

THE CHOSEN

Episode #103

"Jesus Loves the Little Children"

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Yellow

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**TEASER**

86 A HOME ENTRANCE. It's clearly low-class. We hear voices and movement before we see --

ABIGAIL (8-10), a dark-skinned, dark-eyed girl whose very steps are precocious (think "Scout" from *Mockingbird*), bops out of the house, and over her shoulder --

ABIGAIL  
I'll be by the stream!

ABIGAIL'S MOM (O.S.)  
Do not swim!

ABIGAIL  
I won't!

She runs behind the house, carrying her yarn DOLL, and heads into --

86A EXT. FIELD - DAY

86A

Her house is on the outskirts of a small town, and there is a vast, unimproved area behind it. We follow her as she walks and skips and runs through it, doing the things kids did before entertainment was invented.

Eventually she's out of sight and sound from the town. As she turns a corner, she freezes --

87 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

87

Somewhere between a one-night-only setup and a mobile home, this is clearly intended for someone sticking around for a couple weeks. It's also built by someone who knows what they're doing. Tree stumps, branches, animal skins, and rocks have been well-assembled as tables for food and other travel items, a fire pit, a covered area for sleeping, etc..

Abigail stares a few moments, then slowly approaches. As her confidence builds, she (and her doll) introduce us to various TOOLS and gradually make themselves at home.

Suddenly, we hear some humming and footsteps. She hustles back to the corner, crouches, and watches as --

JESUS, carrying a knapsack, arrives at his campsite. He empties fruit from the knapsack onto one of his makeshift tables. After another moment, he stops humming and whistling and looks up and over at Abigail.

She gasps, turns, and sprints away, her steps now resembling something closer to fear than precociousness, as we --

**END TEASER**

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ACT ONE

CREDIT SEQUENCE

CUT TO:

88 EXT. CAMPSITE - EVENING

88

CLOSEUP ON -- 1ST CENTURY FIRE START

Smoke rises as Jesus expertly works a "fire bow." He gently blows a spark into a flame before adding more "kindling."

BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS

-- JESUS ADDING MORE WOOD TO THE FIRE AS IT BUILDS

-- JESUS FILLING A POT WITH LEGUMES, VEGGIES, ETC., THEN PLACING IT OVER THE FIRE

-- AS STEW COOKS, JESUS SLICES FRUIT WITH A CRUDE KNIFE

-- JESUS HEATING BREAD OVER THE FIRE

-- JESUS EATS QUIETLY, THE FIRE AND A FEW TORCHES PROVIDING THE LIGHTING AS THE SUN GOES DOWN.

END SEQUENCE

CUT TO:

89 INT. ABIGAIL'S HOME - NIGHT

89

Abigail eats dinner in a small home with her MOTHER and FATHER (Both acting and looking older than their age). With very simple decor, limited food options, not much space, it's clear they're lower class.

MOTHER

...And Joanna just isn't getting better, which will mean she will have to see if they will give her space to sell her headdresses at the market. And even if they do, which doesn't seem likely because last time I was at the market it looked full, she has to find time to make them.

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

But she needs to focus her time on helping him get better so he can return to work before they give his job to someone else. She just seemed so scared, do you think you could stop by tomorrow and see if they need help with anything?

A pause. He wasn't listening closely.

FATHER

Hm?

MOTHER

Can you see tomorrow if she needs help with anything?

FATHER

Joanna?

She nods.

FATHER (CONT'D)

I don't...I have to stay late every day anyway myself, I don't have time --

(sighs)

I will see.

MOTHER

Thank you, it will mean so much to her. You know how she gets.

He sniffs ("Do I ever.")

MOTHER (CONT'D)

So...Abigail...how was your day?

ABIGAIL

It was fine, can I play with Joshua tomorrow?

MOTHER

Only after you finish --

ABIGAIL

I know, I will get it all done first.

FATHER

Don't interrupt.

ABIGAIL

I'm sorry. But after second meal  
may I go?

MOTHER

I will ask his mother. And where  
will you go?

ABIGAIL

(reluctant)  
Just the field. Maybe the stream.

MOTHER

No swimming.

ABIGAIL

I know. And chores first.

As the adults resume conversation, we see Abigail's eyes  
brighten.

CUT TO:

90 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

90

Jesus commences his bedtime routine. Everything gets cleaned  
up, food is covered, and torches are extinguished. He tosses  
a couple more logs on the fire, removes his outer cloak, and  
arranges his sleeping area.

As he gets comfortable and settles towards sleep, we make out  
the beginnings of a prayer. ("My Father...")

CUT TO:

91 EXT. FIELD - DAY

91

Abigail and her friend JOSHUA, same age, stroll quickly on  
the same journey as Abigail took yesterday. It's clear  
Abigail likes Joshua as much for the fact that he happily  
lets her talk as anything else.

ABIGAIL

...And there was one tool I've  
never seen before, I don't know  
what that's for, but I think he's  
building stuff, I don't know. There  
was some food, too, but even though  
I was hungry I didn't take any,  
that would be wrong, but maybe we  
can take just a little bit this  
time, what do you think?

(MORE)

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

But I'm glad I didn't, because that's when the man got there -- come on, go faster.

JOSHUA

I'm trying, Abby, but your legs are going too fast.

She doesn't slow down.

ABIGAIL

If he comes this time, should we say something to him? I think if you're with me it's okay, I didn't see a sword or anything like that, so I don't think he'll kill us. And he seemed nice. Do you have a sword just in case?

Joshua just tries to keep up.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Oh, we're almost there, here it is.

92

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

92

They approach the corner and peer around it. Jesus is there, dragging a SLED-LIKE STRUCTURE containing chunks of wood of all sizes into his camp.

He sits down, grabs some bread, breaks it, and looks up.

JESUS

My Father in heaven, you are great and over all. Thank you for this bread and for everything you provide. And I pray that if there are ever two children who visit my home here, you will give them the courage to say "Shalom" so that they will know they do not have to remain in hiding. Amen.

Abigail and Joshua look at each other, wide-eyed, and they shrink again, trying to hide. They silently yell at each other with their faces, Joshua frantically indicating they should go, Abigail angrily insisting they should stay.

Jesus casually eats some of the bread while preparing the wood and pulling out some tools. A few moments later, he makes BIZARRE NOISES all at once with his mouth, clearly intended to make the kids laugh.

They do.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 What's that I hear? Sheep don't  
 sound like that.

More giggles.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 No, it's definitely not sheep.  
 Maybe a rooster?

He approaches their area, and finally Abigail emerges, with a  
 still nervous Joshua peeking behind.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 Greetings, children.

Abigail nods. Joshua, as will be his pattern, doesn't move  
 much.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 It's not always safe for a child to  
 wander from their home. You never  
 know if there are bad men around,  
 you were wise to bring your friend  
 this time.

ABIGAIL  
 Joshua.

JESUS  
 Shalom, Joshua.

No response.

JESUS (CONT'D)  
 I admire your bravery to come here,  
 you are a good friend.

But...don't worry, I'm not a bad  
 man.

ABIGAIL  
 See? I knew it.

Jesus heads back towards his tools.

JESUS  
 You are free to stay for a bit if  
 you want, but I'm afraid I have  
 some work to do.

ABIGAIL

Okay.

JESUS

And thank you for not taking any food yesterday, but you are welcome to fruit over there.

ABIGAIL

See? I knew it.

As she heads over to take a piece of fruit and ultimately eat it throughout, the questions begin.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

So what are you doing here?

JESUS

I am visiting for a time.

ABIGAIL

Where are you from?

JESUS

Nazareth.

ABIGAIL

What is that wood for?

JESUS

I am building something.

ABIGAIL

Are you a carpenter?

JESUS

Sometimes, but I am a craftsman, I build all kinds of things.

ABIGAIL

So why don't you live in a house?

JESUS

I travel a lot.

ABIGAIL

How do you make money?

JOSHUA

Abby.

ABIGAIL

I'm just asking how he makes money.

JOSHUA

I know. You shouldn't --

JESUS

It's okay. I don't make money when I travel. For now I build things and trade them for my food and clothing.

ABIGAIL

(indicates wood in Jesus' hands)

What is that?

JESUS

This is going to be a lock and key.

ABIGAIL

Joshua, ask him a question, he's nice, see?

JOSHUA

No, thank you.

ABIGAIL

What else will you build?

JESUS

Wealthy people love decorations, and toys for their children.

ABIGAIL

My family isn't wealthy.

JESUS

Many times that's better.

ABIGAIL

I don't know about that.

Jesus laughs.

JESUS

You will.

ABIGAIL

(indicating her doll)

My mom made me this.

JESUS

What's her name?

ABIGAIL

Sarah.

JESUS  
Very pretty.

ABIGAIL  
Okay, time to go home, bye!

She takes off, and after a hesitation, Joshua, hustles after her. Jesus stares and smiles as we --

CUT TO:

93 EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT 93

To establish--

94 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT 94

Jesus eats some grapes on his side under his sleeping canopy, putting the finishing touches on his lock and key. Clearly tired and lit only by the moon and the fire pit, we get another glimpse of his skill and care. He gives it one last look. It is good. He sets it down and rolls to his other side, and again, we hear the beginnings of a prayer.

CUT TO:

95 EXT. CAPERNAUM SUNRISE - MORNING 95

To establish --

96 EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS 96

97 CLOSEUP OF JESUS' SLEEPING FACE. 97

We hear whispering ("just let him sleep" "Is he okay?" "Shhh!").

Jesus opens his eyes to REVEAL:

Half a dozen CHILDREN staring at him, suddenly silent.

JESUS  
(groggy but smirking)  
You couldn't have waited half an hour, eh?

ABIGAIL  
Can we be around today? These are my other friends. And Joshua again.

Jesus sits up, does a typical morning inhale and eye rub.

JESUS  
Shalom, Abigail's friends. And  
Joshua again.

ALL  
Shalom.

ABIGAIL  
Can we be around today?

JESUS  
(stretching)  
I suppose, but I have some work  
today, you might have to help.

They nod.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. STREAM - MORNING

98

Jesus approaches the nearby stream, six kids following a few feet behind. Throughout this and the rest of his tasks and conversations, they are a merry band of dutiful followers, led by Abigail. Picture Tom Sawyer's group or "Our gang," including the diversity of color, size, and hair combing ability.

They ask more questions as he washes his face and under his arms in the stream (everything modest, of course) and brushes his teeth with a rough cloth and some salt, as well as a "fig twig."

CHILD #1  
How much longer are you going to  
stay here?

JESUS  
Until it is time for me to go.

CHILD #1  
When's that?

JESUS  
I have some work to do here and  
some people to meet, and then I  
will know the right time.

CHILD #2  
You seem nice. Are you dangerous?

JESUS

Mm, to some maybe, but no, not to you, and I won't harm anyone.

CHILD #3

Do you have friends?

JESUS

A few. And more to come.

CUT TO:

99

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

99

Jesus is gathering and passing out fruit and bread for breakfast.

CHILD #2

Abby said you travel a lot, do you have a house?

JESUS

My Father provides everything I need.

CHILD #4

Is your father rich?

JESUS

(laughing)

Did Abigail tell you to ask me that?

CHILD #4

No.

JESUS

That is a question for another time.

JOSHUA

What's your favorite food?

JESUS

Joshua the Brave speaks. Hm, I like so many foods, but I especially love bread. For many reasons.

They are all seated with their food.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Blessed are You, Adonai our God,  
Sovereign of all, who brings forth  
bread from the earth.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CHILDREN (ALL)

Amen.

\*  
\*

They begin to eat the bread. Their speed betrays their  
hunger.

\*  
\*

JESUS

Now... do you all know the Shema as  
well?

\*  
\*

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ABIGAIL

Yes.

JESUS

I would love to hear it.

They bow their heads. Jesus watches them throughout, perhaps emotional, and occasionally mouths along with them.

ALL

(in unison)

Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God,  
the Lord is One. You shall love the  
Lord your God with all your heart,  
all your soul, and all your might.  
And it shall come to pass if you  
surely listen to the commandments  
that I command you today, that you  
may gather in your grain, your  
wine, and your oil, and you will  
eat and you will be satisfied. I am  
the Lord, your God, who led you  
from the land of Egypt to be a God  
to you. I am the Lord, your God.  
Amen.

\*

JESUS

Beautiful. Very good.

\*

ABIGAIL

So why don't you have a home?

CUT TO:

100

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

100

Jesus is assembling pieces for one of his projects as the kids are either listening or doing tasks he's assigning, from tying little pieces together to breaking branches to handing him tools. These tasks come from AD-LIBBED instructions throughout.

JESUS

My home is many places.

CHILD #4

Why?

JESUS

I have a much larger job than just being a craftsman or teacher.

CHILD #3  
You're a teacher, too?

JESUS  
I will be soon.

CHILD #1  
What other job?

JESUS  
Everyone has a much larger job than just their trade. And you are more than just students. You are also at school to show love to others, to take God's Word and share it, and at home to honor your father and mother and most important, from the law of Moses, to love who...

JOSHUA  
The Lord your God with all your heart.

JESUS  
Very good, Joshua the brave. So I will be doing my work in many places.

CUT TO:

101 EXT. FIELD - AFTERNOON

101

The kids are actually all walking as fast as Abigail this time, taking turns in the lead as they talk over each other.

CHILD #3  
...or maybe he's the best builder who ever lived!

CHILD #4  
Or what if he's stronger than Samson?

ABIGAIL  
(to the boys)  
Maybe he's going to be your new teacher at synagogue school.

CHILD #2  
I think he's maybe a new prophet, and he'll --

JOSHUA

No, there aren't new prophets,  
Rabbi Josiah said so!

CHILD #1

But maybe he's a murderer.

ABIGAIL

He is not!

CHILD #1

Maybe that's why he's by himself,  
he's running and hiding and --

CHILD #3

Yeah, and he's pretending to be a  
builder so no one --

ABIGAIL

That's not true, he's building  
things with us, we're watching him  
do it.

CHILD #2

Yeah, he's smart, so we can't --

CHILD #1

(excited)

Maybe we're even helping him build  
weapons and we don't know it.

ABIGAIL

No, he's a good man.

CHILD #4

I think so, too!

CHILD #1

I like him, I'm just saying, maybe  
he's a criminal.

ABIGAIL

But no matter what...

She stops, and they all stop to listen.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

We all agree. We don't tell anyone  
about him, right?

They all shake their heads. "Nobody," "No," etc. As they  
split off and head home --

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)  
See you here tomorrow!

CUT TO:

102 MONTAGE: 102

103 EXT. STREAM - DAY 103

Jesus is walking from the stream with a catch of fish, the kids following, some carrying fishing items. They are peppering him with questions as usual. He makes Abigail raise her hand first.

104 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY 104

Jesus finishes packing a "sled" of items and leaves his campsite for town, dragging it behind him.

105 EXT. CAMPSITE - EVENING 105

Jesus returns, his sled now containing food and supplies.

106 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY 106

The kids are sitting around the campfire, and Jesus is teaching them a new prayer, and they repeat after him -- "Our father, who art in heaven."

107 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT 107

Jesus finishes dressing a wound on his arm, and then he does a series of stretches, clearly working out some soreness as we see some of the typical results of hard labor.

108 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY 108

The kids sit around, listening to Jesus while telling a story, and he startles them all with a demonstrative yell (like a bear or a soldier).

109 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT 109

Jesus is praying, but this time he's pacing, and the prayer is more intense as he's clearly dialoguing with his Father.

110 EXT. CAMPSITE 110

Jesus leads the kids in a song as they are spread around the campsite, all helping him with one of his projects.

111 EXT. FIELD - AFTERNOON 111

The kids are walking towards the campsite, this time excitedly telling a new kid what's going on. \*

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

112 EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY 112

Jesus and the children are gathered, but this time, there isn't activity. Jesus is in full-on teaching mode, and the kids are in full-on respect mode. By this time, the kids all raise their hands before talking, and Jesus acknowledges them. Child #1 is in the middle of a story.

CHILD #1

And he wouldn't stop pushing me, so I pushed him so hard he fell down.

JESUS

And that is why you were punished. Did you expect something different?

CHILD #1

But even Torah says "eye for an eye," why should I be punished, too?

JESUS

Yes, but that is for a judge, you were hardly in a court of law. And you are to be special, to act differently than others.

JOSHUA

You tell us to be gentle, but Rabbi Josiah said Messiah would lead us against the Romans, that he would be a great military leader.

JESUS

It is important to respect your teachers and honor your parents. And Rabbi Josiah is a smart man.

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

But many times smart men lack wisdom. Is there anything in scripture saying Messiah will be a great military leader?

Silence.

JESUS (CONT'D)

There are many things about scripture that you cannot understand yet. And that is fine, you have many years ahead of you, and God does not reveal all things at once. But children, what if many of the things our people think about how we are to behave, and how we are to treat one another, even the Romans...are wrong? What if it is better to be kind... and forgiving... than to fight?

He looks directly at Child #1, because He knows him.

JESUS (CONT'D)

You want things to be fair. I understand. When someone wrongs you, you want to right it. And you know who else loves justice?

A pause, and then Jesus points up to God.

JESUS (CONT'D)

But what does the Lord say in the law of Moses about justice, and vengeance?

Abigail raises her hand.

ABIGAIL

Vengeance is mine.

JESUS

Very good. Boys, pay attention, she doesn't even go to torah class. So yes, the Lord loves justice; but maybe it is not ours to handle. Do you remember when David had the chance to kill King Saul, who was evil to him, but he didn't. He was the Lord's anointed, and it was not the right time for justice.

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

And God says he will have  
compassion on his people when,  
what...

Abigail raises her hand.

JESUS (CONT'D)

Let's see if someone who studies  
this at school is learning.

JOSHUA

When their strength is gone?

JESUS

Yes. So maybe we let God provide  
justice, hm? Maybe we handle these  
things in a different way, not  
trying to be the strongest all the  
time.

CHILD #3

Even Messiah?

JESUS

You will have to see. But do not  
expect Messiah to arrive in  
Jerusalem on a tall horse carrying  
weapons. And He will be most  
pleased with those of you who are  
the peacemakers.

CHILD #2

Where were you yesterday?

JESUS

I had to stay in town later, there  
was a woman who needed my help.

CHILD #3

Did you build something for her?

JESUS

No...do you remember when I said  
that I have a job that is bigger  
than my trade? There is a woman who  
has had much pain in her life, and  
she was in trouble, so I helped  
her.

JOSHUA

Is she your friend?

JESUS

She is now. And I have chosen her and others, and more soon, to join me in traveling.

ABIGAIL

Do they know you?

JESUS

Not yet.

CHILD #1

What if they don't like you?

JESUS

Many won't like me.

The kids can't comprehend that one.

CHILD #2

What if they don't want to be with you?

JESUS

Many will not...but my chosen will. This is my reason for being here.

ABIGAIL

I still don't understand. What is your reason for being here?

Jesus takes a moment, almost as if to make sure He wants to say it, but of course he knows what he's doing. The children lean in as he talks quietly but firmly.

JESUS

I'm telling you this because even though you are children, and the elders in your life have lived longer, many times adults need the faith of children. And if you keep this faith, someday soon you will understand all of what I am saying to you. As prophet Zechariah said, "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets" as the old men and women sit.

But you ask an important question, Abigail. And the answer is for all of you.

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because He has anointed me to  
proclaim good news to the poor.

(MORE)

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JESUS (CONT'D)

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

JOSHUA

Isaiah.

JESUS

I have loved spending this time with you, you are very special. And I hope that my next students ask the same questions you do and listen to my answers. But I suspect they do not have the understanding you do.

He looks at Abigail.

JESUS (CONT'D)

And I hope when the time comes, they will tell others about me like you have.

The children are overwhelmed. Do they understand what he's saying? Could it be? Sure seems like it.

JESUS (CONT'D)

But for now...we honor our father and mother. It is getting late.

CUT TO:

113 EXT. FIELD - DUSK

113

The children walk home together, but this time they don't say a word.

CUT TO:

114 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

114

Jesus puts the finishing touches on something we don't see, and he sets it down next to a rock. We then see him writing something with coal on the rock. He smiles, and we --

CUT TO:

115 EXT. FIELD - MORNING 115

Abigail is walking alone with her doll.

116 EXT. CAMPSITE - MORNING 116

She rounds the corner and freezes. We see the site is empty. Other than a lifeless fire pit, everything is gone. Well, not quite everything.

Abigail looks in sadness, but then notices something by the large rock Jesus was at last night. She approaches, and we see:

A simple but well-crafted DOLL HOUSE. Rock slabs held together by 1st century rope.

Abigail notices the writing above it and reads aloud.

ABIGAIL

Abigail, I know you can read. You are very special. This is for you. I did not come only for the wealthy.

She places her doll into the house and pulls a piece of bread out that Jesus left for her as well. She begins to eat and play as we PULL BACK and --

CUT TO BLACK

117 END EPISODE 117