

THE CHOSEN

Episode #208

"Beyond Mountains"

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TEASER

800

EXT. ROCKY DESERT - DAY

800

A BUSINESSMAN (early 30s) and his APPRENTICE (early 20s) are in a tense negotiation with a landowner, HUSHAM (60s, very skinny) about ownership rights.

BUSINESSMAN

40 talents, and we'll let you keep the western ridge for whatever it is you love so much about it.

HUSHAM

It's a beautiful view of the sunrise.

BUSINESSMAN

You can't eat a sunrise.

HUSHAM

Believe me, I know. What's your lineage?

BUSINESSMAN

We're here to talk price, not family.

HUSHAM

This IS about my family. What tribe?

BUSINESSMAN

Simeon.

HUSHAM

These acres have been in the tribe of Reuben for forty generations, and I'm not about to surrender it to the little brother.

BUSINESSMAN

We can talk ancient birth order all you want, but it won't put a meal on your family's table.

HUSHAM

55 talents.

BUSINESSMAN

45, and we'll send in a team of servants to help you move.

HUSHAM

What could you possibly want with this land? It's all rock, nothing grows.

BUSINESSMAN

That's right, and things that do grow -- what happens to them?

HUSHAM

All things that grow?

BUSINESSMAN

Eventually--

HUSHAM

They die.

APPRENTICE

We're going to cut tombs into these rocks, for the middle class.

HUSHAM

All the way out here?

APPRENTICE

Only the wealthy can afford tombs close to the cities, and more and more of the middle class are dying deep in tax debt.

BUSINESSMAN

Left with no money for a proper burial, their families are forced to surrender their beloved to paupers' graves.

APPRENTICE

We're here to provide an affordable solution. Even if it's far away, it's better than a pit, entwined with other disintegrating bones.

HUSHAM

What's to stop me and my sons from carving tombs?

BUSINESSMAN

Why haven't you? Do you have the tools? The expertise? The capital to hire labor and dozens of stonecutters?

HUSHAM  
50 talents.

BUSINESSMAN  
47, final offer.

HUSHAM  
49. Suppose you find copper, or  
lead when you dig?

Businessman turns to walk.

BUSINESSMAN  
I said 47. You can contact me  
tomorrow if you change your mind.

Apprentice verbally grabs Businessman by the tunic as he's  
walking away.

APPRENTICE  
Wait. He has a point.

Businessman turns back.

APPRENTICE (CONT'D)  
The land could be worth more if  
there's something underneath, like  
he said. Copper or salt.

Businessman is visibly annoyed.

APPRENTICE (CONT'D)  
He's not wrong.

He lets out a frustrated, forced sigh.

BUSINESSMAN  
Our business has a reputation for  
doing things the right way. I'm  
willing to throw in a few more  
talents on the OFF CHANCE there's  
something valuable under all this  
rock.

HUSHAM  
It's all the Promised Land, no  
matter how it looks to you.

BUSINESSMAN  
49. More than ten years' wages,  
Husham. Let's draw up the  
covenants.

Husham also sighs. He turns around and takes in the the sight of the land one last time.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

HUSHAM

That word, "covenant." I was thinking of the promise made to Abraham, and all the other promises.

Husham turns back to them, eyes wet with tears.

BUSINESSMAN

You can talk to your Rabbi about that. For now we'll close the covenants and toast a fair deal for everyone.

Businessman catches Apprentice's eye. The smallest hint of a self-satisfied smile on his face as we --

END TEASER

ACT ONE

801 FADE IN ON: 801

CREDIT SEQUENCE:

XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX

802 EXT. JOTAPATA CAMPSITE - DAWN 802 \*

THE TEETH OF A SAW rips an inch of wood with every pass.

The fisherman have made an assembly line -- JOHN saws a thick branch into logs. BIG JAMES splits the logs with an axe. ANDREW stacks the split pieces.

Zee runs into frame, doubles over, shirtless, catching his breath after a morning jog.

ZEE

You're going to wake the whole camp with your chopping.

JOHN

Put a shirt on, before the women get up.

ZEE

They're already up. I heard them studying in their tent.

ANDREW

Why do the women feel so strongly about studying? Isn't it enough to just listen to our Rabbi?

BIG JAMES

When would they do that? He's never here.

JOHN

You know, your obsession with exercise? It smacks of Hellenism.

Zee pulls on a tunic.

ZEE

I'm just trying to stay ready.  
(to Andrew)

(MORE)

ZEE (CONT'D)

What if they change their minds and try to do what they did to your old Rabbi?

ANDREW

Can you please not bring that up?

JOHN

The mind and spirit are more important than the body.

ZEE

How can you have a healthy mind if you don't have a healthy body?

JOHN

I'm talking about emphasizing one over the other.

ZEE

Try eating a whole bush of poisonous berries, and then tell me how your mind is doing.

Simon emerges from his tent, hair disheveled, eyes squinting, swollen morning face. As he pours a CUP OF WATER over his hands for the ritual hand-washing...

SIMON

What's with the chopping?

ANDREW

Oh, did we interfere with sleeping in?

SIMON

Your sails are still full, I see.

(closes eyes)

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing of the hands.

(yawns, stretches)

What else is there to do?

PHILIP and THOMAS emerge from the woods with armfuls of stone fruit.

PHILIP

Breakfast, boys?

They toss peaches to the guys. In unison they recite the blessing before eating fruit at such speed, you'd think it was a race --

ALL

Blessed are You, Lord our God,  
Ruler of the universe, who creates  
the fruit of the ground.

SIMON

We have plenty of wood, guys.

BIG JAMES

The stack for the next traveler.

JOHN

It's our last day at this camp.

SIMON

It is?

JOHN

He told me last night.

ANDREW

He told everyone.

SIMON

Where's Matthew?

ZEE

He went away with Rabbi early this  
morning.

BIG JAMES

Why does he take Matthew?

JOHN

(to Simon)

And since when did you start caring  
about Matthew's whereabouts?

SIMON

Big Thunder just asked the same  
thing.

ANDREW

You didn't ask about the others.

PHILIP

(to Andrew)

Did you sleep okay?

SIMON

He was like this when I woke up.

ZEE

Jesus sent Little James, Thaddeus,  
and Nathanael ahead to find a  
location for the Sermon.

SIMON

Do we all know what we're supposed  
to do?

ANDREW

I don't know Simon, maybe listen?

SIMON

Keep talking to me like that.

ZEE

I know we'll need security at all  
four points of the compass.

SIMON

We know how to execute that, Zee.

BIG JAMES

It's going to be a bigger crowd  
this time, the way word is  
spreading.

ZEE

What do we do about hecklers?

PHILIP

(skeptical)

Well...the odd Pharisee comes to  
these things. They used to be all  
over John's sermons.

ANDREW

John would heckle THEM.

PHILIP

I said used to.

SIMON

Jesus can handle Pharisees.

JOHN

We need to get this right. No  
mistakes.

As the weight of those words hit them --

803 INT. JOTAPATA CAMP - RAMAH'S TENT - SAME

803 \*

In a far corner, MARY MAGDALENE is writing on shoddy parchments, making a stack. Nearby, Ramah studies Psalm 139.

RAMAH

My frame was not...hiding...

MARY MAGDALENE

Hidden.

RAMAH

Hidden from you, when I was...be...i...?

MARY MAGDALENE

Being made.

RAMAH

When I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

RAMAH (CONT'D)

Your eyes saw my form...not...

MARY MAGDALENE

(struggling)  
My unformed substance.

RAMAH

How do you have this memorized?

MARY MAGDALENE

I've been memorizing the rest of that Song of David. I need more words. More tools. I can't let it happen again.

RAMAH

Mary, you've got to stop dwelling on--

MARY MAGDALENE

Go on. "Your eyes saw my unformed substance--

Ramah sighs, worried for her friend, but returns to the text.

RAMAH

Saw my unformed substance. In your book were written every one of them, the days that were formed for me...

804 INT. JOTAPATA CAMP - MARY MOTHER'S TENT - SAME 804 \*

TAMAR and MARY MOTHER finish up their morning routine. FROM OFF -- the sounds of Ramah READING reach the women.

Tamar leans in to Mary Mother, concerned. She whispers --

TAMAR

Do we all have to learn how to read?

Mary Mother quietly laughs through a big smile, shaking her head.

MARY MOTHER

No. Mary's father taught her long ago, and Ramah just wanted to learn. I think they felt left out. Maybe you being here will take some of the pressure off.

TAMAR

I mean, I'm willing to learn, if that's what it takes.

THOMAS (O.S.)

Hello? I come bearing peaches.

Tamar and Mother immediately rise to exit.

805 EXT. JOTAPATA CAMP - MARY MOTHER'S TENT - CONTINUOUS 805 \*

They emerge from the tent flap and Thomas gives them breakfast.

MARY MOTHER

These are a delight! I'm having mine by the fire.

Mother makes her way to the center of camp.

THOMAS

Is Ramah coming out?

TAMAR

I don't think so. She seems pretty intent on studying.

THOMAS

Oh.

TAMAR

Mary is writing leaflet notices and invitations...

(in confidence, concern)

And also...crying sometimes.

THOMAS

She went through something bad. I think she just needs time.

TAMAR

And what about them?

ANGLE ON -- Simon, Andrew, Zee, James, John arguing in the distance at chopping station. Philip steps between Simon and Zee to gently push them apart.

THOMAS

In the most generous explanation, I'd call that love.

TAMAR

It doesn't look like love to me.

POV -- Philip peacemaking, Simon so frustrated he covers his face with one hand.

THOMAS

They all love our Rabbi and want to follow him the right way. They just can't agree on what that right way is.

Tamar isn't fully convinced but grateful for the insight.

TAMAR

Thank you. I'll take these in to Ramah and Mary.

As she turns back toward the tent --

THOMAS

Oh, and tell Ramah Philip found apples, too. But I told him we should go with peaches. Because I know they're her favorite.

A kind of recognition on Tamar's face.

TAMAR

I'll pass that along.

806 EXT. KORAZIM PLATEAU - DAY

806

LITTLE JAMES, THADDEUS, and NATHANAEL hike through the foothills.

NATHANAEL

I think the knoll East of the Nahal-Kur river looks promising.

THADDEUS

But it's a knoll. He won't be high enough for people to see and hear Him.

LITTLE JAMES

And there are trees to the south that obstruct the view of the Sea of Galilee -- which he specifically requested.

NATHANAEL

Why does he need a view of the Sea?

THADDEUS

I think he wanted to be high enough up.

LITTLE JAMES

What about the hills north of Chorazim? There's plenty of height. His voice would carry.

NATHANAEL

It's too steep of a climb.

THADDEUS

And the distance is too far for the people from Tiberias and Magdala. He said to keep it within a day's walk from those cities.

LITTLE JAMES

Maybe we're looking too far north.

NATHANAEL

What did He request? A grove of juniper or gum trees on the backside where we could camp the night before?

THADDEUS

It's like He already knows the place.

NATHANAEL

Yeah, we just have to find it.

OFF -- sheep baa'ing and goats bleating in the distance.

The disciples hike up a small ridge in the direction of the sound.

807

EXT. KORAZIM PLATEAU - RIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

807

As they crest of ridge, a Mount with some trees on the side comes into view.

Blocking them is a 3.5 foot-high stone fence, and a vast pasture beyond that.

A haggard wooden sign stands in front of the wall with Aramaic on it.

UNKNOWN POV -- inside the pasture (behind the sign), WATCH Thaddeus reading it as the men slowly walk up.

THADDEUS

"No trespassing. Violators will be prosecuted."

Nathanael calls to US --

NATHANAEL

Shalom, shalom!

REVERSE -- a female GOATHERD tends her flock, watching the disciples.

NATHANAEL (CONT'D)

We mean no harm, sister.

THADDEUS

We're here on friendly business.

She approaches cautiously.

NATHANAEL

On the other side of that Mount, is there a view of the Sea of Galilee?

GOATHERD

Go away.

NATHANAEL

That's not very friendly.

THADDEUS

Excuse me...are you the owner?

GOATHERD

It's closed to visitors!

LITTLE JAMES

It's important we see...

Goatherd is totally uninterested. She wanders out of sight.

Little James and Thaddeus share a knowing look, wry smiles.

THADDEUS

This is probably the spot.

NATHANAEL

What? Why? It's completely  
repellant.

LITTLE JAMES

Exactly.

Thaddeus and Little James continue on. After a beat,  
Nathanael follows and we --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

808 INT. MINING OFFICE - DAY

808

Businessman is ecstatic. He paces the room, reeling with delight.

BUSINESSMAN

It was perfection! You played your part so well, and my look of annoyance was one of the best I've ever given.

(grabs 2 wine goblets)

Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus -- they would kill for our acting skills.

Apprentice seems distant.

APPRENTICE

It certainly was a kind of tragedy.

BUSINESSMAN

(uncorking a bottle)

For him, but a TRIUMPH for us. Every tragedy has winners and losers.

APPRENTICE

He was the one who brought up potential minerals.

BUSINESSMAN

Yes, and then you acknowledged the POSSIBILITY of salt -- not giving anything away -- and I conceded the value and it made us look like good guys.

APPRENTICE

Hmm.

BUSINESSMAN

We bought a salt mine for the price of a country plot.

APPRENTICE

Did you see his tears?

BUSINESSMAN

That's common. People have emotional ties to the land.

APPRENTICE

And then what? Do you grow  
callouses on your eyes?

BUSINESSMAN

(handing him wine)  
Lighten up. We just made the  
biggest sale of our lives.

They clink goblets. Businessman drinks.

APPRENTICE

He did make a tidy profit on land  
he didn't know would ever be  
valuable.

BUSINESSMAN

He'll never have to work another  
day in his life.

Apprentice is lost in thought.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

When I took you on as an apprentice  
they neglected to mention you have  
no sense of humor.

APPRENTICE

I do have a sense of humor.

BUSINESSMAN

You're well on your way to becoming  
a wealthy man. Once our miners  
reach the salt, we'll live like  
kings.

APPRENTICE

Kings of what? There is only One  
True King in heaven, and everyone  
else -- even Caesar -- is enjoying  
illusions of power and wealth.  
Sooner or later we all become dust.

BUSINESSMAN

There's that sense of humor.

He sets his glass down. He pats apprentice, sympathetic.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm not oblivious. Okay? I  
know that's right. We get a few  
opportunities to get ahead in this  
world.

APPRENTICE

Opportunity? It was a calculated deception, and it didn't...feel good.

BUSINESSMAN

We used what God gave us. And now we'll have greater choices. We can choose better lives. More devotion. Finish your drink.

APPRENTICE

Man was formed from the earth, then eventually he returns to it, and the time in-between... There has to be more to life than that.

BUSINESSMAN

An orphan and a poet.

APPRENTICE

I said not to call me that.

BUSINESSMAN

Okay okay. I'm sorry. Look, it's been a long week. We both need some time off to rest.

APPRENTICE

WHAT I NEED is a life I can be proud of. Don't you want to do something that will really matter and be remembered throughout history?

Businessman has been dumping coins into a satchel.

BUSINESSMAN

I respect your ambition. God knows I have it. And you have potential. I see it more everyday.

(plops satchel down on the table)

Here's an advance. Let's take a week off. Hmm? Rest, go for walks, do something new.

Apprentice is caught off guard.

APPRENTICE

Really?

BUSINESSMAN

Why not? Like you said, there's more to life than making money.

APPRENTICE

(hesitant)

Th-thank you. I don't know what to say.

BUSINESSMAN

Finish your drink.

Emboldened, Apprentice pounds the goblet in one swig. Businessman smiles, amused by the young man.

809 INT. SHAMMAI'S OFFICE - DAY

809

SHMUEL and YANNI sit across a desk from SHAMMAI (ancient in body, but virile in mind).

Shammai leans back in his chair, absorbing everything he has just heard.

SHAMMAI

That's it? That's your whole story?

SHMUEL

Everything we know for certain, established as fact by eye witnesses in accordance with the Law.

YANNI

There is much speculation we could offer, but we wanted to honor your time, Rabbi Shammai, with only confirmed facts.

After a time, Shammai finally bursts out laughing, quietly at first, shaking his head, and then leaning forward onto the table.

Shmuel and Yanni exchange bewildered, concerned looks.

SHMUEL

I know we can't prove it's the same person, but the pattern is too striking to ignore.

SHAMMAI

It doesn't NEED to be the same person! That's what's wonderful.

Shmuel looks confused. Shammai rises and paces, ecstatic.

SHAMMAI (CONT'D)

I will have Gamaliel DRAGGED for this. It's too good.

YANNI

To be fair, it was the secretary who called the charges minutiae, not Gamaliel himself.

SHAMMAI

Secretaries don't put words in their Rabbi's mouths, it's the other way around. **Minutiae**. My congregation and students will foam at the mouth when they hear this.

SHMUEL

With all respect Shammai, we only need to move Caiaphas.

SHAMMAI

The high priest is clay in the fingers of Rome. A slave to their every whim. Make a written record of your conversation with Gamaliel's secretary -- every word. And file it with the clerk of the special counsel for false prophecies at the Archive. It must be signed and dated by a ranking Levite. Do you understand my instructions?

YANNI

Yes. But why all the exactitude?

SHAMMAI

Because when this Jesus of Nazareth amasses enough followers...**and** enough detractors, it will get Rome's attention. They will feel threatened or bothered or both, and they will intervene in a way that casts the people of Israel in a negative light. And then EVERYONE will know.

SHMUEL

Know what, Rabbi?

SHAMMAI

That Rabban Gamaliel was well aware of these offenses and dismissed them. His obsession with reforming God's immutable Law will be exposed for the negligent, lazy, dangerous abomination it is.

SHMUEL

Not only Gamaliel. We opened a case with the Sanhedrin, and Nicodemus dismissed it as "immaterial."

SHAMMAI

Nicodemus... I've long suspected the lamps were going dim in that house, if you get my meaning.

SHMUEL

Well, I don't know about that, I --

Yanni quiets him with a GESTURE.

SHAMMAI

Spread the word. Tell every scribe, Pharisee, Sadducee, Essene, Priest, Teacher, and Levite you know.

YANNI

Why, Rabbi?

SHAMMAI

First, the facts --  
(reviewing his notes)  
Self-identifies using a divine title from the prophet Daniel --

SHMUEL

Son of Man.

SHAMMAI

He claims authority to forgive sins. Violates Shabbat on multiple occasions and commands others to do so. Eats with tax collectors and sinners.

YANNI

Degenerates.

SHAMMAI

Now, the speculation.

Shmuel and Yanni exchange glances. Both reluctant -- at least unused -- to offer speculation formally.

SHAMMAI (CONT'D)

Spit it out. I don't have all day.

SHMUEL

One of John the Baptizer's students is among his followers, and there are rumors of a second.

Shammai writes.

SHAMMAI

Delicious. We'll never be pestered by that freak again, but still.

SHMUEL

In Capernaum, there were women of ill-repute seen at table with him in the tax collectors house.

SHAMMAI

You're telling me women are among his followers?

SHMUEL

You asked for speculation.

SHAMMAI

Keep going.

YANNI

He consorts with Gentiles. Specifically, the Ethiopian woman who knew his name and origin.

SHAMMAI

Unbelievable.

SHMUEL

The last is very vague and small.

SHAMMAI

Nothing is small when it comes to fidelity to God's Law.

SHMUEL

The Praetor of Capernaum ordered Jesus detained. When I spoke to his office, they made mention of the Fourth Philosophy.

SHAMMAI  
The Zealots?!

SHMUEL  
It was just a passing comment.

SHAMMAI  
He must be out of his mind.

YANNI  
That's all we have.

Shammai rises and paces again, strategizing.

SHAMMAI  
You must make these confirmed facts AND inferences made known far and wide, but NEVER mention that Gamaliel or Nicodemus dismissed the case. The gullible masses will defer to their supposed wisdom. But then, when we reveal the dated documentation showing Gamaliel had early warning and did nothing, the house of his wretched grandfather, Hillel, will fall. And the House of Shammai will rise.

SHMUEL  
Rabbi Shammai, respectfully, we did not come here today seeking to influence which schools of thought. We came looking for someone who will care that a false prophet is deceiving our people.

SHAMMAI  
If that was your intent, you've succeeded. Everything you've shared with me will make an appearance in my next Shabbat sermon.

Shmuel uneasily takes this in.

810 EXT. HIGH ROCK - DAY

810

Matthew has tablets notes scattered all around him.

A few yards away, Jesus stands at an overlook with a view of the camp.

JESUS  
Matthew, look.

Matthew stands to join him.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
Mary finished the notices. They're  
leaving to spread the word.

810A From their POV -- Mary handing out stacks of the flyers 810A  
to the disciples.

MATTHEW  
I hope they can find a way to work  
together.

JESUS  
What do you mean?

Back on the hill top --

MATTHEW  
They can't seem to agree on a  
single thing lately? Myself  
included sometimes.

JESUS  
Oh, I've noticed. In some ways, it  
is to be expected.

MATTHEW  
But not desired, surely?

JESUS  
No, but it's what's bound to happen  
when you start something that is  
open to all, truly ALL people.  
Zealots. Even tax collectors.  
People who've been through tough  
times. People both skeptical and  
hesitant, as well as bold and  
confident.

Jesus looks down at the disciples camp below.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
People hungry to learn as well as  
those learned and knowledgable.  
People with crushed dreams and  
people whose dreams have come true.

MATTHEW  
Like Andrew.

The reference makes Jesus think of something.

JESUS

Although not the way he expected.  
(smiles)  
Let's get back to work. How many  
sections are we up to?

MATTHEW

Nineteen.

They look over the tablets.

JESUS

Feels incomplete, doesn't it?

MATTHEW

There is something about 20 that is  
more symmetrical. You could always  
shorten it to 18.

JESUS

Brevity is usually preferred.  
Which section stands out to you the  
most?

Matthew pull a tablet.

MATTHEW

"Do not be anxious about your  
life," of course.

JESUS

Are there any sections that concern  
you? Give me your honest opinion.  
I know I don't have to say that but-

MATTHEW

The whole truth?

JESUS

You know I won't be offended.

MATTHEW

It's...all...very striking. But if  
I do the math, in terms of good  
news and bad, it seems like there's  
not a lot of...good...news.

He picks up various tablets, READS --

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

**Anyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery...** Doesn't that make everyone an adulterer? **If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out...** won't that lead to an entire population walking around with only one eye?

(re new tablet)

Oh, and this one -- **If anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well?** I know some lawyers who will really struggle with that one. Trees that bear bad fruit being cut down and thrown into the fire, the gate is narrow and hard that leads to life, "depart from me, I never knew you." Do you realize how heavily-laden the sermon is with these kinds of ominous pronouncements? I haven't even named half of them.

Jesus is amused and appreciative of Matthew's assessment.

JESUS

It's a rebel's manifest, Matthew. We're not here to be sentimental and soothing. We're here to start a revolution.

MATTHEW

Well...**Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...** That isn't exactly--

JESUS

I said revolution, not revolt. What did you think I was going to say? "Hi everyone, just go on ahead and keep doing everything you've been doing for the past thousand years, since it's been going SO great?"

MATTHEW

Also there's the beginning and end. Right now we have you ending with the story of a house built on sand.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Word for word the last sentence of your sermon is -- **And the rain fell and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.** Period. End of sentence. No closing comments.

JESUS

Certainly gets your attention doesn't it. What about the beginning?

MATTHEW

My concern about the beginning is more logistical. Right now your opening line is, **You are the salt of the earth.** I'm worried, particularly if it is windy, or the crowd is larger than we expect, that people near the back will hear "salt the earth" and it will immediately call to mind negative connotations.

JESUS

The Punic Wars?

MATTHEW

Yes, when Rome destroyed Carthage they sowed the city with salt to make it barren, and to curse anyone who would rebuild upon it.

JESUS

I share your concern about the opening line, but for different reasons. I think the sermon needs some sort of introduction, an invitation into what -- as you have rightly pointed out -- will be a complex and at times challenging set of teachings.

MATTHEW

And what does, "You are the salt of the earth," even mean? I am not good at metaphor.

JESUS

Salt preserves meat from corruption. Slows its decay. I want my followers to be people who hold back the evil of the world.

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

Salt enhances the flavor of things. I want my followers to renew the world and be part of its redemption. Salt can be mixed with honey and rubbed on the skin for maladies. I want my people to participate of the healing of the world, not its destruction.

MATTHEW

Then why not just say that?

JESUS

Come on, Matthew, allow me a little poetry. Not everyone is like you, some like a little flavor. Read the songs of David. Or Solomon, I'm not even going near as far with metaphor as Solomon.

MATTHEW

I'm reading him next.

JESUS

Well, good luck. He'll probably --  
(makes "over your head"  
motion)

I've told you -- these things will make sense to some and not to others. I don't want passive followers. Those who are truly committed will peer deeply into it, looking for Truth. But I do agree we shouldn't start with salt. It's a valid point.

MATTHEW

You could just flip it with the next image -- ***You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.***

JESUS

I could.

He gets up and goes back to the outcropping that overlooks the camp.

MATTHEW

Or, "Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them"? That one's inviting.

Jesus is lost in thought, absent.

Matthew realizes Jesus is not with him. Jesus stares down at the empty camp.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Master, may I ask why you keep going to look down at the camp? They've all gone, haven't they?

JESUS

(deep in thought)  
They have.

810B Silence. Jesus takes in the sight of the empty camp. 810B  
Something beautiful, if sorrowful, begins to crystalize in his mind.

Turning back to Matthew --

JESUS (CONT'D)

I'm going to need time.

MATTHEW

I'll wait.

JESUS

But I may have something.

Off Jesus' inspired look --

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

811 INT. PUBLIC HOUSE - DAY

811

Apprentice and Businessman sit at the bar. After a drink, Businessman swishes the beverage around in the cup, looking at it, pondering.

We move and shift focus to reveal that behind the men, at a small table are Thaddeus, Little James, Nathanael, and a MAN we'll soon understand to be the pasture's LAND OWNER.

NATHANAEL

We have measures in place for crowd control.

THADDEUS

And we can set aside some of our men to assist your goatherds and shepherds in keeping the animals corralled on the other side of the mountain.

LAND OWNER

My goatherd told me your plans. But I don't like preachers. And I don't like crowds. You're not even offering to pay for use of the space.

LITTLE JAMES

We have no significant money to offer.

NATHANAEL

We may be able to secure a loan.

LAND OWNER

May?

THADDEUS

We have some people in our group who are skilled at negotiation.

LAND OWNER

Why didn't you bring them?

Ouch. Land Owner knows that was harsh but he's not backing down.

NATHANAEL

Do you know of any neighboring pastures similar to yours, someone we could talk to?

LAND OWNER

(Finishes drink)

Look, I only came here because she said you'd pay for my drink if I heard you out, and I have.

Land Owner pushes back from the table. Stands to leave but is stopped by--

BUSINESSMAN (O.S.)

What about product affiliation?

They all turn to see Apprentice and Businessman have turned sideways on their stools, each holding his drink.

LAND OWNER

What?

BUSINESSMAN

If this man is as important as they are saying he is, and the sermon is as significant as they are predicting...

LAND OWNER

I just don't care about some vagabond teacher.

APPRENTICE

This is the man who has healed many, yes? The one we've been hearing about?

NATHANAEL

Yes!

BUSINESSMAN

Think about all those pilgrims that see him as more than a teacher.

(to disciples)

What did you say? Hundreds? Potentially thousands?

NATHANAEL

Multitudes.

## APPRENTICE

Thousands of people who have a life-changing experience on your land, who could see miracles.

## BUSINESSMAN

What happens when those pilgrims go to market for supplies?

The disciples start to catch drift of the business men's meaning. Land Owner is paying attention for the first time.

## BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

All those travelers, well, they'll associate your products with what they felt that day. Coming from far and wide, your products--

## LITTLE JAMES

Your milk, your cheese, your wool!

## BUSINESSMAN

(holding his glass in salute)

Your name would be the only name they trust.

Intrigued, Land Owner repeats the word, pondering --

## LAND OWNER

Multitudes?

The three disciples look hopeful. A beat, then --

## LAND OWNER (CONT'D)

Fine.

(Gathering up his cloak)  
But if I find one piece of trash left behind, I will sue for damages.

## NATHANAEL

You have our word. We'll leave it better than we found it.

Land Owner downs the last of his bitters and exits.

Little James exhales the all the air he's been holding for a full minute. A beat as the three disciples take in what just happened. Smiles emerge on all.

## LITTLE JAMES

I can't believe it!

THADDEUS

Did we just get the land? I think  
we just got the land!

NATHANAEL

We got it!!

They embrace, thrilled. Thaddeus turns to the bar-

THADDEUS

How can we ever thank y--

But Businessman and Apprentice are gone.

812 EXT. VILLAGE STREET - SAME

812

Businessman and Apprentice laughing. Businessman, draped  
over Apprentice's shoulder.

BUSINESSMAN

You see, boy? I haven't been  
leading you to ruin. Life is a  
negotiation.

APPRENTICE

Hey, you were right. You were  
right.

BUSINESSMAN

Opportunities are everywhere,  
staring us in the face. The  
difference between us and most  
people is we've got the tools to  
take advantage.

APPRENTICE

Life is full of possibilities.

Apprentice is feeling pretty good. His spirit's done a 180  
degree turn.

BUSINESSMAN

I've been telling you -- I don't  
wanna be in business forever. I  
just wanna make enough money to  
make my own choices. Like you, I  
want more than just deals and  
titles.

A beat. The high of the negotiation turning to contentment.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)  
 You know what I think might be  
 really interesting?

APPRENTICE  
 What's that?

BUSINESSMAN  
 Seeing this preacher in person.  
 I've been hearing about him.

APPRENTICE  
 I'm glad to hear you say that. I  
 wanna go too.

BUSINESSMAN  
 It's settled.

Businessman slaps a hand on Apprentice's shoulder. As they  
 march through town --

FADE TO:

813 EXT. AROUND WESTERN GALILEE - MONTAGE OF IMAGES 813

Simon enthusiastically hands out a flyer...Andrew points in  
 the direction of the Mount for someone else...

CUTS:

813A -- John and Big James nail a notice to a public post. 813A

813B -- Mary Magdalene gives a leaflet to a pair of 813B  
 prostitutes slouching in a doorway in this little town's  
 version of the Red Quarter.

813C -- Mary Mother kneels down and compassionately tells an 813C  
 old, toothless beggar.

813D -- A STRANGER shares a notice with his NEIGHBORS. 813D

813E -- FISHERMEN post a flier on the wharf. 813E

813F -- QUINTUS reads a flyer delivered by GAIUS. He looks 813F  
 skeptical, and then looks up at Gaius and Atticus. **Is this  
 guy gonna stay in his lane?** Atticus shrugs.

813G And finally, Jesus prays in the high hills. Matthew 813G  
 watches him from far below, nervous.

END MONTAGE.

FADE TO:

814 EXT. JOTAPATA CAMPSITE - DUSK

814 \*

Some disciples (Simon, Andrew, Big James, John, Zee, Thomas, Ramah, Mary Magdalene) return from canvassing. Simon checks Jesus' tent, then the one where Matthew usually stays. Nothing.

SIMON

(to John)

They're still gone.

ANDREW

Have we been advertising something that might not happen? What if he never comes back?

SIMON

He always comes back.

BIG JAMES

We go to sleep -- he's not here. We wake up -- he's not here.

ZEE

Correction -- when YOU wake up he's not here. I've seen him leave with Matthew every morning for the past week.

MARY MAGDALENE

I think He just wants to get it right.

RAMAH

Can He get anything wrong?

MARY MAGDALENE

I mean for the hearers.

THOMAS

What if we've all been misled?

RAMAH

How can you say that? You saw what happened at Cana!

SIMON

Everyone calm down.

THOMAS

I'm sorry, I'm just nervous.

SIMON

We're all tired from a long day.  
We need to rest for tomorrow and go  
meet the others at the mountain  
early to help set up.

JOHN

What if no one shows up?

MARY MAGDALENE

What if EVERYONE shows up?

BIG JAMES

Either way, Simon's right. We  
should rest.

THOMAS

You think I'm going to get a wink  
of sleep tonight? I just want to  
make sure I've done everything I  
can for Him.

Ramah catches his eye. She gives him a reassuring smile.

RAMAH

You always do.

Thomas feels pretty good about that.

SIMON

(to Andrew)

He'll sleep well now.

815 EXT. JOTAPATA CAMP - OUTSKIRTS OF CAMP - DUSK 815 \*

From far away, in the flicker of the firelight we see the  
disciples arguing but can't quite make out their words.

816 EXT. HIGH ROCK - DUSK 816

The sun is about to set. Matthew has fallen asleep among the  
tablets containing the sermon outline.

Sandals on rocky soil. Jesus approaching Matthew. He gently  
shakes him awake.

JESUS

Matthew.

Matthew stirs, then sits bolt upright.

MATTHEW  
Yes, rabbi.

JESUS  
I've got it.

MATTHEW  
(rubbing his eyes)  
The opening?

JESUS  
Yes.

MATTHEW  
What is it?

JESUS  
It's a map.

MATTHEW  
A what?

JESUS  
Directions. Where people should  
look to find me.

MATTHEW  
Okay, give me a moment.

Matthew takes a sip of water from a canteen and shakes himself to wakefulness.

While Jesus walks to the overlook that views the camp, Matthew lights a small oil lamp. He inks up his quill.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)  
I'm ready.

816A EXT. JOTAPATA CAMPSITE

816A \*

Jesus looks up at the full moon, then down at the camp -- some of the guys are tending the fire quietly, others are asleep on little mats under the stars.

The women are invisible in tents.

MATTHEW  
Rabbi?

After a beat --

JESUS

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for  
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

INTERCUT SCENE WITH --

The Chosen-Media Valet

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE

We see Nathaniel under the fig tree.

JESUS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Blessed are those who mourn, for  
they shall be comforted.

EXT. DISCIPLES CAMP

We see Andrew grieving JtB's arrest in Simon's arms.

HIGH ROCK --

Jesus paces. Not nervously, but in a natural, almost  
relieved flow.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
Blessed are the meek...

817 EXT. OUTSIDE JERICHO - NIGHT 817

Little James and Thaddeus tend the fire in 206.

JESUS (V.O.)  
...for they shall inherit the  
earth.

HIGH ROCK --

JESUS  
Blessed are those who hunger and  
thirst for righteousness, for they  
shall be satisfied.

818 EXT. SAMARIA - DAY 818

John and Big James spittin' mad on the road in 201 right  
before they get named Thunder Bros.

HIGH ROCK --

JESUS  
Blessed are the merciful...

819 EXT. DISCIPLES CAMP - DAY 819

Mary Mother pulls her shawl off and puts it over Magdalene's  
uncovered head in 207.

JESUS (V.O.)  
 for they shall receive mercy.  
 Blessed are the pure in heart...

820 EXT. DISCIPLES CAMP 820

Ramah and Mary study, Thomas watches them in 206

JESUS  
 ...for they shall see God.

HIGH ROCK --

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 Blessed are the peacemakers, for  
 they shall be called sons of God.

821 EXT. CAMP - DAY 821

Philip diffuses a situation between Simon and Zee.

HIGH ROCK --

JESUS  
 Blessed are those who are  
 persecuted for righteousness'  
 sake...

822 EXT. JORDAN RIVER - DAY 822

ROMAN TROOPS arrest John the Baptist.

JESUS (V.O.)  
 ...for theirs is the kingdom of  
 heaven.

HIGH ROCK --

Jesus pauses at the thought of his cousin.

JESUS  
 Blessed are you when others revile  
 you and persecute you and utter all  
 kinds of evil against you falsely  
 on my account.

As he writes, Matthew senses Jesus look at him, he glances up. A moment of understanding, compassion passes between the men. Matthew returns to his tablet.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Rejoice and be glad, for your  
reward is great in heaven, for so  
they persecuted the prophets who  
were before you.

Matthew finishes writing. He looks up.

MATTHEW

I still don't see how it's a map.

JESUS

If someone wants to find me, those  
are the groups of people they  
should look for.

Matthew studies everything he has just written, and the  
current outline.

MATTHEW

And then?

JESUS

You are the salt of the earth.

A slow smile creeps across Matthew's face -- and Jesus'.  
It's ready. They're ready.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

823 EXT. THE LANDSCAPE OF GALILEE 823

The endless expanse of rolling hills with their jagged rocks, soft patches of green and all the arid space in between.

OFF -- A dull BEAT. Uneven. Growing into a POUNDING. The sounds of --

824 EXT. ROAD - BASE OF MOUNT OF BEATITUDES - MORNING 824

PILGRIMS streaming across the road laterally heading westward toward the Mount.

Dozens then hundreds COME INTO VIEW. We walk with them towards --

THE MOUNT OF BEATITUDES. Taking in those gathered for the first time. Thousands of pilgrims gather in the pasture.

825 EXT. BACKSIDE OF MOUNT - STAGING AREA - SAME 825

Jesus stands amid a small grove of lemon trees.

MARY MOTHER (O.S.)

What have you done?

Jesus turns to find his mother rushing towards him.

JESUS

What?

She looks at his sandal. A strap is broken.

MARY MOTHER

Your strap. Come here, I'll fix it up.

JESUS

I'm preparing myself, eema.

MARY MOTHER

Fine. I'll come to you.

826 EXT. BACKSIDE OF MOUNT - LEMON GROVE - MOMENTS LATER 826

The female followers assist Mary Mother as she fixes the strap.

MARY MOTHER

There. Simple.

She gives him an up-and-down. Grimaces.

MARY MOTHER (CONT'D)

This is no good.

JESUS

Eema?

MARY MOTHER

You'll blend into the rocks.

Jesus is wearing his stone-wash base layer off-white short tunic.

TAMAR

To the people in the back you'll be a disembodied voice coming from a slate quarry.

RAMAH

You need a pop of color.

JESUS

(resigned, as Mother pulls a white tunic over his base layer)

I know what the prophecy says about my appearance, is this your attempt to change it?

Magdalene steps forward with a blue drape-type garment, situates it at both his shoulders, so it falls down one side of his torso.

MARY MAGDALENE

Blue. A symbol of peace.

JESUS

Hm.

She steps back and the next woman steps forward, repeating the "try-on" motion as all the women tilt their heads, considering.

TAMAR

Red. The symbol for Passion. Blood. Sacrifice. Atonement. Love.

Next up to try on:

RAMAH

Purple: Royalty. Kingship. But also suffering, like a bruise.

Finally, Mary Mother steps forward and holds up to her Son's torso:

MARY MOTHER

Gold: Warmth. Wisdom. Light. The Sun.

She steps back.

RAMAH

Well?

JESUS

We have no glass, no still waters to peer into for a reflection, and even if we did, I cannot tell you how little I care about how I look. Eema?

MARY MOTHER

Purple. Kingship.

JESUS

Mary?

MARY MAGDALENE

Blue. Because you were the first time I felt true peace.

JESUS

Ramah?

RAMAH

Purple. Because of the night I first met you. Grapes. Wine.

JESUS

Tamar?

TAMAR

Blue. It's a calming color. It softens your hard edges.

JESUS

I have hard edges?

MARY MAGDALENE

You've been known to say hard things.

JESUS  
Ha. Just wait.

827 EXT. MOUNT - PASTURE - SAME

827

Simon and Andrew are rushing back toward the staging area.

ANDREW  
Thomas says we're up to 3,000.

SIMON  
At the rate people are showing up  
it will be 4,000 by the time we  
start. In no time.

ANDREW  
Should we even tell him?

SIMON  
I don't want him to be surprised  
when he comes around to his place.

ANDREW  
Do you think he's capable of  
surprise, or being thrown off?

SIMON  
(tension rising)  
This is not good. We weren't  
prepared for this. If more people  
show up, or if one more thing goes  
wrong, this could be a disaster.

EDEN (O.S.)  
Am I allowed?

Simon turns quickly, sees Eden. He almost slumps in release.  
They hurry to each other, but modesty forces them to look  
around and half-embrace while chuckling.

SIMON  
I will show you how I feel later.  
Where is Dasha?

EDEN  
She's with Zebedee and some others.  
They secured a place at the front.

JESUS (O.S.)  
Eden!

She turns with unexpected joy.

EDEN  
 (cautious)  
 Yes?

JESUS  
 Get over here. We need a tie-  
 breaker.

COMPLETELY flattered and excited and freaked out, she goes to Him. Simon watches, amazed.

828

EXT. MOUNT - SAME

828

Apprentice and Businessman approach the gathering. Both are floored by the sight of so many.

BUSINESSMAN  
 This is even bigger than I thought.

APPRENTICE  
 I had a feeling.

They watch as people continue streaming in.

BUSINESSMAN  
 You had a feeling... I want to see him.

APPRENTICE  
 I want to find a place we can hear Him.

BUSINESSMAN  
 I'll come find you. I won't be long. See if you can find one of his followers, one of the men we met, let them know we can help them. They clearly need it.

Apprentice nods and Businessman heads toward what appears to be the staging area.

Apprentice walks into the gathering. The whole sight uplifts him.

A familiar face (to us) happens by. Apprentice stops him --

APPRENTICE  
 Excuse me, do you know where I should stand to hear him?

BARNABY  
 To hear the teacher from Nazareth.

APPRENTICE

Nazareth...

BARNABY

He performs miracles.

SHULA

They're saying He could be The One.

BARNABY

I'm not gonna miss a word. You could do worse than to follow us.

APPRENTICE

That's kind. Thank you.

They turn left, westward, down a less-trodden cow path.

As Apprentice reaches juncture --

SHULA

You know, this is one day when it's definitely better to be blind and not DEAF.

APPRENTICE

I'm sorry, if we're moving to hear the Teacher, why are you turning off the path the others are following?

BARNABY

We're just going to say hello to some old friends before the show.

SHULA

It's not a SHOW, Barnaby.

BARNABY

(as they trail off)

It was a show at Zebedee's house!

Apprentice, Barnaby and Shula make their way up a cowpath.

829

EXT. HIDDEN ROCK PASS - SAME

829

Gaius dismounts a horse. Ties up the steed and takes in the sight of the gathering below.

Atticus, hooded, finds a spot. YUSSIF, undisguised, takes a spot next to him. Neither notices the other.

830 EXT. MOUNT - STAGING AREA - SAME 830

Businessman comes into view of the staging area.

POV -- Thomas and Philip agree to something off screen, split in different directions. Philip comes our way.

Businessman FLAGS Philip.

BUSINESSMAN

Excuse me, son. Could I have a very brief word?

831 EXT. COWPATH - SAME 831

Apprentice sees the crowds amassing, concerned that they will miss a good place to stand. He dithers for a moment, then follows Shula and Barnaby.

832 EXT. MOUNT - UPPER AREA - SAME 832

The crowds are pushing in. John and Zee move laterally along the front line pushing people back, their arms in spread eagle poses.

ZEE

Stay back behind this line, you're too close.

JOHN

Everyone stay back and push no further. This is the line.

ZEE

Step back five cubits, thank you, sir, stay there.

JOHN

Five cubits back, everyone, please.

ZEBEDEE

And what if I don't?

Suddenly the face in front of John is his father's.

John is both shocked and overjoyed -- they embrace. Zebedee kisses him on the cheek.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

You think we'd stay home for this?

JOHN

Eema!

SALOME embraces and kisses him, too.

SALOME

Where's James?

JOHN

He's on the other side. I have to go there now.

SALOME

Go!

JOHN

(over his shoulder as he goes)

Hey! No heckling!

ZEBEDEE

No promises!

SALOME

Zebedee!!

John cracks up with joy as he leaves. He loves his parents. Such weirdos.

833 EXT. MOUNT - STAGING AREA - SAME

833

Mary Mother finishes draping the purple garment on Jesus and smoothing its edges (her choice won, of course).

JESUS

What are you thinking about?

MARY MOTHER

Your father. How he never got to see any of this.

JESUS

My Father. Which one?

MARY MOTHER

You know what I mean.

JESUS

I do miss him. But I'm glad you're here.

A pause.

MARY MOTHER  
I'm so proud of you.

JESUS  
Maybe wait to say that until after  
I'm done. Make sure I don't mess  
up in front of such a big crowd.

MARY MOTHER  
Whatever you say will be beautiful.

JESUS  
Mm...it is pretty good, actually.

She laughs, then looks at him with brimming emotion, barely  
able to hold back, both of them tearful.

Simon breaks the moment --

SIMON  
Master, it's time.

MARY MOTHER  
It's time.

Mary and Jesus join foreheads, emotional. In a near whisper -  
-

JESUS  
If not now, when?

MARY MOTHER (CONT'D)  
If not now, when?

Shula and Barnaby arrive at the staging area, Apprentice on  
their heels.

BARNABY  
We heard some guy was gonna tell  
jokes on a hillside or something.

MATTHEW  
(turning in frustration)  
They're not jokes.

Magdalene, Thaddeus, and Little James rush to them.

MARY MAGDALENE  
Shula!

THADDEUS  
Barnaby!

LITTLE JAMES  
You made it!

Nathanael notices Apprentice a short way behind them.

NATHANAEL

Wait... It's you! You're the man  
from the public house. You're--

APPRENTICE

(re Barnaby, Shula)

I just followed them. I don't know  
what I'm doing here, I--

NATHANAEL

Please, stick around...

Apprentice makes his way forward. Nat introduces him to  
Simon.

NATHANAEL (CONT'D)

This is the man who got us the  
Mount, the pasture. He convinced  
the landowner it was worth his  
while.

SIMON

Ah, good work, thank you.  
(extending a hand)  
I'm Simon.

APPRENTICE

I'm XXXXX. \*

SIMON

Welcome, XXXXX. I'm sure you're  
going to love this sermon.

Push in on Judas' face, aglow with newfound purpose.

APPRENTICE

I wouldn't miss it. \*

Simon hustles back to Jesus.

SIMON

Shall we?

60FPS -- Jesus turns and makes his way around the corner of  
the mountain toward the place where He will speak, flanked by  
John and Big James, to the tune of a song we haven't heard  
before.

Forming the edges, we pass -- Matthew, hopeful. Andrew.  
Simon holding Eden, beaming. Nathaniel, Little James,  
Thaddeus. Mary Magdalene, Ramah, Mother, and Tamar. Philip,  
Thomas, and Zee. And Judas makes twelve.

Jesus rounds the corner to see the crowd below.

833A EXT. MOUNT

833A \*

As we pass the front row -- Zebedee, Salome, and Dasha.

SHOTS of others:

-- Atticus

-- Yussif

-- The FULL CROWD

From behind Jesus, we WATCH Him step out into the expanse before him as the MUSIC CLIMAXES. The FACES stretch out for what seems like a kilometer below him and we --

CUT TO BLACK.

END EPISODE. END SEASON.

The Chosen-MediaValet