

God Loves You! † Jesus Lives!

## Jesus Walks on the Water – a Study Tip

(From passages Matt. 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:15-21)

All Scriptures are Authorized King James Version unless noted otherwise and All Emphases are Added

To get a more complete understanding of any event in the bible, one needs to look at all the places that deal with that topic or event. Hopefully, this article will help understand one method to improve your “study” tools.

Psalm 119:160 [NKJV], “The *entirety* of Your **word is truth**, and every one of Your *righteous* judgments *endures* forever.”

This event is viewed, by most people, as one miracle but, as you will see, there were, in fact, **5 miraculous events** that occurred. Most believers could probably not name them. The three records of this event *complement* each other in such a way as to give much *more* information than one would get from reading any one account. **Please take the time to read all three accounts at this time.** They aren’t very long and it won’t take too much time. The passages are listed just **below** the *title* (above). When you finish reading them, you can pick up at “**A.**” **below.**

A. This *event* occurred right after the miraculous feeding of about **5,000 men**. (Estimates range from about 15-20 thousand *people*, if you include women & children). Let’s take a closer look at what happened. We will look at all three accounts simultaneously to be able to put everything together properly.

1. **Matthew 14:22–23 (KJV)** “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. <sup>23</sup>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.”

- So, *after* Jesus had fed the “**5,000**,” He *quickly* sent His disciples off to Bethsaida (**Mk. 6:45-46**) in a ship, and, while they were on their way to the other side, He sent the people away and then went up on the mountain to pray, by Himself (**Matt 14:22-23**). Only John records the reason Jesus sent the disciples away and the people too.

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- **John 6:14-15 (KJV)** “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth **that prophet** that should come into the world. <sup>15</sup>When **Jesus** therefore *perceived* that they would come and *take Him by force*, to *make Him a king*, He departed again into a mountain Himself *alone*.”
  - So, Jesus *knew* that the people were going to try to forcibly **make** Him “**King**.” This was **not** according to **God’s** plan (or timing). So He sent the people away and went to *pray alone*.
2. All three versions agree that it was dark out and a bad storm had come up on the sea, with large waves and strong winds. **Matthew 14:24** records that the ship was in the middle of the sea being tossed by the waves and that the winds were contrary – in *other* words, the wind was *preventing* them from getting to where they were *supposed* to go. In **Mark 6:47-49** the **1<sup>st</sup> miracle** is recorded. It was dark out and the ship was in the middle of the sea (at *least 3-4 miles* out), yet in **Mark 6:48 (KJV)** “And *He* [**\*Jesus**] **saw them toiling in rowing**; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the *fourth watch* of the night *He cometh unto them, walking upon the sea*, and *would have passed by* them.” \* **added for clarification**
- **Here** is the miracle. It was *pitch dark*. The **4<sup>th</sup> watch** of the night would have been between **3-6 am**. There was a *raging storm*. They were *miles* away from where Jesus was, in *heavy seas*. Yet, **Jesus saw** them *straining with the oars*. This was *supernatural!* I’m so glad that storms, darkness, and distance **can’t prevent Jesus** from seeing me in my struggles! **Are you?**
3. In **John 6:19**, “So when they had rowed about *five and twenty or thirty furlongs*, they **see** Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were *afraid*.” Twenty-five to thirty furlongs is about **3.5 to 4 miles**, but the *time* isn’t mentioned here. **Mark 6:48-50** records that about the **4<sup>th</sup> watch** of the night (**3-6 AM**) He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have “*passed them by*.” **2 comments** about this:
- “Would have passed them by” more literally translates to “*desired to come along side of*”. **Possibly**, Jesus’ intention was to **test** their **faith**, so He may have *changed course* a bit and came parallel to the ship to see **if** they would **recognize** Him *and His supernatural* ability and invite Him into the ship.

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- “He came to them” – isn’t it nice to know that Jesus “*sees*” *miraculously* when *we* are *struggling* in life, and that He will “*walk on water*, in the **middle** of a *storm*,” *if needed*, to *come to us* and to *help* us in our *struggles*? **What an amazing Saviour!**

Mark 6:49-50 says then that they were *afraid* at first, *thinking* He was a *ghost* but Jesus *immediately* talked to them and *comforted* them. Jesus often told them to “*fear not*” etc.

- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (KJV) “Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the *Father of mercies*, and the God of *all comfort*; <sup>4</sup> Who *comforteth* us *in all our tribulation*, that *we may be able to comfort them* which are in *any trouble*, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” When God comforts and delivers us in our struggles, we now have a testimony that **we can share with others**, to comfort **them** in *their* struggles. Matt. 14:25-27 says in the fourth watch of the night (3-6 AM) Jesus came to them walking on the sea and they thought He was a ghost, but He cheered/comforted them as stated in Mark. So **all three** accounts record the *same miracle* of **Jesus walking on the sea**, which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> miracle.

4. The 3<sup>rd</sup> miracle is recorded *only* in Matthew’s version: Matt.14:28-31 states that **Peter** said, “**Lord**, if it be Thou, bid me *come unto Thee on the water*.” Verses 29-30 tells us that Jesus said, “**Come**.” So, Peter climbed out of the ship and walked on the water to go to Jesus. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> miracle – Peter walked on the water. In verse 30 it says, “**But when he saw** the wind *boisterous*, he was *afraid*; and *beginning to sink*, he cried, saying, **Lord, save me**.” In verse 31: “And *immediately* Jesus stretched forth *His* hand, and *caught him*, and said unto him, **O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?**” Let me make some *comments* on **Peter** and this event:

- We often *criticize* Peter for *doubting*, for taking his eyes **off** of Jesus, and for focusing on the *storm* (boisterous wind). In doing so, we *forget* that he was the **only one** in the ship with enough **faith** to climb out of it and *walk on the water* to Jesus. We also forget about how *many* times in *our own* lives that we have allowed the **storms** (or *tests*) in *our* lives to take *our* focus **off** of Jesus and focus on the **storm** or *trial or test* that we were currently in. So *when we do the same thing*

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*Peter did*, do we not exhibit how **little our faith really is?** It's easy to **judge others**. Would we not do **better**, **if** we focused on **ourselves more** and on **others less**?

5. In **Matthew 14:32 (KJV)** we see the **4<sup>th</sup> miracle**. “And when they were come into the ship, the **wind ceased.**” Jesus had **miraculously calmed the storm!** This is **also** recorded in **Mark 6:51**. Furthermore, it **also** says in **Mark 6:51 (NKJV)** that, “They were sore **amazed** in themselves **beyond measure**, and **marveled.**” Then Mark makes *another* comment that is worthy of consideration. **Mark 6:52 (KJV)** “For they considered **not the miracle** of the **loaves**: for their heart was **hardened.**”

Let me comment on **verse 52** of **Mark 6** *before* going to **John's** ending:

- Because of the **hardened hearts** of the disciples, they had **not** caught the **real significance** of the **miracle** of the feeding of 5,000 men the day before. They **didn't** understand **His Supernatural character**, and for this reason they were **stunned** and **amazed** at His calming the storm and waves. This is truly amazing when you consider the many **other miracles** Jesus had **already done**, which **they had also witnessed**. It simply emphasizes a **riveting key point**: people can **see multiple miracles of God** in their lives or in other's lives **and** still **not understand** about Jesus' (or God's) **character**. They can **see and hear about His mighty works** and yet **retain a hardened heart** that will **neither accept Him as God nor submit to Him nor worship Him as God**.
6. In **John 6:21** the **5<sup>th</sup> miracle** is recorded; “Then they willingly **received Him into the ship**: and **immediately** the ship was at the land whither they went.” So, **when they received Jesus into the ship**, **immediately** the **ship** was at the **land where they were going**. This miracle is recorded **only** in **John's** account of **this** event. Let me comment on this also:
- **Consider this**: It was a **dark** night out (**between 3-6 AM**), on a **stormy sea**. The disciples had been **rowing all night and fighting the wind**. The **wind** had been **blowing them off course** and they were **3-4 miles from any land**, to say **nothing of where they were 'trying' to get to**. When **Jesus** got into the ship, and **Peter** with Him, the **ship** was **immediately** at shore and,

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not *only* at shore, but they had landed *exactly where* Jesus wanted them to be, even though they had been *trying to get there* (in *their* efforts) *all night long!* Now that *should* tell us something: The *quickest* way to get where you *need to be* is to “*let Jesus in!*” He will take over (*if* you *let* Him) and will get you where you *need to be*; even *if* it isn’t always where you *want* to be. If you notice, it says, “They *willingly received Him.*” That’s what every *true believer must* do. They must *willingly receive Him into their heart* and let Him take *control of their life.* *Then* they can do what they did in **Matt 14:33 (KJV):** “**Then** they that were in the ship *came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.*”

7. **In summary**, it is very clear that by *not* reading **all** the various *accounts* of this miracle, that *much* would have been *missed*. This is true for **any event (or topic)** of the bible. When we don’t *carefully study* the bible (over and over *and* from cover to cover) we may well end up with very *flawed* and *incomplete* understanding, *lacking information*, which leads to *confusion, frustration*, and often to *flawed understanding* as well. When we consider that this is **God’s** word, which He has *miraculously supplied* to us and *miraculously preserved* for us, and which covers a period of roughly 6000 years (by many estimates), doesn’t it seem a *waste* (on *our* part) to *ignore* it? Maybe it would be more accurate *terminology* to just admit we actually *despise* (or *undervalue*) it. When we *stand before God*, as **all** of us will one day, it will be *challenging* to *explain* to *Him why* we *never took the time* to even *read, let alone actually study* His **word** to us. How does one *excuse* or *justify “rejecting”* what **Almighty God wished** to *communicate* to *him*? We *knew* that it *concerned* our *eternal consequence*; whether we would inherit **eternal life**, along with God’s peace and blessings, **or** we *might* inherit **eternal death**, along with eternal *torment*, pain, darkness, unquenchable fire, weeping and gnashing of teeth, separation from God, *profound regret* for the *choice* that we made to *ignore* God, *and, furthermore*, there will be **no hope** for *any chance of improvement* for **all eternity**. The **Bible** is clear, that *every* person ever *conceived* (whether born or not) will be either blessed or cursed for **all eternity**. **There are no other options**. How sad it is that we spend *much more time* reading newspapers, books, magazines, social media (emails & texts etc.), watching TV, playing games, trying to get rich, exploring the internet, and doing other *frivolous* things than we do *studying* the **Word of God**; which contains **God’s plan** for man *and* the **gospel of Christ**. It is **God’s love letter to us**. He provides **instructions** for us and *informs* us

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what He expects from us. He gives *guidance* and *correction* for us. It is our *road map for salvation and the power of God unto salvation*. It's God's *record* of His *dealings with mankind in the past*, in the *present*, in *this life* and the *next life*. It's His *introduction* to man, *informing us what He is like* and *what He expects from mankind* and *how He will deal with us, according to our deeds*. The **Bible** is God's *communication* to man. Don't you *hate* it, when you are trying to call someone on the phone and you *know* they are *screening* the calls and they just *won't* pick up the phone and *listen* to you or even *talk* to you? Can you imagine what **God** feels, when He *knows* that we just won't pick up our **Bible** and *read* what He has to say? *Furthermore*, we also *won't* get down on our *knees* and try to *speak* with Him either. So, what will we say to **Him**, when we are standing, all *alone*, before **Him**? Will we even be *able* to *speak*? *Think about it*.

The Apostle Paul says in **Romans 1:16 (KJV)** "For I am *not* ashamed of the **gospel of Christ**: for it is the *power of God unto salvation* to *every one* that *believeth*; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

P.S. I *pray* this article will give you *insight* on at least "*one*" way to *improve study* skills for the **Word** of God. Maybe you will find some type of motivation to start *afresh* by opening the **Bible** and asking God to *forgive* you for *ignoring* Him *and* His Word. (**If** you *have* been.) He is "*ready*" to *forgive* and abundant in mercy to *all* who will *call* upon Him. (**Psalm 86:5**) He is *unimaginably gracious* and *kind*. He is also *unbelievably patient* and *longsuffering* as well. I find *myself regularly* asking God to *help* me to walk *pleasing* in **His** sight each day. He has been so very gracious to me in so many ways and I know I have *deserved nothing "good"* from Him. May **God bless you richly** and please, **if** you *haven't* been *reading* and *studying* His Word, **do** so. Make a *start*. **If** you haven't been praying and listening to God, **do** start. I pray that He will *reward you* in ways you *cannot imagine*. There are so *many* ways to approach reading and studying *His Word*. Try *different* methods but **remember this**: to get a *thorough* understanding, you *must* become *familiar* with the *entirety* of the Word. Also, *realize* that *knowledge* is *needful* but it is *essential* that you *incorporate* what you *learn into your life*. **If** you have *knowledge* but *don't "apply"* it, you will be *worse* off than **if** you *didn't* have the knowledge.

**James 4:17**; "Therefore to him that *knoweth* to *do good*, and *doeth it not*, to him it is *sin*."

**James 1:22**; "But be ye *doers* of the word, and *not hearers only*, *deceiving* your own selves."