


the
Jesus 
Storybook
Bible
Curriculum

The Captain of the storm

The storm on the lake, from Mark 4 and Matthew 8

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum
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Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

- ☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.
- ☉ Briefly recap the main point of the previous story: “Last time we read that we do not need to worry because we can trust God to look after us. We also said that if we are worried, we should pray. Let’s start by praying the Lord’s Prayer together.”

- ☉ Pray the Lord’s Prayer aloud together.

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, say: “In the stories of Jairus and the poor sick lady we learned that Jesus has power over sickness and over death. Today we are going to learn about another power Jesus has. This power has something to do with waves. Raise your hand if you have played in the waves at the beach. Thank you, hands down.”

Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

Aim: To expend energy and introduce the idea of calming a storm.

Materials: A very large (preferably blue) sheet; a soft, light object to bounce on the sheet, e.g., a small ball.

1. Say: “If you play in the waves at the beach, you know that the waves can roll over you and even knock you down. If you are out on a boat in the sea and there is a storm, there are great big waves and lots of wind. The waves are so big, they can knock a boat down. Let’s play a game about that.”
2. Lay the sheet flat on the ground in the center of the circle. Ask the children to hold the piece of the sheet nearest to them and then ask them all to stand up.
3. Say: “Let’s try making waves.”
4. Make “waves” by shaking the sheet. Try shaking the sheet quickly and then slowly.
5. Say: “When I call out ‘Hush! Be still!’ we have to try to get the waves still and flat instantly. Ready?”
6. Do this a couple of times, commenting appropriately.

7. Put the soft, light object on the sheet and ask everyone to make waves so that the object bounces on the waves. After mastering bouncing the object, try to bounce it so fast that it bounces off the sheet.

8. Explain the game: Everyone in the circle bounces the object on the waves. If you call out “Storm!” then everyone needs to shake the sheet really fast and the child who is nearest needs to catch or collect the object when it bounces off the sheet. If you call out “Hush! Be still!” everyone needs to try to get the sheet still instantly. When you say “Go!” they can go back to creating waves and bouncing the object.

9. Play the game, calling out “Storm!” and “Hush! Be still!” frequently; sometimes right after one another. Comment as much as possible on the fact that they aren’t getting the sheet still fast enough.

10. Toward the end of the allotted time, ask the children to sit down and let go off the sheet, leaving it flat in the circle.

11. Say: “In our story today Jesus and the disciples are caught in a storm. Let’s find out what happens.”

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 236–243 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD3 track 1.

Notes for Teachers on the Text

In Mark 4:35–41 we read of Jesus and his disciples in a boat when a life-threatening storm arose. We are told that “Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion,” apparently impotent and/or indifferent to the disciples’ peril. The disciples broach this very issue when they wake him: “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” This is the same question posed by the psalmists, Job, Jeremiah, and many others: “Lord, don’t you care?” In Mark we see that Jesus immediately calms the storm, showing no lack of power, and he rebukes the disciples for questioning his love. The Lord is neither out of control nor uncaring.

We learn two very different truths about Jesus from this incident. On the one hand, we learn that he is quite human. Here we see him fast asleep during a “furious” storm. He must have been exhausted to sleep through a storm. On the other hand, the text obviously points to his divinity.

The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by high mountains, making it like a basin, so when the winds from the southwest enter through clefts in the mountains, sudden hurricane-force storms can arise without warning. Jesus is able to stop such a hurricane by simply speaking. He says, “Quiet! Be still!” There is no sense of struggle. It is a simple statement. But Jesus does not simply stop the wind. Had the wind immediately stopped after Jesus’ statement, it could have been a coincidence. But we read that “it was completely calm.” This indicates that everything became still, including the waves.

It is one thing to have stopped the wind, but the language indicates that the raging sea also suddenly became calm. This is a remarkable exertion of enormous power, unavoidably reminding us of the numerous biblical assertions that the Lord alone has power to calm the wind and the waves (see, for example, Psalm 29).

This, therefore, is another in the series of miracles that show us that Jesus is all-powerful, even in situations that are hopeless in human terms; that show us Jesus’ authority over the impossible. Jesus has power over any storm, any chaos, any terror.

When Jesus asks his disciples: “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” he seems to be referring to all the things he has taught them and shown them. The word “still” indicates that Jesus has given them quite a lot of evidence about his power and love. He is saying: “After all you have seen—do you still have no faith? Why are you afraid? Do you have sufficient reason for your fears and doubts?” These are good questions for us to consider too.

Understanding the Story

15 min.



Aim: To understand that Jesus has power over nature.

Materials: A very large (preferably blue) sheet; name tags/labels with names from the story (see below); crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: "Isn't that amazing! Jesus is able to calm a storm by speaking. Let's retell this amazing story."
2. Announce that everyone will get a name from the story. Assign two children (preferably seated opposite one another) the name **boat**. Assign another two children the name **storm**. Assign another two the name **lake**. Continue in a similar manner, using names from the story (e.g., **wind**, **waves**, **afraid**) until you have four to six children left. Assign the last four to six children the name **disciples**. Give the relevant name label to each child.
3. Make sure the children with the same name know who their counterpart is.
4. Explain the game: The children will use the sheet to make waves as in the first activity (no bouncing object this time, and ask them to do this in a way that cannot injure the kids crawling beneath the sheet). You will call out the main points of the story. When you say one of their names, e.g., "They set out in a small **boat**," the children assigned the name **boat** crawl underneath the sheet and emerge in the place of the person with the same name.
5. Say: "You need to try to come out from under the sheet before the other person. Of course, when I say the word **disciples**, then lots of you will be crawling underneath the sheet. Again, you need to try to come out from underneath the sheet before the others. But you must not bump into or touch another player. Ready? Stand up and pick up the sheet. Let's make calm, small waves! Listen carefully so you don't miss hearing your name."
6. Call out the story using the assigned names as much as possible and pausing in between to allow the children to crawl underneath the sheet, e.g.:
 - ☉ Jesus said, "Let's go across the **lake**." [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge]
 - ☉ So Jesus and his **disciples** ... [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge] set out in a small **boat**. [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge]
 - ☉ Jesus was tired, so he fell asleep. They were only halfway across the **lake** ... [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge] when out of nowhere a **storm** arose. [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge; also ask them to make bigger waves for the storm]
 - ☉ The **wind** [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge] blew the water into towering **waves**. [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge]

☉ Jesus was still sleeping [take a dramatic pause]. The **disciples** couldn't control the **boat**; the **storm** was too big for them. [pause to let all three names crawl under the sheet and emerge]

☉ They were **afraid** [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge] and screamed: "Wake up, Jesus! Rescue us! Don't you care?" Jesus stood up and said: "Hush! Be still!" And immediately [take a dramatic pause] the **wind** stopped. [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge]

☉ The **waves** calmed down. [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge; also ask them to hold the sheet still now and stop making waves]

☉ The **storm** was gone and the **lake** and the **boat** were calm and still again. [pause to let all three names crawl under the sheet and emerge]

☉ Jesus asked them: "Why were you **afraid**?" [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge]

☉ The **disciples** [pause to let them crawl under the sheet and emerge] were quiet and asked themselves: "Who is this? Even the **wind** and the **waves** obey him!" [pause to let both names crawl under the sheet and emerge] The end!

7. At the end of the activity, ask the children to sit down in the circle and let go of the sheet. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon.

8. Say: "The disciples ask a very good question. When Jesus calms the storm, they ask each other: 'Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!' What is the answer to their question? Correct, Jesus is God so he has power over the wind and the waves."

9. Say: "Do you remember we discovered that Jesus has power over sickness and over death? Here we discover that Jesus has power over nature. Jesus has power over things that other people do not. On your paper you can see three questions and some possible answers. As I read them aloud, circle the correct answers. Some questions may have more than one correct answer."

10. Read the three questions and possible answers aloud. Give time for the children to circle the correct answers. Ask them what they circled and comment appropriately; e.g., "That's right, all three answers are correct: the disciples were afraid because they thought the boat would sink and because they did not know who Jesus is and because they did not have faith in Jesus." "Correct, the disciples had no need to be afraid because Jesus was with them." "Yes, there are two correct answers: to stop being afraid the disciples need to understand who Jesus is — that he is God — and they need to have faith in Jesus — to trust him completely."

For larger groups: You may want to divide the group into two and have one half play while the other half watches, and then reverse. This also allows you to tell the story twice.

Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “What the disciples do not understand is that Jesus is perfect and powerful in every way. Jesus can do things that we can’t do. He has power over sickness and death and he has power over storms, over nature.”

Say: “We can trust Jesus and have faith in him completely. There is nothing to be afraid of, because Jesus is always with everyone who trusts and believes in him.”

Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, thanking God that he is powerful and so we don’t need to be afraid.

Ask the children to think of something they are afraid of and then to pray that Jesus would help them trust him instead of being afraid of that thing.

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “Jesus calms the storm by speaking. He can do things other people cannot do. He has power over the storm because he is God. There is a verse in the book of Matthew in the Bible that describes this beautifully.”

☉ Announce the verse: “Your verse to learn at home is Matthew 19:26 — ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.

The Captain of the storm (The storm on the lake, from Mark 4 and Matthew 8)



Why were the disciples afraid?

- a) They thought the boat would sink.
- b) They did not know who Jesus is.
- c) They had no faith.

Did the disciples need to be afraid?

- a) Yes.
- b) No.

What did the disciples need to do to stop being afraid?

- a) To get better at guessing the weather.
- b) To understand who Jesus is.
- c) To have faith in Jesus.

Jesus in the Story



What did you discover about Jesus from this story?

Jesus

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.
(Matthew 19:26)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that Jesus has power over nature. He can do things other people cannot do. We can trust and have faith in him.

Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of Matthew, using the diagram above.

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