

“Jesus’ Power Over Nature” Matthew 8:23-27

7.24.2016



Jesus has come down off the mountain where he had preached the Sermon on the Mount and a leper came before him and in faith asked Jesus to heal him and immediately his leprosy left him.

As Jesus came into the town of Capernaum we saw where Jesus healed the servant of a Centurion, a Roman Tribune, a Gentile and the beautiful picture of that whole situation as we looked at the account recorded by Luke in Luke Chapter 7. That the Centurion did not go to Jesus himself but because of the respect and the great relationship with the Jews in Capernaum he sent Elders from the Synagogue to bring his request to Jesus. What did Jesus say about this Centurion’s faith? In all of Israel have I found anyone with such faith!

Jesus goes into Peter’s house and heals his mother-in-law from no ordinary fever. This was no 99 degree fever here people. Remember the word here is meaning that they did not know if she would make it. But here comes Jesus with a touch heals here.

Then they bring Jesus those that are oppressed by demons and he cast out the spirits with, What? A word! He also heals many that are sick.

Now it is getting late in the evening and as we discussed briefly last week we see Jesus in his humanity that he is getting tired. He is needing to get away just for a little while so he gives the orders to his disciples to let’s go over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. But even before he could get in the boat here come three people that are ready to surrender it all to Jesus. Or were they? Did they really count the cost? Jesus shared with them that “Look, if you surrender your lives to me it is not always going to be clear sailing!” No pun intended. What we learned last week gives us some indication of what is getting ready to happen. Because Jesus was telling them there are going to be difficulties. First, just because we live in a world that has been broken by sin. This is a wicked and evil place. Second, the exclusive message that Jesus is God and that he is the only God and that only through Jesus can our souls be saved.

The famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, predicted that the governments of the world would unite, either by force or federation, but that the unity could not succeed without a universal religion. Christianity, he said, should be purged of its “sinful state of mind,” namely, its exclusivism. Exclusivism maintains that God has revealed Himself only in Jesus Christ. But isn’t that what Jesus Himself declared – that He is the exclusive way, truth, and life?

But now they get in the boat. Let’s Read Matthew Chapter 8:23-27.

Matthew Chapter 8:23-27 - ²³ And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵ And

they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing."²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.²⁷ And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

Now as we look at this and we see that this event is recorded in the Gospel of Mark and Luke. We see in Mark Chapter 4 verse 36. Look at the screen.

Mark 4:36 – And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

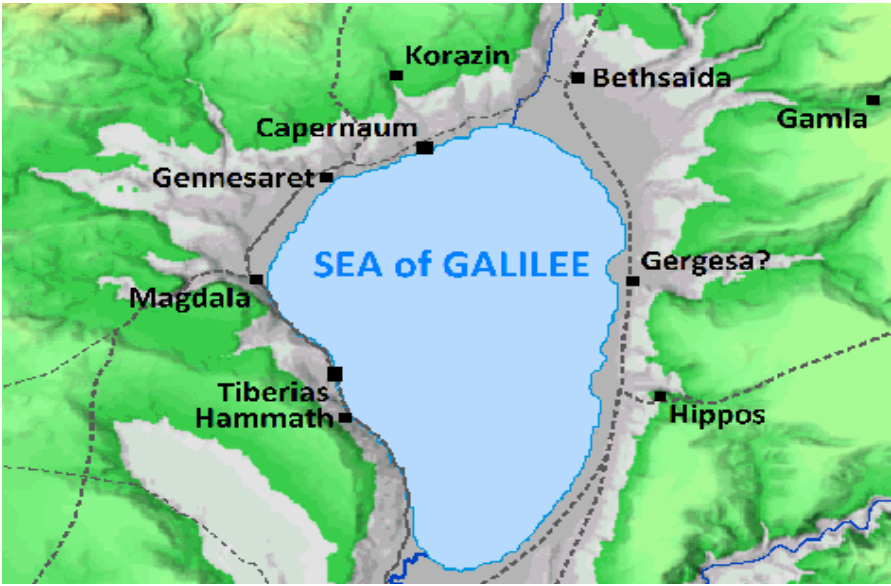
So we see that there are more than what we would probably think of this as just being the first 12 that were selected by Jesus. Because again what is a disciple? It is a follower. One that adheres to the teaching of the teacher. A learner. Right now there are a lot of followers as they continue to be intrigued by all the miracles that Jesus is performing and trying to see if this is really the Messiah. So even in this group there could still be those disciples that were like the three that we learned about last week. Here we go. We are in the boat. Well let's look at that again. Here is a model of a fishing boat from the first century that was used on the sea of Galilee.



This boat was usually about 27 feet long 7 feet wide and about 4 feet deep. It could hold between 13 to 15 men. Actually in 1986 they found the hull of one of these boats at the bottom of the Sea of Galilee after an extreme drought. It was excavated out and here is a picture of it.



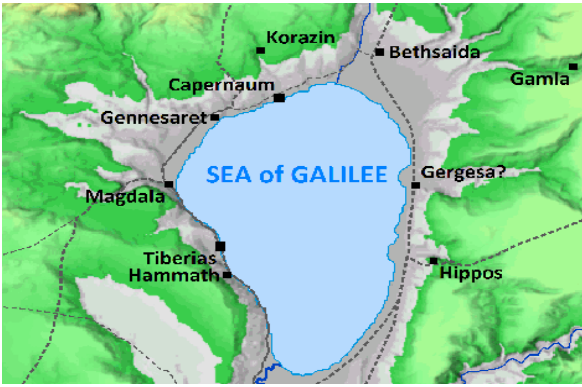
They are in the boat and they are headed across the Sea of Galilee and as we look at this map. Remember they are leaving Capernaum and are headed to Gergesa. Which we will see next week is called the country of the Gadarenes or Gerasenes. It is becoming night people. It says it was evening when Jesus started healing the people that came to him. Now they are headed across the Sea of Galilee as night falls.



Again the Sea of Galilee is about 13 miles long from its most Northern point to its most Southern point and 8 miles wide between its most western and eastern points. So really not too big in comparison to a lot of other bodies of water. But also it is 600 feet below sea level and is surrounded by peaks and mountains and it is well known for its severe storms that come up quickly. So it is like it is in a basin. But one other thing I want to show you is if you will look at about 9 o'clock you will see the city of Magdala. Now look at this picture and you will see how it is surrounded by mountains.



Now go back to the map.

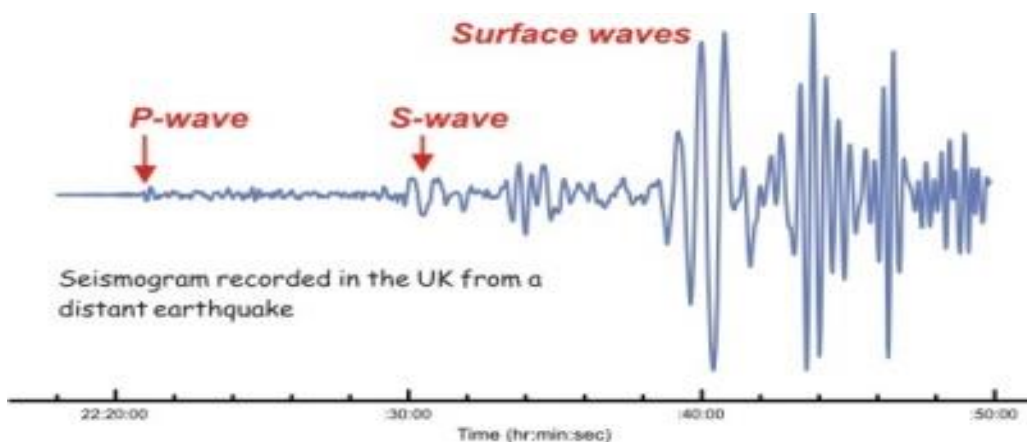


But the more violent storms would come down from the East which is now known as the Golan Heights but has Mt. Hermon and other mountains. These mountains get covered with snow in the winter time and when winds come off those mountains it brings that cold air and meets the tropical air around the Sea of Galilee and these severe storms will pop up. In 1992 it brought down a storm to where the waves were recorded at 10 feet and flooded into the town of Tiberias.

This is where we find us. The boats are heading across the Sea of Galilee. As it says in verses 23 and 24.

Matthew 8:23-24 – ²³And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was swamped by the waves, but he was asleep.

Were these the 10 foot waves as appeared in 1992? We don't know but we get a great example from that account but we also get a good indication of what is going on by several words here. It says "behold"! Don't you love that word? Behold! But the world is always indicating something important is being talked about or is about to happen. So, behold! What? A great storm arose. This is no ordinary storm and the word used here in the Greek for storm is "Seismos" which we get our words seismic. Did you know there are seismic waves of energy that move through the earth because of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and they are measured on a seismograph? Winds can create a wave of energy across the surface of the earth. Here is a picture of an earthquake recorded on a seismograph.



Hey! Was two weeks ago a seismos? You better believe it! That was no ordinary storm. I was standing looking out our back door and I said, "Hey look how fast that rain is moving over there!" Then the rain was at our house in no time and going sideways and two of our trees went about parallel to the ground and I said. Okay, Chloe go downstairs! I am right behind you.

You know what? Some of you have a seismos in your life right now. You have what you may call seismic event going on in your life. Even if it is not seismic each of us have things we are concerned about. You may have an illness you are battling or a loved one is battling and the questions are lingering, financial needs, maybe school, maybe relationships. Young person may I speak to you just a second. Don't let your self-worth be in another person right now. You may be giving away part of your heart that does not belong to that other person. Pray, take it slow.

It could be a good thing that we are concerned about. The salvation of a family member a friend or someone we have been witnessing to. In all these situations we have done everything under our own power and with our own intelligence and we just don't know what else to do. That's a good place to be but why do we do it that way. I guarantee that is what these disciples did in these boats also.

Why do you say that? Well, what was there profession? Fisherman! So they were seaman. They were very familiar with the Sea of Galilee. Look at verse 24 again.

24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was swamped by the waves, but he was asleep.

I can see Peter barking out orders. John, turn it into the wind. James drop the sail. Andrew will you tell Judas to quick counting the money and help us get some of this water out of the boat. Then, they realize something. They can't do it on their own. It is way beyond them and they look up towards the front of the boat and there lays Jesus. Verse 25 says: Either look at your Bibles or on the screen.

25 And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord, we are perishing."

Do you think they kind of gathered around and talked amongst themselves to see who would go wake Jesus? "Okay, who is going to go wake him?" You do it! No, you do it! No, you do it! No, it says they went. People they were falling all over themselves to get to Jesus to wake him up. But we have a problem here? Well that is obvious. But we have one that you might not have thought off. We have already determined what the professions of the disciples were. Fisherman, Seaman! But what did Jesus do for a living until he was to begin his ministry for God the Father? A carpenter! We've got seaman going to a carpenter for help! But they were not needing a carpenter were they. They were in need of a savior! That is what some of you are in need of.

What did they say?

Save us, Lord, we are perishing! In the Gospel of Mark it says they called him teacher and in the Gospel of Luke they called him Master. In Mark it is recorded, "Don't you care?" Oh he cares! He is right there waiting for you to come to him. Rescue us, Sovereign one, ruler of all things we are going to die and you are our only hope. People today Jesus is your only hope. No political party is going to save your soul. No person that can act or sing or play sports is going to save your soul. That person sitting beside you is not going to save your soul. The disciples here are in a good spot again. They realize they cannot do this on their own and that goes for us when it comes to salvation. Your works will not bring you favor before God. Your works will not save you.

You need to be right where they are. You need to be where the Apostle Paul says in Romans Chapter 7 verses 24 and 25!

Romans Chapter 7:24-25 – ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound! That saved a wretch like me! You know we say there is no sinner's prayer in the Bible. That is true. There is nothing that says pray like this or pray like that to be saved. But I believe this is about as close to one as we can get. Save me! Oh Lord, I am perishing! My sin is against you! Save me!

What did Jesus say to them? Look at verse 26.

²⁶And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm.

Guys I was right here. Why didn't you come to me first? What did we see expressed in the miracle of the Leper and the Centurion and really all those that were brought to him for healing? Faith! For some reason Faith gets a negative reaction any more. Especially from atheists! You want make an atheist mad start talking about how great a faith they have. There Jesus was in the bottom of that boat and he stood up and he rebuked. It means to charge sharply. In Mark 4 in the KJV, ESV it says he said, "Peace!" But the word that he actually used is, "Hush!" And upon his word there came a great calm. It means everything became silent. You know even if the wind subsided the waves would kind of keep rolling for a while but it means that the sea became like glass and there was no sound whatsoever. No waves, no wind, no fish jumping, no birds chirping. Silence! Calmness!

Why? Because the one who created it all had spoken!

Look at the reaction of the Disciples in verse 27. Everything is okay now right? The disciples could relax and all there fear is gone, right? Look at Matthew Chapter 8 verse 27.

²⁷And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

Now look at how it is recorded in Mark Chapter 4 verse 41.

⁴¹And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

But wait! Why would they now have great fear? We know they were afraid before but everything has been set right now. Why have great fear? Because when God displays his overwhelming glory how else are we to respond but in reverence and fear. Who is this? I will tell you! It is the creator of the world by which all things are sustained by. It is the savior of your soul who is calling out to you. But just as great and awesome God is, so is he gentle! Whatever your seismic situation may be today. Jesus is in the boat and saying, Why such little faith? For those that are lost today. Come to him today and cry out, Save me Lord, I am perishing! For those that are carrying any other burden will you surrender it to him today.

Please Stand!