.

Tammy: The seller lady was right wasn’t she? Suzi *was* a smart girl. She remembered that the dark green leafy vegetables have the most vitamins and minerals.

So Dolly, was that all Suzi bought that day?

Dolly: No. Often Suzi and her sister asked their mother for snacks, so she thought it would be good to buy some fruit as well. It was not the season for oranges, so there were none for sale. Apples were very expensive this week, and she only had a small amount of money left now. But...yes! Bananas! They were easy for grandmother to eat...she didn’t have many teeth now! And she remembered that they are a food – with *lots* of goodness in them...vitamins, minerals and some carbohydrates.

After buying the bananas, Suzi had no money left, and her job was finished. Her bags were heavy, and the time had passed quickly. She needed to head back home before her mother became worried about her. She was happy with what she had chosen, and proud that her mother had trusted her to go to the market by herself. Surely her mother would be happy with what she’d bought! So she started walking home, singing a song as she went.

Carol: What a lovely story – and I really want to thank you, Dolly. Will you come back and tell us another story one day?

Dolly: Oh yes. I love telling stories...especially ones that help us learn useful things.

Bye for now.

Tammy: Let’s just make sure we can remember what Suzi bought and why...

First, she didn’t have enough money for meat, so for some good *protein for building and mending bodies*, she bought bean curd.

And then she bought eggs – for protein but also because they are the *most complete food*...full of vitamins, minerals, and good fats.

Carol: Next she looked for green vegetables – she decided that because the beans were dark green, and they looked so fresh, they would have *lots of vitamins*. And they would taste good with some onions too.

And finally she bought some bananas – another food with lots of goodness. Suzi remembered well what she had learned at school didn't she!

Carol: I was just imagining the lunch that Suzi's mother might cook with all that delicious fresh food – fried bean curd with onions, steamed green beans, and an egg each. And they could finish off with a fresh banana. Yummm!

Ros has come back today to tell us about another interesting meal – a story from God's word, the Bible. There were thousands of people who were hungry and needed a meal!! Welcome Ros, we can't wait to hear.

Ros: Thanks Carol. Hello... Are you ready for *another* story? I wonder if you're hungry? Or have you had your main meal for the day? Some of us don't eat *lunch* in the middle of the day – some of us eat our main meal in the early evening. And we might call it dinner. But whenever we eat and whatever we call it, we all get hungry don't we!

It was just the same for Jesus and his followers. Let me tell you this true story from God's word...
(from Mark 6:30-41)

Jesus' followers had been away to different places, telling people about the good news of Jesus. This day, they had come back and were talking to Jesus about where they'd been and all the things they'd done.

Jesus said, "Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile." He said this because there were so many people coming and going that he and his followers didn't even have time to eat.

So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone. But the people recognized them and saw them leaving. People from many towns ran along the shore and got there ahead of them. Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat...and *he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd*.

He welcomed them, and even though he was tired, he taught them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those who were sick.

Late in the afternoon his followers came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat."

But Jesus said, "*You feed them.*"

..."With what?" they asked. "We'd have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!"

"How much bread do you have?" he asked. "Go and find out."

They went off in search of some food. When they came back, one of them, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother said, "There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that

with this huge crowd?”

Then Jesus told his followers to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred.

Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to his followers so they could pass it around to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share.

They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, his followers picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish. A total of 5,000 men - and their families - were fed from those loaves!

Carol: Did you like that story? Have you heard it before? Let's see if we can remember it...

Tammy: Jesus and his followers had been busy with lots of people and they had not even had time to eat. So Jesus suggested that they go in the boat to a quiet place and take a rest.

Tammy: But that's not what happened was it? The people saw them going and followed along the shore. Did Jesus *shoo* them away and tell them they needed some time alone? ...No, the Bible says he *had compassion on them*. In fact it says, *he welcomed them* ...he taught them about the kingdom of God and he healed the sick.

Carol: Do you remember what happened next? ...Yes, by late afternoon Jesus' followers came to him and asked him to send the people away to the nearby towns and farms to buy food. Did Jesus do that?...

Tammy: He didn't, did he? He turned around and told *them* to feed the people! Can you imagine *how they felt*? How would *you* feel?...

Carol: I think I would feel just the same as they did... they said they would have to work for months to earn enough money to pay for food for this huge crowd of people.

But all Jesus said, in response to this was, "Go and find out how much bread we *do* have."

They must have searched for a long time among so many people. And when they came back they told him they had *five small loaves of bread and two fish*. ...How could *that* possibly feed the people? And what would Jesus say now?

Tammy: Well, he simply told them to tell everyone to sit down on the grass, in groups. And do you remember what he did next? Would you love to have been there to see this? I would. Jesus took those little loaves and he looked up toward heaven and 'blessed them.' Then he started to break the loaves into pieces...and handed them to his followers to give to the people.

Ros: Imagine being the first to take some of the bread to the people. Wouldn't you want to say... "But...how will this feed *all these people*?" But the story in the Bible doesn't tell us what they said, it just tells us that they *did what Jesus asked them to*...and they *started to hand out the food* ...and Jesus kept breaking the bread ...and they kept on handing out the food ...and Jesus kept breaking the bread ...and they kept handing out the food.

It was already late afternoon and it must have taken a *long time* for them to hand out enough food for 5,000 people. ...But wait...the story tells us that there were 5,000 *men* – not counting the *women and children*!! So there *could* have been about 10,000 people to feed!! ...And the food kept coming. Not only did he divide up enough bread for all these people from 5 small loaves, but he also divided up the two fish into enough fish to feed thousands of people.

What an amazing day these people had! Jesus had not shooed them away. He had *compassion* on them – he truly *cared* about them. Do you remember why? The Bible says ‘...because they were like sheep without a shepherd.’ Have you seen sheep with no shepherd? They have no-one to follow. They don’t know where to go. And at night there’s no-one to keep them from the wild animals that might attack them.

So Jesus had compassion on them – he taught them about the kingdom of God, and he healed the sick. He must have been very tired by the end of the day. But again, instead of shooing them away he gave them all a meal. He fed their souls with spiritual food, and he fed their bodies with physical food.

This is the same Jesus that we worship today – God’s son, the Lord Jesus Christ. If you come to him *he will have compassion on you*. He *cares* about you. He knows what you need and he will answer your cry for help...and give you *hope*.

Would you like to join me as we pray and thank him?

Thank you Jesus for caring for all those people. And thank you for caring for us. Please help my friend to trust you...that you will care for her too. Amen

Carol: We hope you’ve enjoyed our two stories today. We would love to hear from you. We do hope you will be with us again. Have a great week filled with God’s blessings.

Goodbye and God bless you.

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