

## Matthew 14

**When Herod heard the reports about Jesus, what concern did he voice to his attendants (vv. 1-2)?** Herod had previously ordered the execution of John the Baptist. When Herod heard of Christ's miracles, his conscience began to stab him. The memory of the prophet whom he had beheaded kept coming before him. He told his servants, *"This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him."*<sup>1</sup>

In the past, Herod had arrested John and put him in prison. **What was Herod's motivation for arresting John the Baptist (vv. 3-4)?** Herod had abandoned his wife and had been living in an adulterous, incestuous relationship with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. As a prophet of God, John could not let this pass without rebuke. Indignantly and fearlessly, he pointed his finger at Herod and denounced him for his immorality.<sup>2</sup>

John was a man of character.....the antithesis of Herod. When he preached repentance, John did not spare the rich and powerful. We see in John a powerful example of moral courage; which he ultimately paid for with his life.

**What happened on Herod's birthday (v. 6)?** The daughter of Herodias so pleased the king by her dancing that he impetuously offered her anything she wanted.

**What did Herodias advise her daughter to ask Herod for (v. 8)?** Prompted by her wanton mother, she brazenly asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

**How did the King respond to her request (v. 9)?** He was greatly distressed. He had backed himself into a corner. He was afraid to cross his wife and/or lose face before his friends, so he did something he knew to be wrong and ordered John to be beheaded. We see here the antithesis of moral courage – cowardice. Herod's pride got him in trouble, as Pilate's did later. Both of these rulers sacrificed a righteous and holy man on the altar of their personal popularity.

**What did the disciples do (v. 12)?** John's disciples gave their master's body a respectful burial, then went and told Jesus. As for Herod, his crime was finished, but the memory lingered on. When he heard of Jesus' activities (v. 1), the entire episode returned to haunt him.

**When Jesus heard about John's death what did He do (v. 13)?** He withdrew by boat to a secluded area by the Sea of Galilee.

**When His boat landed, what did Jesus see (vv. 13-14)?** The people anticipated where Jesus and His disciples were going. So the crowds flocked from the towns and followed Him on foot. As He went ashore, they were waiting for Him. Far from being irritated by this intrusion, our compassionate Lord set to work immediately and healed all their sick.

**When evening came what was the disciples concern (v. 15)?** So many people and nothing for them to eat. They asked Jesus to send the people into the villages where they could get food.

**What did Jesus tell them to do (v. 16)?** He caught the disciples off guard by saying, *"You give them something to eat."* They were staggered. "Give them something to eat? How are we supposed to do that?"

Jesus was leading them to recognize their personal inadequacy—and to appeal to Him as the only adequate resource (cf. [John 2:1-11](#)).<sup>3</sup>

**What was the disciples' response (v. 17)?** "We have nothing but five loaves and two fish." They had forgotten that they also had Jesus. **What did Jesus do (vv. 18-19)?** Patiently the Savior said, "Bring them here to Me." That was their part.

**When the disciples distributed the fish and loaves, did the people have enough to eat (v. 20)?** There was plenty for all; a multitude of perhaps 10,000 to 15,000 had been fed (5,000 men plus women and children).<sup>4</sup>

**What did the disciples do next (v. 20)?** When all had eaten and were satisfied, the disciples gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. There was more left over when Jesus finished than when He began. Ironically enough, there was a basket for each questioning disciple.

**What did Jesus direct the disciples to do next (v. 22)?** Jesus sent the disciples away in a boat, which did two things: it got them away from the crowd, and it gave them the opportunity to ponder the significance of what had just happened through them.

**What did Jesus do after he had sent the disciples on their way (v. 23)?** After dismissing the crowd ... He went up into the hills alone to pray (cf. [John 6:15](#)). Meanwhile, the boat was now far from land and in the middle of a storm.

**What did Jesus do next (v. 25)?** Jesus saw the disciples' plight and, as the waves battered the boat, He went to them walking on the sea.

**What did the disciples think when they saw Jesus walking on the water (v. 26)?** Thinking it was a ghost, the disciples panicked. Their fear of seeing a ghost was relieved when Jesus announced that it was He. His power over the elements was obvious, but there was also a lesson in faith for the disciples in this experience.

**What did Jesus say to them (v. 27)?** The reassuring voice of their Master, *"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

**What was Peter's response (v. 28)?** Peter wanted greater assurance that it was really the Lord. He said, *"Lord, if it's You ... tell me to come to You on the water."*

**What did Jesus tell Peter do to (v. 29)?** The Lord's reply was a simple *"Come."* With remarkable trust Peter climbed over the side of the boat and began walking on the water toward the Lord.

**What happened when Peter saw the wind (v. 30)?** Peter's faith was challenged when he saw the wind, that is, when he saw its effect on the water. As he sank, he cried to the Lord for help. Immediately the Lord caught him. He was doing well until he became more concerned about the waves than about Jesus. His distressing circumstances distracted his attention and weakened his faith in Jesus.<sup>5</sup> **What kinds of things distract us from Jesus?**

**How did Jesus react to Peter's action (v. 31)?** Jesus rebuked Peter for his lack of faith (cf. 6:30; 8:26; 16:8) which had caused him to sink.

**When Jesus and Peter arrived back at the boat, how did the men in the boat respond to seeing all this (vv. 32-33)?** The stilling of the wind is not the climax of the story. The amazed disciples worshipped Jesus. This is the first time that they addressed Jesus with His full title: *"Son of God"* (16:16; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54). This was a new high for the disciples in their appreciation of Jesus' person.<sup>6</sup>

**What happened when they landed at Gennesaret (vv. 35-36)?** As soon as the local men spotted Jesus, they scoured the area for all who were sick and brought them to Him and He healed them all. And so the doctors in that area had a holiday. The district experienced health and healing through a visit by the Great Physician.

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<sup>1</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1260.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Matthew*, 2025 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 400.

<sup>4</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1261.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Matthew*, 2025 Edition (published by Sonic Light), 404.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 405.