

Matthew 14

ASVh with Comments

Summary. In this chapter, the Lord shows His mercy and His compassion towards the suffering of people and towards His disciples. He heals the sick, feeds the hungry, saves the disciples from the sea storm, and receives John's disciples. 1) Five thousand are fed in a desolate place. The word about the Lord Jesus spread all over, and people followed Him, even in this desolate place. When the Lord saw them, He had compassion and mercy on them, healed their sick, and fed them. He miraculously multiplied five loaves of bread and two fishes to feed this large crowd of five thousand men plus their women and children. Here, the Lord Jesus shows that He is the Lord over life on this earth as well. He multiplies food, which is the source of life on earth. Also, the Lord Jesus shows His disciples that He communicates with the Father for everything He does, and He always seeks the Father's will. And, all of this is the Father's will, to multiply the bread and the fish, to save the disciples, and even to talk to the disciples. 2) The Lord Jesus walks on the water to save His disciples. The miracle when the Lord Jesus walks on the sea shows that He is more than human; He is the Lord over the winds and the sea. This miracle builds the confidence of the disciples that, indeed, He is the Son of God. Throughout the development of this event, we see that doubt and fear are strong enemies of the faith. Here, in this situation, the disciples had both doubt and fear, which happened shortly after they had just witnessed the miracle of feeding the five thousand. Nevertheless, Peter was commanded to walk on the water to conquer his doubt, but fear of the unseen came upon him while he, himself, was walking miraculously on the water. Peter's example is important to all of us. When trouble comes our way like a windstorm and fear of the unseen world grips our souls, we need to call to the Lord as Peter did, "**Lord save me,**" and the Lord will come immediately as He did for Peter. 3) The Lord Jesus heals the sick at Gennesaret. Gennesaret was a small and poor town, and the Lord Jesus came to help those who were afflicted. People recognized Him and spread the word about His coming. Again, people from all over the region came to be healed. The Lord Jesus healed the sick to help people grow in faith and have a firm knowledge about Him. 4) John's disciples come to the Lord Jesus. People at that time had a flawed understanding about the Lord Jesus and John. For us, it is important to note that John never performed any miracles. He was just the messenger of the Lord, and he preached repentance. The Lord Jesus is the light and the One that John preached about, but people didn't link John's teachings to the Lord Jesus. Eventually, after John's death, some of his disciples started to follow the Lord Jesus.

14 ¹ At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the rumor about Jesus, ² and said to his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead and because of this, the miraculous powers are working in him.

Comments 14:1-2. This passage of Scripture shows a comparison that people made at that time between the Lord Jesus and John the Baptist (See verses 1 and 5). John did not do any miracles. John was preaching repentance and told people to wait for the One that will come after him. The Lord Jesus performed miracles, and people were talking about Him. But, they did not link John's teachings to the Lord Jesus; their eyes were darkened, and they could not see the light.

³ For Herod had laid hold on John, he bound and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

⁴ For John said to him, It is not lawful for you to have her.

⁵ And wishing to kill him, he feared the multitude, because they held him as a prophet.

Comments 14:3-5. Even though John was considered a prophet, there was no value for his life because the word of people at that time had more power than the Word of God. It is the same today; many people do not value their life. People fear the word of other people instead of the Word of God, and many do not go to church because of fear of people judging them instead of fearing God's judgment.

⁶ Now the birthday of Herod having been kept, the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst, and pleased Herod.

⁷ Wherefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever if she might ask.

⁸ And **having been led** forward by her mother, **she says**, Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.

⁹ And the king was grieved; **because of the oaths**, and of **those reclining** with him, he commanded it to be given;

¹⁰ and he **having sent**, beheaded John in the prison.

¹¹ And his head was brought on a **board**, and given to the **girl**, and she brought it to her mother.

¹² And his disciples came, took up the **body**, and buried him; and **having come** they told **Jesus**.

Comments 14:12. The death of John was a turning point for some of John's disciples to come and follow the Lord Jesus. Because of John's teaching about the One (the Lord Jesus) that will come after him, some of John's disciples who had their hearts open became the Lord Jesus' followers.

¹³ And **Jesus**, **having** heard, withdrew from **there by** a boat to a **desolate** place **by Himself**. And the multitudes, **having** heard, followed **Him** on foot from the cities.

Comments 14:13. When the Lord Jesus heard about John's death, it made Him feel sad for His own disciples since His time to depart was approaching. The love the Lord has for His disciples makes the Lord feel sad to leave them. His concern is not for Himself but for His disciples. He did not worry for His own but for those that belong to Him. "And the multitudes, having heard, ..." People heard about the Lord Jesus' healing miracles, and they follow the Lord Jesus only to see the miracles He is doing. Hearing about the miracles the Lord Jesus is doing makes them curious but not believing. They follow because they want to see with their own eyes.

¹⁴ And **He** came forth, saw a great multitude, and **felt** compassion **toward** them, and healed their sick.

Comments 14:14. As the Word tells, the people walked from towns to follow the Lord on the boat. When the Lord went ashore and saw the people, He had compassion toward them. Some were coming from far away, some were old, some were sick, and the Lord could see that many were hungry, tired, and weak. So, the Lord had compassion toward them, and He healed the sick who followed Him.

¹⁵ And **evening having come**, the disciples came to **Him**, saying, The place is **desolate**, and the time is already **passed**; **dismiss** the multitudes, that **having gone** into the villages, **they might buy for** themselves food.

Comments 14:15. The Lord did not have money to buy food for the people, and that is why the disciples asked Him to send the people away to buy food for themselves. But the amount of people following the Lord was large and there was not enough food in that area for all of them, even if they had money.

¹⁶ But **Jesus** said **to** them, They have no need to go away; **you** give them to eat.

¹⁷ And they say **to Him**, We have **not** here **except** five loaves, and two fishes.

¹⁸ And **He** said, Bring them **here to Me**.

Comments 14:16-18. In this passage, the Lord Jesus wants the disciples to come and gain faith. This faith experience is for their own good. When the time comes, the disciples will remember that they have seen the Lord multiply the little food to feed this large amount of people who came to follow the Lord Jesus. The Lord showed them that by believing, all things are possible.

¹⁹ And **having** commanded the multitudes to **lay** down on the grass, **having taken** the five loaves and the two fishes, **having looked up** to the heaven, **He** blessed; and **having broken**, **He** gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes.

Comments 14:19. "... having looked up to the heaven, He blessed." In this passage, the Lord Jesus wants His disciples to notice the communication between Him and the Father. Always, the Lord Jesus seeks first the Father's advice and the Father's will, and in this situation, by the Father's will, the food is multiplied. The Lord Jesus always does according to the Father's will for big and small things. The Lord Jesus could multiply the food by Himself, but He seeks first the Father's will.

"and having broken, He gave the loaves to the disciples ..." It is believed that when the Lord Jesus broke the loaves, the small pieces He broke became new loaves in His hands. He placed the multiplied loaves in baskets in front of Him, and the disciples came, took the baskets, and distributed the bread to the people. In the same way, He multiplied the fish.

²⁰ And they all ate and were filled; and they took up that **being** over **and above** of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.

Comments 14:20. The key word of this verse is “filled” or “satisfied”. When people eat until that point, in their hearts, there is nothing else they need more. Many started to follow the Lord Jesus for the food. They followed their human nature that we could call “easy to get.” In humans, the main concern is food for the belly, not food for the soul. This is the weak point of humans; our bellies can order us to do things. If there is food, there will be people to follow.

²¹ And **those eating** were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Comments 14:21. The amount of people who followed the Lord in this place was very large. So, the word quickly spread that if you follow the Lord Jesus, you will get free food. And many followed the Lord for the wrong reason (See John 6:25-27).

²² And **at once He** urged the disciples to **embark** into the boat, and to go before **Him** to the other side, **until He would dismiss** the multitudes.

Comments 14:22. When the Lord dismissed the people, He did not just say, “Go, it is over.” The Lord blessed them and reminded them to remember what He taught them and do not let His Word remain empty. They did not have the Bible as we do today, so the Lord encouraged them to talk together. By reading the Bible, the Word becomes alive for us. In the same way, by bringing the Word to talk together, the Word becomes alive.

²³ And **having dismissed** the multitudes, **He** went up **on** the mountain **by Himself** to pray; when evening came, **He** was there alone.

Comments 14:23. In this passage, the Lord Jesus has shown to all people that even with all the busy days people have, every day, we need to have time alone with the Father to be far from all that makes the mind not be connected with the Father. Only in prayer the mind can be connected with the Father, and the Father needs to be in the center of our lives. We need to think of nothing, not even of ourselves, but the Father alone, because all things, even our own souls, belong to the Father as He created all things. As shown here, even the Lord Jesus Himself needed to be alone with the Father. So, ask yourself when you had that you, all of you, belonged to the Father alone.

²⁴ And the boat, now **many stadia from the land**, was **being tossed** by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

Comments 14:24. In this verse, there is a hidden meaning regarding life in the human way. The wind against the boat is like troubles that come against our lives.

²⁵ **Now** in the fourth watch of the night, **He** came **to** them, walking **on** the sea.

Comments 14:25. Similarly, in this verse, there is a hidden meaning. If you do not give up and if you try, as the boat goes against the wind, in life, if you do not give up and look for the Lord to help, He will come and save you. No trouble is too big for the Lord; the Lord can walk on it as He walked on the water. Above all troubles, you can feel the Lord.

²⁶ And the disciples, **having seen Him** walking on the sea, were troubled, saying, It is a ghost! And they cried out **from** fear.

Comments 14:26. People, when they see the Lord Jesus walking on the water, can only think that it is impossible. The Lord Jesus’ own disciples, who have seen His power, still doubt how a human can walk on the water. The first thing that comes to mind is doubt; no human can walk on the water. Even seeing miracles in front of us, doubt is the first problem for everyone.

²⁷ **Now at once Jesus** spoke to them, saying, **Take courage!** It is **I**, fear not.

Comments 14:27. The Lord Jesus answered fast to ensure the disciples did not build much doubt. They need His firm answer for what will come ahead of them. The walking on water happened to strengthen their faith and make them think that the Lord Jesus is more than a human. They need this light.

²⁸ **Now answering Him**, Peter said, **Lord**, if be **Thou**, command me to come to **Thee** upon the waters.

Comments 14:28. In this passage, Peter may have doubted his eyes but did not doubt the power of the Lord Jesus. The eyes can be deceived, but the heart is the link to the truth. Peter’s walking on the water proved to the disciples that the Lord was truly not in the spirit. They saw Peter walking on the water for a while as well. Peter walked too, not only the Lord.

²⁹ And **He** said, Come. And **having** went down from the boat, Peter walked upon the waters **and** came to **Jesus**.

Comments 14:29. This was not just a command alone; it was also an invitation from the Lord for the disciples to have faith and believe in Him. Do not leave room for doubt. The proof of what can be done by faith is shown in Peter's action. That is what a normal human can do if you believe: you can walk on the water, not only the Lord Himself, but you can also. The power of faith is strong.

³⁰ **Now seeing** the wind, he was **terrified**, and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, **Lord**, save me.

Comments 14:30. Normally, if there are no troubles, we do not come to the Lord. When Peter saw trouble, the first thing he did was cry out to the Lord. But we need to take note that Peter said, "Lord save me," which has a deeper meaning than saying, "Lord help me." As Peter walked on water, he did not see trouble, but the wind and the waves became the problem, and his doubt came and made him sink. Doubt is in our human nature. In this passage, Peter doubted even when he himself was walking on water. But here, Peter showed us that the One to call when we have problems is the Lord Jesus. Everyone can come to the Lord when problems arise.

³¹ And immediately **Jesus** stretched forth the hand, took hold of him, and **says** to him, little faith, **why did you** doubt?

Comments 14:31. "Immediately ... hold of him." Here, we have another confirmation that there is no space and time for the Lord. In Peter's eyes, the distance between him and the Lord was far. But when he asked to be saved, the Lord was right away in front of him. The Lord Jesus walked the distance on the water at the beginning, but when Peter cried out, the Lord folded (bent) the space and time and reached immediately to Peter and gave His hand to save him.

"Little ... doubt?" This shows that the Lord Jesus can see through the hearts and souls of people. What is in our heart and soul, the Lord can read everything. The heart and the soul of man are like an open book for the Lord.

³² And they **having** gone up into the boat, the wind ceased.

Comments 14:32. This verse shows that the Lord Jesus is the Lord of all. He is the Lord over the humans and the Lord above the winds and the waves of the sea. All things are created through Him. He is the master of all. The Lord took Peter by the hand, lifted him up, and they both walked together on the water back to the boat. And, when they got into the boat, the wind ceased, and the waves calmed down.

³³ And **those** in the boat worshipped **Him**, saying, **Truly, Thou** are the **Son of God!**

Comments 14:33. The Lord allowed this sea storm tribulation to come upon the disciples so their faith would be strengthened. The disciples needed to see the Lord Jesus walk on water and calm the storm. They were all humans, and these miracles convinced them that, indeed, the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. This belief prepared them for what they will be facing in the future.

³⁴ And **having** crossed over, they came to the land, **to** Gennesaret.

Comments 14:34. Here, Gennesaret refers to a small town. This shows that the Lord has compassion for people in a small community. The Lord's love and compassion are not for big towns only. This is a poor area, and the Lord goes into this kind of area not to look for the rich but for the poor and hopeless. Even today, the Lord supports missionaries to go first to the needy areas, not only to places that have everything.

³⁵ And the **people** of that place **having recognized Him**, sent into all that **surrounding** region, and brought **to Him** all **those being** sick,

Comments 14:35. "And the people of that place having recognized Him." It is believed that prior to this event, the Lord Jesus had been in the city of Gennesaret, taught in their synagogue, and performed miracles. That is why people knew Him well. Also, some of the men from Gennesaret have seen the Lord Jesus in other towns, and some have heard about His miraculous healings (See also Luke 7:16-17).

³⁶ and they **begged Him** that they might only touch the **fringe of His** garment; and as many as touched were **cured**.

Comments 14:35-36. "sent into all that surrounding region... were cured." The way that messages were carried in those times was by word of mouth. People talking spread faster than the wind. What the Lord has done cannot be hidden. Many who needed help searched for the Lord. The word has been spread out that you will be healed if you only touch His garment or walk into His steps. They all considered the Lord Jesus to be a mighty prophet.

Life and Faith Applications. 1) Doubt and fear are the enemies of our faith. Troubles will come, but when they come, we need to know that the Lord Jesus is the One to call for help. Peter calls upon the Lord to save him

and says, “Lord save me,” we should do the same. 2) The Lord Jesus is the Lord of all, and He is the Son of God. We need to think of the world to come, not the world we are in. The world we are in will perish, and all things that are in it will age, but the world to come is eternal. Come to the Lord Jesus for eternal life, not for the perishing life. 3) It is important to know that John was the messenger of the Lord, and he was sent to preach repentance, and that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God, and He is the One that brings us to the Father and gives us salvation. 4) The Lord showed mercy and compassion to the needy people of Gennesaret. It is the same today; the Lord supports missionaries to go to the poorer regions first and then to the wealthier places.