



EPISODE 2 – SHABBAT

The CHOSEN Discussion Guide

Watch - Discuss - Learn - Rejoice

“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
-Mt 11:28–30.

Watch

Historical fiction often develops a story around a particular cultural emphasis. This episode opens with a scene depicting Sabbath observance in an ancient Israelite home.

The series introduces Quintas, a fictional character who serves as an arrogant and cunning Roman magistrate in Capernaum and Praetor of Galilee.

Matthew, the Praetor, and Peter are fictionally tied into plots to capture tax evaders. Matthew spies on Peter. And we briefly meet the “Av Beit Din” (Master of the Court). He was the second highest ranking member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling body.

Nicodemus' wife is portrayed as controlling in a bad way. Peter's wife is presented as trying to warn her husband of spiritual indifference. Jesus finds Mary after healing her and freeing her.

Discuss

- 1) Describe how the fictional Roman magistrate, Quintas, is portrayed and his attitude towards the Jews. Evaluate how accurate this may be and how it affects your view of ancient Rome.
- 2) Peter's betrayal, spying, and tax plot are fictional. However, intrigue was no doubt common. How does Matthew's character here compare to the one found in the Bible? (Mt 9:10-11)
- 3) The series decided to present Matthew with OCD and on the autism spectrum. Discuss the pros and cons of elaborating on the personality of the apostles when there is very little detail given in Scripture.
- 4) Peter is depicted in the series as someone who speaks quickly and fits in with a crowd of burly fishermen and merchants. He fights and gambles. Compare this portrayal with the Peter depicted in the true biblical accounts (Mark 9:5-6; John 18:10; Acts 10:14; Luke 5:8).
- 5) This episode depicts Sanhedrin eager to give Nicodemus credit for the healing of Mary Magdalene. Nicodemus wants to investigate further and finds out Jesus was responsible. Compare with the words and actions recorded in John 3:1-2.
- 6) Is it plausible Jesus might invite himself to dinner at Mary's home? (Compare Lk 8:1-3)

Learn

- a) Nicodemus' wife is a fictional character. Describe the contrasting priorities and piety of Nicodemus and his wife. How can spiritual leaders fall into this same trap today?
- b) Matthew's father had disowned him, a common response. How ought the people of God respond to family members who betray their parents and their faith?
- c) This episode presents Mary, now healed, excited to observe Shabbat. How can we motivate people to the same excitement in spend time resting with God's Word?
- d) Peter is fictionally portrayed as breaking the Sabbath for "business." How does this part of the episode reflect upon the worship life of many today?
- e) The fictional character, Eden, presents a view of what family life might have been like for Peter, who was in fact married (Mt 8:14, 1 Co 9:5). Evaluate the accuracy of Peter spiritually drifting away from a godly wife. How do modern families often display the same struggle?
- f) Note how this episode portrayed the opulent Sabbath observance with high society in strong contrast to the Sabbath observance where Jesus was literally in attendance. What important truth does this impress on the viewer?

Rejoice

- 1) The Sabbath observance was a day ancient Israel was command (one of The Ten) to cease from rest and a "day of sacred assembly" (Lk 23:3). It began at the time of Moses. It was meant as a time to cease all work and reflect on God's work for his people. There is no command in the New Testament for believers to keep a Sabbath day. In fact, all of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament and applied to the New Testament Church, except for the Sabbath observance. In fact, we are free to worship on any day with any custom that honors Christ (Col 2:16-17). This is because the rest foreshadowed by the Sabbath was completed and won by Christ. In him we find everlasting peace and rest.
- 2) Jesus was buried and his body rested on the Sabbath after he completed our redemption (Lk 23:50-56) Now we find rest in Jesus (any day of the week) as long as it today, until we find rest forever in our eternal home (Hebrews 4:8-11). Let this motivate you to spend time resting with Jesus.

(Nicodemus asks Mary about who healed her and how.) Mary: "I don't understand it myself. But here is what I can tell you. I was one way and now I am completely different (and he is the reason)."
