

Introduction

How many of you have had an “Aha” moment? I have had a number of these moments in my life. As a youngster growing up in Iran, the oil company school was excellent. Everybody learned to read music and play a recorder. I had four years of learning to play a descant recorder, and I also had two years of piano lessons in grade school and high school. I received a guitar for high school graduation in 1973, and that has been one of my most cherished gifts. I played my guitar, but was never really good at it. Most of my time and attention was given to golf, which was my main passion, and it became my livelihood. In 1995, I was playing in the Dominion Open in Richmond, Virginia, and for whatever reason, Karen and the children did not accompany me that week. I elected to stay in private housing, which the tournaments made available to people. The couple that housed me was delightful. The man was a master pianist and he was also an excellent teacher. He took time to explain music theory to me. In my four years of recorder lessons, two years of piano lessons, and twenty-two years of playing my guitar, I had never been taught any music theory. In just thirty minutes he opened my eyes. Suddenly, I understood what made a chord. I understood what a sustained chord and a minor chord was. I could figure out how to play any chord. This was an “Aha” moment for me.

In 1995 I was playing the Nike Tour. In the first few months of the season, I made nearly every cut, but was not finishing high enough to meet my expenses. Our bank account gradually dwindled and I was very anxious about our money. The week before the Tallahassee Open, I had an “Aha” moment. I was in Matthew 6 and the Lord showed me that my anxiety was a symptom that I was trusting in my own resources rather than trusting in Him. Anxiety was a bad fruit from having my trust in the wrong place. I repented and asked God to forgive me. I called our pastor at the time, Larry Malament, and said that I was going to win the next week. I felt confident that God had taught me the lesson He was trying to teach me. I got it. I did win the next week. I won the Tallahassee Open by five shots and God restored our finances.

In our text today, the twelve apostles had been with Jesus for a long time. They had heard him preach about the kingdom of God. They had seen Him heal lepers. They had seen Him heal a paralytic. They had seen Him heal a withered hand. They had seen Him cast out demons. They had seen Him forgive people of their sins, something that only God could do. They had heard Him prophesy and tell people things that only God would know. They had heard him teach and then privately explain parables to them. They thought they knew Jesus, but something happened in our text today to the apostles. They had one of these “Aha” moments that would forever change their lives.

After a full day of ministering to the crowds by the Sea of Galilee, and then privately explaining things to His disciples at His home, Jesus tells His disciples that He wants to cross over to the other side of the lake. It was evening so they were going to cross over at night. While they were crossing a fierce storm came up and these experienced fishermen were scared to death. The boat began to fill up and they said to Jesus, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” Jesus then rebuked the wind and hushed the seas. The apostles had an “Aha” moment. They were more afraid now than before, and said, “Who then is This that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

Who Then Is This? (Mark 4:35-41)

1. Setting
2. Storm
3. Statement

(Mark 4:35-41) “On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." {36} Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. {37} And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. {38} Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" {39} And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. {40} And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" {41} They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"”

1. Setting (Mark 4:35-36)

Mark tells us that “on that day, when evening came...” This was the same day that Jesus had been teaching all the parables to the crowd. He had the disciples get a boat ready and He had taught the crowds who were standing on the beach. After preaching to the crowds, Matthew records that Jesus and His disciples went back to Jesus’ house. Jesus had moved to Capernaum, which is where His house is. At the house, Jesus was privately explaining the parables to His disciples and followers. There were more parables that He taught that day than we have covered in Mark. Matthew tells us that His disciples asked Him to explain the parable of the tares of the field, which is not in Mark’s account. Jesus has had a long day of preaching and a long day of explaining things privately to His disciples. He was probably very exhausted.

(Matt 13:36-37) “Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." {37} And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man,”

When evening came, more crowds began to form and He told His disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” They were going to cross the Sea of Galilee at night. In our account, it says they left the crowd. It would appear from Mark’s account that they were still at the beach, but Matthew’s account said that they were at Jesus’ house. It was at the house that He was explaining things and then a crowd formed at the house. Then, Jesus gave orders to depart to the other side of the sea.

(Mark 4:35-36) “On that day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side." {36} Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.”

(Matt 8:18-23) “Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to depart to the other side *of the sea*... {23} When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him.”

Why did Jesus want to go over to the other side? Next week we will be covering the deliverance of the Demoniac from the Gerasenes. Jesus had obviously been given an assignment from the Father to go deliver this man, and so Jesus had a specific mission in mind when He said to cross over. He did not go to a town; He just ministered to the man and then they were going to come back home. That tells me how interested God is in saving one person. Jesus would cross over the Sea of Galilee to save one person. Don’t ever think that God does not care for you. Each person is important to God. He made each person. He knows how many hairs are on the head of each person. He formed each person in his mother’s womb. In Luke 15:3-7 we have the parable of the

man who had one hundred sheep and one was lost. He left the ninety-nine to go find the one lost sheep. God cares about the one lost sheep.

(Luke 15:3-7) “So He told them this parable, saying, {4} "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? {5} When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. {6} And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' {7} "I tell you that in the same way, there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

In 2 Peter 3:9 we find that God does not wish for ANY to perish. He wants all to come to repentance and He is patient towards us. God cared about the demoniac and He gave Jesus an assignment of crossing over to save Him. In Matthew’s account we find that there were actually two demoniacs that Jesus freed. Mark focuses on the one with the Legion. But, He would have crossed over for just one, because He does not wish for any to perish.

(2 Pet 3:9) “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

Jesus and the disciples were going to cross over the Sea of Galilee. It is also known as the Sea of Tiberias and the Lake of Gennesaret. In the Old Testament, it is also referred to as the Sea of Chinnereth (Nu 34:11). The term Chinnereth comes from kinor, which means harp in Hebrew. The Sea of Galilee is hart-shaped, which is why it was given that name. It is not really a sea, but a lake, a fresh water lake at that. The Jordan River supplies water to the Sea of Galilee. The Jordan River flows out of the Sea of Galilee at the south end and flows into the Dead Sea, which is not fresh water. The Sea of Galilee is 685 feet below sea level. It is the lowest fresh water lake in the world. There is a lot of algae in the lake so there is a lot for fish to eat. In fact, there are twenty-two varieties of fish in the Lake and it was known for its prolific fishing.

The lake is thirteen miles from the northern end to the southern end. It is eight miles wide at its widest part and there are mountains on either side. *“The position of the lake in the Jordan rift below sea level with the high mountains to the East and West creates a natural condition for storms. The cool air masses from the mountain heights rush down the steep slopes with great force causing violent eruptions of the lake. Such tempests are not infrequent and are extremely dangerous to small craft.”*¹ One commentator that I read said that when he camped by the Sea of Galilee he had to use three tent pegs instead of one because the wind was blowing so hard. It was known to have strong winds and storms blowing across it.

Jesus and the disciples were going to travel at night in the boat. They were going to make this thirteen mile journey in the dark. Most sailboats can cruise at a speed of 4-6 knots, which is about 4.5 – 7 miles per hour with a top speed of 7 knots (8 mph). A large racing yacht can reach speeds of 15 to 20 knots (17 -23 mph) with an average cruising speed of 6-8 knots (7-9) mph. This was a fishing boat, not a racing yacht, and it was also loaded with people, so I think it would be even slower than normal. With favorable conditions, it would probably take the disciples at least three hours to cross over.

¹ Picture Encyclopedia Of The Bible, Tenney, Volume II, page 646.

We know that it was Jesus' habit to get up before dark. We saw in Mark 1:35 that Jesus got up in the early morning while it was still dark and was praying. This was not a one-time event. In Luke 5:16, we read that Jesus would often slip away to the wilderness to pray. The KJV says that Jesus got a up a "great while before day." He had probably been up since three or four in the morning. He had spent time praying. Then, He ministered to the crowds for many hours. Then, He spent time explaining things to His disciples in the afternoon. Then, a crowd started forming at His house and He told the disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." Jesus was exhausted and probably intended to get some rest while His disciples sailed the boat over to the other side of the lake. It was rest time. I see the humanity of Jesus. He was the Son of Man. He is Immanuel, God with us, but He humbled Himself and came as a man, who got tired and needed some rest.

(Mark 1:35) "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left *the house*, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."

(Mark 1:35 KJV) "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

(Luke 5:16) "But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray."

2. **The Storm** (Mark 4:37-39)

A fierce gale of wind came up and the waves were breaking over the boat so that it began to fill up. A few weeks ago I gave you the approximate dimensions of the boat. In order to hold Jesus and the twelve apostles, the boat would have had to be at least twenty-eight feet long and eight feet wide. It could have been a touch bigger, but not any smaller. A fishing boat was found in Galilee in 1986 and is called the Jesus Boat. It is 27.5 feet long by 7.5 feet wide. It would hold 5 men and 600 pounds of fishing nets and fish. Without the fishing gear it could have possibly held Jesus and His disciples. It barely satisfies the occupancy load formula. With thirteen men aboard, it did not have any spare capacity, so any water that it took on made it less buoyant. The lower the boat sat, the more water would come in over the sides. This was a dangerous situation. Many of the apostles were fishermen and they knew the imminent danger they were in.

(Mark 4:37) "And there arose a fierce gale (megas lailaps) of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up."

Mark said that a fierce gale of wind came. The Greek words used are megas lailaps. The word megas means very large, and we use that word in English. The second word, lailaps means a hurricane. The KJV says a great storm of wind and the NIV says a furious squall came up. In Matthew's account, he says a megas seismos. The Greek word seismos means a shaking or commotion. We get our English word, seismic from it, which is defined as relating to earthquakes or other vibrations of the earth and its crust. This was not an earthquake, but there was obviously very rough waves. This was no small storm that came up.

(Matt 8:24) "And behold, there arose a great storm (megas seismos) on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep."

The waves were big enough to begin breaking over the boat. Remember that this boat was already loaded to capacity and it could not stand to take on much water. The waves started coming into the boat and it began to fill up. At this rate it would not take much for the boat to

sink. Things were not looking good for the disciples. Where was Jesus? Jesus was at the stern of the boat, which is the rear of the boat. What was He doing? Jesus was sound asleep on a pillow or cushion. I have to take Mark's word that Jesus was sleeping. I don't know how anyone could be sleeping through the storm like this. But, it shows how truly exhausted Jesus was.

(Mark 4:38) "Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

The disciples woke Jesus up and said to Him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" Of course Jesus cared. He is going across this lake to save the demoniac. Jesus would leave the ninety-nine sheep to find the one sheep that was missing, and heaven would rejoice that the lost sheep had been found. Of course Jesus cared. These were twelve men that He was pouring Himself into. These were the future leaders of the church. These are men that He very much cared about. But, in the circumstances, the disciples saw Jesus sleeping in the boat while they were about to perish. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:7 to cast our cares on Him because He cares for us.

(1 Peter 5:7) "Cast your cares upon Him because He cares for you."

After being woken up, Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. The storm was over

(Mark 4:39) "And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm."

There are a number of things that God uses storms for in our lives. Here are just five things that the storms of life do in our lives.

1. Priorities – they cause us to re-evaluate our priorities. (Storm in Acts 27:18-19)
2. Faith and Trust – they reveal what we are trusting in (Matthew 6, Mark 4:40)
3. Wisdom – they teach us wisdom (James 1:4, 1 Chronicles 13:9-12, 15:2-3)
4. Fear of Lord – they teach us to fear God (Jonah 1:15-16, 1 Chron 13:12, Mark 4:41)
5. Perseverance and proven character (Romans 5:3)

3. **The Statement** (Mark 4:40-41)

After addressing the storm, Jesus turned to them and asked them two questions, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" Jesus had told them that they were going to the other side of the lake. Did they not believe they would get there safely? Did they believe Jesus' word to them? Do we believe God's word to us? Did they really believe that Jesus was going to let them perish? If they were with the Messiah, is He going to let them perish like this? Jesus wanted to increase their faith, and He was using this storm experience to do that.

(Mark 4:40-41) "And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"
{41} They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

After Jesus had calmed the wind and the seas, Mark records that they became very much afraid. The storm was over but now they are more afraid than they were in the storm. The disciples had

one of those “Aha” moments in their lives. Their fear of perishing turned into a fear of the Lord. They now had a better understanding of who they were with. They were not in the boat with just another man; they were in the boat with the Son of God, the Messiah, the One who had authority over everything. God wants us to have a reverence, awe, and fear of Him. He is a holy God, who is all powerful, and nothing is impossible for Him. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we should have a reverence and awe of Him.

In Mark 1:1, we began this book by reading, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Mark’s purpose in writing was to show that Jesus is the Son of God. He is God in the flesh. He is the Messianic King.

(Mark 1:1) “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

In Mark 1:11, at Jesus’ baptism, a voice came out of heaven and declared, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.” The disciples had been there for His coronation and had heard the voice and seen the Holy Spirit come upon Him.

(Mark 1:10-11) “Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; { 11 } and a voice came out of the heavens: “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

In Mark 1:22, Jesus had authority in His teaching. In Mark 1:24-27 Jesus had authority over unclean spirits. Later in Mark 1, Jesus was healing everyone who were ill with various diseases. He healed and cleansed a leper. Jesus had authority over demons and He had authority over sickness and disease. In Mark 2, Jesus had healed a paralytic. He also forgave the sins of the paralytic and had asked the Pharisees, which was easier, to tell the man to pick up his pallet or to forgive him of his sins. It was only God that could do a miracle like that. It was only God that could forgive sins. In Mark 2-3, Jesus had run-ins with the Pharisees and scribes about the Sabbath. He made it clear that He was the Lord of the Sabbath.

(Mark 1:22-27) “They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes....{27} They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

Throughout these first few chapters Jesus has been making it very clear who He is. He is the Son of God. The disciples had been with Him all this time and they knew all of this. But something happened in the boat that night. They got an “Aha” moment and now realized that this was the Son of God in the boat. Their fear of perishing had turned into a fear of awe of God.

Conclusion and Applications

As we come to a close this morning, have you had an “Aha” moment in your life. Most Americans know about Jesus. Most have heard that He is the Savior. Most know that He died for our sins and rose from the dead. I played music for many years but really did not know or understand until I had that “Aha” moment. I taught the Volumetric Method of well control for many years, but when I did it on the simulator, I had that “Aha” moment. Have you had that “Aha” moment with Jesus?

The Apostle Paul was a Pharisee, a son of a Pharisee, and had been educated under the strictest teacher, Gamaliel. However, he had not had that “Aha” moment until he was on the road to Damascus and God blinded him. Paul asked the question, “Who are You, Lord?” And the Lord answered him, saying, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” From that day on, Paul served the Lord Jesus Christ. He understood that Jesus was the Son of God. Have you come to that “Aha” moment where you realize that Jesus is the Son of God? Paul fell to the ground when God revealed Himself to him. The disciples became greatly afraid when they realized who they were in the boat with, and they said, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

(Acts 9:4-5) “and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" {5} And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He *said*, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,”

In Genesis 28, Jacob was fleeing from his brother and the Lord appeared to him in a dream at Luz, and revealed Himself to Jacob as the “LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac.” When Jacob awoke, He said the Lord is in this place, and he did not know it. This was the “Aha” moment for him. He built an altar and renamed it Bethel, which means the house of God. Then, it says that He was afraid. He was afraid just like the apostles in the boat were afraid when they realized that they were in the boat with God. Jacob responded to God by vowing to make the Lord his God. He said, “If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, and I return to my father’s house in safety, then the Lord will be my God. Jacob believed what the Lord had spoken to him and he made the Lord his God that day. Then, as evidence of that commitment, He said, “Of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.” A tithe reflects that everything that you have belongs to God. Your life and all your possessions belong to God. This was Jacob’s “Aha” moment when God revealed Himself to him, and he responded by making the Lord his God that day.

(Gen 28:13-22) “And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants....{16} Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." {17} He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." {18} So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. {19} He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. {20} Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, {21} and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. {22} "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

If God has revealed Himself to you, have you confessed Him as Lord of your life? Have you fallen down before Him like Paul and made Him Lord. Have you made a vow to the Lord like Jacob and confessed that the Lord will be your God. You can do that this morning by praying with me. It is not the words that you pray, it must be the attitude of your heart. If this is your desire, then pray with me.

“Lord, thank You for revealing Yourself to me. I do believe that You are the Son of God and that You died for my sins. I believe that the Father raised You from the dead. I believe that

You are Lord, and I ask You to come into my life and forgive me of my sins. I want You to be the Lord of my life. I vow today to make You my Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Perhaps you have been going through a storm. What has God been revealing to you? Are you having an "Aha" moment? Here are some questions for your consideration this morning?

1. Is God wanting to reveal Himself to you in this storm?
2. Is God trying to build your faith and trust? When He says we are going to the other side, do you believe what He says? When you read His word, do you believe it?
3. Is God wanting you to evaluate your priorities? (Spend time with Him, go to church, etc.)
4. Is God teaching you wisdom?
5. Is God developing perseverance and proven character?
6. Is God giving you a greater fear and reverence of Him?

Introduction (Mark 4:35-41)

1. **Setting** (Mark 4:35-36, Matt 13:36-37, Matt 8:18-23, 2 Pet 3:9, Nu 34:11, Luke 5:16, Mark 1:35)
2. **The Storm** (Mark 4:37-39, Matt 8:24, Luke 15:3-7)
3. **The Statement** (Mark 4:40-41, 1:1, 1:10-11, 1:22-27)

Conclusion and Applications (Acts 9:4-5, Gen 28:13-22, Rom 10:9-10)