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By Dan Maines

Matthew 14

Matthew 14:1-2

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus, and said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he himself has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

† Herod's guilty conscience made him believe John had risen. Fear and superstition replaced truth in his mind.

† Josephus records Herod's fear of John's influence, describing how he had him killed to secure his throne (Antiquities 18.116-119).

Matthew 14:3-5

For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. For John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded John as a prophet.

† John's boldness brought him into conflict with power. Herodias hated him for exposing sin, but Herod feared the people's respect for John.

Matthew 14:6-12

But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod, so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Now after being prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." And although he was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths and his dinner guests. He sent word and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and they went and reported to Jesus.

† Herod feared men more than God. To preserve his pride before his guests, he killed the prophet.

† Josephus confirms John's execution at Machaerus, giving historical weight to Matthew's account (Antiquities 18.119).

Matthew 14:13-14

Now when Jesus heard about John, He withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by Himself, and when the people

heard about this, they followed Him on foot from the cities. When He came ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

† Jesus shows divine compassion even in His grief. He turns from sorrow to ministry, healing the multitudes.

Matthew 14:15-21

Now when it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This place is secluded and the hour is already past, so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go; you give them something to eat!" They said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." And He said, "Bring them here to Me." Ordering the crowds to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets. There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

† The feeding of the five thousand reveals Jesus as the true provider, greater than Moses who gave manna. The twelve baskets represent sufficiency for all Israel.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls spoke of a coming messianic banquet (1QSa 2.11-22). Jesus fulfills this expectation.

Matthew 14:22-27

Immediately afterward He compelled the disciples to get into the boat and to go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray, and when it was evening, He was there alone. But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

† Jesus demonstrates authority over creation itself. The sea, a symbol of chaos, is under His feet.

Matthew 14:28-33

Peter responded and said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water, and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out with His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are truly God's Son!"

† Peter's faltering faith reflects the weakness of man, yet Jesus saves when we call out. The disciples worshiped Him as the Son of God.

Matthew 14:34-36

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent word into all that surrounding region and brought to Him all who were sick, and they pleaded with Him that they might just touch the border of His cloak, and all who touched it were cured.

† The healing at Gennesaret shows the overflowing power of Christ. Faith, even in touching His garment, brought restoration.

How it applies to us today:

† Matthew 14 reveals the stark contrast between the rulers of

this world and the true King. Herod lived in fear and compromise, but Jesus reigned with compassion and power. John's death reminds us that standing for truth often comes with a cost, yet it never goes unnoticed by God. The feeding of the five thousand proves that Christ supplies every need of His people, both physical and spiritual. His walking on the sea shows His dominion over creation, and Peter's rescue shows His mercy when our faith falters. For us today in the fulfilled kingdom, this means we can't place our hope in corrupt leaders or human power, but in the Son of God who reigns already. We must live as disciples who trust Him fully, proclaim His fulfilled promises boldly, and rest in His care even in the storms of life.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus, Antiquities 18.116-119

† Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QSa 2.11-22

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