

Feast from a Snack

A Monologue for a Child

by Mark McClintock
based on John 6:1-15

Editor's Note: The following is a monologue meant to be delivered by a young boy. If you'd like to make this authentic, he should be costumed as a peasant child from the first century. He could be carrying a basket.

You should've seen it! It was a miracle!

And it was me who helped Jesus do it. I mean, it was I who helped Jesus do it. I mean...it was Jesus who helped me. We'd heard of him and the things he done...I mean, did...on the other side of the sea. But we never thought he'd pass through our little fishing village! When he did, it was like a holiday. A crowd of people was following him.

Some of the men stopped working to see him. My father wanted to go, but he and my older brothers had to repair our boat. Mama said, "Send Joel," —that's me— "he's no help to you anyway." To tell the truth, I am a little clumsy, and Papa easily loses his patience with me.

"But Mama," I said, "I have to go to shul." "What for?" she said. "You think the rabbi will care?"

I don't think he would. He scolds me for asking too much...I mean, too many questions and tells me I should work harder on my Hebrew. Still, I didn't want to go. I knew this new teacher would think I was stupid, too. And besides, I hadn't eaten breakfast yet. Papa and my brothers took up all the space at our small table. Every morning, I waited until they were finished, and now I wouldn't get anything.

Mama rolled her eyes and said one of her little blessings over me...the kind where she pulls me by my ear.

She took some fish out of the salt and some

loaves of bread and rolled them all up in a cloth and stuffed them in my arms and blessed me out the door.

So that's why I followed Jesus. It was a long walk up the mountain where I once got in trouble for playing when I should have been in shul. I was starving, and I ate half the food Mama had given me along the way. Some of the other boys had skipped shul, too, but their parents were with them, so they didn't get in trouble.

When we finally reached the mountaintop, it was amazing! All these sick people had come, or people had brought them for Jesus to heal. He made Obed, the lame beggar, stand up and walk. I saw it with my own eyes! He made blind people see, and deaf people hear and crooked people stand up straight.

After awhile, I got tired of watching. Some of the other boys started a game of tag, but they didn't ask me to play. They hardly ever did.

Later, they started complaining to their parents that they were hungry. I stuffed my bundle of food in my tunic. If they weren't going to invite me to play, I sure wasn't going to share my lunch with them.

Finally, Jesus stopped healing and started teaching. The things he said were different from the rabbi in my village. He talked about the meek and loving your enemy. And the stories he told! A shepherd who went after a lost sheep. And a son who was a bigger fool than me, but his father loved him anyway. I could have listened to him tell stories all day. But then he stopped and told these men to find food for everybody. They looked at him

like he was crazy. To tell the truth, I thought so, too. There was millions of people standing around Jesus. Or at least thousands. Nobody seemed to think of bringing any food except me.

To tell the truth, I would've shared my food, but I knew my Mama wouldn't like it. Well, I knew she would've blessed me for being foolish. There was only a little left, and everybody would've laughed at me if I'd offered to share it. To tell the truth, I wanted to keep the rest for myself.

I know I looked stupid standing there, staring at them. But Jesus put his arm around me and said, "Don't ever think what you have to give is unimportant. God can make a feast out of a snack."

But then one of the little children near me started crying. I knew she was hungry. And I thought, maybe she needed the food more than me. So when the men came back to Jesus, I showed one what I had. I meant for him to take it to Jesus, but instead he took me with him. Now I knew everyone would laugh at me.

But Jesus just said, "Sit everyone down and bring some baskets." Then he took my food and said a prayer—a short one, not like the ones our rabbi says that make your back ache. And he started breaking the bread and

the fish into little pieces. Somehow, he filled up a whole basket and handed it to me.

Me! He asked me to help!

"You wanted to share it?" he said.

I went straight to that little girl and gave her some. Then I passed the basket around until it was empty. When I took it back to Jesus, I couldn't believe it!

There were five more baskets full of fish and bread! It took forever to give it all out. And when we were done, there were twelve basketfuls of leftovers! I know I looked stupid

standing there, staring at them.

But Jesus put his arm around me and said, "Don't ever think what you have to give is unimportant. God can make a feast out of a snack."

Some things haven't changed much. The rabbi still says I ask too many questions. A few of the other boys still make fun of

me, but most of the children invite me to play with them now. My Mama says my head has grown bigger, but my cap still fits, so I think she's just blessing me again.

And I still have to wait for my father and big brothers to go fishing before I can have breakfast at the table.

But to tell the truth, after that day with Jesus, nothing is the same. No matter what anybody else thinks, I know

I'm important to Jesus and I can serve God.

And you know what? At Jesus' table, there will always be a place for me.

—Mark McClintock is the director of PassportKids, a summer children's camping program. He lives in Birmingham, Alabama, with his wife Michelle, his daughter Maggie and several ventriloquist's puppets.