

Matthew 14 Commentary-C H Spurgeon

PREVIOUS

NEXT

MATTHEW 14:1-12 THE KING'S HERALD SLAIN

Matthew 14:1. AT that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants. This is John the Baptist; he is risen form the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

When the whole country was moved, "at that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus. " Then, but not till then, the fame of Jesus reached this wretched princelet, who was too absorbed in self and lust to hear much about spiritual matters. The peasant heard of Jesus before the prince. The Word of God may enter the palace, but it forces its way slowly.

Herod spoke to his servants about this famous person, for he was so alarmed that he could not conceal his fears. A guilty conscience is haunted by a misdeed. "John " was written on the tyrant's memory; and now that he is startled by a rumor of wonders being done, he cries out, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead. " Herod was a Sadducee by profession, but his terror made his skeptical creed crumble to dust. For John at least he believes that there is a resurrection. Great superstition often underlies a surface of avowed unbelief. Herod Antipas had a quarter of his father's kingdom, and less than a quarter of his ability; but in selfish cruelty he was a true cub of the old wolf. He had enough conscience to scare him, though not enough to change him. Note how he believed in the power of a risen man: "Therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. " If from mere hearsay Herod attributed such power to our Lord on earth, shall we not believe in the Almighty power of our risen Lord upon his throne in glory?

Matthew 14:3, 4. For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

Of course it was not lawful for him to take to himself his brother Philip's wife while Philip was yet living, and while his own wife was living also.

While he was the guest of Philip at home, he became ensnared by Herodias; and the guilty pair, who in addition to their being already wedded, were by birth too near of kin for lawful marriage, came back to Galilee as if they were man and wife. It was bravely spoken of the Baptist when he bluntly said, "It is not lawful for thee to have her "; but the sentence cost him dear.

Herod Antipas could bear to do the deed, but he could not bear to be told that he had committed an unlawful act. John did not mince matters, or leave the question alone. What was a king to him if that king dared to trample on the law of God? He spoke out pointedly, and Herod knew that he did so. Herod laid, hold on John, because John's word had laid hold on Herod.

The power of evil love comes out in the words, "for Herodias sake. " This fierce woman would brook no rebuke of her licentiousness. She was a very Jezebel in her pride and cruelty; and Herod was as a puppet in her hands.

Matthew 14:5. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

Neither he nor his paramour could bear such plain dealing, and so he would have silenced for ever the rebuking tongue if he had not been restrained by a salutary dread of the populace. Herod was already a murderer in intent; but fear stayed his cruel hand. The people held John in high esteem as a servant of God, and the tyrant dared not incur the wrath of the multitude.

What slaves to fear bad princes may become. It is well they should be so; for thus a temporary check is put upon their tyranny. Alas! it is not often a restraint for long, for they soon break loose again; and for a favorite's sake risk the anger of the nation.

Matthew 14:6. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

There is no harm in keeping birthdays, but where is great harm in lewd dances, or in any other sports which suggest evil. Salome was a true "daughter of Herodias." She forgot her rank, and danced before the court after the lascivious fashion of the ago, so as to gratify a probably drunken monarch. She "pleased Herod," her mother's paramour; and we can readily guess the kind of dancing which would please him.

In these days mothers too often encourage their daughters in dress which is scarcely decent, and introduce them to dances which are not commendable for purity. No good can come of this; it may please the Herods, but it displeases God. In this case dancing led to a cruel crime; and it is to be feared that in many instances gross immoralities have taken their rise in dances which suggested uncleanness.

Matthew 14:7. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask,

A foolish promise, and a wicked oath. Men of Herod's order are always free with oaths. Men should know what they are at when they promise, and never set their signature to a blank which another may fill up; for they may thus sign away their all. Besides, a mere piece of immodest posturing could never deserve so large a recompense. Herod was surely as much fool as knave. Had wine and lust taken away his heart?

Matthew 14:8. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

The whole thing was planned between this shameless mother and daughter, who both knew Herod's weak points and how to handle him. The mother set her daughter dancing, and then put the request into her mouth: she was of her mother's nature, and readily carried out that wicked woman's instructions. No doubt Herodias was more incensed than Herod at what the Baptist had dared to say; for it is usually the case that the female offender is most angered by a rebuke of such sin. Sad that from noble Maccabean blood such a female monster should have sprung! She must have John Baptist's head upon a dish. The mention of the details shows the cold-blooded character of the demand. As if it were a dainty dish for her tooth, the prophet's head must be served up in a charger.

Matthew 14:9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them, which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

Pretty sorrow! A crocodile is said to shed tears over those it snaps in two. "The King" was afraid of the consequences. Poor king! He may have felt a dying struggle of conscience, for Herod had some sort of reverence for John; yet his grief could not have been very deep, for he had already willed to kill him. The king feared that his courtiers and comrades at the drinking bout would think him weak, and perhaps jeer at him for being too religious to touch a prophet. Such fear of being thought weak proved that he was weak indeed. In addition to this, Herodias would consider him to be by no means so fond of her as he had professed to be, and how could he endure her passionate grief? Moreover, he was "a man of honor", and for the oath's sake he must not run back. With the regret which a wolf feels because he must eat the lamb, he gave orders for the murder of John, and the handing of his head to the young girl. Rash promises, and even oaths, are no excuse for doing wrong. The promise was in itself null and void, because no man has a right to promise to do wrong. Wicked oaths ought to be repented of, and not acted out; but this cruel tyrant commanded the murder, and so went through with his horrible promise.

Matthew 14:10. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

Herod sent, and beheaded John. By word a precious life is ended. How lightly tyrants think of murder! No miracle was wrought for John's deliverance. Why should there be? It was well for the Baptist to go to his reward, for his work was done. He was not left to pine in solitude: the man of God left his prison for Paradise by one sudden stroke of the sword. It was a foul murder, but to the

Baptist it was a happy release. He was no longer in the power of Herod or Herodias: he received his crown in heaven though he had lost his head on earth Herod is said to have "beheaded John "; for what he ordered to be done is set to his account, and in his conscience he knew it. We do ourselves what we do by others. Men may sin by proxy, but they will be guilty in person.

Matthew 14:11. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

What a present for a young lady! It was given to the damsel The girl is not ashamed to lift the dainty dish, and bear it to her fiendish mother, that she may glut her malice by the sight of the head of her faithful reprove. What a mother and daughter! Two bad women can do a world of mischief. What a fate for such a head! Did it even from the charger charge the foul adulteress with her crime?

Matthew 14:12. And his disciples came, and took up the boy/, and buried it, and went and told Jesus

The good man's followers did not desert their murdered leader: "his disciples came." The mangled corpse was surrendered to them; they reverently took up the body, and buried it. They were his disciples still, and his death was not the death of their faith. They did the only act of kindness then in their power to him whom they had followed. They regarded the headless trunk as being the last relic of John, and so they gathered about it, and gave it honorable burial. But it is not said by the Evangelist that they buried John, but "they took up his body, and buried it", not him. The real John no man could bury, and Herod soon found that, being dead, he yet spake.

What remained for John's disciples but to go to their leader's Friend and Master, and tell him all the circumstances, and wait further orders? John had taught them well, since they went at once to Jesus when their teacher was dead.

When we are in a great trouble, we shall be wise to do our best, and at the same time tell the Lord Jesus all about it, that he may direct us further as to what we are to do. What a relief to tell Jesus! It was a painful story for him to hear; but he would be sure to impart consolation to these mourners; and in our case also he will send comfort.

MATTHEW 14:13-22 OUR KING GIVES A GREAT BANQUET

Matthew 14:13. When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

Our Lord could not allow so sad an event as the death of his Forerunner to pass without special devotion; perhaps also he judged it wise to be out of the dominions of Herod just at this time. When such a tiger once tastes blood he is apt to thirst for more. Moreover, rest was needed both by himself and by the little band which attended him; and our Lord was no hard taskmaster, overdriving his servants. As soon therefore as Jesus heard of John's death, he went with his followers to a lone spot beyond Herod's jurisdiction; "a desert place apart." He went there by ship, to put the sea between him and the crowd. It was difficult for him to get into retirement, but he used common-sense ways of obtaining it. He knew the absolute need of privacy, and he strove after it. The discreet use of solitude has yet to be learned by many workers.

The multitude would not permit him to be at rest: they were curious, anxious, necessitous; and so they were soon on foot after him. While he sailed by sea, they hurried along the shore. It is a happy sign when there is an eagerness to hear the Word of God. The Lord send us more of it in these days of religious indifference.

Matthew 14:14. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

When he left the boat and went forth, our Lord found a congregation waiting for him. In the most emphatic sense he saw the people, and at the sight he was burdened. He was not angry at the great multitude, nor did he show disappointment at being balked in his

pursuit of quiet; but he was moved with compassion. The original word is very expressive: his whole being was stirred to its lowest depth, and therefore he proceeded at once to work miracles of mercy among them. They came unasked, he received them tenderly, he blessed them graciously, and at length fed them bountifully. He was as a stag that fled from the huntsmen; but they had overtaken him, and he yielded himself to them. To those who needed him most he attended first: "He healed their sick"! Lord, heal thou me, for I am sick in soul, if not in body!

Matthew 14:15. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

The disciples had the compassion of men who see the need; but to their human thought there seemed but one poor way out of it, namely, in effect to shirk the difficulty by sending the multitudes away. The short way out of a perplexity is generally a very poor affair. To this day many Christians get no further than leaving the masses to themselves, or to some unknown influences which may turn up. One thing was wise in the disciples; they did bring the matter to Jesus: "When it was evening, his disciples came to him." They represented the place as barren, the time as late, the people as many, their needs as great: they were well posted up in all discouraging matters. The proposed course of action was the one weak point in the representation. Our schemes are for the most part wretched affairs. It is almost a wonder that we dare to state them. Do we forget that our Lord Jesus hears our sorry proposals?

Note the disciples' word: "The time is now past." We usually think the times are unpropitious for large attempts. As for the position, it is hopeless: "This is a desert place." What can be done here? As for the disciples' proposal, it was of a kind which is common enough: "Don't let the people die under our noses; pull down the rookery in the next street; clear out the bad houses from our district." "Send the multitude away." Or, better still, show the people the dignity of self-help! Talk to them about thrift and emigration. Urge them to go into the villages, and buy themselves victual. This is a favorite nostrum at this day with those who want to save their own loaves and fishes. Our Lord has nobler thoughts than theirs: he will display his royal bounty among the hunger, crowd.

Matthew 14:16. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

Glorious word! "They need not depart." We are able, when he is with us, to meet any cases of want which may arise; we never need send the multitude away to be dealt with by the State, by the parish, or by hirelings.

If we will but set to work, we shall find that the Lord makes us competent for every emergency. "Give ye them to eat": you talk of their buying for themselves, but they are penniless, and cannot buy. Everything must be free, or they will starve; you are the men to feed them freely; get at it.

Begin at once.

Matthew 14:17. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes

See how they overhaul their provisions; and they report, "We have here but five loaves." With what a gloomy "but" they show how lean is the larder!

Those two sardines make the stock seem positively ridiculous. It is a good thing for us to know how very poor we are, and how far from being able to meet the wants of the people around us. It is for our good to be made to confess this in so many words to our Lord.

Truly, he who writes this comment has often felt as if he had neither loaf nor fish; and yet for some forty years and more he has been a full-handed waiter at the King's great banquets.

Matthew 14:18. He said, Bring them hither to me.

He will have us yield up what we have: we are to make no reserve. We must hand all over to Jesus: "Bring them hither to me." He will accept what we bring: this is implied in the command to bring it. He will make a little go a long way: that which gets to Jesus will reach the needy by the surest route. The shortest way to procure provender for perishing souls is to go to Jesus about them.

Matthew 14:19. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

He had prepared both carpet and seats for his guests, by making grass to grow in his open-air banquet hall. At the bidding of their great Host, all the crowds sat down. "He commanded," and they obeyed: a proof of the singular power of the personality of our Lord to produce obedience even in simple matters. One would have thought that they might have answered — "What is the use of sitting down? How shall a table be furnished in this wilderness?" But our Lord's presence awed unbelief into silence and obedience. The King of men is immediately obeyed when he commands in the fullness of his majesty. "Where the word of a king is, there is power."

Now that all is in order, the divine Lord takes the slender provision into his blessed hands. By a simple sign he teaches the people whence to expect gracious supplies: "Looking up to hearer." Not without a blessing does the *al fresco* meal begin: "He blessed." God's blessing must be sought even when Jesus is there: He will not act without the Father. Our Lord Jesus did all in the provision of the feast: he blessed, he brake, he gave to his disciples. All is with him. The disciples come in to take their subordinate position, after he has displayed his divine creatorship. They are the waiters: they serve and distribute; they can do no more; they are glad to do that. In haste, but yet in order, they divide the food among the throng, much wondering and adoring as they so do. It was bread and a relish with it; good fare and agreeable; sufficient, but not luxurious. Some would give the poor only the barest necessities; bread only; our Lord adds fish. What a feast was this! Christ for Master of the feast: apostles for butlers; thousands for numbers; and miracles for supplies! What a far more glorious feast is that which the gospel spreads for hungry souls! What a privilege to be fed by the Son of God!

Matthew 14:20. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

No one was neglected, no one refused, no one was too faint, no one left off till he was satisfied, no one needed anything else, no one found that the food did not suit him; for indeed they were all hungry, "and they did all eat." No one stinted himself, or was stinted, all "were filled." Ours is a filling Benefactor, and he provides filling food.

After the feast, twelve great baskets were needed to hold the fragments. It was impossible to exhaust the store. The baskets were full as well as the people. There was more provision after the feeding than before it. By feeding others our stock increases. That which was left had been blessed as well as that which was eaten, and therefore it was fine food for the disciples. They gave plain bread and fish, and they receive more in quantity, and a blessing to improve the quality. Those who wait upon others at Christ's bidding shall have a fair portion for themselves. Those who fill others' mouths shall have their own baskets filled. Everybody is satisfied when Jesus makes the feast.

Matthew 14:21. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

"Women and children" are usually more numerous at a sermon than men; but as the people had come on foot, perhaps the stronger sex preponderated on this occasion, as they generally do at feeding-times.

From many a great banquet women and children are shut out; but in Christ Jesus there is no exclusion because of sex or youth. Five thousand men is no small dinner party. Think of five thousand fed with live loaves! A loaf among a thousand! Never let us fear that our consecrated stores will not hold out, or that we have not talent or ability enough if the Lord is pleased to use us. Our King will yet feed all the nations on that gospel which is today so little thought of. Amen! So let it be.

Matthew 14:22. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

Straightway is a business word: Jesus loses no time. No sooner is the banquet over than he sends off the guests to their homes. While they are well fed he bids them make the best of their way home. He who made the multitude sit down was able also to send the multitude away; but they needed sending, for they were loth to go.

The sea must be crossed again, or Jesus cannot find seclusion. How he must run the gauntlet -to get a little rest! Before he starts again across the sea, he performs another act of self-denial; for he cannot leave till he sees the crowd happily dispersed. He attends to that business himself, giving the disciples the opportunity to depart in peace. As the captain is the last to leave the ship, so is the Lord the last to leave the scene of labor. The disciples would have chosen to stay in his company, and to enjoy the thanks of the people; but he constrained them to get into a ship. He could not get anyone to go away from him at this time without sending and constraining This loadstone has great attractions. He evidently promised his disciples that he would follow them; for the words are, "to go before him unto the other side. " How he was to follow he did not say, but he could always find a way of keeping his appointments. How considerate of him to wait amid the throng while the disciples sailed away in peace. He always takes the heavy end of the load himself. <401423

MATTHEW 14:23-26 THE KING RULING WINDS AND WAVES

Matthew 14:23. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Now that the crowd is gone, he can take his rest, and he finds it in prayer. He went up into a mountain apart in a place where he might speak aloud, and not be overheard or disturbed, he communed with the Father alone.

This was his refreshment and his delight. He continued therein till the thickest shades of night had gathered, and the day was gone. "Alone ", yet not alone, he drank in new strength as he communed with his Father. He must have revealed this private matter to the recording evangelist, and surely it was with the intent that we should learn from his example.

We cannot afford to be always in company, since even our blessed Lord felt that he must be alone.

Matthew 14:24. But the ship now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

While Jesus was alone, they, in the ship, were in the same condition, but not occupied with the same spiritual exercise. When they first quitted the shore it was fair sailing in the cool of the evening; but a storm gathered hastily as night covered the sky. On the lake of Galilee the wind rushes down from the gullies between the mountains, and causes grievous peril to little boats; sometimes fairly lifting them out of the water, and anon submerging them beneath the waves. That deep lake was peculiarly dangerous for small craft. They were far from land, for they were "in the midst of the sea ", equally distant from either shore. The sea was furious, and their ship was "tossed with waves. " The hurricane was terrible. "The wind was contrary ", and would not let them go to any place which they sought. It was a whirlwind, and they were whirled about by it, but could not use it for reaching either shore. How much did their case resemble ours when we are in sore distress! We are tossed about, and can do nothing; the blast is too furious for us to bear up against it, or even to live while driven before it.

One happy fact remains: Jesus is pleading on the shore though we are struggling on the sea. It is also comfortable to know that we are where he constrained us to go (See verse 22), and he has promised to come to us in due time, and therefore all must be safe, though the tempest rages terribly.

Matthew 14:25. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea

Jesus is sure to come. The night wears on and the darkness thickens; the fourth watch of the night draws near, but where is he? Faith says, "He must come." Though he should stay away till almost break of day, he must come. Unbelief asks, "How can he come?" Ah, he will answer for himself: he can make his own way. "Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. " He comes in the teeth of the wind, and on the face of the wave. Never fear that he will fail to reach the storm-tossed barque: his love will find out the way.

Whether it be to a single disciple, or to the church as a whole, Jesus will appear in his own chosen hour, and his time is sure to be the most timely.

Matthew 14:26. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

Yes, the disciples saw him; saw Jesus their Lord, and derived no comfort from the sight. Poor human nature's sight is a blind thing compared with the vision of a spiritual faith. They saw, but knew not what they saw. What could it be but a phantom? How could a real man walk on those foaming billows? How could he stand in the teeth of such a hurricane? They were already at their wits' end, and the apparition put an end to their courage.

We seem to hear their shriek of alarm: "they cried out for fear." We read not that "they were troubled" before: they were old sailors, and had no dread of natural forces; but a spirit — ah, that was too much of a terror.

They were at their worst now; and yet, if they had known it, they were on the verge of their best. It is noteworthy that the nearer Jesus was the greater was their fear. Want of discernment blinds the soul to its richest consolations. Lord, be near, and let me know thee! Let me not have to say with Jacob, "Surely God was in this place; and I knew it not!"

Matthew 14:27. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not of afraid.

He did not keep them in suspense: "Straightway Jesus spake unto them." How sweetly sounded that loving and majestic voice! Above the roar of waves and howling of winds, they heard the voice of the Lord. This was his old word also, "Be of good cheer." The most conclusive reason for courage was his own presence. "It is I; be not afraid." If Jesus be near, if the spirit of the storm be, after all, the Lord of love, all room for fear is gone. Can Jesus come to us through the storm? Then we shall weather it, and come to him. He who rules the tempest is not the devil, not chance, not a malicious enemy; but Jesus. This should end all fear.

Matthew 14:28. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Peter must be the first to speak; he is impulsive; and besides, he was a sort of foreman in the company. The first speaker is not always the wisest man.

Peter's fears have gone, all but one "if"; but that "if" was working him no good, for it seemed to challenge his Master: "Lord, if it be thou." What a test to suggest: "Bid me come unto thee on the water"! What did Peter want with walking the waters? His name might have suggested that like a stone he would go to the bottom. It was an imprudent request: it was the swing of the pendulum in Peter from despair to an injudicious venturing.

Surely, he wist not what he said. Yet we, too, have put our Lord to tests almost as improper. Have we not said, "If thou hast ever blessed me, give me this and that"? We, too, have had our water-walking, and have ventured where nothing but special grace could uphold us. Lord, what is man?

Matthew 14:29. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

When good men are unwise and presumptuous, it may be for their lasting good to learn their folly by experience. "He said, Come." Peter's Lord is about to teach him a practical lesson. He asked to be bidden to come. He may come. He does come. He leaves the boat, he treads the wave. He is on the way towards his Lord. We can do anything if we have divine authorization, and courage enough to take the Lord at his word. Now there were two on the sea, Two wonders! Which was the greater? The reader may not find it easy to reply. Let him consider.

Matthew 14:30. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried,

saying, Lord, save me.

“But”: a sorrowful “but” for poor Peter. His eye was off his Lord and on the raging of the wind: “he saw the wind boisterous.” His heart failed him, and then his foot failed him. Down he began to go — an awful moment is this “beginning to sink”; yet it was only a “beginning”, he had time to cry to his Lord, who was not sinking. Peter cried, and was safe. His prayer was as full as it was short. He had brought his eye and his faith back to Jesus, for he cried, “Lord.” He had come into this danger through obedience, and therefore he had an appeal in the word “Lord.” Whether in danger or not, Jesus was still his Lord. He is a lost man, and he feels it, unless his Lord will save him — save him altogether, save him now. Blessed prayer: “Lord save me.” Reader, does it not suit you? Peter was nearer his Lord when he was sinning than when he was walking. In our low estate we are often nearer to Jesus than in our more glorious seasons.

Matthew 14:31. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Our Lord delays not when our peril is imminent and our cry is urgent: “Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand.” He first “caught him” and then taught him. Jesus saves first, and upbraids afterwards, when he must needs do so. When we are saved is the fit time for us to chasten ourselves for our unbelief. Let us learn from our Lord, that we may not reprove others till we have first helped them out of their difficulties.

Our doubts are unreasonable: “Wherefore didst thou doubt?” If there be reason for little faith, there is evidently reason for great confidence. If it be right to trust Jesus at all, why not trust him altogether? Trust was Peter’s strength; doubt was his danger. It looked like great faith when Peter walked the water; but a little wind soon proved it to be “little faith.” Till our faith is tried, we can form no reliable estimate of it.

After his Lord had taken him by the hand, Peter sank no further, but resumed the walk of faith. How easy to have faith when we are close to Jesus!

Lord, when our faith fails, come you to us, and we shall walk on the wave.

Matthew 14:32. And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

So that Peter’s walk and his rescue had happened in the face of the tempest. He could walk the water well enough when his Lord held his hand, and so can we. What a sight! Jesus and Peter, hand in hand, walking upon the sea! The two made for the ship at once: miracles are never spun out to undue length. Was not Peter glad to leave the tumultuous element, and at the same time to perceive that the gale was over? “When they were come into the ship, the wind ceased”; it is well to be safe in a storm, but more pleasant to find the calm return and the hurricane end. How gladly did the disciples welcome their Lord, and their brother, Peter, who though wet to the skin, was a wiser man for his adventure!

Matthew 14:33. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

No wonder that Peter “worshipped him”, nor that his comrades did the same. The whole of the disciples, who had been thus rescued by their Lord’s coming to them on the stormy sea, were overwhelmingly convinced of his Godhead. Now they were doubly sure of it by unquestionable evidence, and in lowly reverence they expressed to him their adoring faith, saying, “Of a truth thou art the Son of God.”

Matthew 14:34-36. And when they were gone over they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

The barque so lately tempest tossed is soon at the desired haven; and now other scenes of wonder meet our eyes. Land where he

may, the great Physician is sure to find patients. Some of the men of that place had knowledge of him; and these were as sparks to set the rest of the people on fire by wonderful accounts of what Jesus had done. Many became eager advertisers of his skill, and either went themselves, or "sent out " others "into all that country round about. " Very busy those people were. They sent out; they brought unto him; they besought him; they touched his garment; they were made perfectly whole. The sentences follow each other without a break. The people asked little, they begged "that they might only touch the hem of his garment;" but they received much; for they "were made perfectly whole. " In no case was there any failure: in every instance the work was complete. Their humble request was founded upon a precedent, was urged by earnest spirits, and was accompanied with practical sympathy, therefore it was not refused. How glad that whole region was made! "All that were diseased " had become happy witnesses of the Lord's healing power.

Our King is master both on land and water. Whether it is on the sea of Gennesaret, or in "the land of Gennesaret " his supreme power and majesty are infallibly proven. He stills tempests, and allays fevers. He touches waves with his foot, and they grow firm; he touches sick bodies with his hand, and they return to health. He imparts to his servant Peter, and to the hem of his own garment. marvelous power.