

Mark 6:49

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

Analysis

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: Seeing Jesus walking on water, they 'supposed it had been a spirit' (φάντασμα, phantasma, ghost/apparition) and 'cried out' in terror. Their fear despite witnessing countless miracles reveals persistent spiritual dullness. They didn't immediately recognize Jesus in unexpected manifestation, illustrating how preconceptions limit recognizing Christ's presence.

Historical Context

Ancient Mediterranean culture believed in ghosts and sea spirits. Jewish tradition included stories of supernatural beings, though orthodox theology rejected pagan superstitions. Their terror reflected natural human response to apparently supernatural phenomenon. The cry suggests collective panic—all disciples feared simultaneously, showing it wasn't individual hallucination but observable event.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does this verse teach about Christ's nature and work?
2. How should this truth shape our daily discipleship?

Interlinear Text

οἱ	δὲ	ιδόντες	αὐτὸν	περιπατοῦντα	ἐπὶ	τῆς
G3588	But	when they saw	him	walking	upon	G3588
	G1161	G1492	G846	G4043	G1909	
θαλάσσης	ἔδοξαν	φάντασμά	εἶναι,	καὶ	ἀνέκραξαν·	
the sea	they supposed	a spirit	it had been	and	cried out	
G2281	G1380	G5326	G1511	G2532	G349	

Additional Cross-References

Job 9:8 (Parallel theme): Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

Luke 24:37 (Spirit): But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.