

Matthew 14:1-12

The Death of John the Baptist



Verse	Details	Keywords	Revelation	Application
Matthew 14:1	Herod the tetrarch hears reports about Jesus.	<i>Tetrarch</i> (tetrarchēs) – ruler of a fourth part; <i>Heard</i> (ēkousen) – to pay attention to	The growing fame of Jesus reaches even political rulers.	Your witness can reach places you never enter—faithful ministry spreads.
Matthew 14:2	Herod says, “This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead!” That is why miraculous powers work in Jesus.	<i>Risen</i> (ēgerthē) – raised up; <i>Powers</i> (dynameis) – miracles, divine	Guilt warps perception—Herod’s conscience is haunting him.	Unconfessed sin distorts perspective; deal with guilt through repentance.
Matthew 14:3	Matthew explains how Herod arrested, bound, and imprisoned John because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife.	<i>Arrested</i> (krateō) – seized; <i>Imprisoned</i> (en phylakē) – held in custody.	John’s boldness in truth led to opposition—faithfulness can be costly.	Stand for truth even when it’s unpopular or dangerous.
Matthew 14:4	John had been telling Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have her.”	<i>Not lawful</i> (ouk exestin) – against God’s moral law.	John confronted sin in leadership without fear.	Speak truth with courage and conviction when God calls you to.
Matthew 14:5	Herod wanted to kill John but feared the people, who considered John a prophet.	<i>Feared</i> (phobeō) – to be alarmed, intimidated.	Herod is torn between guilt, fear of public opinion, and sin.	Don’t let fear of people rule your decisions—fear God above all.

Verse	Details	Keywords	Revelation	Application
Matthew 14:6	On Herod's birthday, Herodias's daughter dances and pleases Herod.	<i>Pleased</i> (areskō) – to gratify; often with immoral implications.	Lust blinds Herod's judgment, leading to disastrous choices.	Guard your heart and mind—moments of temptation have long-term consequences.
Matthew 14:7	Herod promises with an oath to give her whatever she asks.	<i>Oath</i> (horkos) – binding vow; <i>Whatever</i> (hosan) – unlimited promise.	Foolish, emotional vows lead to regret.	Be slow to speak and commit—emotion should not lead your decisions.
Matthew 14:8	Prompted by her mother, she requests John the Baptist's head on a platter.	<i>Prompted</i> (probibazō) – pushed or influenced; <i>Head</i> (kepha lē).	Sin influences others; Herodias' bitterness seeks revenge.	Don't let others manipulate you into sinful choices.
Matthew 14:9	The king is distressed but because of his oath and guests, he orders John to be beheaded.	<i>Distressed</i> (lypeō) – deeply grieved; <i>Because of</i> – pressured by pride.	Herod cares more about reputation than righteousness.	Choose integrity over image—don't sin to save face.
Matthew 14:10	John is beheaded in prison.	<i>Beheaded</i> (apokoptō) – to cut off; <i>Prison</i> (phylakē).	Faithfulness sometimes leads to suffering and martyrdom.	Honor God even when it costs everything—He sees and rewards eternally.
Matthew 14:11	John's head is brought on a platter and given to the girl, who gives it to her mother.	<i>Given</i> (didōmi) – delivered over; <i>Platter</i> (pinax) – serving board.	Evil celebrates victory too soon—but God's justice is still coming.	Even when evil appears to win, remember God has the final say.

Verse	Details	Keywords	Revelation	Application
Matthew 14:12	John's disciples bury his body and then go tell Jesus.	<i>Buried</i> (thaptō) – to lay to rest; <i>Told</i> (apēngeilan) – reported.	John's followers honor him despite risk; they bring their grief to Jesus	Bring your sorrow to Jesus—He is the place to go after loss and injustice.

Summary Revelation

This passage reveals:

- **Sinful rulers fear truth** and are tormented by guilt (Herod).
- **God's messengers speak boldly** even when the cost is great (John).
- **Unconfessed sin spreads and destroys**, leading Herod and Herodias into deeper darkness.
- **Followers of Jesus bring their pain to Him**, trusting Him for justice and comfort.

The voices of truth may be silenced by men, but they are never silenced before God.

Matthew 14:13-21

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand



Verse	Details	Keywords	Revelation	Application
Matthew 14:13	When Jesus hears about John's death, He withdraws by boat to a solitary place, but the crowds follow Him on foot.	<i>Withdraw</i> (anachōreō) – to step away; <i>Solitary</i> (erēmos) – deserted, quiet.	Jesus seeks solitude and grief with the Father yet remains moved by the needs of others.	It's okay to withdraw when hurting, but stay sensitive to God's purpose even in pain.
Matthew 14:14	Jesus sees the large crowd, has compassion on them, and heals their sick.	<i>Compassion</i> (splagchniz omai) – deep inner stirring; <i>Heal</i> (therapeuō) – restore, serve.	Jesus' compassion overrides His exhaustion—love moves Him to act.	It's okay to withdraw when hurting, but stay sensitive to God's purpose even in pain.
Matthew 14:15	As evening approaches, the disciples tell Jesus to send the crowds away to buy food.	<i>Evening</i> (opsios) – late day; <i>Send away</i> (apolyō) – dismiss.	The disciples see limitation; Jesus sees an opportunity.	Don't default to natural solutions—God often has a miracle in mind.
Matthew 14:16	Jesus replies, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."	<i>Give</i> (dote) – supply, provide.	Jesus draws the disciples into the miracle—He invites partnership.	God often asks you to do the impossible so He can show His power through you.
Matthew 14:17	Jesus replies, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."	<i>Only</i> (monon) – merely, nothing more; <i>Loaves</i> (artos) – bread.	They focus on what they lack, not what they have.	Focus on what God can do with your "only," not on the size of your need.

Verse	Details	Keywords	Revelation	Application
Matthew 14:18	Jesus says, “Bring them here to me.”	<i>Bring</i> (pherō) – to carry to, offer.	Jesus transforms whatever is surrendered to Him.	Your little becomes much when placed in Jesus’ hands.
Matthew 14:19	Jesus directs the people to sit, takes the five loaves and two fish, looks to heaven, blesses them, breaks them, and gives them to the disciples to distribute.	<i>Blessed</i> (eulogēsen) – to give thanks; <i>Broke</i> (klasō) – to break apart; <i>Gave</i> (edidou) – kept giving continually.	The miracle happens in Jesus’ hands and multiplies through the disciples’ hands .	God multiplies what you release; obedience unlocks overflow.
Matthew 14:20	Everyone eats and is satisfied; the disciples gather twelve baskets of leftovers.	<i>Satisfied</i> (chortazō) – filled to abundance; <i>Baskets</i> (kop hinos) – small hand-baskets.	Jesus doesn’t just meet needs—He exceeds them.	God provides not barely enough, but more than enough.
Matthew 14:21	About 5,000 men ate, not counting women and children.	<i>Men</i> (andres) – adult males; implying 10,000–20,000 total people.	The miracle was far larger than the number recorded—God’s work impacts multitudes.	Never underestimate how far God can stretch what you give Him.

Summary Revelation

This miracle teaches us that:

- Jesus responds with **compassion**, even in grief.
- He invites us to **partner** with Him in impossible situations.

- What we see as *too little*, He sees as *more than enough*.
- In His hands, scarcity becomes abundance.

Bring Jesus what you have. He will multiply what you surrender.

Cross References

The Death of John the Baptist **Matthew 14:1-12**

Mark 6:14–29

A parallel account of John's death with more detail about Herodias's plot.

Luke 3:19–20

Herod imprisons John because he rebuked him for marrying Herodias.

Theme: John's boldness in confronting sin.

Matthew 11:2–6

John's earlier imprisonment and Jesus' reassurance to him.

Theme: John's faithfulness even under persecution.

Matthew 23:35

Jesus describes the shedding of righteous blood.

Theme: God remembers every injustice done to His prophets.

Revelation 6:9–11

Souls of martyrs cry out for justice.

Theme: The righteous who die for truth are honored and avenged by God.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

Matthew 14:13-21

John 6:1–14

Full parallel including the boy with five loaves and two fish.

Theme: Jesus is the Bread of Life.

Mark 6:30–44

Parallel account emphasizing Jesus' compassion and shepherd-like heart.

2 Kings 4:42–44

Elisha feeds 100 men with 20 loaves; leftovers remain.

Theme: God multiplies what is surrendered.

Psalms 145:15–16

“You give them their food at the proper time... You satisfy the desires of every living thing.”

Theme: God's abundant provision.

Matthew 15:32–38

Jesus feeds the four thousand—another miracle of multiplication.

Theme: Jesus repeatedly meets physical and spiritual needs.