

1. Introduction

- a. Political division of Israel after death of King Herod the Great in 4 BC
 - i. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee & Perea (east side of Jordan River & Dead Sea, & Masada).
 1. He had divorced his first wife to marry Herodias, who used to be married to his half-brother Philip
 - ii. Philip the Tetrach (Herod Philippi) ruled Decapolis (Golan Heights) & Trachonitus (southeast part of Syria)
 1. He was brother to Herod Antipas but they were political "enemies" because of their personal animosities
 - iii. Pontius Pilate (Roman ruler) governed Judea, Jerusalem, & Samaria
- b. Daily life for a Jew had many political & social realities to deal with
- c. Matthew 14:1-2 – Herod hears about Jesus's miracles & thinks that John the Baptist had come back to life from the dead
- d. Matthew 14:3-11 – Before this Herod had put John the Baptist in prison & finally cut off his head.
 - i. John the Baptist told Herod Antipas that his marriage to Herodias was unlawful under Jewish law
 - ii. John the Baptist ministry was along banks of Jordan River
- e. Matthew 14:12 – Disciples of John the Baptist took his body, buried it, & came telling Jesus what happened.
- f. Two events in this part of Scripture
 - i. Feeding of 5000 (verses 13-21)
 - ii. Jesus walking on the water (verses 22-32)

2. Pressure of Personal Loss

- a. John the Baptist relationship with Jesus
 - i. He was Jesus' cousin
 - ii. He was the forerunner for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:1-3)
 - iii. He revealed Jesus' ministry at his baptism
 - iv. John 1:29 – "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"
- b. Examples of personal loss for Jesus
 - i. John the Baptist had just been executed by Herod Antipas
 - ii. John 11:35 Jesus wept because Lazarus died & was buried

3. Pressure of Political Threat

- a. Jesus was very popular & multitudes followed Jesus out of the cities (verse 13)
 - i. Many of John the Baptist's disciples now followed Jesus
 - ii. Jesus popularity easily seen as political threat to current rulers
- b. Immediately after feeding the 5000, he sent his disciples ahead of the crowds to the other side of Sea of Galilee (verse 22)
 - i. Disciples left Herod Antipas territory (west side) for Philip the Tetrarch's territory (east side)

4. Pressure for Private Time

- a. Jesus went into the wilderness away from his disciples & crowds most likely to grieve John the Baptist's death (verses 13, 15)
- b. Jesus went up on the mountain to pray by Himself (verse 22) after feeding the 5000 & before walking on the water

5. Pressure to Prepare His Disciples

- a. With hungry crowds (verses 15-18, 20)
 - i. Jesus allowed a hungry multitude to occur
 - ii. His disciples alert Him of the problem of hungry people
 - iii. Jesus told His disciples to feed them, a humanly impossible task
 - iv. The disciples could only find 5 loaves & 2 fish – one person dinner
 - v. After feeding of 5000, the disciples gathered up 12 huge baskets of food fragments – certainly enough to feed all of them for several days
 - vi. Jesus can provide for daily needs
- b. On a boat in stormy water (verses 22, 24-26, 32)
 - i. Jesus sent His 12 Disciples alone out into the Sea of Galilee
 - ii. Jesus did not come to them until early morning hours (4th watch) after His night of prayer
 - iii. Boat was in middle of raging storm
 - iv. Jesus identifies Himself
 - v. Peter courageously starts walking on water to Jesus\
 - vi. But finally Jesus saves both Peter & the Disciples by calming the storm waters
 - vii. Jesus can give safety & protection anywhere
- c. Jesus actions for the 12 Disciples:
 - i. Jesus came to them when they were in danger
 - ii. Jesus comforted them by His Word
 - iii. Jesus enabled Peter to do the humanly impossible
 - iv. Jesus returned Peter back to safety
 - v. Jesus calmed the storm