

left over produced worms.⁹ And Elijah fed the widow, but provided only what sufficed.¹⁰ But Jesus, as Lord and Master, provides an overabundance. This is the meaning of the literal account. But the spiritual meaning is this: the five loaves signify the five books of Moses, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The two fish signify the two teachings of the fishermen: the Epistle Book and the Gospel Book.¹¹ By these are nourished our five senses, signified by the five thousand. But we are not able to eat it all, and there is much left over, which the apostles, though, are able to grasp. For we who are enslaved by the five senses cannot grasp the more difficult thoughts of the law and the Gospel, but the apostles can.

45-52. And straightway He constrained His disciples to get into the boat, and to go to the other side towards Bethsaida, while He sent away the multitude. And when He had sent them away, He departed onto a mountain to pray. And when the evening was come, the boat was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on the land. And He saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw Him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been an apparition, and cried out: for they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He talked with them, and saith unto them, Take courage: it is I; be not afraid. And He went up unto them into the boat; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marvelled. For they had not understood the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. "He constrained the disciples" for they did not want to be taken away from Him, and could be separated only by compulsion. This, because of their love for Him, and because they were at a loss to know how He would come to them, because He had no boat. He sent away the multitude and went up

⁹ Ex. 16:20

¹⁰ III Kings (I Kings) 17:13-16

¹¹For use in Orthodox church services, the book of the New Testament is divided and bound separately as two books, called in Greek the *evangelion*, the Gospel, and the *apostolos*, the "Apostle", which includes the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. From these two books, as well as from the Old Testament, readings are made at the appointed times during the Divine Services.

to pray alone, for prayer requires stillness and no disturbance. He permits the disciples to be tested, so that they would learn to endure. This is why He does not go to them at once, but allows them to be tossed by the storm throughout the night, teaching them to persevere and not to hope for rest at the very beginning of their troubles. Observe this as well: at the very moment when He is about to bring an end to their troubles, He casts them into even greater fear. For when they saw Him, they cried out and were troubled, thinking He was some apparition. And immediately He heals them with His voice, saying, "Be not afraid." Then when He enters the boat, He obtains for them a more perfect calm: for "the wind ceased." To walk on water is a great miracle, and truly of God, and the storm and the contrary wind only add to the miracle. The apostles had not understood the miracle of the loaves, but through the miracle of the sea they understood. Hence it appears that Christ permitted them to be tested for this reason too, that since they had not recognized Who He was by the miracle of the loaves, they might do so by the miracle on the sea, and thus receive benefit.

53-56. And when they had passed over, they came unto the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come down out of the boat, straightway the people recognized Him, and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry on beds those that were sick, to where they heard that He was. And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch even if it were but the hem of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole. On another occasion, it would seem, the Lord had visited that place. Therefore the evangelist says, "The people recognized Him" and brought to Him their sick. They no longer asked Him to come to their homes, but they themselves brought their sick to Him, beseeching Him "that they might touch even if it were but the hem of His garment." For they had all heard of the miracle of the healing of the woman with an issue of blood, and it had given them greater faith.