

# SABBATH SCHOOL

Level 5 • Unit 5 • Week 2

## JESUS WALKS ON WATER

### OBJECTIVE:

To examine Jesus Christ's ministry in Galilee focusing on the event of Christ walking on water. This lesson is also intended to acquaint the students with the land of Palestine as it was in the time Christ.

### ATTENTION GETTER:

Directions: Present to the students a map of Palestine as it was in the time of Christ. Then have them each take some drawing paper and reproduce it themselves. Have them label the following sections and who ruled them:

- District of Galilee and Perea—Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great).
- Trachonitis—Philip (the brother of Herod Antipas, perhaps the only good ruler to come from the Herod family).
- Decapolis—10 cities that ruled themselves.

Note: The above rulers only ruled by the permission of the Roman emperor who was in control of all of that part of the world at the time.

Next show a map of the area around the Sea of Galilee. With another piece of drawing paper have the students draw their own Sea of Galilee and then have them label the following cities around it.

- Capernaum—where Christ had a house as an adult.
- Nazareth—where Jesus grew up.
- Bethsaida—where disciples were heading on the boat when Jesus walked on water.

### BIBLE LESSON:

(From Matthew 14 and Mark 6.)

Say: The disciples were glad to return to Jesus. Sometime earlier He had sent them out to preach that people should repent. When He sent them out, Jesus had given the disciples power over unclean spirits and the power to heal the sick. Now upon their return, the disciples eagerly related what had happened on their journey [see Mark 6:30]. Though this was a happy meeting it was marred by some sorrowful news.

Ask: What was this news? [Tell the students to find the answer in Matthew 14:1-10.]

Say: The very sad news was that John the Baptist had been beheaded. When Jesus heard all of this news from the disciples, He decided that they all needed some time to themselves so He and His disciples got into a boat and sailed to a lonely desert spot on the northeast side of the Sea of Galilee. But when they arrived to the desert place they found out that it wasn't lonely after all.

Somehow the people found out where Jesus and His disciples were going and many of them walked from the surrounding villages around the lake and were there waiting for Christ and His disciples when their boat landed.

Ask: Was Jesus annoyed with the crowd for following them and not leaving them alone? Let's look in Matthew 14:14.

Say: Jesus felt great compassion for the multitudes of people because they had no one to guide them into the right way of living. So He took time to teach them about the Kingdom of God and to mercifully heal their sick (Luke 9:11).

Later on, as the day was ending and night was approaching, Jesus, realizing the people were too far away in the desert to get something to eat, miraculously took five loaves of bread and two fish and fed 5,000 men as well as women and children.

Say: Jesus directed His disciples to get into a boat and start sailing across the Sea of Galilee.

Ask: What did Jesus do after His disciples left on the boat?

Explain: Jesus went up on a mountainside to pray and He kept right on praying until it was quite late at night. Then, as Jesus approached the shore of the lake, He noticed that the wind had really picked up and the waves were really high. He also noticed the disciples' boat in the distance being buffeted by the storm. So He decided to go out and help them.

Ask: Did Jesus use a boat to get out to where His disciples were? Why didn't Jesus need a boat?

Say: God performed a miracle that allowed Jesus Christ to walk right on top of the water in the middle of a storm. Can you imagine what it must have been like walking on the top of high waves in the wind? Would it be like surfing?

Ask: What time was it when Jesus walked to the disciples?

- Say: Well, the fourth watch of the night was sometime between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. in the morning.
- Say: The disciples were frightened when they saw a figure approaching them on top of the water. At first they thought it was a ghost; but as He neared them, they realized it was Jesus.
- Ask: What did Peter want to do when he saw Jesus?
- Say: Peter wanted to walk on the water with Jesus. Peter was the kind of guy that wanted to try things, so Jesus told him to come out of the boat. So Peter jumped over the side and—lo and behold!—he was walking right on top of the water! Until...
- Ask: What caused Peter to start to sink?
- Say: Peter took his eyes off Jesus and started looking at the high waves and wind around him and got worried.
- Ask: What lessons can we learn from this?
- Say: As long as Peter trusted God and did not focus on what was going on around him, he walked on the water. But when he began to look at his surroundings, he began to sink. Have you ever had a tough challenge at school, like a tough test, or a bully to face? As long as you look at the problem, you might say, I can't see how I can do this! But if you look to God and trust the fact that He can help you through anything, you can have courage to face the problem and get through it. As it says in the Psalms, God is a present help in time of need!

## **LESSON APPLICATION:**

### **Vocabulary Fun**

Directions: Select the right definition for the words listed below:

1. boisterous
  - a. a boy horse
  - b. loud, noisy and turbulent
  - c. stampeding cattle
  - d. a coughing fit
  
2. tetrarch
  - a. a ruler over a division
  - b. a Hebrew prayer
  - c. video game

3. apostle
  - a. kitchen utensil
  - b. a type of angel
  - c. one sent out to preach the gospel
  - d. a Levitical priest
  
4. disciple
  - a. a Greek wrestler
  - b. a student of someone (especially Jesus)
  - c. a fisherman
  
5. compassion
  - a. strong desire for something
  - b. empathy and concern for others
  - c. to make smaller
  - d. friendship
  
6. contrary
  - a. unhappy
  - b. unfavorable, opposite
  - c. area in Ireland
  - d. sunny

### Learn a Bible Tool

If time permits, do the following activity to learn about Vine's Greek dictionary.

Listed below is an excerpt from *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* under the word "faith." Explain how in Vine's one looks up the English word "faith," to find out what the Greek word is. The New Testament was written in the Greek language.

#### Faith

*Pistis*: primarily, "firm persuasion," a conviction based upon hearing (akin to *peitho*, "to persuade"), is used in the NT [New Testament] always of faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual. The word is used of (a) trust e.g. [e.g. means for example], Rom. 3:25... (b) trust-worthiness, e.g. Matthew 23:23...

Do: Explain how *pistis* is the Greek word and then the definition that follows shows how it was used. Then it shows the different ways it is used in the Bible.

Ask: Look up Romans 3:26. How is faith used to mean trust?

**MUSIC:**

Teacher's choice from the United Church of God hymnal.

**MEMORY VERSE:**

Matthew 14:30 "But when he [Peter] saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me.'"

Matthew 14:31 (Jesus' reply) "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

# *family activity*

## **THE POINT:**

To examine Jesus Christ's ministry in Galilee focusing on the event of Christ walking on water. This lesson is also intended to acquaint the students with the land of Palestine as it was in the time Christ.

## **FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:**

Talk about miracles! Take turns thinking of miracles that Jesus did, and how they helped others. Talk about how the people who were helped must have felt.

Have your parents tell you about miracles God has done in their lives (healings they have known about, protection, the way God called them and gave them the truth, etc.).

Talk about the everyday miracles of the sun coming up, a seed growing, our body breathing, being able to speak and think. Consider planting some seeds together and watching the miracle of seeds growing.

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

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Matthew 14:31 (Jesus' reply) "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"