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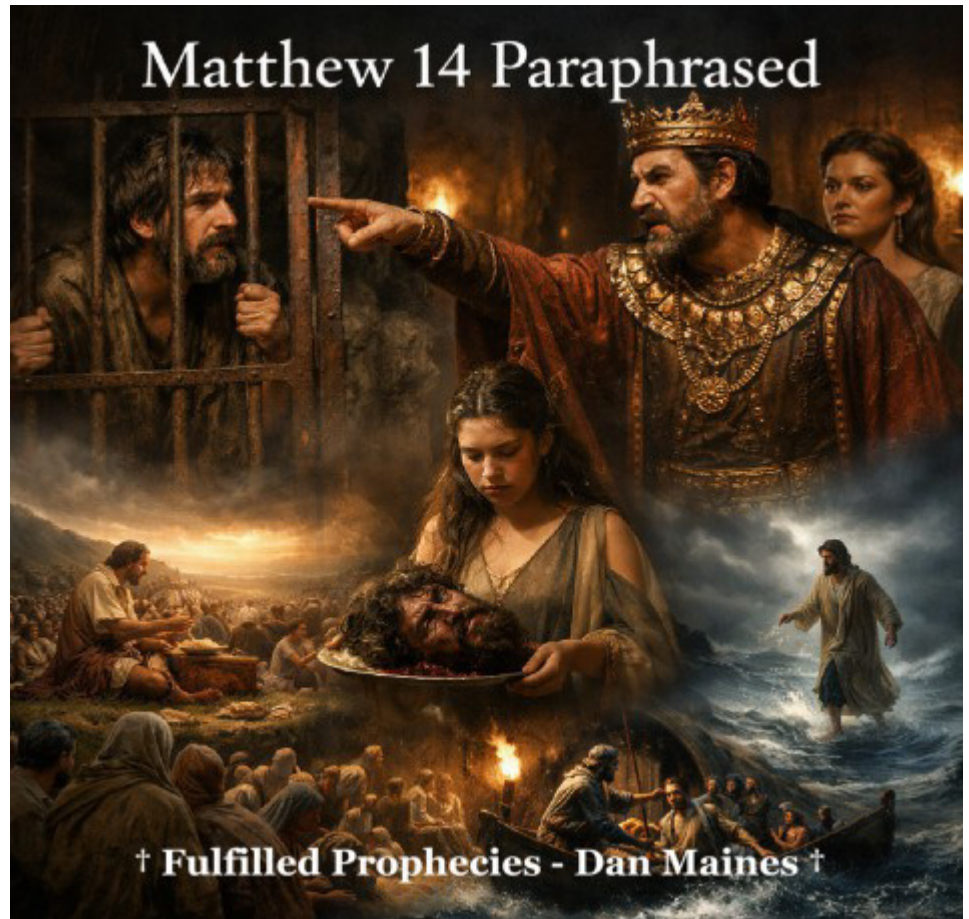
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## Matthew 14 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## Matthew 14 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† Matthew 14 records major events in the ministry of Jesus, including the death of John the Baptist, the feeding of the five thousand, and Jesus walking on the sea. These events reveal both the rejection of God's messengers by corrupt rulers and the growing revelation of the Messiah to Israel (Matthew 11:12; Matthew 16:16).

† The chapter shows how the message of repentance brought conflict with political authority, while Christ's miracles

demonstrated the arrival of God's kingdom among that generation (Matthew 12:28; Luke 7:22).

† These events also take place during the final decades leading to the covenant judgment Jesus later announced against Jerusalem, showing the urgency of the message being preached to Israel (Matthew 23:36; Luke 19:41-44).

### **Matthew 14:1**

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus,

† Herod Antipas governed Galilee under Roman authority and was deeply disturbed by the growing reports of Jesus' miracles and teaching (Luke 3:1; Luke 9:7).

† News about Christ's works was spreading rapidly across the region because the miracles confirmed that something extraordinary was happening in Israel (Matthew 4:23-24).

† Even political leaders could not ignore the influence of Jesus as crowds gathered to hear him and witness his power (Mark 6:14).

### **Matthew 14:2**

and he said to his servants, This is John the Baptist, he has risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.

† Herod's fear reflected the guilt he carried after ordering the death of John the Baptist (Mark 6:16).

† The rulers recognized that supernatural power was present in Jesus' ministry, even though they misunderstood its source (John 3:2).

† John's powerful preaching had left such a strong impression that Herod believed his spirit had returned (Matthew 3:5-6).

### **Matthew 14:3**

For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.

† John had publicly rebuked Herod for taking his brother's wife, which violated the law of Moses (Leviticus 18:16; Leviticus 20:21).

† Prophets throughout Israel's history confronted rulers about sin, often suffering persecution for speaking the truth (1 Kings 18:17-18).

† John's imprisonment shows the cost of faithful preaching when it challenges those in power (Matthew 5:10-12).

#### **Matthew 14:4**

For John had been saying to him, It is not lawful for you to have her.

† John's rebuke was based on the law given to Israel which condemned such a relationship (Leviticus 18:16).

† He served as a prophetic voice calling the nation to repentance just as Elijah had done in earlier generations (Malachi 4:5-6).

† This courage demonstrates the responsibility of God's messengers to confront sin without compromise (Ezekiel 3:17-19).

#### **Matthew 14:5**

Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded John as a prophet.

† The people widely believed John was a true prophet sent by God (Matthew 21:26).

† Herod's fear of the crowd shows how political leaders often weigh public opinion when making decisions.

† This moment reveals the tension between political authority and prophetic truth.

#### **Matthew 14:6**

But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod,

† Royal celebrations often involved elaborate banquets and entertainment for rulers and their guests (Esther 1:5-8).

† The event created the setting that would ultimately lead to John's execution (Mark 6:21).

† Moments of careless celebration often lead to serious consequences when wisdom is absent.

### **Matthew 14:7**

so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked.

† Rash vows were warned against in scripture because they could lead to destructive outcomes (Ecclesiastes 5:4-5).

† Herod made the promise to impress those attending the banquet.

† Pride and reputation often drive people to commit themselves to foolish decisions.

### **Matthew 14:8**

Having been prompted by her mother, she said, Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.

† Herodias used her daughter to carry out revenge against John for exposing her sin (Mark 6:24).

† Hatred toward God's messengers often grows when people refuse to repent.

† The persecution of prophets was a long pattern within Israel's history (Matthew 23:34-35).

### **Matthew 14:9**

Although he was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests.

† Herod knew the request was wrong but valued his reputation more than justice.

† Fear of embarrassment before others can push leaders into moral failure.

† This moment reveals the weakness of authority that lacks righteousness.

### **Matthew 14:10**

He sent and had John beheaded in the prison.

† John the Baptist sealed his prophetic ministry with his life.

† Jesus later described John as the greatest born among women because of his role in preparing the way (Matthew 11:11).

† The death of prophets at the hands of rulers was tragically common throughout Israel's history (Luke 13:33-34).

### **Matthew 14:11**

And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.

† The brutality of the scene exposes the corruption within Herod's household.

† Vengeance often drives people toward acts that shock the conscience.

† Scripture repeatedly records how rejecting God's messengers leads to escalating violence (2 Chronicles 36:16).

### **Matthew 14:12**

His disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and they went and reported to Jesus.

† John's followers honored him with a proper burial.

† They brought the news to Jesus, recognizing the connection between John's mission and Christ's work.

† John's ministry had prepared the nation for the coming of the Messiah (John 1:29-31).

### **Matthew 14:13**

Now when Jesus heard about John, he withdrew from there in a boat to a secluded place by himself, and when the people heard of this, they followed him on foot from the cities.

† Jesus withdrew after hearing about John's death, likely for prayer and reflection (Mark 6:31).

† The crowds continued pursuing him because they desired healing and teaching.

† The growing number of followers shows how powerful his ministry had become among the people.

### **Matthew 14:14**

When he went ashore, he saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

† The compassion of Jesus reveals the heart of the Messiah toward suffering people (Isaiah 61:1).

† Healing the sick fulfilled prophetic expectations about the coming kingdom (Isaiah 35:5-6).

† These miracles confirmed that God's power was present in Christ's ministry.

### **Matthew 14:15**

When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, This place is desolate and the hour is already late, so send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.

† The disciples were concerned about the physical needs of the large crowd.

† The setting resembled Israel's wilderness experience where God provided food for his people (Exodus 16:4).

† This moment prepared the disciples to witness another demonstration of divine power.

### **Matthew 14:16**

But Jesus said to them, They do not need to go away, you give them something to eat.

† Jesus challenged the disciples to trust God rather than the limits of their resources.

† The miracle would involve the disciples participating in distributing the food.

† Christ often used such moments to teach the disciples deeper faith.

### **Matthew 14:17**

They said to him, We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish.

† The disciples saw only the small amount of food available.

† Human reasoning often focuses on scarcity instead of divine provision.

† The limited supply highlights the magnitude of the miracle that followed.

### **Matthew 14:18**

And he said, Bring them here to me.

† Jesus began with the small resources already present.

† God frequently multiplies what appears insignificant (2 Kings 4:42-44).

† The command shows that divine provision begins with trusting Christ.

### **Matthew 14:19**

Ordering the people 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,

† Jesus acknowledged the Father as the source of provision before distributing the food.

† The disciples acted as servants distributing the miracle to the people.

† This moment reveals the Messiah as the shepherd providing for Israel (Psalm 23:1).

### **Matthew 14:20**

and they all ate and were satisfied. They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets.

† The abundance demonstrated that God's provision exceeded the need.

† Twelve baskets may symbolize provision for the twelve tribes of Israel.

† The miracle showed that the Messiah could sustain the people of God.

### **Matthew 14:21**

There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and children.

† The full crowd likely exceeded ten thousand people.

† The scale of the miracle made it impossible to deny what had occurred.

† This event greatly increased the fame of Jesus throughout the region.

### **Matthew 14:22**

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the crowds away.

† Jesus dismissed the crowd to prevent political attempts to make him king (John 6:15).

† He directed the disciples across the sea while he remained behind.

† This prepared them for another powerful demonstration of his authority.

### **Matthew 14:23**

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.

† Prayer was central to Jesus' ministry.

† He frequently withdrew to spend time with the Father (Luke

5:16).

† Even after miracles he sought solitude and communion with God.

### **Matthew 14:24**

But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

† Sudden storms were common on the Sea of Galilee due to the surrounding terrain.

† The disciples struggled against strong winds and waves.

† This situation prepared them for another miracle revealing Christ's authority.

### **Matthew 14:25**

And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea.

† The fourth watch occurred between roughly 3 and 6 in the morning.

† Walking on water demonstrated authority that belongs to God alone (Job 9:8).

† This miracle revealed Jesus' power over the forces of nature.

### **Matthew 14:26**

When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, It is a ghost! And they cried out in fear.

† The disciples reacted with fear because they could not understand what they were witnessing.

† Encounters with divine power often produce fear before understanding.

† Their response shows how extraordinary the moment was.

### **Matthew 14:27**

But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid.

† Jesus calmed their fear by identifying himself.

† God's presence repeatedly brings reassurance to his people (Isaiah 41:10).

† His words revealed authority and compassion at the same time.

### **Matthew 14:28**

Peter said to him, Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.

† Peter showed bold faith in asking to walk toward Jesus.

† He trusted that Christ's command could make the impossible possible.

† This moment reveals both courage and spiritual curiosity.

### **Matthew 14:29**

And he said, Come! And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

† Peter briefly shared in the miracle through faith in Christ's command.

† The event demonstrates how faith can overcome natural limitations.

† Yet it also foreshadows the weakness of human faith.

### **Matthew 14:30**

But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me!

† Peter lost focus on Jesus and became overwhelmed by the storm.

† Fear replaced faith when circumstances took his attention.

† This moment reveals how quickly doubt can weaken trust.

### **Matthew 14:31**

Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and took hold of him, and said to him, You of little faith, why did you doubt?

† Jesus rescued Peter while also correcting his doubt.

† Faith must remain focused on Christ rather than surrounding

circumstances.

† This moment helped shape the growth of the disciples.

### **Matthew 14:32**

When they got into the boat, the wind stopped.

† The storm ceased immediately when Jesus entered the boat.

† This demonstrated authority over nature itself.

† Such power confirmed the divine identity of Christ.

### **Matthew 14:33**

And those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, You are certainly God's Son!

† The disciples responded with worship because they recognized his authority.

† Their confession reveals growing understanding about who Jesus truly was.

† The miracles throughout Matthew were leading them to this conclusion.

### **Matthew 14:34**

When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

† Gennesaret was a fertile area along the Sea of Galilee known for its agriculture.

† Jesus continued ministering as he traveled through the region.

† The miracles had prepared the people to seek him out.

### **Matthew 14:35**

And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent word into all that surrounding district and brought to him all who were sick,

† News about Jesus spread quickly among nearby towns.

† People brought their sick because they believed he could heal them.

† His reputation as a healer continued to grow throughout the

region.

### **Matthew 14:36**

and they implored him that they might just touch the fringe of his cloak, and as many as touched it were cured.

† The people believed even touching his garment could bring healing.

† This reflects the earlier healing of the woman who touched his cloak in faith (Matthew 9:20-22).

† The power present in Christ confirmed that God's kingdom had arrived among them.

### **Historical References**

† Josephus records the execution of John the Baptist under Herod Antipas, confirming the historical context of this chapter (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 18.5.2).

† Eusebius wrote about the martyrdom of John the Baptist as a major event remembered by early Christians (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 1.11).

† Clement of Alexandria referred to John as the final prophet who prepared the way for the Messiah (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

### **How It Applies To Us Today**

† John's courage reminds us that truth must be spoken even when it challenges powerful people (Acts 5:29).

† The feeding of the five thousand shows that Christ provides more than enough for those who trust him (Philippians 4:19).

† Peter walking on the water reminds us that faith must remain focused on Christ rather than our circumstances (Hebrews 12:2).

### **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** Why did Herod think Jesus was John raised from the dead?

**A:** His guilty conscience over executing John caused him to

believe John had returned, revealing how deeply the prophet's death troubled him (Mark 6:14-16).

**Q:** What was the significance of feeding the five thousand?

**A:** The miracle revealed Jesus as the provider for Israel and echoed God's provision during the wilderness journey (Exodus 16:4; John 6:35).

**Q:** Why did Peter begin to sink while walking on water?

**A:** Peter shifted his focus from Jesus to the storm around him, showing how doubt can weaken faith (Matthew 14:30-31; James 1:6).

**Q:** Why was John the Baptist imprisoned by Herod?

**A:** John publicly rebuked Herod for taking Herodias, his brother's wife, which violated the law given to Israel. His imprisonment shows how rulers often reject the truth when it exposes their sin (Leviticus 18:16; Luke 3:19-20).

**Q:** Why did Jesus feed the crowd instead of sending them away?

**A:** Jesus showed compassion for the people and demonstrated that the Messiah provides for his people just as God provided manna for Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 16:4; Matthew 14:14-16).

**Q:** Why were twelve baskets of leftovers collected?

**A:** The twelve baskets reflect abundance and likely symbolize provision for the twelve tribes of Israel, showing that the Messiah had come to provide for the whole nation (Matthew 15:37; Luke 22:30).

**Q:** Why did the people believe touching Jesus' cloak could heal them?

**A:** Earlier miracles showed that faith in Christ brought healing, including the woman who touched his garment and was immediately healed (Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:27-29).

**Q:** What does Jesus walking on the sea reveal about him?

**A:** The miracle demonstrates authority that belongs to God alone, confirming that Jesus possessed divine power over creation itself (Job 9:8; Psalm 107:28-30).

**Q:** Why did the disciples worship Jesus in the boat?

**A:** After seeing the storm immediately stop and witnessing Jesus walking on the sea, they recognized his divine authority and confessed that he truly was the Son of God (Matthew 14:32-33; John 20:28).

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

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### **Source Index**

† Matthew 14:1-36; Matthew 11:12; Matthew 16:16; Matthew 23:36; Matthew 4:23-24; Matthew 3:5-6; Matthew 5:10-12; Matthew 9:20-22; Matthew 12:28

† Isaiah 35:5-6; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 61:1; Psalm 23:1; Job 9:8; Exodus 16:4; 2 Kings 4:42-44

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 18.5.2; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 1.11; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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