

THE CHOSEN

Episode #201

"Thunder"

written by

Ryan M. Swanson &
Dallas Jenkins &
Tyler Thompson

PINK Draft

September 28, 2020

TEASER

FADE IN ON:

SIMON -- whoa, is that him? He's older. 30s but still Simon. Seated.

100

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE

100

SIMON

The first time? You know the first time. You were there.

MAN (O.S.)

Humor me.

SIMON

I was out on Andrew's old sloop. I'd had a bad night. At first, I didn't even know it was Him. You remember? I thought He was a Roman, about to ruin my life.

MAN (PRE-LAP)

What happened next?

THOMAS (30s), reflects --

THOMAS

It was at a moment when I thought my career and my reputation were about to be destroyed.

NATHANIEL -- Someone we haven't met yet. 30s, charismatic.

NATHANIEL

Phillip just said "Come and see." And I did. And I don't know how to describe it other than...he knew me before he knew me.

THADDEUS -- again, aged a bit. Still youthful features with salt and pepper hair. In deep reflection --

THADDEUS

He was just sitting there, eating lunch with the other construction workers, cracking jokes.

LITTLE JAMES (O.S.)

I was on my w--

PAN TO FIND -- LITTLE JAMES (30s), pauses with emotion.

LITTLE JAMES (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. All of this is hard to talk about. It reminds me of how much I miss him.

MAN (O.S.)
But we have to.

LITTLE JAMES
I know. And I tell others about him every day. It's just different with all of you.

ANDREW -- older -- half-smiles at a memory --

ANDREW
I was standing next to John the Baptizer--

Simon pokes his head into the frame.

SIMON
Creepy John.

ANDREW
(pushing Simon away)
--and He literally just walked by. Like out of nowhere. And John freaked out and said, **Behold!**

SIMON (O.S.)
I am eating a new bug.

Andrew rolls his eyes.

MARY, still radiant, but with the crow's feet and countenance of someone that's known loss -- and survived.

MARY MAGDALENE
It was in a tavern. He set his hand on my mine. Which, isn't what it sounds like. Maybe leave that part out. It will confuse people.

MAN (O.S.)
I don't know yet what I'll be including.

MATTHEW is aged, too. With a full, unkempt beard. His clothes are rags. But he looks healthy, in good spirits.

MATTHEW

It was the fourth morning in the third week of the month of Adar, some time during the second hour.

MAN (O.S.)

It doesn't have to be precise.

MATTHEW

Why wouldn't it need to be precise? Mine will be precise.

MARY MOTHER (50s) deep in thought. Suddenly looks to someone OFF.

MARY MOTHER

My answer might not make sense.

MAN (O.S.)

Try me, Mother.

MARY MOTHER

I can hardly remember a time I didn't know Him.

(shrugs, then recalls)

There was one little kick...

101 INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

101

TWO SHOT of JOHN and MARY MOTHER across a table. John taking notes on a tablet.

It's been JOHN'S VOICE we've been listening to.

JOHN

Go on.

MARY MOTHER

My son...why are you doing all this? Why now?

JOHN

Because we're getting older, and our memories --

MARY MOTHER

I mean why NOW...during shiva...

JOHN

Because everyone is here. I need to get their memories --

MARY MOTHER

You need to mourn your brother.

A pause.

JOHN

He won't be the last of us this happens to. Who knows when I'll 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.

MARY MOTHER

Isn't Matthew going to write something?

JOHN

He's only writing what he saw, or what Jesus told him directly. I was there for things Matthew doesn't know about. I was in his inmost circle.

(a beat)

He loved me.

MARY MOTHER

He loved all of you. You just feel the need to talk about it all the time.

(a beat)

I prefer to treasure these things in my heart. You know that if you tried to write every single thing He did, the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

JOHN

Oh, a disclaimer. That's good. I'm gonna say that.

(he scribbles)

If I don't write these things down, Mother, they'll be lost to history. James would agree.

Mary SEES his determination. SIGHS --

MARY MOTHER

Where will you start?

JOHN
 In the beginning. Naturally...
 I'm just not sure which beginning.

John chews the end of his REED QUILL.

MARY MOTHER
 His birth?

JOHN
 Earlier.

MARY MOTHER
 His ancestry?

JOHN
 No, I'm sure Matthew has that
 covered.

MARY MOTHER
 Maybe the prophecies? The promise
 to Abraham?

JOHN
 I thought about starting with
 Abraham. But still so much came
 before him.

MARY MOTHER
 What was before Abraham?

JOHN
 Noah.

MARY MOTHER
 And before him?

JOHN AND MARY MOTHER
 A Garden.

MARY MOTHER
 You could start there.

JOHN
 But I want it known that he's more
 than what has been seen or touched.
 What was before the Garden?
 "In the beginning, the earth was
 formless and void..."

Gently, a LOW RUMBLE of thunder sounds in the distance. It
 thunders again, louder. They look at each other.

MARY MOTHER

I can't hear it without thinking of
you two.

JOHN

I can't believe how much he put up
with.

Rain falls, pattering the window ledge. Emotional.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Others...they won't remember the
sound of his voice. They'll just
be words.

MARY MOTHER

He said they weren't just words.
Remember? "Heaven and earth will
pass away--

JOHN AND MARY MOTHER

"But my words will never pass
away."

MARY MOTHER

They're eternal.

Thunder CRACKS again. John looks at the window, and Mary
looks at him with sadness. She stands, steps to him, and
kisses his head.

MARY MOTHER (CONT'D)

You'll think of something. But
take your time. I'm off to bed.

John hugs her, almost absentmindedly, and stares at the
window as we --

*

END TEASER

ACT ONE

102 FADE IN ON: 102

CREDIT SEQUENCE:

XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX

DISSOLVE TO:

103 EXT. FARM - DAY 103

Big James DRAGS the harrow behind him with a rope around his chest, tilling the soil.

In the area he has already tilled, John is furrowing rows and planting seeds. Both are drenched in sweat.

JOHN

I'd rather clean out the hold after a long weekend.

JAMES

Yuck. You'd reek for a month. I'd rather mend every hole in abba's sails.

JOHN

And probably sew your hands together in the process.

(a beat. The clincher --)

I'd rather wrestle a swordfish.

JAMES

Just get in the water with it?

JOHN

I meant on a hook. But I'd snatch it out of the water with my hands if it means not spending a night with these people.

JAMES

You know it has a sword on its face, yeah?

JOHN

We lucked out, brother. Planting this field while the others try to keep up with Rabbi in Sychar.

JAMES

He'll be okay, right? Anyway, it wasn't luck. He chose us.

(re seeds)

You're going two thumbs deep?

JOHN

Yeah, yeah. Rows three handbreadths apart. Why do you think He did that?

JAMES

We're good workers. And maybe He knows we don't like Samaritans.

John thinks about it for a moment.

JOHN

Maybe Jesus just likes us best.

BIG JAMES

Yes, that must be it.

JOHN

Why **do** you think he likes me best?

JAMES

Maybe for the reasons I like you best -- because you pose no threat to anyone, intellectually or physically.

JOHN

Thanks, man.

(a beat, thinks)

Wait--

JAMES

What I wanna know is who are we planting it for? He said it'll feed generations.

JOHN

I assume travelers. People passing through like us.

(in Jesus' voice)

Hospitality isn't just for those with homes, John.

JAMES

Don't quit your day job.

JOHN

Too late for that.

JAMES
 (slaps his forehead)
 Me, too. Let's pick it up. I
 don't wanna lose my new gig.

As they furrow and plant --

104

EXT. SAMARITAN ROAD - DAY

104

THOMAS, RAMAH, and Ramah's father, KAFNI, owner of the Kafni Vineyard on foot, pulling a DONKEY. Stopped at a fork in the road.

RAMAH
 Sychar is on the other side of the
 Mt. Ebal.

THOMAS
 And the map says to go southward
 along the east side.

RAMAH
 (indicating map)
 It could be this fork, taking us
 down toward Shiloh.

KAFNI
 But this left could be too early.

THOMAS
 That's a theory. It's a fact that
 we have to veer south because if we
 keep going westward, we'll
 encounter the hostile city of
 Sebaste.

KAFNI
 It's faster to go between Mt.
 Gerizim and Mt. Ebal.

THOMAS
 But more dangerous.

RAMAH
 Not if we avoid the cities.

THOMAS
 There's no avoiding cities on a
 road. That's what roads do, they
 connect cities.

KAFNI

You're not taking my daughter off-road.

THOMAS

Kafni, I've given you my word that I will protect Ramah from harm.

KAFNI

Can you even protect yourself?

THOMAS

With due respect--

KAFNI

You are walking **toward** Samaria to find a group of men you don't know--

RAMAH

And a woman.

KAFNI

--a woman who would be with a group of men. Do not talk back to me, young lady. This is all ludicrous.

RAMAH

(pointing OFF)

Maybe they know the way.

A group of SAMARITAN WOMEN have stopped washing clothes in a creek to gawk.

THOMAS

Shalom.

The WOMEN are too flabbergasted to respond.

Two teen boys approach menacingly from farther down the creek.

BOY #1

Hey! What are you doing talking to our mother, Jew?!

Thomas' surprise turns to concern, he steps in front of Rhama. Kafni shakes his head and the three of them hustle on.

105 INT. INN - MORNING

105

The disciples are gathered in a hostel-like INN on the main square. Simon enters with an update for Andrew, Little James, Mary Magdalene, and Matthew.

SIMON

Thaddeus counted 50 in the square,
with more arriving every minute.
Is Jesus ready?

ANDREW

He's in the back store room.

MARY MAGDALENE

He needed a moment alone.

SIMON

But there are many begging to hear
more.

LITTLE JAMES

He's been talking to people since
dawn. He needs a break.

ANDREW

(pouring a pitcher)
I'll take him more water.

MARY MAGDALENE

I thought most people had left
after the first sermon.

SIMON

They left to go get their relatives
and friends and now they're back
threefold.

Matthew pushes beads on an abacus.

MATTHEW

The population of Sychar is
approximately 2,000.

MARY MAGDALENE

Not including women and children.

MATTHEW

There are 12 hours of light per day
at this time of year.

Simon rolls his eyes.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

--and he said we would stay here
two days, which means over 24 hours
the number of **men** we need to reach
per hour is 83.333...

(looking up, blinking
wildly)

3333--

SIMON

What is .33 of a man, Matthew?

ANDREW

Simon.

SIMON

There's a crowd growing out there,
and we need to decide what to do.

MARY MAGDALENE

Why don't we just tell him the
situation and let him decide?

LITTLE JAMES

It's what he's going to do anyway.

ANDREW

(taking the cup of water)

I'll tell him.

Matthew looks up from his abacus.

MATTHEW

How many stadia wide is the city?

Simon turns to the group with a look. ***This guy.***

106

INT. STORE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

106

ANDREW

I brought you more water and to see
how--

Andrew steps through the curtain into the room when he stops
short. The room is empty.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Rabbi?

Rushing to the back door --

107 INT. INN - CONTINUOUS

107

MATTHEW

It will give us a rubric for how many square cubits we need to cover per hour.

SIMON

Rubrics. Cubits per hour.

MATTHEW

His ministry deserves careful thought.

SIMON

No one is thinking about it more carefully than me.

Andrew bursts in.

ANDREW

He's gone.

SIMON

What are you talking about?

ANDREW

He's not in the store room, or anywhere the house. I checked the alley.

SIMON

We LOST him!?

ANDREW

He's probably not lost--

SIMON

We have to go. James, you search the southern side. Andrew and I will search the north.

(to Mary)

Tell Thaddeus to keep an eye on the crowd.

MATTHEW

What about me?

SIMON

Stay here in case he comes back.

Everyone mobilizes. Everyone turns their separate ways. Leaving Matthew alone. Mary stops a moment.

MARY MAGDALENE

I'll be back soon, and I won't be far.

MATTHEW

(on the bright side)
Staying here gives me the greatest likelihood of locating Jesus first.

MARY MAGDALENE

Well there you go.

108 EXT. MARKETPLACE - DAY 108

Andrew and Simon dash through the market asking VENDORS along the way.

SIMON

Have you seen the teacher from Galilee?

ANDREW

The man who arrived here yesterday and was in the square?

SIMON

My master, he's about yay high, beard, curly hair to here, big eyes.

110 EXT. MARKETPLACE - SAME 110 *

Little James asks a FRUIT SELLER. *

LITTLE JAMES *

The one called Jesus of Nazareth. *

Has he passed this way? *

She shakes her head. *

109 EXT. NORTHERN RESIDENCES - SAME 109

Simon and Andrew approach a VINTNER at a wine stand. *

SIMON

You wouldn't happen to have seen the teacher up this way?

VINTNER *

He passed by earlier. *

ANDREW
The teacher?

*

VINTNER

*

The Chosen-Media Valet

Yes, but is he going to be back in
the town square?

*
*

ANDREW

He's on an errand. Where did he go?

*
*

VINTNER

Down towards that alley.
(indicating another
vendor)

*
*
*
*
*

I was about to go see him again and
bring him. He's not teaching again?

SIMON

He'll be there, he'll teach more,
you won't be disappointed.

The brothers run off, leaving the Vintner bewildered.

*

111 EXT. STREET - CART - CONTINUOUS

111

JESUS lies on his back under a cart. He tightens something
with a wrench.

A heavysset grain miller named TZURI kneels, watching.

*

The Chosen-Media Valet

JESUS
There. All tightened up.

TZURI
So it WAS the axle. I told my
brother it was the axle.

JESUS
Sometimes all you need is a fresh
set of eyes. Hand me some pitch,
and it'll be good as new.

Tzuri goes to a tar bucket.

TZURI
You're good at this. You should
stay in town and open up a shop.

JESUS
Should I?

He looks up at the underside of the cart, crossing his hands
on his chest and musing freely --

JESUS (CONT'D)
A shop.

PHOTINA (O.S.)
Rabbi!

Jesus and Tzuri TURN to find Photina and TWO SAMARITAN WOMEN
at the corner of the alley.

PHOTINA (CONT'D)
(to someone off)
Quickly! Get the others!

Tzuri is amused.

TZURI
That woman is going to introduce
you to every Samaritan in the
country.

Off Jesus' reassuring look --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

112 INT. INN - DAY

112

Matthew sits in the inn's common area, fidgeting.

Mercifully, there's A KNOCK on the door from OFF SCREEN. He hustles to it, opens the door to find --

THOMAS

Shalom.

MATTHEW

Shalom.

Thomas is confused, uncertain.

THOMAS

I don't know you.

MATTHEW

Maybe you're in the wrong place.

THOMAS

We're looking for Jesus.

MATTHEW

Everyone is.

Matthew closes the door on Thomas. He then hears:

MARY MAGDALENE (O.S.)

Oh, you're here!

Matthew opens the door again, and Mary has arrived.

MARY MAGDALENE (CONT'D)

Thomas and Ramah, yes?

RAMAH

Yes. Mary?

MARY MAGDALENE

Good memory.

(hugging)

So good to have you.

Thomas bows to Mary and gives Matthew a side eye.

THOMAS

It's good to see you again, Mary.
This is Ramah's father, Kafni.

Kafni offers a curt bow and wanders inside, examining the place. He eyeballs Matthew but says nothing.

RAMAH

Where is everyone?

MARY MAGDALENE

They're out looking for Jesus.

THOMAS

Is he lost?

MARY MAGDALENE

He's never lost. He probably just needed a moment. The townspeople have been clamoring to see him, he's been changing many hearts.

THOMAS

I know how that works. So, your friend wasn't just being rude.

Matthew grimaces, about to take issue --

MARY MAGDALENE

Thomas, this is Matthew. Matthew, Thomas.

Thomas goes to shake his hand. Touching isn't Matthew's thing. Even if it were --

MATTHEW

You approached a strange home and when the occupant answered you said I don't know you. Is that being rude?

Thomas looks to the others. ***This guy.*** To Mary --

THOMAS

We had a brutal journey. It wasn't easy to find this place and the Samaritans... I thought we'd be torn apart.

MATTHEW

Samaritans and Jews are historical enemies.

THOMAS

I'm aware. We knew the journey would be fraught but...it's like He's actively trying to make it difficult to follow Him.

KAFNI

I'd have come just to thank Him for saving the reputation of my vineyard -- and your careers. Not that you care about those.

Anyway...

THOMAS

I'm glad we found you, at least. But why aren't you--

MATTHEW

I stayed. It's most likely that He'll return to the last place He was seen.

THOMAS

--a little farther from the city, is what I was going to say. But what do you base that on? Isn't it most likely that he's gone on to his next appointment?

MATTHEW

He does not keep a schedule.

THOMAS

Perhaps I can be helpful as an organizer, then. I'm good with figures, times. Precision is my specialty.

Matthew is about to crawl out of his skin when Big James and John ENTER.

The brothers smile at the sight of Thomas and Ramah.

BIG JAMES

Ah, you made it!

JOHN

Good to see you again, glad you're here.

The men embrace. John winces. Thomas pulls back, soaked in the brothers' sweat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It was a long day.

The enthusiastic greeting is not lost on Matthew.

113 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY 113

Jesus teaches a crowd while standing on a makeshift stage of four downturned wooden crates.

JESUS

Think of it this way -- do we have
any sheep herders in the crowd?

A YOUNG SHEPHERD pipes up --

SHEPHERD

I am.

114 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 114

Little James approaches a group of people gathered at the edge of the town square. Then he SEES Thaddeus standing with Andrew and Simon, just arrived, watching the same group.

They converge. From the edge of the crowd, SEE --

115 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS 115

JESUS

Welcome! It's an honor to have you
here. I have a special place in my
heart for shepherds. Who is with
your flock now?

SHEPHERD

My brother. We're taking turns.

JESUS

How many sheep?

SHEPHERD

One hundred, teacher.

JESUS

Say one of them goes missing. What
would you do? *

SHEPHERD

I'd go look for it, of course.

JESUS

Of course? What about the other
99?

SHEPHERD

I'd have to leave them, I can't
lose the one sheep.

JESUS

And if you find it?

SHEPHERD

I would lay it on my shoulders and
bring it home. And would probably
do a little dance.

The Shepherd gets caught up in the excitement of the
scenario. Others LAUGH.

JESUS

And what would you say to your
friends who were worried for you?

SHEPHERD

"Rejoice with me, I've found my
lost sheep!"

*

JESUS

(to all)

Do you see? He rejoices over that
one sheep more than over the ninety-
nine that never went astray. So it
is not the will of my Father who is
in heaven that one of these little
ones should perish. In the same
way, 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.

*

116 EXT. NEDIM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

116

Jesus continues teaching while Photina's fifth husband,
NEDIM, listens from his second-floor window on the town
square.

117 EXT. TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

117

Thaddeus, Andrew, Simon, and Little James look on.

ANDREW

Look at them.

SIMON

You couldn't tell Jew from
Samaritan the way they're
listening.

118 EXT. FARM - DUSK

118

The field has been transformed. The ground is cleared of rocks, black soil evenly tilled for acres, seeds planted.

A man we will come to know as MELECH (30s), hobbles into view. He walks with a crutch. One leg immobilized in a wooden splint. He stands frozen at the sight.

Melech's mind can't grasp what his eyes behold. He wipes the sweat from his brow, as if it'll clear up the confusion.

Melech stares out at the field when his eyes suddenly well up with tears until they spill out.

OVER PRELAP BOISTEROUS CHATTER --

119 INT. INN - NIGHT

119

Jesus, Andrew, Simon, Little James, and Thaddeus return to the inn, spirits high.

THADDEUS

Did you see the woman and her
little girl though?

OVERLAPPING. Ad-libbed, emotional praise.

SIMON

I always get emotional.

ANDREW

You think you won't and then--

Thomas hops up excitedly.

THOMAS

Shalom.

SIMON

You came through! You made it!

JESUS

Of course he did!

Jesus embraces Thomas.

THOMAS
You remember Ramah?

JESUS
How could I forget? You will join us, also?

RAMAH
Well...Rabbi, this is my father, Kafni.

JESUS
Oh yes, the owner of the vineyard that produced such fine wine for my friends! Shalom!

Kafni nods, they shake hands.

KAFNI
Very kind of you of you to say.

JESUS
I imagine you want to speak with me, yes?

KAFNI
If you have some time, I would like to ask some questions, and --

JESUS
Of course, you wouldn't be a good father if you didn't. Here's what I'd like to do, if you approve...we've both had long days, and there are available rooms in this establishment for you. Let's get some rest, and tomorrow we can talk about everything, good?

KAFNI
I, um...I suppose...we could --

JESUS
It's a plan, thank you. We're delighted you're with us. If you will all excuse me for a moment, I must go speak with two men who performed a truly remarkable act of service today.

He sneaks a quick look of "It's going to be okay" at Thomas and Ramah.

Simon steps forward protectively. Andrew right behind him.

SIMON
Let us escort you Rabbi.

JESUS
If you like.

Jesus enters the kitchen. All follow. Jesus stops.

JESUS (CONT'D)
We've arrived.

With confusion, ALL follow Jesus' eyes to -- John and Big James. Huge plates of food before them. Stuffing their faces.

Suddenly aware of the crowd, John FREEZES, nudges James.

BIG JAMES
(mouth full)
What happened?

JESUS
I was just telling the others that you did remarkable work today. You must be famished.

John and Big James eyes are wide as saucers. They shrug --

JOHN
Yeah, we're pretty hungry.

JESUS
Eat. Restore your strength. When you're done, please describe the work to the others.
(to the disciples)
I hope every one of you will take note of what John and Big James did here. Good night.

Jesus exits, leaving the group STARING at John and James. The brothers can barely contain their surprised smiles.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

120 EXT. SYCHAR STREET - MORNING

120

John and Big James are flanked by Simon and Mary on either side. The rest of the disciples trailing behind.

John slices pieces of an apple with a knife.

Matthew talks to Andrew aside.

MATTHEW

Where are we going?

ANDREW

I dunno anymore than you. Jesus gave them an errand and said to come with.

(off Matthew's look)

I don't get it either.

MATTHEW

They described moving stones and digging. They're now leaders?

ANDREW

(shrugs)

I don't know. Didn't sound all that much harder than fishing, but...

MATTHEW

I have never performed hard labor.

ANDREW

Guess you'll have to tag along like the rest of us.

Andrew picks up his pace to catch up with --

Simon talks with Thomas. Mary and Ramah follow closely.

SIMON

The list of things He might do is long. First, there's a leper colony to the west and they are begging you to come.

MARY

They're not allowed into the city, so they have no way to hear Him.

ANDREW

Both Jewish and Samaritan purity laws forbid coming with 4 cubits of a leper.

BIG JAMES

(sotto)

What distance are we supposed to keep from these Samaritans?

JOHN

We've been within 4 cubits of a leper before, Andrew.

ANDREW

I'm just saying if He breaks their law it might cause a stir.

SIMON

And for dinner we've been invited to the home of the town treasurer. You hear that, Matthew? The Keeper of the Purse.

Simon turns to Matthew. He doesn't take the bait.

SIMON (CONT'D)

And we have to juggle that invitation with another to have dinner at the home of the high priest of Sychar, which could get messy.

THOMAS

Why messy?

ANDREW

Samaritan beliefs are so at odds with Jewish beliefs. He might want to trap Jesus in His words.

BIG JAMES

I don't think He's afraid of being trapped by His words.

ANDREW

I'm just saying...

MARY MAGDALENE

We could be somewhere else, with people who actually WANT to listen to Him, not argue.

MATTHEW

If He convinces the Rabbi of the town, His message would continue to be preached long after we leave this village.

SIMON

Let's leave it up to the boss, eh?
(to Thomas)
What do you think? Dinner with the Treasurer or the Priest?

JOHN

Neither.

THOMAS

Dinner with whom then?

SIMON

There are a lot of people who want to talk to Him.

JOHN

Yeah. But...He wants to make dinner.

Off the disciples puzzled looks --

BIG JAMES

That's the errand.

SIMON

That's the errand. You're really enjoying being in the know.

JOHN

Coming from you, Simon?

SIMON

What's that mean?

BIG JAMES

He told us His plans. So...
(shrugs)
Matthew, distribute money to each accordingly -- Thaddeus, buy bread. Enough for twelve people.

Matthew quickly sorts coins into his hands.

THADDEUS

Leavened, unleavened, rye,
sprouted, spelt?

JOHN
An assortment. Your choice.

SIMON
Twelve? Who are the others?

BIG JAMES
(ignoring Simon)
Little James, buy a leg of lamb,
including the knuckle and fillet
end. Make that two legs.

Matthew winces, pauses doling out coins.

MATTHEW
We only have--

JOHN
Andrew? Grapes, currants.
Cherries if you can find them.

MATTHEW
At this rate we won't have enough
for--

JOHN
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. Simon?

SIMON
(mocking)
But Master, what about--

JOHN
Three skins of wine.

SIMON
Done.

BIG JAMES
Matthew? Black pepper and chives.
Also salt and olive oil.

MATTHEW
At this cost, we will not make it
to Judea.

JOHN
Have faith, Matthew.
(off his look)
In *Him*. Mary? Look for leeks,
garlic, and onion.

John and Big James watch everyone depart. Simon hangs back.

SIMON

And what are you guys gonna get?

JOHN

We're gonna get outta the street.

SIMON

Why?

JOHN

Samaria's biggest problem...too many Samaritans.

Big James and John crack up. Simon shakes his head.

121

EXT. MARKETPLACE - MOMENTS LATER

121

Simon approaches the VINTNER.

SIMON

Hi again. Three skins of wine, please.

*

VINTNER

What kind?

SIMON

Red. Something with...cloves, I guess?

PHOTINA (O.S.)

Simon!

Simon turns to see Photina approaching.

PHOTINA (CONT'D)

There you are. I've been looking for all of you.

SIMON

Lucky you, we're all in this market.

PHOTINA

What are you doing? Is he going to teach here?

SIMON

Just shopping, if you can believe it.

PHOTINA
 (to Vintner)
 This man, he told --

PHOTINA AND VINTNER
 Me/you everything I/you ever did.

VINTNER
 We've heard Him for ourselves! And
 it's because of **His** words we
 believe He's the Anointed One. You
 don't have to keep telling us,
 Photina.
 (handing Simon the skins)
 Here.

SIMON
 This is four, I only need three.

VINTNER
 It's on the house. Anything for
 Him.

SIMON
 (Distracted)
 Thank you.

PHOTINA
 (extending small scroll)
 Simon, I need to deliver a message.

Simon's eyebrows raise when he sees the gold plating on the
 tiny scroll.

He carefully unspools it and reads silently. Looking at
 Photina --

SIMON
 Everyone?

PHOTINA
 Yes.

SIMON
 But there's ten of us.

PHOTINA
 Please.

Simon studies her.

122 INT. INN - MORNING

122

Ramah and Kafni are alone in the common kitchen area. Ramah is finishing up making a bowl a porridge and berries as Kafni waits.

KAFNI

What do you think he's doing? I just need a few moments with him.

RAMAH

He said it was a short walk, I'm sure he'll be here soon, Father.

KAFNI

I have things to say. You are lucky I even came all this way with you, I could have just decided no. I can't decide what Thomas does, he can make his own bad decisions, but you...I have things to say.

RAMAH

I know.

She sets the porridge and berries in front of him.

RAMAH (CONT'D)

And I'm very grateful.

KAFNI

Porridge. Soon you'll know every way possible to make it, because that's what you eat when you don't have a job or live with your family.

Jesus walks in.

JESUS

Kafni, good morning, thank you for your patience, I had a few people to meet before our important talk. Were you comfortable last night?

KAFNI

Yes, although I must say I didn't sleep very well.

JESUS

I know what it's like to be concerned about someone you are responsible for, but I am not a father, I imagine you must be nervous about all this.

KAFNI

(indicating next room)
Could we...

JESUS

Of course.

They step into the next room.

KAFNI

Allow me to first say why I am here. I want to thank you for whatever you did at the wedding. You kept the reputation of my business, and of my daughter and Thomas, from suffering. Ramah and Thomas have insisted that you performed a miracle. Now...I am an old man, I need to leave for my journey, and I do not have time to be unclear. I believe this to be on the edge of blasphemy, and I am not in the habit of believing a man from -- a man -- performed some miracle, and I am not in the habit of giving my blessing for my daughter to leave our home...but I am in your debt, and that is why we are in this room with you now.

JESUS

Thank you for your honesty.

KAFNI

I cannot give you my belief or my devotion, so I'm afraid my honesty is all I have left to give after giving up my daugh--

He stops, choking on his words.

JESUS

I understand. I ask a lot of those who follow me, but I ask little of those who don't.

KAFNI

I do not want to be rude, but I
have said all I want to say.

Jesus watches as Kafni walks back into the kitchen area,
where he approaches Ramah and takes her face in his hands.
They exchange a few words, he forces her to take some money,
they embrace again.

Kafni turns with Ramah and they walk out of the kitchen into
the room where Jesus is. As they walk by, Kafni looks
straight ahead, ignoring Jesus, and they exit as Jesus
watches sadly.

123

EXT. INN - CONTINUOUS

123

Thomas is waiting outside with a few of the disciples having
just returned. Some of them go inside as Thomas remains.

THOMAS

Kafni.

KAFNI

Thomas. It is time for me to go.
(to Ramah)
One more moment.

Kafni pulls Thomas aside.

KAFNI (CONT'D)

I have long admired you for your
hard work, and you have done well
in spite of the loss of your
father. But this is foolishness,
and I won't pretend it isn't. I
will see you next when you ask for
my daughter's hand--

Thomas freezes, starts to protest.

KAFNI (CONT'D)

No, I'm not stupid. You may be,
but I am not. But when that day
comes, I don't know what I'll say.
Keep her safe.

Before Thomas can speak, Kafni turns to both of them.

KAFNI (CONT'D)

Shalom.

He leaves. Thomas and Ramah look at each other.

124 EXT. FIELD - AFTERNOON

124

Jesus and the disciples stand at the edge of the field John and Big James planted. A low whistle of approval.

JESUS

This is some expert work, my boys.
Exceptional.

BIG JAMES

You should have seen this place.
Weeds and branches piled
everywhere.

JOHN

We cleared and sowed it in a single
afternoon.

ANDREW

So you've told us.

Jesus claps them on the back with a laugh as he takes in the field. The brothers puff up.

125 EXT. MELECH'S FARM - SUNSET

125

Jesus leads the disciples up to a dilapidated farm house.

SIMON

What are we doing here, Rabbi?

JESUS

This is where we're dining.

John turns to Big James, incredulous.

JOHN

Someone lives here?

Melech, the hobbled man we saw earlier break down at the edge of his field staggers toward them.

JESUS

You must be Melech.

MELECH

I am. You're the teacher?

JESUS

I'm Jesus of Nazareth. These are
my students.

MELECH

I believe I owe you a debt of gratitude. I'd bow but, as you can see--

JESUS

It's John and Big James there that put in the sweat.

BIG JAMES

You own the field?

MELECH

I do.

John and James share a look. **A Samaritan?**

JOHN

We...thought it was for travelers.

Melech clears his throat. Turns to Jesus --

MELECH

So spit it out. What's the catch?

JESUS

Catch?

MELECH

You don't know me from Adam. You're a Jew. You come here all the way from Galilee to preach in town. You send your students out here to work my land.

JESUS

Photina told us you were in need.

MELECH

Mm. And she told me all about you. So, what do you want from me?

Jesus looks for words.

MELECH (CONT'D)

I don't have any money. I can't make a donation to your ministry. Can't even feed my family.

JESUS

That's what I want.

MELECH

What?

JESUS

I'd love for you to share a meal
with me and my friends.

MELECH

I'm really, so very sorry, but we
don't have any food. Not even for
ourselves.

The disciples hold up their ample supplies for a feast.

JESUS

We've got that covered. Please.
We would be honored.

MELECH

I don't know what to say.

JESUS

Don't say anything.

Melech is confounded.

126 EXT. MELECH'S FARM - NIGHT

126

Night has fallen and the group is seated around the fire
outside, finishing their meal.

Melech's wife, CHEDVA (20s), and daughter, REBECCA (7), sit
at his side.

SIMON

The net strained so hard I thought
my arms would come out of their
sockets.

ANDREW

And James and John took their sweet
time coming to help us.

Andrew turns to John and Big James with a chuckle. The
brothers don't return the gesture. Withdrawn and bothered.

SIMON

I had to call for help five times
before you moved.

John picks up his uneaten plate and exits.

MELECH

And so you followed him. All the
way into Samaria.

MATTHEW

We did suggest the alternate route
along the Jordan.

MELECH

You didn't think it could
be...dangerous? For you?

Chedva shoots Melech a forbidding look. Jesus stares into
Melech's eyes.

JESUS

Of course.

Chedva clears her throat.

CHEDVA

When I was a little girl, my father
told me the Messiah would bring an
end to pain and suffering. If you
are who people are saying you are,
when will you do that?

The faces of the disciples glow in the firelight. They're
interested in the answer themselves.

JESUS

I am 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. In this
world, bones will still break,
hearts will still break, but in the
end, light will overcome darkness.

From a seat apart from the others, John mouths silently,
"light will overcome darkness."

JESUS (CONT'D)

Speaking of broken bones, what's
the story?

MELECH

I fell off a horse.

Chedva looks apprehensive. Jesus looks around innocently.

JESUS

I didn't see a pasture...

MELECH
It wasn't mine.

JESUS
Ah. A friend's horse, maybe?

MELECH
Not...exactly.

JESUS
Oh.

Melech looks deeply pained.

MELECH
Look, you've done so much for me
that I didn't deserve...and...

His eyes search around and eventually uncomfortably land on Rebecca. Chedva and Jesus follow his gaze. Chedva gets up.

CHEDVA
Come Rebecca, time for bed. Say
goodnight to your new friends.

REBECCA
Good night.

ALL respond in kind.

Chedva leads Rebecca away to the house. Melech struggles silently.

MELECH
If you knew who I am you would
never have helped me.

JESUS
That's not true.

Melech makes an aggrieved sound. Jesus pats him on the shoulder.

JESUS (CONT'D)
This is what we Jews do...we tell
and listen to stories. Our stories
connect us.

Melech stares into the fire. His voice changes.

MELECH
We ran out of money.

A quiet sets over the group in the flickering light.

MELECH (CONT'D)

And food. My little Rebecca...I could see her ribs through her skin. And Chedva, her eyes turned gray. There had been a drought, and 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.

No one moves, but they can sense where this is going.

MELECH (CONT'D)

We attacked a Jew who was traveling alone. Pulled him down from his horse, took 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 Anatoth. I would ride north and sell the horse at a Roman outpost. But I wasn't on for ten minutes and she reared up, threw me, broke my leg. 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.

Jesus' eyes are filled with sorrowful compassion.

MELECH (CONT'D)

So now you know what you've done. The kind of man you've helped. Everyday I think about that Jew, naked and alone in the road, possibly dead. I could be a murderer.

They are all quiet.

JESUS

He didn't die.

Melech looks up.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Someone came along to help him.

Melech lets out something that is a combination of hope and scoffing, holding back tears.

JESUS (CONT'D)

I promise.

Melech looks around at the group.

MELECH

Why me? Why did you come all the way out here? Isn't everyone in town falling at your feet?

JESUS

The shepherd leaves the ninety and nine on the mountain to search for the one that went astray.

Melech wars with himself.

MELECH

What do you want?

JESUS

Believe my words. Return to synagogue. Search Torah.

MELECH

I never learned to read.

JESUS

Then listen to the Word read aloud, and open your heart to it. See what happens.

MELECH

And then what?

JESUS

(faint shrug)
Tell others.

Melech searches Jesus' face.

MELECH

You know the crime I committed. In cold blood. You'd help someone like me?

Jesus looks to Mary and Simon.

SIMON

He would.

Melech struggles.

JESUS

Sleep on it. We'll be in town one more day.

Chedva returns as the disciples begin to rise.

CHEDVA

She's asleep.

SIMON

We need to make our way back into town before it gets too late.

JESUS

(with a wink at Melech)
We never know what sorts of men might be lying in wait along the road.

Melech shakes his head.

JESUS (CONT'D)

(clapping his shoulder)
I'm sorry, too soon? Too soon, I know.

Melech chuckles in relief.

CHEDVA

You told them.

MELECH

(mystified)
I think he already knew.
(To the others)
Where are you staying?

SIMON

(holding up a the tiny gilded scroll)
I don't know; all I have is the address.

JESUS

(extending his arms)
May I?

But he was going to do it anyway. Jesus embraces Melech. Pulling back, he looks him in the eye:

JESUS (CONT'D)

Sleep well tonight, friend.

Melech holds his gaze. Eventually Jesus turns away and heads into the night with his friends.

Melech and Chedva watch them go, transfixed.

END ACT THREE

The Chosen-Media Valet

ACT FOUR

127 EXT. NEDIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

127

Simon and the group stand outside a big house, looking up at it awkwardly.

THADDEUS

You're sure this is it?

SIMON

This is the address I was given.

Simon musters himself and steps forward, knocks on the door. He steps back. Everyone fidgets as they wait. When the door opens, Nedim stands in the entry.

NEDIM

I'll be honest up front, I only have five extra bedrooms and two of them are drafty.

Photina appears behind him.

PHOTINA

Nedim, they usually sleep on the ground, I think they'll be fine.

SIMON

(to Nedim)

You're sure this isn't a problem?

NEDIM

I'm dying anyway, I don't need this house anymore. Where is Jesus?

Jesus lifts his hand.

NEDIM (CONT'D)

Well, you've certainly livened things up around here. Got me in a good mood just to fit in. Come in.

The group begins to enter as Nedim steps aside. As Jesus reaches the doorway --

NEDIM (CONT'D)

And one of the rooms is haunted. By my dead grandmother.

JESUS

Oooh. I'll take that one.

PHOTINA
Do you know who he is? He's not
afraid of ghosts.

ANDREW
(nervously through his
teeth)
I might be.

128 INT. REBECCA'S BEDROOM - SUNRISE 128

Rebecca wakes. She sits up from the mat and yawns, stretches, wipes her eyes when, from OFF, something SHATTERS.

129 INT. MELECH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 129

Melech's eyes suddenly bug out. He looks like he's about to projectile vomit.

CHEDVA
Melech?

Rebecca rushes into the room in time to see her father writhing on the floor.

CHEDVA (CONT'D)
(frightened)
What's wrong?

REBECCA
Abba?

Melech leaps up and backward. The girls SCREAM.

Melech stands on two strong, healthy legs. Melech falls to his knees on the bed and the family of three holds one another in a group hug, with tears of joy.

130 INT. NEDIM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING 130

Jesus opens his eyes from sleep with a smile, staring up at the ceiling from his mat. He chuckles contentedly.

Along the opposite wall in the narrow guest room, John props himself up on one elbow. Jesus chuckles again.

JOHN
What's so funny?

JESUS

Oh. I just...know of a family who's
having an unexpectedly good
morning.

John stares at him. Jesus mimes walking, using two fingers
across the floor. John lets out a short burst of air in
amazement. Big James rubs his eyes. A beat behind.

BIG JAMES

What's happening?

JOHN

You don't even have to be there to
perform miracles.

JESUS

Don't be so surprised, John. One
day you'll be given authority to do
the things I do. Even greater.

John and Big James are awed at the idea.

BIG JAMES

Wait, I'm sorry, can you say that
again?

Jesus laughs as the brothers stare in shock.

JESUS

What happened to you guys last
night at dinner? You were awfully
quiet.

The brothers share a surreptitious, guilty look. Jesus lets
it go.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Well. I'm ready for breakfast.

They all close their eyes. Jesus leads as the others follow
along quietly--

JESUS (CONT'D)

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

131 INT. NEDIM'S DINING ROOM - LATER

131

The group sits haphazardly on everything from chairs to the
floor to cushions.

SIMON

The invitation from the treasurer
stands.

ANDREW

And the priest.

The Chosen-Media Valet

JOHN
The priest is a high risk.

ANDREW
If he wants to fight over whose
Torah is better.

MATTHEW
But a great reward if he believes.

MARY MAGDALENE
Don't forget the leper colony.

Jesus gets up.

JOHN
Where are you going?

JESUS
For a walk.

SIMON
But we haven't made our plans yet.

JESUS
(on his way to the door)
Whatever the plans turn out to be,
I'm sure it will be a long day, and
I need some time alone.

BIG JAMES
(getting up)
You need protection.

JESUS
Enough with the protection, I'm
fine. I won't be long.

SIMON
But where can we find you?

JESUS
Seek and you will find.

Clink. The door shuts and he is gone.

SIMON
His riddles.

RAMAH
It didn't sound like a riddle to
me.

LITTLE JAMES

If you look for him you'll find him.

JOHN

That's not what I heard?

SIMON

Oh yeah? What'd you hear?

JOHN

I heard you looked and couldn't find him.

BIG JAMES

You guys lost him for practically the whole day, Matthew said.

Simon and Andrew shoot Matthew daggers.

SIMON

He goes where He wants, when He wants.

BIG JAMES

Yeah, well, we have to do better.

SIMON

Can you believe these guys? They dig in the mud and suddenly they're running the show.

JOHN

We just think we need some leadership, okay? Security concerns aside, we need a plan.

BIG JAMES

No matter what we decide to do today, the real question is where will go from here.

SIMON

We'll get to that.

JOHN

James and I have outlined a plan for the next month.

SIMON

Month?!

JOHN
Beginning with a stop at the
temple, his first appearance there
since performing public signs--

SIMON
Whoa, whoa, whoa.

BIG JAMES
A visit to the scribes at Qumran.

JOHN
Two days of preaching in Hebron.

SIMON
Hold on!

BIG JAMES
He said we were exceptional
planners.

LITTLE JAMES
I think he said planters.

JOHN
He applauded our execution.

SIMON
He sent you to the farm to teach
you a lesson.

BIG JAMES
And we made an impression.

ANDREW
Let's vote on it.

JOHN
Sure. Okay.

ANDREW
All in favor of John & Big James'
plan?

No one raises his hand...until Matthew. Probably to spite
Simon.

MATTHEW
I agree an agenda would be prudent.

MARY MAGDALENE
I'm not voting.

THOMAS

Me either.

JOHN

Why not?

THOMAS

New guy.

MARY MAGDALENE

It doesn't matter what I think He should do. **Or** what you think.

ANDREW

All opposed?

A few hands go up. Mostly people are just uncomfortable. Big James and John share a look. John shrugs.

JOHN

I'm sorry you feel that way. But I, for one, am not okay losing him for periods of time. I'm not okay arguing about where we're going every day.

THADDEUS

So don't argue.

The larger group returns to normal. John shakes his head in frustration and storms out. Big James follows after him.

132 I/E. NEDIM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

132

Big James chases John down.

BIG JAMES

Hey! Where are you going?

JOHN

I'm going to tell Jesus our plan.

BIG JAMES

The group said to leave it alone.

JOHN

They also said He makes His own decisions. So, let's let Him.

Big James is torn.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Why did he pick us to plant that field?

BIG JAMES

I'm starting to wonder about that. If I'd known it was a Samaritan's field--

JOHN

Come on. Jesus will sort it out.

Big James reluctantly follows.

133

EXT. NORTHWESTERN ROAD - LATER

133

John and Big James find Jesus outside the city.

JESUS

Couldn't wait, could you?

JOHN

We're sorry, we just wanted to clear a few things up, if that's okay.

Just as they are about to present their plan, a CARAVAN of SAMARITAN TRADERS approaches.

TRADER

You Jewish boys are a long way from home.

*

JESUS

Yes, as a matter of fact we are. Shalom to you, too.

TRADER

Here's our traditional Jewish greeting for you...

*

The Traders HURL rocks at Jesus. Miss. John and Big James stand in shock but quickly reconcile what they've seen.

Before the brothers can spring forward, Jesus thrusts an arm to the side, stopping them like a gate.

JESUS

Don't lift a finger.

TRADER

That was a warning.

*

BIG JAMES
Try it again, see what happens!

JESUS
Quiet, Big James.

Members of the caravan spit on James and John as they pass by.

JOHN
You filthy dogs!

JESUS
I said quiet!

The brothers practically shake with rage. When the caravan has passed and they have wiped their faces, John pivots so that his back is to the traders, his face close to Jesus'.

JOHN
(hissing)
Let us do something.

JESUS
And what would that achieve?

JOHN
Defending your honor.

BIG JAMES
They reviled and humiliated you.

JOHN
They deserve to have bolts of lightning rain down and incinerate them.

BIG JAMES
Yes, fire from heaven.

JESUS
Fire?

JOHN
You said we could do things like that. Say the word, and it will happen.

Jesus stares at them.

*

BIG JAMES

Why not? We knew we couldn't trust these people, we shouldn't have come here in the first place. They don't deserve you.

John's eyes search those of his master wildly. He clenches his fists, trying to contain a volcano of indignation.

Jesus reaches into his satchel, crumples up a garment, and gives it to John.

JESUS

Here.

John holds the garment to his own mouth and screams into it, muffled. Jesus takes it back.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Feel better now?

JOHN

I'd feel better if they got what they deserved.

Jesus shakes his head, then looks at them, some fire in his eyes.

JESUS

Why do you think I had you work Malech's field? What was I teaching you?

BIG JAMES

To help.

JESUS

You really think I was just teaching to be more helpful, or how to be better farmers?

Wasn't it?

JESUS (CONT'D)

It was to show you that what we're doing here will last for generations. What I told Photina at the well, and what she did by then telling so many others...it's sowing seeds that will have impact for lifetimes. Can you not see what's happening here?

(MORE)

*

JESUS (CONT'D)

These people you hate so much are believing in me without even seeing miracles...it's the message, the truth we're giving them. 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? They're not worthy? You're so much better, you're more worthy? Well, you're not...that's the whole point, it's why I'm here.

A long pause.

BIG JAMES

I'm sorry.

JOHN

Sorry, Rabbi.

JESUS

As we gather others, I need you to help show the way, to be humble.

BIG JAMES

We will.

Another pause.

JESUS

You wanted to use the power of God to bring fire from the sky to burn these people up?

JOHN

Well, it sounds worse when you say it that way.

Jesus chuckles.

JESUS

You two are like a storm on the sea.

He ruffles John's hair and slings both arms around them on either side as they walk back to town.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Thunder in your chests, exploding out of you at every turn. In fact, I think that's what I'll call you from now on -- James and John, the Sons of Thunder.

JOHN

Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

JESUS

Today it was not good. But strong passion can be a good thing, when channeled for righteousness. I just might have to delay giving you that authority we discussed earlier, or maybe in smaller doses until you calm down a bit.

Simon and the others approach. Simon can tell something went down.

SIMON

James, John, you look terrible. What happened?

JESUS

What happened is that James and John needed to be reminded that we are in Samaria to plant seeds, not burn bridges.

The brothers look sheepish.

SIMON

Master, we've brought a guest who asked to deliver an invitation to you personally.

GERSHON (60s) appears from the back of the group wearing vestments.

MATTHEW

Rabbi this is Gershon, the priest of Sychar.

JESUS

Ah, I've heard a lot about you.

GERSHON

And I've heard a lot about you. You have blessed this village beyond our deserving.

JESUS

(indicating the group)
The pleasure is all ours. To be here.

GERSHON

We've caught word today might be
your last day in Sychar.

JESUS

Word travels fast.

GERSHON

Won't you do us the great honor of
giving a reading from the scroll of
Moses, in our humble synagogue?

Jesus looks around the group, then at Gershon.

JESUS

Of course.

134 **INT. SYCHAR SYNAGOGUE**

134

The synagogue is overflowing. MEN are seated in the center, *
the WOMEN on risers at the back and on the sides.

Simon and Andrew work crowd control, helping people find
their seats.

At the threshold between men's and women's sections, Nedim is
with Photina, looking hesitant. She gently prods him
forward.

PHOTINA

Go on.

Nedim carefully joins the men, Simon helping him. The room
simmers with anticipation.

135 **INT. BETH MIDRASH - CONTINUOUS**

135

In the Torah study room, Gershon pulls back an elegant purple
curtain with gold trim to reveal the Torah scrolls.

GERSHON

Here they are, in proper order-

He indicates each one in succession, from right to left
(Hebrew reads right to left, so do numeric successions).
Their names are written in Hebrew characters above the
holding place of each scroll.

GERSHON (CONT'D)
 Beresheit (In the Beginning),
 Shemot (Names), Vakira (And He
 Called), Bamidbar (In the desert),
 and Devarim (Words). I'll leave
 you to make your selection in
 private.

JESUS
 Thank you.

Just as Gershon is exiting--

JESUS (CONT'D)
 Gershon,

GERSHON
 Yes, Rabbi?

JESUS
 Please send in my disciple John.

GERSHON
 Of course.

Gershon exits and John enters, looking hesitant and cautious.
 He closes the door behind him. Jesus indicates the scrolls.

JESUS
 The five books of Moses, and no
 more.

John stands by his side, looking at the scrolls.

JOHN
 They're missing out on so much.

JESUS
 They are. But we have to start
 somewhere.

The quiet hangs between them.

JESUS (CONT'D)
 What do you think I should read?

John exhales, thinking.

JESUS (CONT'D)
 Maybe...Moses striking the rock
 instead of speaking to it? Or
 Balaam hitting his donkey when he
 was mad?

John releases a relieved chuckle.

JOHN
Don't torment me.

JESUS
How about when Moses broke the tablets? Jonathan storming away from the dinner table, Samson striking down the men of Ashkelon, wait, they don't have those scrolls.

JOHN
I get it, I get it.

JESUS
(earnest)
I really am open to suggestions for the reading.

John sinks.

JOHN
I couldn't. After today, after yesterday, I don't feel much worthy.

JESUS
Who is worthy of anything?

JOHN
(careful)
You? But no man, apparently.

JESUS
I'm a man, John.

JOHN
And yet...

John strains, afraid to prod for more, but desperate. Jesus holds his gaze for a moment before turning back to look at the scrolls.

JESUS
I am who I am.

The words hang in the air. John is haunted and amazed. Finally, a muffled voice from the other side of the door cuts through --

137 INT. BETH MIDRASH - CONTINUOUS

137

Back on Jesus.

JESUS

I like that.

He reaches for the Beresheit scroll.

JESUS (CONT'D)

And it is a favorite memory.

He slides the first scroll out from its place.

138 INT. SYCHAR SYNAGOGUE - CONTINUOUS

138

Jesus emerges from the Beth Midrash with the scroll, and anticipation ripples through the crowd. Jesus proceeds to the podium.

As Jesus sets the scroll on the podium, a murmur of amazement from the crowd near the entrance pulls his attention. Melech, Chedva, and Rebecca enter, looking out of place.

Photina welcomes Chedva and Rebecca and pulls them to a spot next to her in the women's section. People whisper as they watch Melech proceed with no crutch to an empty seat in the men's section. He sits and locks eyes with Jesus.

Jesus beams at him, and Melech's eyes brim with emotion and expectation. Finally, it's time to get down to business --

JESUS

A reading from the first scroll of
Moses.

The room becomes very still. John watches Jesus.

JESUS (CONT'D)

(full volume)

In the beginning...

John watches and listens.

JESUS (CONT'D)

(half volume)

God created the heavens and the
earth.

JOHN (V.O.)

(full volume)

In the beginning was the Word.

JESUS

(Half)

The earth was without form and
void, and darkness was over the
face of the deep.

JOHN (V.O.)

(full)

And the Word was with God, and the
Word was God.

Jesus continues reading Genesis 1 at half volume and we
continue hearing John.

JOHN (V.O.)

He was in the beginning with God.
All things were made through Him,
and without Him was not anything
made that was made.

139

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE

139

Back where we started in the Cold Open, John continues
reading aloud from parchment. It's still raining outside.

JOHN

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.

From the open window where rain is pattering the sill, a soft
flash of light illuminates the room and thunder cracks. John
turns to the window and smiles as we-

CUT TO BLACK.