

## LESSON 2

June 13, 2021

### Unit I. Jesus Teaches about Faith Calming the Storm

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Psalm 107:23-32

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:** Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

**PRINT PASSAGE:** Matthew 8:23-27

#### KEY VERSE

[Jesus] saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. (Matthew 8:26, KJV)

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[Jesus] replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. (Matthew 8:26, NIV)

#### Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Consider the feelings of the disciples when a storm overtook their boat while Jesus was asleep.
- Identify the crises that cause adults to worry about themselves and their families.
- Respond to the promised presence of Jesus in bad times as well as good times.

#### KEY TERMS

**Calm (verse 26)**—Greek: *galéné* (gal-ay’-nay): a calmness; stillness; a state of being undisturbed, serene, or peaceful.

**Followed (verse 23)**—Greek: *akoloutheó* (ak-ol-oo-theh’-o): accompanied; attended to.

**Obey (verse 27)**—Greek: *hupakouó* (hoop-ak-oo’-o): to listen or harken to a command; submit to.

**Rebuked (verse 26)**—Greek: *epitimaó* (ep-ee-tee-mah’-o): chided; admonished; warned.

**Save (verse 25)**—Greek: *sózó* (sode’-zo): to deliver, preserve, or rescue from danger.

**Storm (verse 24)**—Greek: *seismos* (sice-mos’): a commotion, shaking (as an earthquake); a violent disturbance, usually with strong winds; “tempest” (KJV).

#### INTRODUCTION

After much prayer, this writer left full-time employment as a college professor to accept the pastorate of a small church at a considerable reduction in pay. Faced with the realities of a 50 percent pay cut, our family set a reduced budget while cutting back on all unnecessary spending—dining out, luxury cars, and cable packages. The family budget was cut with the hopes that the lost income (and related privileges) would be offset by the improved family time. With a little money

in savings and much prayer, we embarked on the journey of pastoral ministry. During the first winter, less than six months in, the truck broke down, high school fees were due, close family members needed help, and my wife faced a significant health challenge. Despite our prayers and fasting, storms of trouble continued to come against us. One night, we awoke to a loud, thunderous noise whose source we could neither locate nor identify. We returned to bed only to awaken a few hours later to a bone-chilling, bitter cold. The central heating system had gone out, and there was nothing I could do to offset or fix the situation. When the repairman arrived, he explained that a delayed furnace ignition and the build-up of gas had resulted in a small explosion. That small explosion could have and should have resulted in far more damage than what our eyes were seeing. We learned from that experience not to allow anxiety and pressure from the progression of unfortunate mishaps to build up inside of us. Our God is a deliverer and a very present help. When we face a situation that we cannot fix, He is well able to see us through when we place our trust in Him.

## THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

After many days of ministry, Jesus directed the disciples to prepare themselves to travel the eight-mile distance to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. As the disciples made necessary preparations, Jesus became engaged in conversation with a scribe (a teacher of the Law) and a disciple regarding spiritual commitment. Jesus elaborated on the cost of following Him.

The focus of today's lesson is the revelation of Jesus' divine authority over the natural elements—the wind and the sea. Although the disciples had seen Jesus perform countless miracles, they were astonished at His ability to speak a word that not only calmed the wind and water, but also settled the tremendous storm of fear that had overtaken their own spirits. These experienced fishermen had likely weathered many dangerous storms on the Sea of Galilee, but on that night, they were convinced that they had come upon the storm that would kill them. They worked desperately to save themselves, and when they had done all they could, they went to Jesus in desperation and pleaded for His help. The disciples showed a measure of trust by seeking Jesus, yet He rebuked them for not realizing that the situation was under control even as He slept. Jesus' calm and ability to rest in the midst of the storm assures believers that they can trust God during difficult times.

## ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

### Storms Come (*Matthew 8:23-25*)

#### KJV

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples *followed* him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great *tempest* in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, *save* us: we perish.

#### NIV

23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples *followed* him.

24 Suddenly a furious *storm* came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, *save* us! We’re going to drown!”

Jesus entered a boat with His disciples to travel to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (verse 23). The text does not indicate how long the disciples struggled against the storm, but the raging storm appeared suddenly and tossed water into the boat until the disciples were convinced that they would drown. The NIV refers to it as a “furious storm” (verse 24); the KJV calls it a “tempest.” The Greek word used is similar to the word used for “earthquake,” indicating a massive disturbance in the water and air at the time of this event. The storm was so massive that the waves began to cover the boat (verse 24a)—promoting great fear in the hearts of the experienced sailors. What is even more amazing in this event is that Jesus managed to remain asleep through it all (verse 24b). After doing all they could to manage the boat, they awakened Jesus to alert Him of the danger they faced (verse 25a), and pleaded with Him, “Lord, save us” (verse 25b). When storms arise, it is appropriate to go to Jesus and seek His help. The apparent problem with the men’s request was their certainty of perishing (verse 25c). They were convinced that they were going to drown. In their panic, the disciples displayed a fearful, reactive faith. Jesus wants His disciples to trust Him even in the middle of the worst storms of their lives. Jesus requires of us the same level of faith that He expected from His disciples that day—an unshakable faith that prevails even when storms threaten to take us under. Because Jesus is the Master of all things, there is no need to be afraid. He is well able to calm every storm. The patience and peace of God the Son in trusting in God the Father is an example for us to follow. Storms will come upon us in this world, whether suddenly or gradually. No matter what these storms bring, we must always learn to trust in God in all things, even amid the storms that kill us.

### **What do you think?**

Take time to share a storm that came upon you suddenly and how you handled it.

### **Seek Christ** (*Matthew 8:26-27*)

#### **KJV**

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and *rebuked* the winds and the sea; and there was a great *calm*.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea *obey* him!

#### **NIV**

26 He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and *rebuked* the winds and the waves, and it was completely *calm*.

27 The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves *obey* him!”

When the disciples realized the storm was beyond their control, they went to Jesus. The problem is that they went to Him in fear and not in faith. Jesus knew their inner thoughts and their purpose behind every move. The same is true for each of us. He immediately asked the disciples, “Why are ye fearful?” and chastised them for having “little faith” (verse 26a). The first part of Jesus’ question about fear should challenge every Christian. If we know that Christ is with us, why

do we fear? Many problems yet exist in our world because Christians exhibit fear rather than faith. Hence, the second part of the question dealt with having little faith. Jesus was suggesting that if they had more faith, they would not have feared even an awful storm. We should seek God when we are in trouble, in need of help, or seeking clarity and answers. The challenge is to seek in faith and not in fear. In all of those circumstances we should seek in faith, knowing that whatever is happening in our lives is temporal and cannot stand against the eternal God. The text states that Jesus rebuked the air and the sea, causing them both to settle down and creating a “great calm” on the sea (verse 26b). There was such a contrasting peace in the sea that “the men marvelled” (verse 27a). Their astonishment led to another level of amazement as they began to wonder “what kind of man” (verse 27) was Jesus that even nature obeyed His voice and command. The closing of their statements reveals their growing understanding of Jesus’ identity and authority as the Son of God. Although they had seen many miracles, they were awe-struck that “even the winds and the waves obey Him!” (verse 27b, NIV).

As we all seek Christ through our life’s journey—filled with many days of overcast skies and storms that come and go—we must learn to seek Him in faith, understanding that He is Master of all on earth and in heaven. A faithful walk includes one that understands that if God is in total control, then He is able to prevent storms, physical and spiritual, from coming; but as is the case in the text, He often chooses not to remove the storm but wishes that we seek Him in trust as we endure the storm—for He is able to keep us through the storm.

### **What do you think?**

Practically speaking, what must we do to experience peace amid life’s most devastating situations—such as job loss, the death of a loved one, a terminal medical diagnosis, or bad news concerning a family member?

### **A CLOSING THOUGHT**

Today’s lesson on faith challenges our natural, physical reaction to unexpected occurrences in our lives that lead us into a state of fear. Jesus, as our Master who is always near and dear to us, is ready to handle the matter if we will trust Him completely. While we may not like storms, however, in all of our lives, they will come. When they do, we must trust God.

### **YOUR LIFE**

This week, identify the most recent storm in your life. If you are not currently in a storm, then reflect on the last storm. How did you handle it? What could you have done better? In this current storm, remain calm and rational. Turn to God’s Word, seek His presence, and trust His love for You. Never doubt that God can see you through anything.

### **YOUR WORLD!**

This week, consider someone you know is going through a storm. Prayerfully consider ways that you might support the person. This might require covering with prayer, sharing your testimony, or delivering some resources.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, we humbly confess our fears. When we face storms, we ask You to cover and keep us by Your grace. Strengthen our faith and reduce our fear as we look to You for all our help. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## **CONCLUSION**

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

While reading the background Scripture, consider this thought: "Have you ever experienced a healing touch?"

## **HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

Healed by Faith  
(June 14-20, 2021)

|                    |   |                        |
|--------------------|---|------------------------|
| MONDAY, June 14    | "Fringe, Aid to Remember God's Commandments"  | (Numbers 15:37-41)     |
| TUESDAY, June 15   | "Disciples and Family Witness Girl's Healing" | (Luke 8:40-42a, 49-56) |
| WEDNESDAY, June 16 | "A Woman Testifies to Jesus' Healing Touch"   | (Luke 8:42b-48)        |
| THURSDAY, June 17  | "Jesus Opens the Eyes of Blind Man"           | (Matthew 9:27-31)      |
| FRIDAY, June 18    | "Jesus Restores Speech to a Mute Man"         | (Matthew 9:32-34)      |
| SATURDAY, June 19  | "Join the Lord's Harvest Today"               | (Matthew 9:35-10:1)    |
| SUNDAY, June 20    | "Faith in God Heals Many Ills"                | (Matthew 9:18-26)      |