

**Introduction:** I think it was in 1972 the British rock group Jethro Tull released a concept album called *Thick as a Brick*. It was one continuous song of about forty-five minutes. Boomers remember a brick is a large quantity of recreational marijuana. The album tells the story of a man perpetually stoned and has instances of the band's trademark irony and cynicism. It is a depressing album because, as with all their music, they never offer a way out of the wasted lifestyle. \*\*\* However, all artists have something to say about the human condition that we should all file away in our hearts and minds to reflect upon from time-to-time. There were three spoken proverb-like statements near the beginning of side two. My math major friend, who I often thought of as the 'maranatha boy' because of a sign he posted outside his dormitory room door, was always quoting the second sentence to me: 'We will be geared to the ordinary, rather than the exceptional'. Many people are afraid to strive to be the best they can be and settle for mediocrity. Worse than that, when some people see true excellence they want to destroy it so they will not look bad by comparison. Worst of all, it keeps us from knowing Jesus! \*\*\* Our texts this morning challenge this flaw in human nature. As I dug into *Matthew*, I was struck that in less than a chapter we see Jesus perform at least five amazing miracles. Let's be honest with ourselves. As you heard the passage read, did your heart burn with amazement to the point you desired to express worship to God physically? Did you want to lift your hands towards Him in thanksgiving for His amazing power and authority in His Son Jesus? Or, were you so humbled by His power and your tendency not to acknowledge Him that you wanted to stretch out on the floor and put your forehead on the wood? If not, why not? \*\*\* When we say yes to all these questions, and more, about God, we are living in Him, and we will discover: ***Living in God results in protection.*** \*\*\* And when you heard the introduction to the Royal Psalm, were you moved to joyful praise of THE God who is Creator, Redeemer and King all in one? \*\*\* Let it be our prayer that when we conclude our deeper examination of God's Word we can say yes to all these questions. Then we will be ready for the Sacrament of Communion.

**I. Jesus feeds a large multitude of people.** (*Matthew 14:13-22*)

- A. He goes to be alone in the wilderness, but people follow Him; and, with compassion, He heals the sick. (*Verses 13-15*)
1. Having heard, Jesus departed to the wilderness alone; and, having heard, the multitude followed Him on foot out of the towns. (*Verse 13*)  
**John the Baptist:** Jesus heard that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist. (*Verses 1-12*)  
**Many people:** A multitude of everyday people was following Jesus.
  2. Having gone forth, He saw the great multitude, and He was moved with compassion to them and healed their sick. (*Verse 14*)  
**Jesus' compassion:** By seeing with His mind the effects of sickness on people, Jesus was moved (by the Spirit) with compassion.  
**Healing of sick:** His healing of the sick was a miracle. He did it with no medicine or machines.
  3. Having become late, the disciples came to Him, saying, 'The hour is now past, Thou must send away the multitude, so having gone to the villages they may buy solid food (vittles)'. (*Verse 15*)  
**Late hour:** It is now late afternoon, early evening.  
**Disciples' plea of concern:** They are concerned Jesus will give them opportunity to eat good food.
- B. Jesus commands His disciples to feed the people; but, they say they have meager portions, so Jesus commands they bring to Him what they have. (*Verses 16-18*)
1. But Jesus said, 'They are not needing to depart; you all must give them to eat'. (*Verse 16*)  
**Jesus' surprise answer:** Jesus emphatically commands His disciples to feed the multitude.
  2. And they are saying, 'We are not having here, except five loaves and two fish'. (*Verse 17*)  
**We don't have enough:** They admitted and confessed they did not have enough. Only Jesus does.
  3. But Jesus said, 'You all must be bringing them to Me here'. (*Verse 18*)  
**Bring to Me:** All disciples have the responsibility of turning over all their meager possessions to Jesus, and to trust Him to multiply them to be more than sufficient.
- C. After blessing what they brought, Jesus has His disciples distribute the food and twenty thousand are fed. (*Verses 19-22*)
1. Having commanded the multitude to be seated on the grass, having taken the five loaves and two fish, having looked to heaven, He blessed; having broken, He gave the loaves to the disciples and the disciples to the multitude. (*Verse 19*)  
**Blessing:** Jesus took three preliminary steps before He blessed the loaves and fish.  
**Involved disciples:** He graciously delegated the distribution of the bread to the disciples.
  2. All ate and were filled, and they took up the fragments being left over: twelve baskets full. (*Verse 20*)  
**Filled:** Everyone in the multitude ate enough to be filled.  
**Leftovers:** Not only that, there were many leftovers.
  3. They being eating were being about five thousand men beside women and children. (*Verse 21*)  
**Total number:** The men had wives and most families had at least two children, so in total some twenty thousand people ate the multiplied loaves and fish. This is the second miracle.
  4. Immediately He urged the disciples to get into the ship and go before Him to the other side, until that He may send away the multitude. (*Verse 22*)  
**Urges disciples:** Jesus desired the disciples go ahead to the next opportunity to know Him better.  
**Final care for people:** He wanted the everyday people sent home appropriately.

**II. Jesus does three miracles in the wind and waves; and, God's people joyfully worship Him as the Great King.**

(*Matthew 14:23-33; Psalm 95:1-5*)

- A. After praying, Jesus saw the disciples a half-mile out to sea tossed by the waves and the wind, so He walked to them on the water. (*Matthew 14:23-27*)

1. Having sent away the multitudes, He went up to the mountain to pray alone; but, having become late, only He was being there. (*Verse 23*)  
**Prayer:** Jesus often prayed alone (*Luke 5:16; 6:12*), sometimes with the twelve (*Luke 9:18,28; 11:1*).
  2. The ship is now many stadia from the land, it was being fully tossed about by the waves for the wind was being contrary. (*Verse 24*)  
**Distance:** A stadia is 600 feet, if many is more than three, then they were about a half mile from shore.  
**Storm:** Ship tossing waves and strong contrary winds are obvious results of a severe storm.
  3. In the fourth watch of the night He went to them walking on the sea. (*Verse 25*)  
**Time:** It was sometime between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM.  
**Walking on water:** This is a major miracle. Even in the best weather people do not walk on water.
  4. The disciples, having seen Him being walking on the sea were troubled, saying, 'That is being an apparition'; and, from the fear, they cried out. (*Verse 26*)  
**Troubled fear:** They are now agitated, anxious and perplexed; terror struck, they loudly cry out.
  5. Immediately Jesus spoke to them saying, 'You all must take courage: I, I AM being, you all must not be frightened'. (*Verse 27*)  
**Encouragement:** He emphatically uses the Divine Covenant Name and gives the same encouraging word He will later use to conclude His Last Passover in the Upper Room (*John 16:33*).
- B. Peter requested to walk to Jesus and he did, but he sank in fear and cried out; Jesus caught Peter and calmed the sea causing all to worship Him. (*Matthew 14:28-33*)
1. Having answered Him, Peter said, 'Lord! If Thou are being, Thou must command me to come to Thee on the waters. (*Verse 28*)  
**Peter's faith:** Peter believed Jesus had the power to enable him to walk on water too.
  2. And He said, 'Thou must come'; and, having come down out of the ship, Peter walked on the waters and went to Jesus. (*Verse 29*)  
**Jesus complies:** Jesus grants Peter's request by commanding him to come.  
**Peter walks:** Peter obeys the command in faith and begins to walk on the storm-tossed sea. This is a big miracle, maybe the biggest this night.
  3. But seeing the severe wind, he was made afraid and having begun to sink, he cried out saying, 'Lord! Thou must save me'. (*Verse 30*)  
**Panicked plea:** Peter, fearing the effects he saw of the wind on the sea, began to sink and made a loud, panicked plea to his Lord.
  4. Immediately Jesus, having stretched forth the hand, He caught him; and He is saying, 'Little-faith! In what did thou doubt?' (*Verse 31*)  
**Catch:** Jesus immediately saved Peter by catching him in His hand. Being in Jesus' inner circle of three, Peter was close to Jesus, God's Son. Jesus loved him very much and protected him from death.

#### **Living in God results in protection**

**Chastisement:** However, after saving Peter, Jesus also called him out for not having enough faith.

5. Having gone aboard into their ship, the wind ceased. (*Verse 32*)  
**Storm calmed:** The third miracle of the night was the immediate cessation of a severe storm. As Jesus was united with His chosen disciples who lived with Him night and day, He made them safe.

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**Bottom line:** They in the ship worshipped Him, saying, 'Truly, Son of God, Thou are being'. (*Verse 33*)

**Worship:** This is the bowing prostrate before God with the face firmly planted on the ground.

**Confession of faith:** They say Jesus is truly God's Son, God. May we all be aware that the wonderful, amazing God has the power to meet the deepest needs of people, whom He created in His image.

C. God's people rejoice in their rock of salvation because He is the great King who created everything. (*Psalms 95:1-5*)

1. Come! We will joyfully sing to Yahweh, to The Rock of our Salvation; we will come to Him with thanksgiving, praising Him in psalms with victorious shouts of joy. (*Verses 1-2*)  
**Salvation – grace:** God's people sing to Him in joy because of His gracious salvation of them.  
**Thanksgiving – gratitude:** Thanking Him, they express their gratitude to Him.  
**Joy:** Their joy becomes psalms of praise to the Rock of their Salvation, their Redeemer.

#### **We sing praise to The Rock of Our Salvation**

2. For Yahweh is a great God and a great King over all 'gods'. (*Verse 3*)  
**King:** *Psalms 93-99* are a confession of faith and hope for The Kingdom of God on earth. Together they speak of Yahweh as the eternal, universal and invincible King of everything.
3. In His hand the deep places of the earth, the eminence of the mountains is also His; the sea is His and He made it, His hands formed the dry lands as a potter. (*Verses 4-5*)  
**Land:** Yahweh is celebrated as the three-fold Creator of all dry land including the valleys and mountains.  
**Sea:** And He owns the sea because He is its Creator.

**Conclusion:** We have seen Jesus compassionately heal the sick, feed the hungry, walk on water to His disciples overwhelmed by a storm at sea, enable one of them to walk on the same storm-tossed sea (until his little-faith failed him), and calm the sea. The cumulative effect of all this on them was awe and worship given to Him whom they now understood to be truly God. In other words, they were made aware He is the same God the psalmist declared to be THE Creator, Redeemer and King.

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