

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 22 – January 22nd – Matthew 14:13-36

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

Verse 13

Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν ἐν πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν· καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ ὄχλοι ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ πεζῆ ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων.

Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς "ties this passage to the end of the preceding one about the death of John the Baptist... The effect of this, however, is to ignore the fact that the story of John's death was a flashback and so to throw the entire sequence of narratives that follow back to that earlier time. Perhaps Matthew regarded John's death as having occurred only a few days earlier (thus McNeile). The suggestion that, given the parenthetical nature of vv 3-12, the object of ἀκούσας, 'having heard,' is Herod's evaluation of John in v 2 (Carson, Morris, Blomberg) ignores the placement of ἀκούσας immediately following the reference to the report of John's death to Jesus (v 22) [*stet* v.12?]. This verse is a counterpart to 4:12, which refers to Jesus' response to John's imprisonment using the same participle, ἀκούσας, 'having heard,' and main verb, ἀνεχώρησεν, 'he went away.' Presumably Jesus had gone εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν, 'privately to a deserted place,' in order to pray, the death of John perhaps turning his mind to his own approaching passion." Hagner.

ἀναχωρεῶ withdraw, go away
ἐκεῖθεν from there
πλοῖον, οὐ n boat, ship
ἐρημος, οὐ f deserted place, uninhabited region, desert; also ἐρμος, οὐ adj
lonely, deserted, uninhabited, desolate
τοπος, οὐ m place, opportunity
ἴδιος, α, οὐ one's own; κατ' ἰδίαν privately
ὄχλος, οὐ m see v.5
ἀκολουθεῶ follow
πεζῆ on foot; by land
πολις, εως f city, town

Verse 14

καὶ ἐξελθὼν εἶδεν πολὺν ὄχλον, καὶ ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν τοὺς ἀρρώστους αὐτῶν.

ἐξελθὼν Verb, aor act ptc, nom m s
ἐξερχομαι

Morris thinks that the verb here means 'come ashore'

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω see
ἐσπλαγχνίσθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s
σπλαγχνίζομαι be moved with pity or
compassion, have compassion

Cf. 9:36; 15:32.

θεραπεύω heal, cure
ἀρρωστος, οὐ sick, ill

Verse 15

ὄψιας δὲ γενομένης προσῆλθον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ λέγοντες· Ἐρημός ἐστιν ὁ τόπος καὶ ἡ ὥρα ἤδη παρήλθεν· ἀπόλυσον τοὺς ὄχλους, ἵνα ἀπελθόντες εἰς τὰς κώμας ἀγοράσωσιν ἑαυτοῖς βρώματα.

ὄψια, ας f evening
προσῆλθον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
προσερχομαι come or go to, approach
μαθητῆς, οὐ m see v.12

The disciples, like the crowds, must have walked to the spot.

ὥρα, ας f hour, moment
ἤδη adv now, already
παρερχομαι pass, pass by, pass away

ὥρα ἤδη παρήλθεν 'it is now late'.

ἀπόλυσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ἀπολύω
release, send away, dismiss

ἀπελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἀπερχομαι

κωμη, ης f village, small town
ἀγοράσωσιν Verb, aor act subj ἀγοράζω
buy

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself
βρῶμα, τος n food, solid food

Verse 16

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Οὐ χρείαν ἔχουσιν ἀπελθεῖν· δότε αὐτοῖς ὑμεῖς φαγεῖν.

χρεια, ας f need, want

δότε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl διδωμι

ὑμεῖς is added for emphasis.

φαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐσθιω and ἐσθω
eat, consume

Verse 17

οἱ δὲ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Οὐκ ἔχομεν ὧδε εἰ μὴ πέντε ἄρτους καὶ δύο ἰχθύας.

ὧδε here, in this place

πεντε (indeclinable) five

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf

Small loaf – a bun/roll. Five of them with the two small fish would have been a packed lunch for one boy (cf. Jn 6:9).

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

ἰχθυς, υος m fish

"At this point the story bears some intentional similarity to the comment of Elisha in the miraculous provision of food from twenty loaves of barley and the response of the man from Baal-shalishah (2 Kings 4:42-44; cf. John 6:9, 'but what are those among so many?')." Hagner.

Verse 18

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Φέρετέ μοι ὧδε αὐτούς.

φερω bring, carry, bear, lead

Verse 19

καὶ κελεύσας τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνακλιθῆναι ἐπὶ τοῦ χόρτου, λαβὼν τοὺς πέντε ἄρτους καὶ τοὺς δύο ἰχθύας, ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἔδωκεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς τοὺς ἄρτους οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ τοῖς ὄχλοις.

κελευω order, command

ἀνακλιθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀνακλινω
seat at table, recline

χορτος, ου m grass, vegetation

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω

ἀναβλεπω look up

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

εὐλογεω speak well of, bless

Here used simply of a prayer of thanksgiving. Jesus did not bless the bread, he thanked God for his goodness, maybe in words similar to those found in the Mishnah, "Blessed art thou who bringest forth bread from the earth."

κλω break (only of bread)

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι

"The sequence of verbs or participles, i.e., λαμβανειν, 'take,' εὐλογειν, 'bless,' κλω, 'break,' διδοναι, 'give,' is the same as in the account of the Last Supper (26:26-27), suggesting an inevitable association of the two stories (but cf. the similarity with the description of the ordinary meal in Acts 27:35)." Hagner. Cf. Lk 24:30.

Verse 20

καὶ ἔφαγον πάντες καὶ ἐχορτάσθησαν, καὶ ἤραν τὸ περισσεῦον τῶν κλασμάτων δώδεκα κοφίνους πλήρεις.

ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθω

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

χορταζω feed, satisfy

This was not merely a 'token meal'; the crowd were fully satisfied with what they received. Hagner says that this verb, "has already been used with clearly eschatological associations in 5:6. The miracle in this sense anticipates the messianic age in which the hungry are to be fed (cf. Luke 1:53; 6:21). Messianic blessing also appears to be intended in the overabundance of food... This miracle recalls God's miraculous, abundant provision of manna, 'bread,' ἄρτος in the LXX, in the wilderness (cf. Exod 16:13-35; Num 11:7-9, 31-32). The eschatological connotation of the manna miracle is evident in 2 Apoc. Bar: 29:8 (cf. Rev 2:17)." Hagner.

αἶρω take, take up, take away

περισσευω be left over

κλασμα, τος n fragment, piece

δωδεκα twelve

κοφινος, ου m basket

πληρης, ες (sometimes not declined) full,
complete

"The miracle typifies the full and complete blessing of humanity in the meeting of human need and the experience of ultimate well-being, universal shalom. The feeding of the multitude is thus the harbinger of good news for Matthew's church and for Christians of every era. At another level and in specific contrast to the feeding of the four thousand (which, as will be seen, points to the Gentiles), the symbolism of the twelve baskets suggests the special significance of this miracle for Israel. Messianic fulfillment means (and especially for Matthew!) that Jesus will provide for Israel before considering the Gentiles. And the feeding of the five thousand is an indication to the Jews that the Messiah is in their midst, offering to them – as in the miracle of manna in the wilderness – the reality of salvation, the fulfilment of the promises." Hagner.

Verse 21

οἱ δὲ ἐσθίοντες ἦσαν ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ
πεντακισχίλιοι χωρὶς γυναικῶν καὶ παιδίων.

ἄνηρ, ἄνδρος m man, husband
ὡσεὶ as, about, approximately
πεντακισχίλιοι, αι, α five thousand
χωρὶς without, apart from, besides
γυνή, αἰκος f woman, wife
παιδίον, ου n child

Verses 22-33

Cf. Mark 6:45-52 also John 6:16-21.

Verse 22

Καὶ εὐθέως ἠνάγκασεν τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐμβῆναι
εἰς πλοῖον καὶ προάγειν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πέραν,
ἕως οὗ ἀπολύσει τοὺς ὄχλους.

εὐθέως is omitted from κ* C* sy^{s,c}. The UBS committee considered this an accidental omission.

ἀναγκαζῶ force, compel, urge

Some MSS read μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ which the committee judged to have been introduced from the parallel in Mark 6:45.

ἐμβαινῶ get into, embark
πλοῖον, ου n boat, ship
προαγῶ go before or ahead of
πέραν beyond, across; το π. the other side
οὗ adv where; ἕως οὗ until
ἀπολύω see v.15

The reasons for this hasty dismissal can be found in John 6:15 which tells us that some of the 5000 wanted to make Jesus their king.

Verse 23

καὶ ἀπολύσας τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος
κατ' ἰδίαν προσεύξασθαι. ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης
μόνος ἦν ἐκεῖ.

ἀπολύσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαίνω go up
ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill
ἰδιος, α, ου one's own; κατ' ἰδιαν privately
προσευχομαι pray

"The right relation between prayer and conduct is not that conduct is supremely important and that prayer may help it, but that prayer is supremely important and conduct tests it." William Temple.

ὄψια, ας f evening
μόνος, η, ου adj only, alone
ἐκεῖ there, in that place

"The other references to Jesus praying (προσευχεσθαι) in Matthew are in 26:36, 39, 42, 44 (cf. Luke 9:28), all in connection with his own imminent suffering and death. In the present instance, the same thoughts may be presumed to be in Jesus' mind, prompted perhaps by the thought of John the Baptist's death (cf. the initial departure of Jesus into the wilderness privately in v 13 following the report referred to in v 12)." Hagner.

Verse 24

τὸ δὲ πλοῖον ἤδη σταδίου πολλοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς
γῆς ἀπεῖχεν, βασανιζόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων,
ἦν γὰρ ἐναντίος ὁ ἄνεμος.

ἤδη now, already
σταδιοι, ων m (pl) stades, furlongs (about 200 metres)
γῆ, γης f earth, land

"John tells us that the disciples had gone 25 to 30 *stadia*. The greatest width of the lake is 61 *stadia* ... they were well into their journey, though with quite a way to go." Leon Morris.

ἀπεῖχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἀπεχω be distant

Many MSS read μεσον της θαλασσης ἢ rather than σταδίου πολλοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀπεῖχεν. The committee judged this reading to be a harmonisation with Mark 6:47.

βασανίζω torment, disturb
κύμα, ατος n wave
ἐναντίος, α, ου against, contrary to
ἄνεμος, ου m wind

Verse 25

τετάρτη δὲ φυλακῆ τῆς νυκτὸς ἦλθεν πρὸς
αὐτοὺς περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν.

τεταρτος, η, ου fourth
φυλακή, ης f prison, watch (of the night)
νύξ, νυκτος f night

Between 3 and 6 in the morning.

περιπατεῶ walk
θάλασσα, ης f sea

Verse 26

οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης
περιπατοῦντα ἐταράχθησαν λέγοντες ὅτι
Φάντασμα ἔστιν, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραζαν.

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὄραω see, observe
ἐταράχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ταρασσῶ trouble, frighten
φάντασμα, τος n ghost, apparition
φοβος, ου m fear
κραζῶ cry out, call out

"OT symbolism concerning the mastery of God over the sea and specifically his walking upon it (e.g., Ps 77:16, 19; Job 9:8; 38:16; cf. wisdom in Sir 24:5), while significant in retrospect, could hardly have occurred to the disciples at the time, although for the evangelist and his readers it must have been suggestive." Hagner.

Verse 27

εὐθὺς δὲ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων·
Θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε.

εὐθὺς adv. straightway, immediately
λαλεω speak, talk

κ* D 084 sy^c sa bo omit ὁ Ἰησοῦς, other witnesses (C L W Θ 0106 f^{1,13} TR) place αὐτοῖς before ὁ Ἰησοῦς. Although the shorter reading may be original, it is also possible that the name dropped out through homoioteleuton. Hence the committee placed the name in brackets.

θαρσεω (only in imperat) **Courage! Take courage! Cheer up!**

On the expression ἐγὼ εἰμι Filson remarks that it "implies that the speaker had authority and embodies God's power and claim. Jesus brings the answer to their need if only they perceive and believe that in him God is at work to save them. Hill says it is "not 'It is I', but 'I AM', the Living One, master of wind and wave." Morris says "the expression has overtones of deity, and who but God could walk on the stormy waters?"

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

Verse 28

Ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν· Κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἶ, κέλευσόν με ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σὲ ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα·

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply, say
κέλευω see v.19

ἐλθεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

It is difficult to know what lay behind Peter's request. It may have been that Peter wanted to participate with Jesus in this miracle as he had in the preceding one. Perhaps it was no more than impulsiveness or the desire to do something excitingly dangerous – to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience – which appealed to him. The impossible would be possible through the power of Jesus. Thus Peter's request is based upon faith in Jesus and not upon an uncertainty about whether the apparition really was Jesus (this really is assumed in the protasis of the condition)." Hagner.

Verse 29

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Ἐλθέ. καὶ καταβάς ἀπὸ τοῦ πλοίου Πέτρος περιεπάτησεν ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα καὶ ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

ἐλθέ Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ἐρχομαι
καταβαινω come or go down, descend
πλοῖον, ου n see v.22
περιπατεω see v.25

"We usually remember that Peter's faith failed and that Jesus drew attention to this. But we should bear in mind that it took courage for the apostle to venture on the water at all." Leon Morris.

Verse 30

βλέπων δὲ τὸν ἄνεμον ἰσχυρὸν ἐφοβήθη, καὶ ἀρξάμενος καταποντίζεσθαι ἔκραξεν λέγων· Κύριε, σῶσόν με.

βλεπω see, look

"The present participle βλέπων means something like 'as he saw'; the switch of attention from Jesus to the storm coincided with Peter's inability to stay on top of the water." Leon Morris.

ἄνεμος, ου m see v.24

ἰσχυρος, α, ον strong, mighty, powerful

Some important witnesses (κ B* 073 33 sa bo) omit ἰσχυρον, which may have been added to heighten the cause of Peter's fear (cf. the addition of σφοδρα in W). A majority of the committee, however, regarded the word as necessary to explain Peter's increased fear. Thus the word is enclosed in brackets.

ἐφοβήθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s
φοβεομαι see v.27

Phillips, "he panicked"

ἀρξάμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s
ἀρχω midd begin

καταποντίζομαι sink, be drowned

κραζω see v.26

σῶσόν Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s σωζω
save, rescue

Cf. 8:25.

Verse 31

εὐθέως δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἐπέλαβετο αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· Ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας;

ἐκτεινω stretch out, extend

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

ἐπιλαμβανομαι take, take hold of, sieze

ὀλιγοπιστος, ον of little faith

δισταζω doubt, be doubtful

"The leading apostle might have been expected to trust more wholeheartedly, more especially since he had already taken some steps in his alien environment. He was learning that problems arise when doubt replaces trust."
Leon Morris.

"Here the object of the doubt is whether it was possible indeed to walk on the water and hence indirectly expresses a doubt concerning the power of Jesus. Peter was nevertheless saved. The underlying message here is as much for the disciples and for Matthew's church as it is for Peter himself." Hagner.

Verse 32

καὶ ἀναβάντων αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος.

ἀναβαινω go/come up, ascend, embark
κοπαζω cease, stop

"ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος ... not apparently in response to a command of Jesus (as in 8:26) but simply in response to his presence in the boat." Hagner.

Verse 33

οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· Ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.

προσκυνεω worship, fall down and
worship, fall at another's feet
ἀληθῶς adv truly, in truth

Cf. the similar contrast with the ending of the similar story in 8:23-27. "... it is not easy to see precisely how they would have understood the expression at this time (after the resurrection it would have had fuller significance for all Christians). But at least they are saying more than that Jesus is one among many whose godliness entitles them to be addressed as 'sons of God.' They are saying that Jesus is uniquely related to the one God." Leon Morris.

"Here 'Son of God' is probably understood by the disciples as the unique messenger of God, God's messianic agent, and not, as the later church will make explicit, the actual incarnation of God. This conclusion has an inevitability about it, given the preceding two narratives. It strangely anticipates the answer given to the direct question of Jesus in 16:16, which gives the impression of being the first time the question has received this answer. Yet Matthew's Christology builds throughout the narrative of the words and deeds of Jesus that begins in chap. 5. The present passage and verse are a climactic point in the narrative thus far (cf. Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54). 16:16 is yet a higher climax and a turning point of the whole Gospel." Hagner.

Verses 34-36

Cf. Mark 6:53-56; John 6:22-25.

Verse 34

Καὶ διαπεράσαντες ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν εἰς Γεννησαρέτ.

διαπεράσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
διαπεραω cross over
γη, γης f see v.24

"Gennesaret, or Gennesar, is either a village or a region (or both) that lies on the shore just a couple of miles southwest of Capernaum." Hagner.

Verse 35

καὶ ἐπιγνόντες αὐτὸν οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου ἀπέστειλαν εἰς ὅλην τὴν περιχώρον ἐκείνην, καὶ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας,

ἐπιγινωσκω perceive, recognise
άνηρ, άνδρος m man, husband
τοπος, ου m place, opportunity
ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ἀποστελλω send, send out
όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire
περιχωρος, ου f surrounding region,
neighbourhood
προσήνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
προσφερω bring, bring before
κακως badly, severely; κακως έχω be sick

Verse 36

καὶ παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν ἵνα μόνον ἄψωνται τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ· καὶ ὅσοι ἦσαν διεσώθησαν.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
μονον adv only, alone
ἄψωνται Verb, aor mid subj, 3 pl ἅπτω
midd. take hold of, touch
κρασπεδον, ου n fringe, edge, tassel
ἱματιον, ου n garment, clothing, cloak

Cf. 9:20. "Jesus probably healed in his normal way, i.e., directly. But there were apparently so many people in need of healing that they pressed around him and begged (παρακαλουν; for the same use of the verb, cf. 8:5) to touch the hem of his garment (for this, see Comment on 9:20). Such is the power of Jesus that all who touched him on this occasion were instantly cured of their maladies." Hagner.

όσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as;
pl. as many as, all

ἦσαντο Verb, aor mid indic, 3 pl ἅπτω
διεσωθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
διασωζω bring safely through, cure

The compound verb is not to be distinguished in meaning from the simple σωζω, cf. 9:21-22.