

JESUS AND PETER WALKING ON THE WATER

Introduction

Matt 14:22-33 (NASU) *Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. 23 After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. 24 But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. 26 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." 28 Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"*

A nature miracle: like other such

- calming the sea
- water to wine
- multiplying loaves & fish

Tells us something about who Jesus is:

- power over nature matches greatest prophets
- directness of miracle-working surpasses theirs

This incident is unusual re/ action of Peter:

- disciples sometimes shared in Jesus' miracles
 - loaves & fishes (where did multiplication take place?)
 - casting out demons (not in his presence?)

but this is most direct: Peter doing miracle in Jesus' presence (tho not when he is not)

almost seems like grand-standing on Peter's part, but not rebuked by Jesus for

this.

Is This an Acted Parable?

A fairly common feature of OT prophetic ministry:

- Ahijah rips cloak (1 Kings 11:29)
- Isaiah going "naked" (Isa 20:2-6)
- Jeremiah smashing clay pot (Jer 19:1-13)

- Hosea's marriage (Hos 1-3)
- Jonah's gourd (Jon 4:6-11)
- [sometimes involves miracle: gourd, Ezk's sticks?]

Some *actions* of Jesus are parabolic:

- Foot washing
- Cleansing temple

Some *miracles* of Jesus parabolic:

- Cursing fig tree (Mark 11)
- Healing blind man (John 9)

What Does It Mean?

The Story Itself:

Peter is able to accomplish something humanly impossible through the empowerment of Jesus.

Jesus does not reject or rebuke Peter's desire to do so.

Peter begins to waver when he realizes he is out of his depth (sorry about pun!).

When he withdraws his trust from Christ and begins to fear (dangerous) circumstances, he fails.

Jesus comes to the rescue.

Understood as Acted Parable (similar to application):

Not necessarily that Jesus will do miracles thru us (but don't deny possibility he may choose to).

The Christian life, rightly lived, is like walking on water.

If we will really trust Jesus in living our lives, we will come into circumstances and opportunities that are way over our heads.

If we quit depending on Jesus, and begin to fear our circumstances, God will let us fail:

- contrast Prophets Uriah and Jeremiah in Jer 26
 - Jeremiah stayed & was safe
 - Uriah fled in fear & was killed
- Jer 1:17: "Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them."

The Xn life is a life of constant trust:

Let us make God our security, Rather than security our god
And God will make our enemies flee before us (even Satan!),
Rather than us flee our enemies (even the weakest of them).

Read Lev 26:7-8 (NASU)

But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; 8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.

Read Rom 16:20 (NASU) *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.*