

The Chosen—Season 2, Episode 1, “Thunder” : “Easter Eggs,” Notes, and Discussion Questions

Details and Notes that Might Be Helpful or Interesting:

- Big James (the elder son of Zebedee and John’s brother) will be played by a different actor than who we’ve seen in Season 1.

‘*’ Indicates an extra/non-biblical character or reference

Time:	Reference:	Explanation/Note/“Easter Egg”:
<p>COLD OPEN— 00:00:27 – 00:08:40 “The Interviews”*</p>	<p><u>Simon</u> “The first time? You know the first time, you were there.”</p> <p><u>John</u> “Humor me.”</p> <p><u>Simon</u> <i>[Simon scoffs]</i> “Uh...I was out on Andrew’s old sloop. I’d had a bad night. At first I didn’t even know it was Him. Remember? I thought He was a Roman about to ruin my life.” <i>[chuckles]</i></p> <p><u>John</u> “And what happened next?”</p> <p><i>[Simon looks thoughtfully, reflecting on John’s question, and the scene shifts to John interviewing Thomas.]</i></p> <p><u>Thomas</u> “It was at a moment when I thought my career and my reputation were about</p>	<p>Summary: The scene opens with Simon looking out of the screen, seemingly addressing the viewer. It turns out, as John’s voice replies from offscreen, Simon is actually talking to John, apparently about the first time he met Jesus. Thomas reflects on his first encounter, as well, including a brief reflection from a disciple we haven’t yet met—Nathanael. We see and hear from Thaddeus, Little James, and Mary Magdalene, concluding with Mary the Mother of Jesus. These “interviews,” apparently, take place later, even after what we know as the conclusion of the Gospels with Jesus’ resurrection and ascension: there’s a little gray in Simon’s beard, as well as in Thomas’ hair and beard, Andrew (Simon’s brother) appears older, as do all the other disciples we see and hear in the interview. Matthew especially.</p> <p>The scene concludes with an extended conversation between Mother Mary and John, reflecting on what it is he intends to write, why, and most especially on where to begin.</p>

	<p>to be destroyed.” [Laughing]</p> <p>[The scene shifts again to another of the Disciples, one we haven’t met yet—Nathanael (See Note 1—Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael: John 1:43-51, p. 2)—also reflecting on his first encounter with Jesus.]</p> <p><u>Nathanael</u> “Philip just said, ‘Come and see.’ And I did. And...look, I don’t know how to describe it other than...He knew me before He knew me.”</p> <p>[Again the scene shifts, this time to John himself.]</p> <p><u>Andrew</u> “I was standing next to John the Baptizer...”</p> <p><u>Simon</u> [interrupting] “Creepy John...”</p> <p><u>Andrew</u> [chuckles] “...and He walked by. Out of nowhere. And John freaked out. He said, “Behold...”</p> <p><u>Simon</u> [interrupting again] “I’m eating a new bug.” [Andrew playfully shoves his brother.]</p> <p>[Scene shift—now featuring Thaddeus and Little James, the man who was on his way to Jerusalem to join the Temple Choir.]</p> <p><u>Thaddeus</u> “He was just sitting there...eating lunch with all the construction workers, cracking jokes.”</p> <p><u>Little James</u> “I was on my way to Jerusalem. [begins to weep] I’m sorry. All of this is just, uh, it’s difficult to talk about. It reminds me of how much I miss Him.”</p> <p><u>John</u> “But we have to.”</p> <p><u>Little James</u> “I know, I just...I talk about Him to other every day. But... it’s</p>	<p>Notes:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael: John 1:43-51</p> <p>The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.”⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!”⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.”⁴⁹ Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰ Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.”⁵¹ And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”</p>
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	<p>difficult with all of you. It's different with all of you."</p> <p><i>[Scene shift—we see Mary Magdalene over John's shoulder.]</i></p> <p><u>John</u> "Just tell me about the first time you actually saw Him."</p> <p><u>Mary</u> "It was in a tavern. He set His hand on mine. Which, isn't what it sounds like. Maybe leave that part out, people will get confused."</p> <p><u>John</u> "I don't know yet what I will be including...I'm just writing it all down." (See Note 2—"...I'm just writing it all down."; p. 3)</p> <p><u>Mary</u> "Good."</p> <p><i>[Scene shift—now Matthew, with typical Matthew detail.]</i></p> <p><u>Matthew</u> "It was the fourth morning of the third week of the month of Adar, (See Note 3—Adar, p. 3) sometime during the second hour."</p> <p><u>John</u> <i>[somewhat exasperated]</i> "It doesn't have to be precise." (See Note 4—"It doesn't have to be precise."; p. 3)</p> <p><u>Matthew</u> <i>[scoffs]</i> "Why wouldn't it need to be precise? Mine will be precise."</p> <p><i>[Scene shift—Mary the Mother of Jesus.]</i></p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "My answer might not make sense."</p> <p><u>John</u> "Try me, Mother." (See Note 5—The Relationship between John and Mary, p. 4)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "I can hardly remember a time when I didn't know Him.</p>	<p>2. Note 2—"...I'm just writing it all down."</p> <p>Remember we saw John with a tablet, eavesdropping on the clandestine conversation at night between Jesus and Nicodemus in Season 1, Episode 7, "Invitations."</p> <p>3. Note 3—Adar</p> <p>The Hebrew calendar is a lunar calendar, which means the months begin and end at the approximate time of the new moon. (As such, it falls short of the 365 days of the Gregorian calendar (our mode for marking time), so an extra lunar month is added every 2 or 3 years.) This also means the Hebrew months fall within a range of our Gregorian months.</p> <p>The Hebrew months are as follows: Nisan; Iyar; Sivan; Tammuz; Av; Elul; Tishrei; Cheshvan (or Marcheshvan); Kislev; Tevet; Shevat; and Adar, with this month being the one that is extended (Adar 1 and Adar 2) in Gregorian leap years.</p> <p>4. Note 4—"It doesn't have to be precise."</p> <p>Remember that ancient historical writers—the Gospels most closely match that style of ancient writing—aren't hindered by the indicators of "truth" that we look for in contemporary journalism and history, those questions of "Who? What? When? Where? Etc. etc." Instead, ancient historians are guided by an essential interpretive question of "What does this mean?" As such, details of a particular account (think about the paralyzed man lowered through the roof—was it a earthen roof through which the man's friends dug, a la Mark 2:1-12? Or was it a tile roof, a la Luke 5?) are malleable, tools to be arranged or rearranged in service of interpreting the event, "What does this mean?"</p>
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	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>[pauses thoughtfully]</i> There was one little kick...</p> <p><i>[John shuffles papers as viewpoint shifts toward him.]</i></p> <p><u>John</u> "Go on..."</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "My son...why are you doing all this? Why now?" (See Note 5—The Relationship between John and Mary: John 19:25-27, p. 4)</p> <p><u>John</u> "Because we're getting older, and our memories..."</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "I mean, why now...during shiva?" (See Note 6—Shiva, p. 4)</p> <p><u>John</u> "Because everyone is here. I need to get their memories."</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "You need to mourn Big James." (See Note 7—The Martyrdom of James the Elder, p. 4)</p> <p><u>John</u> "He won't be the last of us this happens to. Who knows when I will see the others again, or if? I'm not in a hurry to write a whole book, but I do want to get the eyewitness stories now, while we're together." (See Note 8—The Martyrdom of the 12, p. 5)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> "Isn't Matthew going to write something?"</p> <p><u>John</u> "He's only writing about what he saw, and about what Jesus told him directly. But I was there for things that Matthew doesn't know about. I was in His inmost circle. He loved me." (See Note</p>	<p>5. Note 5—The Relationship between John and Mary: John 19:25-27</p> <p><i>Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."²⁷Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.</i></p> <p>(See Note 9—The One Whom Jesus Loved)</p> <p>***</p> <p>It is possible that John's response to Mary here, calling her "Mother" is simply a term of respect and honor, that she is the honored, eldest woman of the movement and the mother of Jesus. And, it could be that John is also expressing the expanded relationship Jesus commands from the cross</p> <p>Roman Catholic tradition also places Mary and John together in a small house just outside the city of Ephesus and living there, Mary in John's care, until some time into the AD 60s. (That house is a pilgrimage site, the House of the Virgin Mary, to this day and is believed to be where Mary spent her final years.) Part of that tradition asserts that it was John who established the first Christian community in Ephesus, the community to which Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians. John was later exiled by the Emperor Domitian to the tiny island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea somewhere around AD 90 to 95. It was here that he wrote his Revelation. Tradition says that John asked his followers to bury him in Ephesus.</p> <p>6. Note 6—Shiva</p> <p>"Shiva," coming from the Hebrew word that means "seven," is the Jewish mourning period that takes place for seven days after the burial of a loved one. Some of the customs during shiva, some of which you might see in the video, include sitting on the floor; covering mirrors; not wearing new clothes, shaving, or wearing makeup; and lighting a candle.</p> <p>What is not clear at the moment is WHOSE death is being mourned.</p> <p>7. Note 7—The Martyrdom of James the Elder</p> <p>What we discover is that this scene takes place after the death of Big James—from Acts 12:1-5: "About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. ²He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. ³After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the Festival of Unleavened Bread.) ⁴When he had seized him, he put him in</p>
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	<p>9—The One Whom Jesus Loved, p. 5)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “He loved all of you. [teasing?] You just feel the need to talk about it more often. I prefer to treasure these things in my heart. ...You know that if you try to write every single thing He did, the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (See Note 10—Mary treasured all these things..., p. 6)</p> <p><u>John</u> “Hmm, a disclaimer. That’s good. I’m going to say that. You see, Mother, if I do not write these things down, they’ll be lost to history. James would agree.” (See Note 11—The Disclaimer: John 20:30-31, 21:24-25, p. 6)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “Where will you start?”</p> <p><u>John</u> “In the beginning, naturally...I’m just not sure which beginning.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “His birth?”</p> <p><u>John</u> “Earlier.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “His ancestry?”</p> <p><u>John</u> “I’m pretty sure Matthew has that covered.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “Maybe the prophecies? The promise to Abraham?”</p> <p><u>John</u> “I thought about starting with Abraham. But still so much came before him.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “What was before Abraham?”</p> <p><u>John</u> “Noah.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “And before him?”</p>	<p><i>prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. ⁵ While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.”</i></p> <p>James’ death occurred in Jerusalem, around 44 AD, the second recorded Christian martyr after Stephen the Deacon, Acts 7:54-60.</p> <p>8. Note 8—The Martyrdom of the 12 Of the 12 Disciples, only James’ death is recorded in Scripture. But according to tradition...</p> <p>Judas Iscariot—death by suicide</p> <p>Big James—beheaded by sword in Jerusalem, 44 AD</p> <p>Simon Peter—crucified in Rome in the 60s AD</p> <p>Matthew—slain by a spear in Ethiopia, around 60 AD</p> <p>Thaddeus (also called Jude)—one tradition is that he was beheaded by axe in what is today known as Beirut around 65 AD</p> <p>Simon the Zealot—either crucified in Samaria or sawn in half in Persia around 65 AD</p> <p>Andrew—crucified in Patras, Greece around 70 AD</p> <p>Thomas—Stabbed with a spear in India around 70 AD</p> <p>Nathanael (also called Bartholomew)—Beaten with rods, scourged, and beheaded in Armenia around 71 AD</p> <p>Philip—crucified upside down in Hierapolis (today, western modern Turkey), and some traditions place him with Nathanael/Bartholomew.</p> <p>Little James (James, Son of Alphaeus)—Probably the most uncertain of the martyrdom traditions, one holds that he was beaten, clubbed, and stoned to death (place and time unknown), while another holds that he was crucified in Egypt.</p> <p>John—believed to be the only Apostle to escape violent martyrdom, instead being exiled to Patmos and died later of old age.</p> <p>9. Note 9—The One Whom Jesus Loved: John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, and 21:20</p> <p>Biblical scholars have most often argued that this reference is John the Gospel writer himself.</p> <p>John 13:21-23: “...Jesus was troubled in spirit and declared, “Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.” ²² The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. ²³ One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining close to his heart.”</p>
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	<p><u>Together</u> “The Garden.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “Well, you could start there.”</p> <p><u>John</u> “But I want it know that He was much more than what could be seen or touched. What was before the Garden? ‘In the beginning, the earth was formless and void...’” [Thunder, rain falling] (See Note 12—The Beginning: John 1:1-5 & Genesis 1:1-3, p. 7)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> [Responding to the thunder and lightening outside the window] “I cannot hear it without thinking of you two.”</p> <p><u>John</u> “I can’t believe how much He put up with.” [pausing thoughtfully] “Others...they will not even remember the sound of His voice. They’ll just be words.”</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “He said they weren’t just words, remember? Heaven and earth will pass away--”</p> <p><u>Together</u> “...But my words will never pass away.” (See Note 13—Matthew 24:35: Heaven and earth will pass away, p. 7)</p> <p><u>Mother Mary</u> “Hmm...they’re eternal.” [Thunder and lightening again. Mary sighs and begins to rise.] “You’ll think of something. But take your time. I’m off to bed.”</p>	<p>John 19:26: See Note 5—The Relationship between John and Mary: John 19:25-27</p> <p>John 20:1-4: “Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, <u>the one whom Jesus loved</u>, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.” (Additional note: there have been an number of quips throughout Season 1 about Peter’s slowness of foot.)</p> <p>John 21:4-7, 20-23: “Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶ He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷ <u>That disciple whom Jesus loved</u> said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he had taken it off, and jumped into the sea. ... Peter turned and saw <u>the disciple whom Jesus loved</u> following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” ²¹ When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” ²² Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!” ²³ So the rumor spread among the brothers and sisters that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”</p> <p>10. Note 10—Mary treasured all these things...: Luke 2:17-20</p> <p>“¹⁷ When the shepherds saw [Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger], they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and <u>Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.</u> ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.”</p> <p>11. Note 11—The Disclaimer: John 20:30-31, 21:24-25</p> <p>John 20:30-31: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the</p>
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		<p><i>Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.”</i></p> <p>John 20:24-25: <i>“This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ But <u>there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”</u></i></p> <p>12. Note 12—The Beginning: John 1:1-5 & Genesis 1:1-3</p> <p>John 1:1-5: <i>“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.”</i></p> <p>Genesis 1:1-3: <i>“When God began to create the heavens and the earth, ² the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.”</i></p> <p>13. Note 13—Matthew 24:35: Heaven and earth will pass away</p> <p>Matthew 24:32-35: <i>“³² “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³⁵ <u>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”</u></i></p>
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Scene: A Field Outside of Sychar*--Samaria

<p>00:09:40 – 00:11:43</p>		<p>Summary: The scene opens, returning to the original timeline of The Chosen. We see James and John, the fishermen sons of Zebedee—much younger since we’re back to the original timeline—both straining to pull a harrow and plough weighted with large rocks, pausing occasionally for conversation and to plant seeds. They have apparently been chosen by Jesus for this task while the rest keep up with Jesus in Sychar, the Samaritan village of His encounter with the woman at the well from Season 1, Episode 8. They wonder between the two of them WHY they have received such a job. James reflects that they are good works and wonders if Jesus knows they “don’t like Samaritans.” (Remember the antagonism between Jews and Samaritans—See Note 1—Who are the Samaritans?, p. 8) John suggests that maybe Jesus just likes them best, and James agrees. So now the</p>
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		<p>conversation shifts about WHY Jesus likes them best and WHO IT IS for whom they are planting the field.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Who are the Samaritans</p> <p>Identity: The Samaritans were a mix of Jewish and pagan ancestry, and were considered half-breeds by the Jews. The Samaritans believed they were the true Israel and the rightful heirs of the land.</p> <p>It is thought that the Samaritans’ origins went something like this: when the Assyrian Empire destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 721 BC, their empire-building policy was to remove the natives of the conquered land to a different region of the empire and replacing the now displaced natives with other conquered peoples from other parts of the empire. It was thought that this “fruit basket upset” of removal and transplants undercut whatever sort of rebellious fervor for the native land that might be present. <i>The Samaritans were considered to be those descendants.</i></p> <p>Religion: The Samaritans worshiped Yahweh, but their religion was not mainstream Judaism. They only accepted the first five books of the Bible as canonical, and their temple was on Mount Gerizim. (See the map, “Israel at Time of Jesus” on p. 20.)</p> <p>Relationship with the Jews: The Samaritans and the Jews had a tense relationship. The Jews did not recognize the Samaritans as part of their people, and would not allow them to enter the Temple in Jerusalem. The Samaritans also held antipathy towards the Jews. As referenced in the conversation between Jesus and his disciples, the Samaritans allied themselves with the Greek Empire when Alexander the Great conquered Palestine in 332 BC. Around 170 BC, the Greek emperor Antiochus IV—in an effort to suppress Jewish rebellion—entered the Temple in Jerusalem; installed his own high priest; established a statue of Zeus in the Holy of Holies; and sacrificed pigs there in the Temple. Shortly after, during the Maccabean Revolt (167 – 160 BC), the Maccabees, a family of Jewish revolutionaries, overthrew the Greeks and sought to expand Judea’s historical rule over lands dating back to the time of King David, including the destruction of the Samaritan Temple.</p>
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Scene: On the Road to Sychar*--Samaria

<p>00:11:43 – 00:13:01</p>		<p>Summary: Ramah* and Thomas (the caterers from the wedding in Cana) are on the road to Sychar and have apparently responded to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him. They are traveling with Ramah’s father, Kafni*, the vintner who provided the wine at the wedding celebration. They discuss, quite seriously, the appropriate route to Sychar, and Kafni in particular seems edgy about the whole trip, noting oddities of even being in Samaria, let alone to meet up with a group about whom they know very little.</p>
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		<p>“This is foolishness,” Kafni grumbles. They spot another group of travelers, Samaritans, thinking they might provide directions but who respond negatively to these Jewish interlopers. (If you haven’t yet, please see Note 1—Who are the Samaritans? from the previous scene, A Field Outside of Sychar—Samaria, p. 8)</p>
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Scene: Sychar*--Samaria

<p>00:13:03-00:19:37</p>		<p>Summary: Simon enters a house where we see Mary Magdalene, Little James, Matthew and Andrew. Simon announces a growing crowd in Sychar’s square. Jesus is in His room having some time to himself—He has been preaching and teaching. The disciples talk amongst themselves about what to do. (Matthew, in the particular way that we have seen his character develop, is plugging in all the variables: the population of men (Mary Magdalene notes women and children, as well), the size of the city, etc. Simon responds with antipathy toward Matthew’s analysis, noting, “No one is thinking about His ministry more carefully than me.” Andrew goes to report to Jesus and give him a drink of water and discovers that He is gone and hurries back to tell the others. With concern, the group disperses to find Jesus, except for Matthew who indicates that his remaining gives him the greatest likelihood of locating Jesus.</p> <p>We find Jesus underneath a two-wheeled cart, working on it, while the owner looks on. Photina (the Woman at the Well—See Note 1—Jesus & the Samaritan Woman: John 4:1-42, p. 9) enters with more friends wanting to meet Jesus.</p> <p>Meanwhile, back at the house, Matthew responds to a knock at the door and finds Thomas, Ramah*, and Kafni*. After a few seconds of a typically awkward exchange with Matthew, Mary Magdalene arrives to greet and welcome the trio. Puzzled by Jesus’ absence, Mary reports that while she doesn’t know where Jesus is—Kafni seems concerned—she is certain that He’s probably just having a moment alone and that He has been changing many hearts. “I know how that works,” Thomas replies knowingly. (Remember it was the miracle of water into wine at the wedding celebration in Cana that began to capture Thomas and Ramah.) Matthew’s awkwardness and Kafni’s hesitancy continue on full display.</p> <p>James and John return from their farming task.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Jesus & the Samaritan Woman: John 4:1-42</p> <p><i>Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John”² (although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized),³ he left Judea and started back to Galilee.⁴ But he had to go through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son</i></p>
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Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."⁸ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."¹¹ The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?" ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" ¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back."¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband."¹⁸ Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹ The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

²⁷ Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" ²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹ "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" ³⁰ They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something."³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."³³ So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" ³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around

		<p>you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶ The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”</p> <p>³⁹ Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”</p>
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Scene: * Jesus Teaching in the Square at Sychar--Samaria

00:19:37-00:21:12		<p>Summary: We find Jesus teaching to a crowd in the square, riffing on what we know as the Parable of the Lost Sheep, presented compellingly (I think) in more of a conversational way than “the lecturing” or “sermoned” way that the Gospels usually present Jesus’ teaching.</p>
00:19:37-00:21:07	<p><u>Jesus</u> “We know that God pursues the sick more than the healthy. Think of it this way...are there any sheep herders in the crowd?”</p> <p><u>Shepherd</u> “I am.”</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “Ah, welcome! We are honored you are here. I have a very warm place in my heart for shepherds.” (See Note 1—Jesus’ Warm Place in His Heart for Shepherds: Luke 2:15-20, p. 11) [Little James comes hurriedly around the corner and into the square, smiling as he discovers what Jesus is doing.] Who is tending your flock now?” [Enter Simon and</p>	<p>As the disciples begin to gather around the fringe of the crowd, Simon notes, “You couldn’t tell Jew from Samaritan the way they’re listening.”</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Jesus’ Warm Place in His Heart for Shepherds: Luke 2:15-20</p> <p>¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.</p>

	<i>Andrew, somewhat frantically]</i>	
<u>Shepherd</u>	“My brother. We’re taking turns.”	
<u>Jesus</u>	“How many sheep?”	
<u>Shepherd</u>	“One hundred, Teacher.”	
<u>Jesus</u>	“Say one of them goes astray, what would you do?” (See Note 2—The Parable of the Lost Sheep: Luke 15:1-7 , p. 12)	2. Note 2—The Parable of the Lost Sheep: Luke 15:1-7
<u>Shepherd</u>	“I’d go look for it, of course.”	<i>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”</i>
<u>Jesus</u>	“Of course! But what about the other 99?”	³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
<u>Shepherd</u>	“I’d have to leave them behind. I can’t lose the one sheep.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John’s report of Jesus’ interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well (Photina*, in <i>The Chosen</i>) indicates Jesus stays at Sychar for <u>two days</u> after his initial encounter with her. (See John 4:1-42, see specifically v. 40— Note 1—Jesus & the Samaritan Woman: John 4:1-42 above, pages 9-11.) <u>However, there is no report of his teaching or ministry there.</u>
<u>Jesus</u>	“Hmm...and if you find it?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to hear repeated themes throughout Jesus’ ministry of preaching and teaching. <i>The Chosen</i> lifts these repeated themes up again and again, and it seems to me, as a preacher, it would have been likely that Jesus rehearsed, introduced, refined, and repeated these themes throughout his ministry, <u>even though they may appear “out of place” or “out of sequence” in the way the Gospels themselves record and present Jesus’ preaching and teaching.</u> Note, for example, this Parable of the Lost Sheep recorded in Luke’s Gospel appears a good half-way through that narrative of Jesus’ ministry, while Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritans at Sychar recorded in John’s Gospel occurs very early on in Jesus’ ministry.
<u>Shepherd</u>	“I’d lay it over my shoulders and bring it home [<i>amused</i>] and would probably do a little dance.” <i>[Laughter, including Jesus]</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the way <i>The Chosen</i> presents Jesus’ preaching and teaching ministry in this more conversational way, rather than the way the Gospels present Jesus’ preaching/teaching ministry in a more “lectured” or “sermoned” way. As a preacher and teacher, I find this more “organic” and conversational approach to be (a)
<u>Jesus</u>	“And what would you say to your friends who are worried for you?”	
<u>Shepherd</u>	“Rejoice with me, I have found my lost sheep!”	
<u>Jesus</u>	“Do you see what he just said there? <i>[We might notice Neriah*, Photina’s husband from Season 1, Episode 8 listening from a balcony overlooking the</i>	

	<p><i>square.] He rejoices more for one sheep, than over the 99 who never went astray. [Does Neriah seem intrigued by what he is hearing?] So, it is not the will of my Father that one of these should perish. In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.”</i></p>	<p>much more winsome and (b) more personable and inviting.</p>
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Scene: * A Field Sychar--Samaria

<p>00:21:13-00:21:40</p>		<p>Summary: The scene opens in low light, sunset of this very long day, with a figure walking with a crutch and labored breathing. We soon discover that he is approaching the field we saw James and John working in a previous scene. Is this the man with the crutch’s field? Whatever the case, he seems emotional over what he is seeing, puzzled at least.</p>
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Scene: * The House Where the Jesus & the Disciples are Staying in Sychar—Samaria

<p>00:21:41-00:24:00</p>		<p>Summary: The scene opens at night with Ramah*, her father Kafni*, and Thomas seated silently around a candle-lit table. Suddenly Simon, Andrew, Thaddeus and Little James enter the house with Jesus. Simon and the rest are talking excitedly about what they had seen over the course of the day. They notice and greet Ramah*, Kafni*, and Thomas, somewhat surprised that they “came through.” Jesus greets Thomas with an embrace. There is a brief uncomfortable moment as Thomas reintroduces Ramah* and Jesus asks whether she will be joining them also. Kafni continues to be icy at best, in spite of Jesus’ praise of his wine from Season 1, Episode 5, “The Wedding Gift,” and Jesus praises Kafni for being a good father. After a very long day and Kafni’s obvious intent to learn more about Jesus, His movement, and Ramah’s involvement, Jesus proposes a conversation in the morning to answer questions and have that conversation. Kafni seems taken aback at Jesus’ openness and congeniality.</p> <p>Jesus dismisses himself “to speak to a couple of men who performed a truly remarkable act of service today.” Simon insists that he and the rest escort Jesus (Does Jesus seem annoyed?),</p>
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		only to find out Jesus is only going into one of the rooms adjoining the courtyard where Big James and John are eating. Jesus points out Big James' and John's actions to the rest of the disciples only in vague, general terms and insists that they (Big James and John) describe what they did and that the rest of the disciples take note. Jesus dismisses himself, and the rest of the disciples seem puzzled.
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Scene: * The Next Day, Sychar—Samaria

00:24:02-00:27:00		Summary: The scene opens with a view of the bustling square at Sychar as the disciples enter, Matthew and Andrew are talking over the errand with which Jesus has apparently tasked Big James and John with an errand and for the rest to accompany them. They seem puzzled at the “moving stones and digging” and wonder if Big James and John “are leaders now?” Toward the back of the entourage, Simon and Mary Magdalene are filling in Thomas about the potential opportunities for Jesus to interact with others, mentioning a leper colony outside of the town, a dinner invitation, etc.
00:24:30-00:25:20	<u>Simon</u> <i>[to Thomas]</i> “The list of things He might do is long. First, there’s a leper colony to the west, and they’re begging Him to come.”	
	<u>Mary Magdalene</u> “They’re not allowed into the city, so they have no way to hear Him.”	
	<u>Andrew</u> “Both Jewish and Samaritan purity laws forbid coming within 4 cubits of a leper.” (See Note 1—Cubit and Note 2—Jewish Purity Law Regarding Leprosy—Leviticus 13:1-8, 45-46 , pgs. 14-15)	The mention of the leper colony provokes a conversation toward the front of the entourage about purity laws regarding leprosy, noting the distance from lepers that, by law, must be maintained. Big James casts an aside comment about the distance that should be kept from Samaritans, seeming ungraciously to tie together uncleanness between lepers and Samaritans. The conversation among the group continues to speculate over a wide range of possibilities about what Jesus might do next and the potential for accompanying complications.
	<u>Big James</u> “What distance do we have to keep from these Samaritans?”	Big James and John then indicate that the errand is that JESUS wants to make dinner. This seems to provoke Simon, even more so as Big James and John begin to give assignments for Jesus’ dinner errand.
	<u>John</u> “We’ve been within 4 cubits of a leper before, Andrew.” <i>[Season 1, Episode 6, “Indescribable Compassion,” when Jesus healed the man with leprosy from Mark 1:40-44 and parallel accounts from Matt. 8:1-4 and Luke 5:12-16.]</i>	As Matthew begins to count the cost of the dinner, he worries about running out of money. John assures him to have faith in Jesus.
	<u>Andrew</u> “I’m just saying if He breaks their law, it might cause a stir.”	NOTES:
	<u>Simon</u> <i>[continuing with his briefing of Thomas]</i> “And for dinner we’ve been	1. Note 1—Cubit: An ancient unit of measurement, approximately 18 inches, based on the length of a human arm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Probably the most familiar occurrence of the word comes from God’s commands to Noah in building the ark, Genesis 6:14-16: “ <i>Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.</i> ” ¹⁵ <i>This is how you are</i>

00:25:30-00:27:00		<p>invited to the home of the town treasurer. And we have to juggle that invitation with another one, to have dinner at the home of the high priest of Sychar, which could get messy.”</p>	<p>to make it: the length of the ark <u>three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.</u> ¹⁶ <u>Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks.”</u></p>
	Matthew	2. Note 2—Jewish Purity Law Regarding Leprosy—Leviticus 13:1-8, 45-46:	
	Andrew	<p>“Why messy?”</p>	<p><i>The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:</i> ² “When a person has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot and it turns into a defiling disease on the skin of his body, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. ³ The priest shall examine the disease on the skin of his body, and if the hair in the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a defiling disease; after the priest has examined him he shall pronounce him unclean. ⁴ But if the spot is white in the skin of his body and appears no deeper than the skin and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest shall confine the diseased person for seven days. ⁵ The priest shall examine him on the seventh day, and if he sees that the disease is checked and the disease has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall confine him seven days more. ⁶ The priest shall examine him again on the seventh day, and if the disease has abated and the disease has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only an eruption, and he shall wash his clothes and be clean. ⁷ But if the eruption spreads in the skin after he has shown himself to the priest for his cleansing, he shall appear again before the priest. ⁸ The priest shall make an examination, and if the eruption has spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is defiling.”</p>
	Big James	<p>“Samaritan beliefs are so at odds with Jewish beliefs. He might want to trap Jesus in His words.”</p>	<p>...“The person who has the defiling disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ ⁴⁶ He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.</p>
	Andrew	<p>“I don’t think He’s afraid of being trapped by His words.”</p>	<p><u>The Hebrew word for leprosy is not a precise diagnosis but could have any number of skin ailments.</u></p>
	Mary Magdalene	<p>“I’m just saying...”</p>	
	Matthew	<p>[interrupting] “We could be somewhere else, with people who actually want to listen to Him and not argue.”</p>	
	Simon	<p>“If He convinces the Rabbi of the town, His message will be preached long after we leave this village.”</p>	
		<p>“Let’s leave it to the Boss, eh?”</p>	
		<p>***</p>	
	Simon	<p>“You know there are a lot of people who want to talk to Him...”</p>	
	John	<p>“Yes, but...HE wants to make dinner.”</p>	
	Big James	<p>“That’s the errand.”</p>	
	Simon	<p>“Oh yeah? That the errand? Yeah? You guys are really enjoying this...being in the know, huh?”</p>	
John	<p>“Ha! Coming from you, Simon?!”</p>		
Simon	<p>“What does that mean?”</p>		
Big James	<p>“He told US His plans, so.... [Big James begins organizing tasks and</p>		

	<p><i>assignments</i>] Matthew, distribute the money accordingly—Thaddeus, buy bread, enough for 12... <i>[glancing at John]...</i></p>	
<u>John</u>	“13”	
<u>Big James</u>	“...13 people...”	
<u>Thaddeus</u>	“Leavened, unleavened, rye, sprouted, spelt?”	
<u>John</u>	“An assortment, your choice.”	
<u>Simon</u>	<i>[stewing]</i> “13? Who are the others?”	
<u>Big James</u>	“Little James, buy a leg of lamb, including the knuckle and fillet...No, no, two legs of lamb.”	
<u>Matthew</u>	<i>[counting their coins]</i> “We only have...”	
<u>Big James</u>	“Andrew, grapes, currants...”	
<u>John</u>	“Cherries.”	
<u>Big James</u>	“Cherries, if you can find them.” <i>[Simon, now apparently at a slow burn]</i>	
<u>Matthew</u>	“At this rate, we will not have enough for...”	
<u>John</u>	“At the start of this trip we didn’t expect to find a bag of gold, did we? We’re putting it to good use. <i>[to Simon]</i> Simon?”	
<u>Simon</u>	<i>[sarcastically]</i> “Yes, master.”	
<u>John</u>	<i>[pausing, reacting, but undeterred]</i> “Three skins of wine.”	
<u>Simon</u>	<i>[dismissively]</i> “Done.”	
	<i>[The conversation about dinner, the cost, further assignments continue.]</i>	
<u>Simon</u>	<i>[to Big James and John]</i> “And what are you guys going to do?”	
<u>John</u>	“We are going to get out of the streets.”	
		<p>3. Note 3—Growing conflict: There are two strands of conflict here to be noted: (1) the growing tension among the Disciples, particularly between Simon, Big James, and John, at least, and (2) Big James’ and John’s prejudice and antipathy toward the Samaritans.</p>

	<u>Simon</u>	“Why?”	
	<u>John</u>	“Samaria’s biggest problem...”	
	<u>Big James</u>	“Too many Samaritans.”	
	<u>John</u>	“Mmm...”	

Scene: * The Marketplace in Sychar—Samaria

00:27:02-00:28:20		<p>Summary: The scene shifts to the bustling marketplace. Simon approaches a wine seller, a woman with whom he had brief interaction earlier in the episode when the Disciples were looking for Jesus and asks for three skins of wine, per John’s instructions. Photina* (the Samaritan woman at the well) approaches Simon indicating that she’s been looking for them. Simon, annoyed, indicates that they’re all here in the marketplace shopping. Photina turns to the vintner to tell her, “This man (Jesus) told me...”, and the vintner interrupts and finishes her sentence, “...everything you ever did.” She goes on to say, “Yes, we’ve heard Him for ourselves! It’s because of His words we believe He is the Anointed One.” (See Note 1—Jesus & the Samaritan Woman: John 4:1-42, especially John 4:42, pages 9-11 above.) The vintner ends up throwing in a fourth wine skin, “On the house. Anything for him.”</p> <p>Photina hands Simon a scroll with a request to deliver a message. Simon reads the scroll, an invitation of some sort apparently.</p>
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Scene: * Back at the House in Sychar—Samaria

00:28:20-00:33:47		<p>Summary: Back at the house, Kafni*, Ramah’s father, is waiting for Jesus. He seems annoyed, particularly when Ramah returns from the shopping errand, apologetically; it’s been a busy morning. She busies herself with making something to eat for her father, who questions her about what she thinks Jesus’ intentions are and expresses his doubts about the whole endeavor, though he does also indicate his openness to have come this far when he could have just put his foot down and said No. Ramah expresses gratitude for Kafni’s willingness to this point. He expresses his concern over her wellbeing, no job, no family, and only porridge to eat.</p> <p>Jesus enters, thanks Kafni for his patience, and explains Jesus had some people to meet before their “important talk,” deferring to Kafni’s unspoken but apparent concerns. Jesus names Kafni’s concerns and nervousness. Kafni indicates he’d rather have this conversation without Ramah’s presence and Jesus agrees. Once outside, Kafni first thanks Jesus for “whatever You did at the wedding,” for preserving Kafni’s, Ramah’s, and Thomas’ reputation and saving them from suffering. But he also continues</p>
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by saying that he believes Jesus and His movement to be “the edge of blasphemy” and that he’s “not in the habit of believing a man from Naz...”, beginning to bring up Jesus’ questionable origins from Nazareth, but deferring instead to his doubts over the miracle. (See **Note 1—Nazareth**, p. 18) Most especially he unequivocally indicates that he is not “in the habit of giving my blessing for my daughter to leave our home...but...I am in your debt,” he concludes. Jesus thanks Kafni for his honest, and Kafni continues by confessing that he cannot give his belief or devotion so that his honesty is all he has left to give—he begins to grow teary—after giving up his daughter. Kafni begins to softly sob. Jesus expresses compassionate understanding and indicates the hard way that comes with following Him and that He asks little of those who do not follow Him. The conversation ends with great pathos both from Kafni AND from Jesus, and Kafni retreats into the background with Ramah and seems to press some money into her hand as he leaves.

Ramah follows her father out of the house where they meet Thomas. Kafni and Thomas acknowledge each other, and Kafni draws Thomas aside. Kafni expresses his admiration for Thomas, for his hard work, apparently in spite of the loss of Thomas’ father. But Kafni also expresses his doubt and anger, “This is foolishness, and I won’t pretend it isn’t.” The trio parts, all with tears in their eyes.

NOTES:

1. **Note 1—Nazareth:** We first encountered the common Jewish prejudice against Nazareth in Season 1, Episode 1, “Shabbat,” when the character Barnaby* expresses it over Mary Magdalene’s first time hosting Shabbat when she indicates that Jesus is from Nazareth: “*Well, apparently something good can come from Nazareth.*” While the rest of the guests are embarrassed, Jesus seems able to take a little ribbing.

Nazareth has a reputation as backwater town of little significance or import. In **John 1:43-46**, prior to responding to Jesus’ call to follow Him, we hear Nathanael reflect these very sentiments:

[After Jesus had called Simon Peter and Andrew...]⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

⁴⁴ *Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”*

⁴⁶ *“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.*

“Come and see,” said Philip.

Scene: * Back at the Field Outside Sychar—Samaria

00:33:48-00:43:58		<p>Summary: The scene opens with Jesus and the Disciples admiring the field Big James and John had ploughed and planted. Jesus whistles in amazement. Big James and John report, proudly, maybe even boastfully, all the work they had done “in a single afternoon.” “So you’ve told us,” Andrew jabs. Jesus commends the two brothers as they look around smugly at their companions.</p>
00:35:57-00:36:15	<p><u>Simon</u> <i>[laughing]</i> “The boat almost flipped. Then the net strained so hard I thought my arms would come out of their sockets.”</p> <p><u>Andrew</u> “And James and John took their sweet time coming to help us.” <i>[glancing over his shoulder at Big James and John who sit just outside the fringe around the fire—they glower as Andrew mocks his recollection at their hesitancy and paralysis, though you might remember they were actually quite quick to come to Simon’s and Andrew’s aid.]</i></p> <p><u>Simon</u> “I had to call for help five times before you moved!” (See Note 1—Tension among the Disciples, p. 20)</p>	<p>The entourage continues toward a ramshackle stone house where we see a man with a crutch outside the house. Simon questions Jesus about what they’re doing there. Jesus indicates that this is where they’ll be dining tonight, much to John’s skepticism about the accommodations. Of course, it turns out, after greetings and a brief exchange with Jesus, that this disabled man is owner of the field in which Big James and John had labored. Big James and John appear disappointed that they worked so hard for a Samaritan, thinking the field was for travelers. (You might remember John teasingly quoting Jesus as the two brothers were working, “<i>Hospitality isn’t just for those who have homes.</i>”) Their response seems to provoke the man (Melech*) who now thinks there’s a catch and is skeptical about their intent, him being a Samaritan and they being Jews. Photina (the woman at the well), had apparently alerted Jesus to Melech’s need and had told Melech all about Jesus. He has no money, “I can’t make a donation to your ministry,” he says, “I can’t even feed my family.” Jesus indicates that He would love to share a meal with Him and his friends. Melech misunderstands, indicating he doesn’t even have food enough for his family, though the Disciples indicate they have that covered. Big James and John glance at each other suspiciously.</p> <p>The scene shifts to nightfall and supper around a fire with Jesus and the Disciples, Melech and his family. Simon is regaling the group about their miraculous catch of fish back at Galilee, and Andrew adds a jab at Big James and John for taking “their sweet time coming to help us.”</p>
00:38:40-00:43:00	<p><u>*Melech</u> “If You knew who I am You would never have helped me.”</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “That’s not true.” <i>[pausing, looking intently at Melech]</i> “This is</p>	<p>Melech marvels that the fishermen not only followed Jesus, but as much so that their discipleship has brought them to Samaria. (Matthew interjects in his typically awkward way that they had suggested an alternate route that would have not brought them to Samaria.) Jesus acknowledges even His concern that it could be dangerous for them. At this point, Melech’s wife, Chedva*, who has been silent to this point, clears her throat and speaks, indicating that her father had told her that the Messiah would bring an end to pain and suffering and wonders, if Jesus is who everyone else is saying He is, when He will do that, of course, keenly aware of their own pain and suffering. After a prolonged silence, Jesus simply indicates that He is here to preach the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven, “a Kingdom that is not of this world, a Kingdom that is coming soon, where, yes, sorrow and sighing will flee away. I make a way for people to access that Kingdom. But, in this world, bones will still break, hearts will still break, but in the end, the light will overcome the darkness.”</p>

	<p>what we Jews do...we tell and listen to stories. Our stories connect us. Tell me your story.”</p> <p><u>Melech</u> <i>[looking intently at Jesus, then to the ground, gathering his thoughts and words]</i> “We ran out of money...and food. My little *Rebecca...I could see her ribs through her skin. And *Chedva, her eyes turned gray. There had been a drought so there was no work in town. I had a friend in Tirathana who was also in bad straits. We traveled south past Ephraim, and lied in wait along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. We attacked a Jew who was traveling alone. <i>[Big James and John, arms folded across their chests, look disapprovingly at Melech]</i> Pulled him down from his horse, took all his money and all his clothes. He fought back so *Dishon knocked him down, hit his head on a rock. I thought he was probably dead. Dishon was to take the Jew’s belongings and sell them to pawn traders in</p>	<p>(00:36:59-00:37:48) (See Note 2—The Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven, p. 20)</p> <p>Speaking of broken bones... Jesus asks Melech about his injury, and after some unfolding conversation, we discover that it was likely Melech fell off a horse he was trying to steal. He confesses his gratitude for what Jesus has already done that he “didn’t deserve,” that if Jesus knew who Melech was, he wouldn’t have helped him. Jesus tells him that’s not true and invites him to tell his story.</p> <p>The scene ends with timely humor from Jesus and an embrace between the two men.</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note 1—Tension among the Disciples: Again in this scene, we have seen and heard the both the growing tension among Big James and John and their harbored prejudice against Samaritans and between Simon and Andrew (perhaps the others as well) toward Big James and John. Note 2—The Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven: This—“the Kingdom of Heaven”—could be one of the most misunderstood elements of Jesus’ teaching. The misunderstanding, especially lies, in the interpretation of this kingdom language as “a place” (Heaven) and Jesus as “the punched ticket” to get there. (Even Jesus’ words in this scene seem to hedge toward that misunderstanding.) <p>However, both Jesus’ teaching and the action that takes place around Him indicates a more “NOW” aspect to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is a better interpretation, from the grammar of the Greek itself throughout the Gospels, to understand this kingdom language in this way: <i>“the kingly, reigning ACTIVITY of God that is grounded and focused in Jesus himself.”</i></p> <p>Likewise, often Jesus’ language of repentance isn’t so much a <i>moral assertion</i> (i.e., “Change your sinful ways,” though there is always an element of that), as it is a call to <i>have one’s heart/mind changed</i> to see and believe that JESUS—His words, His actions, etc.—are the very presence of God’s <i>kingly, reigning activity</i> that will effect that change in our hearts/minds. The proper emphasis is on WHO IT IS that is causing the repentance: us? Or Jesus? <i>So note, for example, how it is that Melech’s repentance—his change of heart/mind—occur in the presence and confrontation of Jesus: a “moral” issue, yes, but one in which that change of heart/mind happens through one’s encounter with Jesus.</i></p> <p>So for example, in Mark’s Gospel, we read/hear these words:</p> <p>Mark 1:14-15: <i>“...Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God ¹⁵ and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God [“the kingly, reigning activity of God</i></p>
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	<p>Anatoth. I was to ride north and sell the horse at a Roman outpost. But I wasn't on for ten minutes, when she reared up, threw me, broke my leg. I had to—I had to crawl on my elbows and forearms to the nearest town and beg for a ride back to Sychar, worse off than before. <i>[turning slowly to look at Jesus]</i> So now You know what You've done. The kind of man You've helped. Every day I think about that Jew...naked and alone on the road, possibly dead. I could be a murderer." (See Note 3—Melech's story, p. 22)</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> "He didn't die." <i>[Melech, startled, turns to look at Jesus.]</i></p> <p>"Somebody came along and helped him."</p> <p><u>Melech</u> "How do You know?"</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> "Melech, I know. I promise you...he did not die." <i>[Melech weeps]</i></p> <p><u>Melech</u> <i>[relieved and turning to look at Jesus]</i> "Why me? Why did you come all the way out here? Isn't everyone in town</p>	<p><u>that is grounded and focused in Jesus himself"]</u> <i>has come near; repent. ["let your hearts/minds be changed to see"] and believe in the good news."</i></p> <p>Matthew 4:13-17: "Jesus left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles— ¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." ¹⁷ <u>From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, ["let your hearts/minds be changed"] for the kingdom of heaven ["the kingly, reigning activity of God that is grounded and focused in Jesus himself"]</u> <i>has come near."</i></p> <p>Luke 4:16-21: "When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "<u>Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.</u>"</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This passage makes no mention of "the Kingdom," nor of "repentance" <i>but lifts up the IMMEDIACY—the "NOW-ness" of God's action grounded and focused in Jesus himself.</i> What is more, the recognition and participation in what God is up to—repentance? A change of heart/mind?—is found in "good news to the poor" and "release to the captives" (whatever "captivity" might mean), "recovery of sight to blind," and freedom for "those who are oppressed" (whatever "oppression" might mean.) John's Gospel doesn't use this Kingdom language but instead uses the motifs of light vs. darkness and sight vs. blindness, the gift of being able to SEE and PARTICIPATE in God's presence and activity. We hear Jesus employ this language in this scene in His soliloquy about His ministry.
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		falling at Your feet?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Kingdom language occurs most frequently in Jesus’ parables, where he often introduces the parable by saying something like, “<i>To what can we compare the kingdom of God...</i>” [again, “<u>the kingly, reigning activity of God that is grounded and focused in Jesus himself</u>”]. So the parables themselves become an entry into recognizing God’s presence and activity around and among us in the world. <p>JESUS—all that He says and does and happens in, around, and through Him—IS the Good News.</p> <p>3. Note 3—Melech’s story: Sound familiar?</p> <p>Luke 10:25-37: “An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”²⁶ He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?”²⁷ He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.”²⁸ And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”</p> <p>²⁹ But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead.³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.³³ But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion.³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.’³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”³⁷ He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.””</p> <p>Of course, there are some significant differences in Melech’s story and the parable Jesus tells in Luke 10. But if you ever wonder how it is preachers come up with their stories...</p>
	<u>Jesus</u>	“The shepherd leaves the 99 on the mountain to search for the one that went astray.”	
	<u>Melech</u>	“What do you want?”	
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Believe my words. Return to synagogue. Search Torah.”	
	<u>Melech</u>	“I never learned to read.”	
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Then listen to the Word read aloud, and let it affect your heart. See what happens.”	
	<u>Melech</u>	“And then what?”	
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Tell others.”	
	<u>Melech</u>	“You know the crime I committed...in cold blood. You’d help someone like me?”	
	<u>Simon</u>	[off screen, from the side] “He would.” [As the scene shifts to Simon and Andrew, both are staring intently at Melech]	

Scene: * Later that Night, Back in Sychar—Samaria

00:44:01-00:45:18		Summary: Jesus and the disciples have returned to Sychar and stand before a closed door. Simon knocks gently on the door. Thaddeus wonders aloud if Simon is sure this is the place, apparently the location for the invitation Photina, the Woman
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		<p>from the Well, had given to him. There is no answer to Simon’s knock.</p> <p>Eventually, the door opens and standing in the doorway is Neriah*, Photina’s husband that we first met in the Cold Open for Season 1, Episode 8, “I Am He.” Neriah bluntly indicates he has 5 extra rooms—apparently the invitation is for Jesus and the Disciples to stay there—and that he (Neriah) is dying and won’t need the house. Photina joins him in the doorway, and Neriah asks which one is Jesus, says, “You have certainly lived things up around here.” His spirit is COMPLETELY different from the bitter, morose one we have seen, matching Photina’s bubblyness.</p> <p>As he invites the entourage in, Neriah quips, “One of the rooms is haunted. By my dead grandmother.” “Ooooh, I’ll take that one,” Jesus says, and Photina says, “Don’t you know who He is? He’s not afraid of ghosts.” Andrew says, “I might be.”</p>
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Scene: * Sunrise at Two Houses—Samaria

<p>00:45:19 – 00:47:28</p>		<p>Summary: The scene opens with the sun rising over the trees at Melech’s house. As the scene shifts to the interior of Melech’s house, his daughter *Rebecca awakes with a start to the sound of thumping and Melech panting. Melech is on the floor and his wife *Chedva and Rebecca leap up to help him. Melech is ecstatic, “No pain!” he exclaims. And to the joyous surprise of all, Melech leaps to his feet, giggling and jumping up and down, embracing in turn Rebecca and Chedva, completely healed.</p> <p>The scene shifts, still with the family’s laughter in the background, back to Neriah’s house as Jesus awakens with a wry smile on his face and a giggle of his own. John sleepily wonders what is so funny, and Jesus responds, “Oh, I just know a family that’s having an unexpectedly good morning, gesturing with “walking fingers.” John is amazed that Jesus doesn’t even have to be present to perform the wonders He does.</p> <p>Jesus tells John and his brother Big James that they too will be given authority to do the things Jesus does, even greater things. (See Note 1—Even Greater Things, p. 23)</p> <p>The three quip about the hauntedness of the room as they rise and begin to pray.</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Even Greater Things</p> <p><i>John 14:8-14: “Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will</i></p>
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		<i>do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”</i>
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Scene: * Later That Morning at Neriah’s House in Sychar—Samaria

00:47:30- 00:50:43			Summary: Jesus and the disciples have gathered around a table generously loaded with food. Simon is reviewing the invitations Jesus has received, one with the town’s treasurer and the high priest there at Sychar. Mary Magdalene reminds them of the leper colony, and Big James and John look worried. Jesus rises to take a walk, nonplussed by the list of demands, but also needing some time alone. (See Note 1—Jesus’ alone time , p. 25) Big James jumps up to offer protection (presumably from the Samaritans), and Jesus draws up a bit short, “Enough with the protection. I’ll be fine.” Concerns about where they might find Jesus is responded to by Jesus, perhaps even a bit annoyed himself, “Seek, and you will find.” That sends the Disciples off on a conversation about what Jesus might mean, and once again we might sense the growing tension and antagonism among the Disciples, particularly between Simon, Big James, and John.
00:48:12- 00:50:19	<u>Simon</u>	“His riddles.”	
	<u>Ramah*</u>	“It didn’t sound like a riddle to me.”	
	<u>Little James</u>	“If you look for Him, you’ll find Him.”	
	<u>John</u>	<i>[skeptically]</i> “That’s not what I heard.”	
	<u>Simon</u>	<i>[annoyed]</i> “Oh yeah? What’d you hear?”	
	<u>John</u>	<i>[directly to Simon]</i> “I heard you looked and <i>couldn’t</i> find Him.”	
	<u>Big James</u>	<i>[accusingly]</i> “You guys lost Him for practically a whole day, Matthew said.”	Big James and John reveal that they have a plan, an agenda, an itinerary for Jesus and the Disciples. This leads to arguing, particularly between them and Simon and Andrew, though Matthew, predictably, indicates his preference to have a plan. An eventual vote among the table reveals the rest of the Disciples’ lack of support for Big James and John, who storm out.
		<i>[Simon and Andrew turn slowly to look accusingly at Matthew, who won’t make eye contact.]</i>	
	<u>Simon</u>	<i>[forcefully]</i> “He goes where He wants, when He wants.”	
	<u>Big James</u>	“Yeah, well we need to do better.”	Outside the house, John tells Big James that he is going to find Jesus to tell them their plan, in spite of Big James’ observation that the rest of the group are not supportive: “They also said He gets to make His own plan,” John says, “So let’s let Him.” John tries to persuade his brother that Jesus’ choice of them to plough Melech’s field carried with it some preference of Jesus’ for the brothers. Big James not only indicates he’s rethinking that line of thought and once again reveals his hostile prejudice toward Samaritans. “Jesus will sort it out,” John replies as he turns to go find Jesus, Big James in tow.
	<u>Simon</u>	<i>[sarcastically]</i> “Can you believe these guys? They dig in the mud and suddenly they’re running the show.”	
	<u>John</u>	“We just think we need some leadership, ok? Security concerns aside, we need a plan.”	
	<u>Big James</u>	“No matter what happens today, the real question is where we will be after we leave here.”	

<u>Simon</u>	“We’ll get to that...”	<p>NOTES:</p> <p>1. Note 1—Jesus’ alone time: The Gospels provide numerous examples of Jesus seeking time alone to pray:</p> <p>Matthew 14:23: <i>“Immediately [after feeding the multitudes] Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.</i> (A parallel is found in Mark’s Gospel, as well, 6:45-46.)</p> <p>Luke 5:15-16: <i>“Now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds were gathering to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. ¹⁶Meanwhile, he would slip away to deserted places and pray.”</i></p> <p>Mark 1:32-37: <i>“³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed by demons. ³³And the whole city [of Capernaum] was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.</i></p> <p><i>³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.”</i></p> <p>2. Note 2—Qumran, Hebron: (See the map, “Israel at the Time of Jesus, 1st Century AD, p. 31) Big James and John seem to be planning an itinerary that takes Jesus to significant Jewish religious and historical locations.</p> <p>Qumran—Founded somewhere around 130-100 BCE, Qumran was a community of one of the Jewish sects called the Essenes, a conservative movement toward Jewish law, emphasizing ritual purity. The archaeological site has uncovered numerous baths used for daily immersion. They held to a strict hierarchy under a priest, though they thought the priests in Jerusalem were corrupt and anticipated the rise of a new and great high priest who would usher in a new Jewish golden age. The Essenes were</p>
<u>John</u>	<i>[cutting Simon off]</i> “That’s why James and I have outlined a plan for the next month...”	
<u>Simon</u>	“Month?!”	
<u>John</u>	<i>[cutting Simon off again]</i> “...beginning with a visit to the temple, His first appearance there since performing public signs...” <i>[the rest of the disciples seem concerned]</i>	
<u>Simon</u>	“Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa...”	
<u>Big James</u>	<i>[cutting Simon off still again]</i> “...a visit to the scribes at Qumran...”	
<u>John</u>	“...Two days preaching at Hebron.” (See Note 2—Qumran, Hebron , p. 25)	
<u>Simon</u>	<i>[growing more heated]</i> “Hold on!”	
<u>Big James</u>	“He said we were excellent planners.”	
<u>Little James</u>	“I’m pretty sure He said ‘planters’.”	
<u>John</u>	“He applauded our execution.”	
<u>Simon</u>	“He sent you to the farm to teach you a lesson.”	
<u>Big James</u>	“And we made an impression.”	
<u>Andrew</u>	“Let’s vote on it.”	
<u>John</u>	“Sure.”	
<u>Andrew</u>	“Ok. All in favor of John and Big James’ plan?”	
	<i>[Initially there is silence around the table and snickering from Simon]</i>	
<u>Matthew</u>	<i>[raising his hand]</i> “I agree an agenda would be prudent.” <i>[Simon is seething.]</i>	
<u>Mary Magdalene</u>	“I’m not voting.”	
<u>Thomas</u>	“Me either.”	
<u>John</u>	“Why not?”	
<u>Thomas</u>	<i>[shaking his head]</i> “Mmm Mmm. New guy.”	

	<p><u>Mary Magdalene</u> “Look, it doesn’t matter what I think He should do, or what you think.”</p> <p><u>Andrew</u> “All opposed?” <i>[Thaddeus, Simon, and Andrew all raise their hands.]</i></p> <p><u>John</u> <i>[irritated]</i> “Well. I’m sorry you feel that way. I, for one, am not ok losing Him for long periods of time. I’m not ok arguing about where we’re going every day.”</p> <p><u>Thaddeus</u> <i>[looking pointedly at John]</i> “So don’t argue.”</p> <p><i>[John gets up and leaves the table, followed quickly by Big James, as the rest of the Disciples sit in silence.]</i></p>	<p>“ascetics”—that is, they withdrew from society to practice their purity and avoid corruption. Some scholars believe that John the Baptist may have been an Essene and that perhaps Jesus himself may have had some connections to the movement. The Qumran site is best known for its Dead Sea Scrolls, hidden in caves nearby.</p> <p>Hebron—Considered one of the oldest cities in the region, Genesis 13:18 asserts that this was the place where Abram (Abraham) parted ways with his nephew Lot, Lot taking the fertile valleys for his family and flocks, while Abram was left with the hilly, arid countryside. Additionally, this was the place God showed Abram the land that would belong to him and his descendants. Genesis 23 claims that, in the end, the only portion of this land Abraham ever owned was a cave he bought as a tomb for his wife Sarah. Later, 2 Samuel 2 & 5 Hebron becomes King David’s first capitol.</p>
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Scene: * Somewhere Outside Sychar—Samaria

<p>00:50:45-00:55:30</p>		<p>Summary: We find Jesus out in the countryside somewhere around Sychar, apparently lost in thought. He is interrupted by John and Big James who indicate they just want to clear up a few things. A small Samaritan caravan is passing by, and one of the caravan drivers observes, “You Jewish boys are far from home.” Jesus replies, greeting the Samaritans with “Shalom.” “Here is our traditional Jewish greeting for you,” the Samaritan replies, and a handful of the caravan members throw something—rotten fruit?—at Jesus and the brothers. John and Big James begin to rush the insulters, but Jesus holds them back, “Don’t lift a finger.” Jesus continues to try to calm the brothers as the caravan moves on, and the driver sarcastically returns Jesus’ blessing with “Shalom to you too” and spits at them, landing it right in the middle of John’s chest. Angrily, John replies with an insult and begins to try to rush the caravan as Jesus, even more forcefully, insists, “I said, ‘Quiet!’”</p> <p>As the caravan moves on, John turns to face Jesus: “Let us do something,” he hisses and Big James joins John in demanding Jesus rain down fire from heaven to incinerate the offenders. (See Note 1—Fire from heaven: Luke 9:51-56, p. 27) Big James then puts his hostility toward Samaritans on full display. Jesus finally confronts them with the lesson he was trying to teach them in having them plant Melech’s field, to plant seeds that will last generations. “Can you not see what is happening here?” Jesus confronts them. “These people you hate so much are believing in me without even seeing miracles....And you’re going to get in the way of that because a few people from a region you don’t like were mean to you, that they’re not worthy? What? You’re so much</p>
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		<p>better?...Well, let me tell you something, you're not. That's the whole point!"</p> <p>Chastised and rebuked, the two brothers dejectedly apologize, insisting at Jesus' behest that they will show the way through their humility. "You two are like a storm on the sea," Jesus concludes, chuckling as He reconciles with them and they begin to head back to Sychar. (See Note 2—Sons of Thunder: Mark 13-19, p. 27)</p> <p>They meet the rest of the entourage on the way, Simon noting that John "looks terrible." Jesus tells them in general what has happened, that "We are in Samaria to plant seeds, not to burn bridges."</p> <p>Simon indicates the presence of a guest, *Gershon, the Samaritan high priest there in Sychar, who invites Jesus to give a reading from the scroll of Moses in their synagogue. Jesus glances knowingly at Big James and John before accepting the invitation. (Review Note 1—Who are the Samaritans? from A Field Outside of Sychar on p. 7-8, particularly on some of the key differences between mainstream Judaism and Samaritan Judaism.)</p> <p>NOTES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Note 1—Fire from heaven: Luke 9:51-56 <p><i>"When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to prepare for his arrival, ⁵³but they did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" ⁵⁵But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶Then they went on to another village."</i></p> Note 2— Sons of Thunder: Mark 13-19 <p><i>"Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴And he appointed twelve to be with him and to be sent out to preach ¹⁵and to have authority to cast out demons. ¹⁶So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), ¹⁷James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder), ¹⁸and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who handed him over."</i></p>
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Scene: * The Synagogue at Sychar—Samaria

00:55:32-01:04:40	<p>Summary: The synagogue begins to fill. Even Neriah* is there with his wife Photina, the Woman from the Well. *Gershon the high priest escorts Jesus to the scroll room, inviting Him to make his selection for the reading. Jesus asks Gershon to</p>
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00:57:45-01:04:40	<u>Jesus</u>	“I really am open to suggestions for the reading.”	send in John. John slowly, quietly joins Jesus. Jesus asks John what he should read, suggesting a couple of texts that involve striking and hitting. “Don’t torment me,” John requests knowingly with the previous incident outside Sychar in mind. Light heartedly, Jesus makes a few more suggestions, noting, “Oh wait. They don’t have those scrolls.”
	<u>John</u>	“I couldn’t. After today, after yesterday, I do not feel very much worthy.”	
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Ah...who is worthy of anything?”	NOTES:
	<u>John</u>	“You? But no man, apparently.”	1. Note 1—I am Who I am
	<u>Jesus</u>	“I’m a man, John.”	In Exodus, in the story of Moses’ encounter with God in the Burning Bush, we hear God give Moses God’s name:
	<u>John</u>	“And yet...”	Exodus 3:13-15: “Moses said to God, ‘If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?’” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I am who I am.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I am has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’: This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.”
	<u>Jesus</u>	“I am Who I am.” (See Note 1—I am Who I am , p. 28)	
	...		
	<u>Jesus</u>	“So. Do you have a favorite passage? From the first 5?”	And in John’s Gospel, in identifying WHO this Jesus is and WHAT He means, John employs a series of “I AM” statements that come from Jesus’ mouth, each corresponding to a quality of God and affirmations of his divine nature and unity with the Father: “I AM...”
	<u>John</u>	“Um. Do you?”	John 6:35: [after feeding the 5,000] “...the bread of life.”
	<u>Jesus</u>	“I don’t know...I like them all.”	John 8:12: “...the light of the world.”
	<u>John</u>	“You don’t say.” [pauses] “I suppose I like the beginning.”	John 10:7 & 9: “...the door.”
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Hmm...”	John 10:11, 14: “...the good shepherd.”
	<u>John</u>	“I love how God simply spoke and the world came into being.”	John 11:25: “...the resurrection and the life.”
	<u>Jesus</u>	“Yes. As David wrote, ‘By the word of the Lord...”	John 14:6: “...the way, the truth, and the life.”
	<u>Together</u>	“...the heavens were made.” (See Note 2—Psalm 33:1-6 , p. 29)	John 15:1-5: “...the vine.”
	<u>John</u>	“You know, the Greeks use ‘word’ to describe divine reason...” [The scene suddenly shifts to the older John from the Cold	But wait. There’s MORE.
			John 18:1-6: “Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. ² Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³ So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. ⁴ Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” ⁵ They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground.”

	<p><i>Open, pondering how he will start his recollection.]</i> “...what gives the world form and meaning.” (See Note 3—Logos, p. 29)</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “I like that. And it is a favorite memory.” <i>[Jesus begins to take up the first scroll, what we would know as Genesis.]</i></p> <p><i>[Jesus makes his way to the podium, in Hebrew “the bimah,” and begins to uncover the scroll. Melech* and his family enter.]</i></p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “A reading from the first scroll of Moses. ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...’</p> <p><i>[As Jesus reads, we hear the older John from the Cold Open beginning to write his Gospel, even as we see the young John listening to Jesus read.]</i></p> <p><u>John</u> “In the beginning was the Word.”</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “And the earth was void, and without form...”</p> <p><u>John</u> “And the Word was with God...”</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “...and darkness covered the face of the deep.”</p> <p><u>John</u> “...And the Word was God.”</p> <p><u>Jesus</u> “And God said, ‘Let there be light: and there was light.’”</p>	<p>WHY would the men there to arrest Jesus suddenly <i>fall to the ground</i>?! Unless they are in the very presence of I AM.</p> <p>2. Note 2—Psalm 33:1-6</p> <p><i>Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright. ²Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings. ³Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. ⁴For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. ⁵He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. ⁶By the word of the LORD the heavens were made and all their host by the breath of his mouth. ⁷He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses.</i></p> <p>3. Note 3—Logos: The word John references here is the Greek word <i>logos</i>, translated into English as “word.” But it’s a much, MUCH bigger concept than merely a spoken or written “word,” as he tells Jesus, “<i>The Greeks use ‘word’ to describe divine reason, what gives the world form and meaning.</i>” Noting God creating “In the beginning” by speaking “a word,” John’s initial claim—his Beginning—is that the same word, the Logos, “<i>the divine reason that gives the world form and meaning</i>” and has taken on flesh and blood in Jesus.</p>
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	<p><u>John</u> “He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.”</p>	
	<p><u>Jesus</u> “God called the light Day, and the dark Night.” <i>[The younger John, there in the synagogue at Sychar begins to weep.]</i></p>	
	<p><u>John</u> “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”</p> <p><i>[Thunder rolls.]</i></p>	

ISRAEL AT THE TIME OF JESUS

1ST CENTURY AD



For discussion:

1. In the Cold Open of Season 2, Episode 1, Simon seems to be addressing us, the viewers of the story: *“The first time? You know the first time, you were there.”* While in the reality of the episode, he’s actually apparently being interviewed by John, who is beginning to assemble what they have encountered.

What is the earliest memory YOU have of an encounter, through faith, with Jesus? What is it about Jesus that is so important to you?

What is it about Jesus you would want someone else to know? WHO IS that “someone else” in your life you wish knew Jesus like you have come to know Jesus? What is it that can be difficult about having these conversations?

2. In the Cold Open, as John and Mary the Mother of Jesus are reflecting on Jesus’ ministry, their relationship with Him, and what it is John will be writing in memory of Jesus, they both remember some of what Jesus said, at one point reciting together Jesus’ words recorded by Matthew: *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away”* (24:35).

What are some words or elements of the Gospels’ recollections of Jesus that stick in your heart and mind?

3. As with the final episode of Season 1 from this past Fall (“I Am He”—this is the one where we saw (a) the dinner party at Matthew’s house with “tax collectors (publicans) and sinners” that was interrupted by the Pharisees (Matthew 9:10-13) and (b) Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4)) more than once this episode lifts up the hostility between the Jews and Samaritans of Jesus’ day.

Who would say are “the Samaritans” in our current context? What fuels the hostility toward and rejection of these people?

How would you describe Jesus’ “technique” toward both his interactions with Samaritans and his interactions with his disciples and their baked-in prejudice toward Samaritans? How does this impact the way you might think about, let alone interact with those you named as “the Samaritans” in our context?

4. In the scene where Simon is buying wine in the marketplace in Sychar, the vintner, who has indicated her belief in Jesus as the Anointed One, ends up throwing in a 4th skin of wine “On the house. Anything for Him.”

Can you compose some thoughts—a theology—about faith and responsive stewardship?

5. In his exchange with the imagined character Melech the Samaritan (the man with the broken leg whose field Big James and John ploughed and planted and with whom Jesus and the Disciples share a meal), Jesus says this in response to Melech's confession about who he is: *"This is what we Jews do... we tell and listen to stories. Our stories connect us. Tell me your story."*

Find someone in the room whom you do not know very well. Tell each other your stories, focusing on these three points:

- (1) your earliest recollection of faith or faith practice (i.e., worship or prayer or reading the Bible or service, etc.)
- (2) An important person (or persons) in your faith or practice—a relative; a friend; a pastor; a teacher; etc.
- (3) A key moment when your faith/practice mattered or impacted you deeply.

6. While staying at *Neria's house in Sychar, we see and hear Jesus, Big James, and John awaken to pray first thing in the morning:

"I am thankful before You, living and enduring King, for you have mercifully restored my soul within me. Great is your faithfulness."

(Interestingly enough, there is a whole school of neurological study on the effects of gratitude on human mental health.)

It's not the first time we've seen Jesus keep this practice—in Season 1, Episode 3, "Jesus Loves the Little Children," we saw Him pray before going to sleep at his campsite outside of Capernaum: "Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings sleep to my eyes, that I lie down in peace and arise in peace."

Similarly, we have seen Jesus slip away for solitude and prayer at numerous points throughout the story.

What are some of your daily faith practices—prayer, devotion, etc.—that sustain you in daily life?

Do you find moments of quiet (no radio; no phone; certainly no TV) and solitude? What does that look like for you?

What would it look like to adopt such daily practice—perhaps as a resolution for the new year?