The Chosen—Season 5, Episode 6, "Reunions"
"Easter Eggs," Notes, and Discussion Questions—Details and Notes that Might Be Helpful or Interesting

Introductory Notes:

1. '*' Indicates an extra-biblical character or incident.
2. **John's Farewell Discourse: John 13:21-17:26** Contrasted to the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), which detail Jesus' Last Supper by focusing on the Passover bread and wine, John's Gospel focuses more so on Jesus' foot washing (John 13:1-20). In fact, John's Gospel places the Last Supper *before* the Passover—*"Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father,"* John 13:1.

   (**Remember from previous sessions:** the Gospel writers—as with other contemporary historians of the ancient world—are less concerned with "the accidents," the precise details of a particular incident and moreso *the meaning* of the incident. For example, in reporting a battle, the historian might write that *"…500,000 fell by the king's sword that day…"*, and whether or not that number is accurate and true, the meaningful point—the "truthiness" of the report, thank you very much, Stephen Colbert—is that this king was mighty and victorious in battle. The number is less important to the historian than the point, the meaning.)

   We can think of the Farewell Discourse as sort of a "last will and testament," a final inclusion of the summation of Jesus' teaching according to John. Included in this 4 ½-chapter-long monolog are some Jesus' best-known and well-beloved words, some of which are included in this scene:

   - **Jesus' New Commandment:** Love One Another (13:31-35)
   - **Foretelling Peter's denial** (13:36-38)
   - **Jesus' departure to the Father and Jesus the Way to the Father** (14:1-14)—*"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. …I am the way, and the truth, and the life"* (vs. 1-2, 6).
   - **Promised assurance of the Holy Spirit as advocate and guide** (14:15-31)—*"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. …the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid"* (vs. 18, 25-27).
   - **Jesus the True Vine** (15:1-17)—*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. …No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if (when!—MEP) you do what I command you. …You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last…"* (vs. 1-2, 13-14, 16).
   - **The World's Rejection** (15:18-27)—*"If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you"* (v. 1).
   - **Reminders of the promise Holy Spirit and Jesus' impending departure** (16:1-15)
   - **A promise that their grief will turn to joy and peace** (16:16-33)—*"A little while and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me. …Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. …Take courage; I have conquered the world!"* (vs. 16, 20, 33).
   - **Jesus prays for his disciples** (17:1-26)

Cold Open: The Last Supper

00:00:22 – 00:08:52	**Scene Summary:** Again the scene opens around the table of the Last Supper—Judas is still there.

The first words spoken are by Thomas, addressed to Jesus: “What is that supposed to mean?” and after a lengthy pause, Thomas looks around the table and adds, “Well who is? And who isn’t?” It is unclear as to whether Jesus is addressing Thomas’ question: “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. This is our last Passover together on this earth before we celebrate it again when all is fulfilled in the new kingdom” (See **Note 1—I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover meal with you: Luke 22:14-16**, p. 3.).

Nathanael wants to know how long that will be and continues to answer his own query, “But I know the answer,” implying the answer Jesus has give time and again to questions of when… “Soon.”

Jesus promises, “You will understand. But first…”—he picks up a large round of unleavened bread, looks heavenward, and prays, “Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.” “Amen,” the disciples reply, and Jesus breaks it in half, handing one portion to Judas on his left and the other to John on his right. (The camera follows Judas in this moment, breaking off a piece of the bread before handing the remainder on to his left—he seems uncertain, eyes cast downward as he perhaps is contemplating his course of action.)

As the bread is passed around the table, Jesus begins to reinterpret the Passover meal: “Normally this bread is to remember and celebrate our redemption from Egypt into the Promised Land, from slavery into freedom,” he says, “Tonight we are celebrating your redemption from sin…”—the camera focuses on Judas—“…because of me.” (See **Note 2—The Passover Bread: Exodus 14:14-20,** p. 3.) Jesus pauses and then concludes, “Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” (See **Note 3—Last Supper texts,** p. 3.) Jesus eats, and the disciples do, as well.

Next Jesus takes one of the cups in front of him, again looks heavenward, and prays, “Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.” Again, all respond, “Amen,” and again, Jesus explains and reinterprets. He drinks from the cup and passes it to Judas, who drinks and passes it to Big James.

Jesus continues—now we’re back in John’s Gospel—“I am the true vine…”. (See **Note 4—I am the vine: John 15:1-8,** p. 4.).

By the time Jesus concludes, the cup has made it all the way around the table, and John drains it, “These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full.”

Suddenly—it startles Jesus—there sits John the Baptist at the table. (See **Note 5—The Passover & Elijah**, p. 4.) The camera suggests that the disciples themselves notice Jesus and look in the direction he is gazing. But only Jesus sees John the Baptist. Andrew questions Jesus’ smile, which seems to break Jesus from his vision.

Regathering himself, Jesus reflects on the foot washing—something only suggested to this point but as yet not seen—“Earlier,” he says, “I may have washed *some* of your feet. But not all of you are clean.” (See **Note 6—I may have washed *some* of your feet…**, p. 4.) Again, the camera lingers on Judas. Big James questions Jesus’ statement, but Jesus only replies with, “The Scripture has now been fulfilled, ‘He who has eaten my bread has lifted his heel against me.” (See **Note 7—The fulfilled Scripture, “He who has eaten my bread…”: John 13:18**, p. 4.)

John (the disciple—not the vision of the Baptizer) is baffled by Jesus’ words, and Jesus continues to speak of his betrayal by one of the disciples, as we saw and heard at the outset of the previous episode. As Peter presses for who it is, again, the camera lingers on Judas, then Jesus. Peter suggests they would “bind him, gag him, and throw him in a pit so he can’t do it.” But Jesus only replies, “The Son of Man goes as it is written of him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed…” (See **Note 8—The Son of Man goes as it is written…: Matthew 26:23-24,** p. 5.). Tearfully, Zee demands to know who it is so that they make sure “that man wishes he had never been born.” Jesus only shakily dismisses himself from the table only saying, “I need a moment,” leaving the table in stunned silence until a handful of the disciples rise to tend to their teacher.

Notes:

1. **Note 1—I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover meal with you: Luke 22:14-16:** *When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him.* ***15*** *He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,* ***16*** *for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."*

   We have had scant references to Luke's Gospel, *The Chosen* choosing instead to draw mainly from Matthew and John. Here, in particular, *The Chosen* has included this passage from Luke in connection with the Last Supper and "the Kingdom of God." That phrase—"the Kingdom of God"—is used 35 times in Luke's Gospel.

   Remember: Most of the time, Jesus' use of that phrase has less to do with "heaven"—Luke never uses that terminology, "Kingdom of heaven"—and as our desired final destination. Rather, a better translation of the phrase would be something akin to, *"the kingly ruling activity of God."* Most importantly, ***the Kingdom of God is better understood as the inbreaking of God's good and gracious ruling activity and will, ushered into the world around us through Jesus, and a reality followers of Jesus are called to recognize around themselves; participate in; enact and build through living out Jesus' teaching and ministry; and anticipate the full consummation of in a future yet to come.*** Again and again, throughout Luke's Gospel in particular, Jesus' introduction to his parables begin, "*The Kingdom of heaven* is like…", and then the point of the parable often is to open our eyes to the way this ruling activity of God is already active among us.

2. **Note 2—The Passover Bread: Exodus 14:14-20:** *"This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.* ***15*** *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel.* ***16*** *On the first day you shall hold a solemn assembly and on the seventh day a solemn assembly; no work shall be done on those days; only what everyone must eat, that alone may be prepared by you.* ***17*** *You shall observe the Festival of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your companies out of the land of Egypt: you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a perpetual ordinance.* ***18*** *In the first month, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day, you shall eat unleavened bread.* ***19*** *For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, for whoever eats what is leavened shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether an alien or a native of the land.* ***20*** *You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread."*

3. **Note 3—Last Supper texts:** There are 4 places in the New Testament from which we draw regarding the Last Supper:

   - **Matthew 26:26-30:** While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." **27** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, **28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. **29** I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

     30 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

   - **Mark 14:22-26:** While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." **23** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. **24** He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. **25** Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

     26 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

   - **Luke 22:14-20:** When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. **15** He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, **16** for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." **17** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves, **18** for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." **19** Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **20** And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

   - **1 Corinthians 11:23-26:** *[The apostle Paul writes,]* For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way he

took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Note 1: This Corinthians text (along with the rest of Paul's words surrounding this passage) is significant in that it reveals that already in the earliest days of the Jesus movement, keeping the Lord's Supper has already become foundational to Christian practice, even among the far flung and fledgling congregations throughout the Mediterranean world.

Note 2: Note that John's Gospel makes no mention of the Passover elements of bread and wine at the Last Supper, placing the final meal *NOT on the first day of the Passover and its solemn feast,* but instead, *"Now BEFORE the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father…".*

Note 3: In Matthew and Mark, Jesus' revelation of the as yet unidentified betrayer in their midst comes *before* "the words of institution." In Luke's Gospel, it comes *after.*

Other comparisons and contrasts between the Last Supper accounts you notice or wonder about?

4. **Note 4—I am the Vine: John 15:1-8:** *Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. [2] He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. [3] You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. [4] Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. [5] I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. [6] Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. [7] If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. [8] My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."*

   Again, with the fruit language.

5. **Note 5—The Passover & Elijah:** Beyond just an unexpected cinematic effect, the appearance of John the Baptism here may be a nod to contemporary Jewish Passover practices. Beginning in the Middle Ages, a custom developed around the 11th century wherein families left a empty chair, a extra glass (untouched throughout the meal) of wine, and/or opened their front door to symbolize their readiness to run outside and greet the Messiah, heralded first by Elijah's appearance, when redemption had finally arrived.

   Malachi 4:1-6: *See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.*
   [2] But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. [3] And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts.

   [4] Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

   [5] See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. [6] He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.

   In the Gospels, John the Baptist's role—both in function as well as appearance—hearkens to an Elijah figure who heralds Jesus' arrival and appearance.

6. **Note 6—I may have washed *some* of your feet—**This may be something to watch for. **John 13:4-5, 12** seems to imply *all* the disciples: *"[4] Jesus got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. [5] Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. … [12] After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"*

   It is during this episode that Jesus first alludes to the presence of the betrayer: *[10] Jesus said to Peter, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." [11] For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."*

7. **Note 7—The fulfilled Scripture, "He who has eaten my bread…": John 13:18:** *[18] I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, 'The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'"*

"The Scripture" Jesus is referring to is **Psalm 41:9**. This Psalm is attributed to David, and the context of its content seems to be that of suffering and abandonment of his friends and allies.

8. **Note 8—The Son of Man goes as it is written…: Matthew 26:23-24:** *23 He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. 24 The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."*

Scene 1: Jerusalem—The Temple: the Court of the Sanhedrin*

00:09:55-00:24:16	**Scene Summary:** The scene opens as the Sanhedrin discusses a building project on "Solomon's Porch" and an anticipated increase in the cost over the original estimate. As the camera pans the men gathered there, we now see Nicodemus among them. He seems to be dozing, as the laughter around an inside joke awakens him. As the meeting adjourns, one of the rabbi's we've seen lately—Ozem* (one of the most vociferous in their pursuit of Jesus' death)—welcomes Nicodemus back, noting, "I trust your time was fruitful." Their conversation explains Nicodemus' absence, as he was apparently on another teaching junket, this time in Bethel, a similar mission that had brought him to Capernaum and his initial encounters with Jesus in the beginning. As Nicodemus' conversation with Rabbi Ozem* ends, he turns to face his old student Shmuel.* Their initial greetings are cordial though somewhat distant. Nicodemus congratulate Shmuel* for his appointment to the Sanhedrin and apologizes for not being there to officially welcome him. The conversation with between Shmuel* and Nicodemus ends awkwardly if not amiably when Rabbi Zebadiah* interrupts and lets Nicodemus know Zebadiah will be at his quarters "in less than an hour." Turning back to Shmuel*, Nicodemus does affirm, "It's good to see you again, which Shmuel* echoes—though there seems to be some tension, probably reestablishing the contentiousness that had existed between the two men back in Capernaum when Nicodemus advised caution in Shmuel's* fervor against Jesus. Next, we see the anticipated meeting between Zebadiah* and Nicodemus in his quarters as Zebadiah* fills him in on the business conducted while Nicodemus was away. As Zebadiah* reports some of the minutiae, Nicodemus requests only the highlights, and as Zebadiah* continues, he notes Nicodemus' impatience and skips over a few items. Zebadiah* comments that he noted Nicodemus' conversation with Shmuel* and goes on to praise Shmuel's* addition to the Sanhedrin, noting that Rabbi Shammai—probably the most conservative of the council—gave Shmuel* "credit for some of the events leading to the death of the baptizer from Galilee." But Nicodemus has apparently not heard and Zebadiah* fills him in, "Beheaded by Herod's court." Nicodemus had indicated that he had encountered John the Baptist directly while in Capernaum, and Zebadiah* wonders about Nicodemus' encounter, who reminds us he had visited John in prison. (S1E5, "The Rock By Which You Are Hewn.") Nicodemus remembers, "He had a cousin in Capernaum"—Jesus—"A teacher who was amassing a following, doing signs and wonders." Zebadiah* now fills Nicodemus in on the furor around Jesus in the Sanhedrin, noting especially, "Caiaphas ended up giving a whole speech about him." Nicodemus seems surprised that the whole Jesus matter made it all the way to Caiaphas since Jesus "is all the way up in Capernaum," and Zebadiah* indicates that Nicodemus has been away for a long time—possibly as long as two years since his disappearance from the story at the end of Season 1 (S1E8, "I Am He.") He goes on to report, "Jesus has been traveling all over, and these so-called signs and wonders you mentioned have bedeviled the people. He's the most popular Messiah claimant in a while." (See **Note 9—Previous people who claimed to be Messiah: Acts 5:36-39,** p. 7.) As Zebadiah* continues his report, Nicodemus is obviously affected by this news and dismisses Zebaidah.* Zebadiah* seems alarmed by Nicodemus' sudden change in mood. After Zebadiah* has been dismissed, Nicodemus enters a side office in his quarters calling for "Matthias," the Mysterious Watcher we have seen lurking going back to the resurrection of Lazarus (S4E7, "The Last Sign") and who was the one who abducted Mary Magdalene in the last episode, bringing her to Nicodemus. (Apparently, Mary is completely unaware of the

conspiracy to kill Jesus, even in her knowledge of the danger he is in.) Anxiously, Nicodemus commands Matthias to drop everything he's doing for an assignment Nicodemus has for him.

The scene shifts BACK to Mary's encounter with Nicodemus AFTER her abduction by Matthias in the last episode. (See **Note 10—Plot Narrative Timeline,** p. 7.) Nicodemus greets her, "Mary of Magdala" and wonders if she had been looking for him, which indicates in the affirmative. Mary is puzzled by the cloak and dagger of it all, wondering, "Why didn't your men just tell me they were with you." Nicodemus replies that he had no choice and had to be cautious about all this lest his position, place, and stature among the Sanhedrin be threatened and no longer able to work on Jesus' behalf. He chastises her and the disciples for being indiscreet in looking for him and that her actions "could well have accelerated [Jesus'] demise." But she corrects him, indicating that they have "been on the run from the moment we arrived" and that "Jesus has not passed up a single opportunity to make an enemy." Nicodemus presses her as to why she thinks Jesus is doing this, "systematically turning allies into enemies," and she reminds him of what Nicodemus himself has experienced: "You've seen him challenge authority. He won't shrink just because…". But Nicodemus interrupts her, revealing that there's something bigger going on here and turns to read Jesus' own words. This puzzles Mary and Nicodemus discloses what we've seen going back to the resurrection of Lazarus: "My watchman was observing and taking notes." Nicodemus reads her Matthias' report of Jesus' protest and demonstration among the moneychangers and sacrifice vendors at the Temple: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees…"—lingering on the word "Pharisees," as he himself is a Pharisee—"…hypocrites. For you are like whitewashed tombs, who outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and uncleanness." (As Nicodemus reads, Matthias bows his head until eventually Mary looks over at him.) Nicodemus goes on reading from Matthias' report of Jesus' words, growing angrier by the moment and concluding, "Doesn't exactly sound like an invitation to join him, does it?!" Mary wonders how long Nicodemus has been tracking Jesus and expresses puzzlement as she turns to address Matthias: "You've seen us? You've been watching all of us?" After Matthias nods, Mary fires back, "Tell me why I shouldn't be very uncomfortable with all of this," but Nicodemus responds, "He was only doing what I asked him to do. I've not seen Jesus since Capernaum. But when news reached Jerusalem that he was claiming to be the Christ, I had to." (See **Note 11—Christ vs. Messiah**, p. 7.) He continues in the face of Mary's protest of being spied on, "Mary, I brought you here under duress, so I'm trying to be patient with your loose words. …I teach Torah and the foundations of our faith to students all over Israel. Please try to understand the immense responsibility for our people that I feel on my shoulders from Adonai himself." (See **Note 12—Adonai,** p. 7.) He continues, "Every year, from every region, someone comes along claiming to be the Messiah, and trying to sway our people, and mislead them. Most of them are crushed for their false prophecy and we never even hear of them." (Review **Note 9—Previous people who claimed to be Messiah: Acts 5:36-39,** p. 7.) Nicodemus adds, "But when someone like Jesus achieves this level of influence over these many people, performing these kinds of signs and wonders, all the while claiming to be the Christ, and asserting his authority over the law and leaders of our people…I have a sacred duty to prove him wrong."

Mary now turns to Matthias first, "What did you see?" and then back to Nicodemus, "What did he report to you? You met him yourself. I helped arrange it. I'm sure you saw who he is as well…" (nodding to Matthias) "…What did he see?" Nicodemus responds: "He saw the eyes of the blind opened. The ears of the deaf unstopped. The lame man leaping like…" (Nicodemus begins to weep, as Mary smiles) "…like deer. And the tongue of the mute singing for joy." (See **Note 13—One of Isaiah's Messianic prophecies: Isaiah 35:3-7,** p. 7.) Mary notes, "Isaiah," and Nicodemus continues with another Isaiaic prophecy: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light…" (See **Note 14—The People who walked in darkness: Isaiah 9:1-7,** p. 8.) He trots out another Messianic prophecy, this time from the prophet Micah, but this time it is Matthias who finishes the prophecy, "…One who is to be ruler of Israel." (See **Note 15—Bethlehem: Micah 5:1-6,** p. 8. And **Note 16—Matthias: Acts 1:13-26,** p. 9)

Mary concludes, "You now know he is the one who fulfills these prophecies," and Nicodemus confesses the prayed Jesus wouldn't be that, that he "needed him to be a fraud." Matthias

	confesses, as well, “But I have seen too much,” which Mary corroborates, including a question, “And you saw Lazarus?” Matthias only nods. Mary’s mood changes, however, when she begins to question why Nicodemus hasn’t borne witness to the rest of the Sanhedrin and why Nicodemus has been absent. Nicodemus explains that his present condition (his old age?) and the futility of getting anything of substance done because of the “money, politics, and fear that guide most of them and govern their decisions” have prevented him, especially with the energy that false prophecy provokes among the Jewish leadership. Now Mary questions Nicodemus, indicating that she had been looking for him, “Why have you wanted to talk to me, if not help?” Nicodemus replies that he has wanted to warn Mary to warn Jesus that he’s in danger. Mary signals that message has been received, “But for whatever reason, he’s clearly not running from that danger. So now I’m asking you to help eliminate it.” She reminds him that his wisdom and strength moved Nicodemus to pursue Jesus when the rest of the Jewish leadership began to assemble against him. Tearfully, she pleads for Nicodemus to do anything he can. Nicodemus, overwhelmed by it all, simply turns back to the fire. Finally, Mary concludes, “Nicodemus, there is something else I wanted to say to you: thank you.” This puzzles Nicodemus, and Mary continues, “For trying.” She recollects the day the Roman soldiers brought Nicodemus to Mary’s place in the Red Quarter in Capernaum. (S1E1, “I Have Called You by Name”) After Mary leaves, Nicodemus expresses his frustration by striking a nearby couch with his walking stick at the very moment his wife Zohara walks in, noting his troubled spirit. Nicodemus tries to explain, but Zohara adamantly insists he come with her. Inside his office, we seek various scraps of paper pinned to the wall, connected by a series of red strings. Zohara expresses her concern for him, but also perhaps the implication of her concern about what he’s been so consumed by in his studies and demands to talk. Nicodemus only says that they will but that he can’t right now.

Notes:

1. **Note 9—Previous people who claimed to be Messiah: Acts 5:36-39:** *[Peter had testified before the Jewish Council who had arrested him, bearing witness to Jesus’ resurrection…] 33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. 34 But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time. 35 Then he said to them, “Fellow Israelites, consider carefully what you propose to do to these men. 36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him, but he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and disappeared. 37 After him Judas the Galilean rose up at the time of the census and got people to follow him; he also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. 38 So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them—in that case you may even be found fighting against God!”*
2. **Note 10—Plot Narrative Timeline:** Everything we’ve seen in this episode transpires *BEFORE* Mary’s abduction by Matthias—*THIS was the assignment Nicodemus gave to Matthias.*
3. **Note 11—Christ vs. Messiah:** The Hebrew word “Messiah” means “anointed one,” as in “Adonai’s anointed” or “God’s chosen and anointed one.” “Christ” is the Greek translation of “Messiah,” meaning the same thing.
4. **Note 12—Adonai:** The Hebrew word for God, “the LORD.” In our English translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, this name for God is denoted by that all-caps typeset: the LORD.

   Another name for God—“Elohim”—is usually indicated simply by the word “God.”

   Where we encounter “the LORD God,” it is BOTH words together: “Adonai Elohim.”
5. **Note 13—One of Isaiah’s Messianic prophecies: Isaiah 35:3-7:**

   Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.
   4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance,
   with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.”
   5 *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;*
   6 *then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.* For waters shall break forth in
   the wilderness and streams in the desert;

[7] the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

Note: Note how the prophecy begins—*"He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."*

This prophecy was first spoken by Isaiah either…

…(most likely) immediately after the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria in stages between 732 and ultimately 722 BC;

…immediately prior to the conquest and destruction of the northern kingdom of Judah by Babylon in stages between 597 and ultimately 587 BC; or

…immediately after that conquest.

If you are a fearful, threatened, or conquered nation, which words are you apt to gravitate toward?

Which of these words tip toward the expected, anticipated, hoped for Davidic warrior king?

Which of these words tip toward someone who looks/sounds/acts more like Jesus?

6. **Note 14—The People who walked in darkness: Isaiah 9:1-7:**

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

[2] The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
[3] You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
[4] For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
[5] For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
[6] For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
[7] Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Note: With the mention of Zebulun and Naphtali, this prophecy is more squarely located in the events of the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel. But once again, note…

If you are a fearful, threatened, or conquered nation, which words are you apt to gravitate toward?

Which of these words tip toward the expected, anticipated, hoped for Davidic warrior king?

Which of these words tip toward someone who looks/sounds/acts more like Jesus?

7. **Note 15—Bethlehem: Micah 5:1-6**

Now you are walled around with a wall; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the ruler of Israel upon the cheek.

[2] But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
[3] Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.
[4] And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, [5] and he shall be the one of peace.
If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight rulers.
[6] They shall rule the land of Assyria with the sword and the land of Nimrod with the drawn sword; they shall rescue us from the Assyrians if they come into our land or tread within our border.

Note: Once again, Micah's prophecy is located time/place around the time of the Assyrian threat.

You know the drill—**how might this prophecy had been misunderstood with good reason?**

8. **Note 16—Matthias: Acts 1:13-26:** *13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.*

15 In those days Peter stood up among the brothers and sisters (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, 16 "Brothers and sisters, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus, 17 for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." 18 (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out. 19 This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms,

'Let his house become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it'; and 'Let another take his position of overseer.'

21 "So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." 23 So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Note: Not only does this passage lift up Matthias as Judas' eventual replacement, but it also introduces a puzzling, different story about Judas' demise.

- This is one of those passages that strikes at the heart of the mistaken notion of Scripture, *univocality*, that is, that Scriptures speaks consistently "with one voice." Clearly, it does not—did Judas hang himself as Matthew 27:1-10 declares?

  Matthew 27:1-10: *When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. 2 They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.*

  3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 4 He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." 5 Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. 6 But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." 7 After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. 8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, 10 and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

  Or did it happen in the way Luke/Acts reports?

- **Remember from previous sessions:** the Gospel writers—as with other contemporary historians of the ancient world—are less concerned with "the accidents," the precise details of a particular incident and moreso *the meaning* of the incident. For example, in reporting a battle, the historian might write that *"…500,000 fell by the king's sword that day…"*, and whether or not that number is accurate and true, the meaningful point—the "truthiness" of the report, thank you very much, Stephen Colbert—is that this king was mighty and victorious in battle. The number is less important to the historian than the point, the meaning.

  What both Matthew and Luke agree on is that Judas met a terrible demise.

Scene 2: Elsewhere in Jerusalem* (See **Note 17—Why Judas betrays Jesus**, p. 10.)

00:24:17-00:30:10	**Scene Summary:** We pick up where we last saw Judas entering the house of Caiaphas the High Priest. Caiaphas bids Judas sit down and offers to serve him something, but Judas interrupts him: "We are not the same." He continues to explain that whatever it is Shmuel* has reported to Caiaphas, "…You and I are not the same." Caiaphas agrees, lifting up his credentials as High Priest and turning to Judas as, "…helping to save your people," Judas says. Shmuel* appears annoyed, and Judas goes on to guarantee that he can indeed deliver Jesus to Caiaphas and, "I do believe that Jesus is most likely the Messiah." "Why?..Why do you believe that?." asks Caiaphas as he rises from his desk. "I've seen too much," Judas replies, which only provokes curiosity from Caiaphas as to why Judas would be willing to

	betray Jesus. Twitching, Judas only replies, “I suppose I have not seen enough.” But he goes on, “Hopefully, we’ll get to see it this week. If, when you take him into custody, he effortlessly destroys his captors, leads us to victory over Rome, and takes his rightful place on the throne of David. Then I’ll be celebrating with the rest of our people.” Caiaphas dismisses Judas’ premise and denigrates him as being “utterly out of your depth.” Next Caiaphas dismisses his servant Malchus and Shmuel*. Once the two have left the room, Caiaphas chastises Judas for speaking to him in such a manner. As Judas turns to leave without a deal, Caiaphas raises his voice and commands Judas to sit down, “We are not finished!” Now Judas resolutely turns to face the High Priest and strides confidently toward him seated at his desk, laying out the terrain of the bargain: “This isn’t complicated, your honor,” Judas says, “You need information, and I’m the only one capable and willing to give it to you.” He coolly sits down, looking Caiaphas in the eye, “All we have to agree on,” Judas continues, “Is a price.” Caiaphas slams a money bag down on the desk, “Twenty pieces of silver.” And the bargaining commences, landing finally on, of course, thirty, “The equivalent of four months wages,” Caiaphas says. “That is the price of a slave,” retorts Judas, “And I will not live like one while I’m looking for a new job.” He demands 35, but Caiaphas will not budge, even seeming to threaten Judas with torture, ”The temple guard have sophisticated methods of extracting information, if you’d like.” He pauses ominously as Judas considers the bargain before concluding, “Or you can just take the money.” Judas considers for a moment before replying, “I have one condition,” and Caiaphas replies, “I’m listening.” Judas goes on to explain that he’ll provide the opportunity for Jesus’ arrest only in the absence of the crowd, noting the potential for riot and retribution from Rome. But Caiaphas replies with Judas’ own words about using “his divine powers to strike down his adversaries. Could be the best Passover of all, wouldn’t it?” Judas seems to be wavering now, “If he says who he says he is… If he’s not…”—he seems twitchy again now before regaining his composure, “Thirty pieces of silver will be of no use to me when Pilate brutalizes us for disturbing the peace and inciting a revolt.” Now Caiaphas responds with his own condition. “You have 24 hours to deliver him over to us,” he commands, “Time is of the essence.” “Deal,” Judas replies as he collects the money off the desk. As he rises to leave, Caiaphas taunts Judas: “You’re an only son. …You’re an only son of an only son, and he’s passed away. I was given all your information, Judas. You’re the last of the Iscariots. …Unless you survive all this, and have a son, this could be your best chance for your family name to be remembered.” Caiaphas dismisses the Betrayer.

Notes:

1. **Note 17—Why Judas betrays Jesus:** All four Gospels agree that it was Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus. But once again the details vary:
   - **Matthew 26:14-16:** specifies the exact amount of money agreed upon: 30 pieces of silver.
   - **Mark 14:10-11:** money is promised, but the specific amount is not mentioned.
   - **Luke 22:3-6:** a sum is agreed upon, and Judas begins looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus, but no specific sum is mentioned.
   - **John 13:18-30:** neither a meeting with Jewish leadership nor any specific amount is ever mentioned.

   In none of the Gospels is any sort of motivation directly attached to Judas’ betrayal.

Scene 3: Jerusalem—A Roman Prison Cell*

00:30:11-00:37:29	**Scene Summary:** The scene opens in the house where Kafni* and his bunch were detained, Kafni* shackled in place as Atticus* enters. Kafni* asserts that Atticus* has no right to hold him; demands to know what crimes he has committed; and wants to speak to his legal representative. Atticus* reminds him, “Those rights are granted to citizens of the Roman Empire, of which you, decidedly, are not.” Atticus* removes the manacles from Kafni’s* wrists and begins to interrogate him, comparing Kafni* and his rabble to the Zealots, but without the sophistication and training. (See **Note**

	18—the Zealots, p. 11.) Eventually, Atticus* gets around to bringing up Jesus, "Someone about whom so many people have such intense feelings and opinions. Both good and bad. He's the only figure at the moment toward whom a man like you could stir up so much animosity." So Atticus* begins pressing Kafni* about Jesus as he pours both of them a drink from a flask Atticus* is carrying. After a few moments of silence, Kafni* replies, "He killed my daughter," but Atticus* dismisses that accusation until Kafni* recalcitrance finally moves Atticus* to probe further. Kafni* goes on to accuse Jesus of seducing Ramah* spiritually, but Atticus* is not interested in the least of anything spiritual. But Kafni* goes on to reference Jesus' miracle at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee (S1E5, "The Wedding Gift"), calling it "a magic trick that made her so grateful and awed and entranced that she became more loyal to him than me." Atticus* calls Kafni's* accusation "the pettiest thing I've ever heard," and Kafni* goes one to describe his perspective of Ramah's* following Jesus, ending with her murder by Quintus* in Capernaum. (S4E3, "Moon to Blood.") This seems to impact Atticus*--remember in the story, Quintus* and Atticus* were long time acquaintances and colleagues. But Atticus* focuses on the face-value details of the story, "So a *Roman praetor* killed your daughter, not Jesus…" and accuses Kafni* of hiding his true motives. But Kafni* is unmoved from his accusations, insisting that Ramah* would not have been anywhere around Capernaum had it not been for Jesus. But Atticus* insists she had free will and followed Jesus accordingly. Now Kafni* brings Thomas into the equation, accusing him of luring Ramah* "into the notion of marriage without my consent." Atticus* continues his line of questioning, still from the standpoint of avoiding Jewish custom, law, or practice and Kafni's* own feelings of guilt, grief, and anger, "…Instead of facing your guilt like a man, or dealing with your grief, you've decided to look for someone to blame." This provokes Kafni's* anger all the more, but Atticus* keeps following his line. Eventually, however, Atticus* icily indicates Kafni* will become a pawn, "useful to my purposes" and reveals that instead of arresting Kafni* for unlawful assembly, possession of illegal weapons, and the rest, Atticus* proposes that he will provide information about Jesus' whereabouts to Kafni* in exchange for spreading "your venom to anyone who'll listen" in order to turn the tide of public opinion against Jesus. And in exchange, Atticus* will "keep holes out of your hands and feet."
Notes: 1. **Note 18—The Zealots:** As *Crazy Book: A Not-So-Stuffy Dictionary of Biblical Terms* puts it, "As vegans are to vegetarians, zealots were to Jews" (363). Faithfulness, to them, was a political-economic response of open, violent opposition to Rome as well as Jewish collaborators and the re-establishment of the Davidic Kingdom of Israel. The Zealots instigated the rebellion that in 70 AD led to the Roman destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Luke/Acts lists one of the disciples/apostles as "Simon the Zealot" (Luke 6:15, Acts 1:13).	

Scene 4: *In the Darkness of Jerusalem

00:37:30-00:38:49	**Scene Summary:** Mary Magdalen makes her way through the darkened city streets. Seeing a detachment of Roman soldiers—at Pilate's headquarters?—she becomes overwhelmed with it all, ducks into a nearby alcove doorway, begins to weep, but also recalling the Isaiah 9 prophecy, "The people who walked in darkness…" (Review **Note 14—The People who walked in darkness: Isaiah 9:1-7,** p. 8.) She smiles broadly, "Thank you for that."
Notes:	

Scene 5: Jerusalem—Morning at the Home of Caiaphas the High Priest*

00:38:50-00:42:42	**Scene Summary:** Caiaphas sits at his desk as various servants bustle about, "Passover begins in eight hours," Malchus, the High Priest's servant, declares, "One last thorough search," he continues, "There cannot be even a single speck of leaven anywhere in the house." He uses the word *"hametz."* (See **Note 19—Hametz**, p. 12.)

Suddenly, Pilate bursts into the house. Storming toward Caiaphas' desk, Pilate demands to know what Caiaphas intends to do with Jesus. " A *chag semeach* to you too, Pontius," Caiaphas replies dismissively. (See **Note 20—Chag Semeach,** p. 12.) The two men of power spar, "I don't observe this holiday," Pilate curtly says, to which Caiaphas simply says, "No kidding." Pilate reminds him that he himself is maintaining his side of the arrangement for allowing the Passover to progress peacefully per usual by making "an example of a zealot" (a public execution—crucifixion) and demands to know what Caiaphas is doing to maintain his side of the arrangement. (See **Note 21—Pilate & Caiaphas,** p. 12.) Caiaphas seems to toy with Pilate, holding forth for a moment about the hatred of the Zealots from both sides, the Romans because the Zealots' violence and the Jewish people because of the Zealots' instigation of Roman wrath. But Pilate focuses Caiaphas on the problem of Jesus, "…They hate the Zealots, and they don't hate Jesus." Caiaphas observes the Messianic fever of the city and the need for him to bring the temperature down which establishes the common ground between the two. But Caiaphas continues to dig at Pilate, remembering the families of "massacred Jews who might take issue" with Pilate's desired expression for peace. (See **Note 22—Pilate & Massacred Jews**, p. 12.) Pilate next confronts Caiaphas for his methods of maintaining the peace, which seems to alarm Caiaphas and spurs him to ask Pilate what he's heard and wondering if Pilate has been spying on the Jewish leadership. "You are not Roman citizens," Pilate reminds Caiaphas, "You have no right to privacy." But Caiaphas is purposeful in his protest against the Romans, noting they are not believers, they don't know what's best for the Jewish people, and that "there are layers to this you do not comprehend."

The two men continue verbally to face off until they reach the bottom line:

Pilate: "You've grown too comfortable with our arrangement. So much so that you think you deserve the special treatment the empire has come to give you over the years."

Caiaphas: "We're God's Chosen People. Why should we expect anything less?

Pilate: "It's galling and confounding to every I know in Rome. Even our stoic philosopher Seneca has wondered aloud, to my humiliation, how in Jerusalem, the vanquished have given laws to the victors." (See **Note 23—Seneca on the Jews**, p. 13.) Well not anymore!" (Caiaphas simply scowls as Pilate approaches his desk, placing his hands on the desk in a power move) "Let me say to you, plain and simple, Caiaphas, if you go through with this, and tensions rise as a result, our alliance is over."

Caiaphas simply takes it in as Pilate turns on his heal and exits.

Notes:

1. **Note 19—Hametz**, also spelled "Chametz," this is the designation according to *halakha* (Jewish law) of any leavened food product made from five core grains: wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt, any of which that have been combined with water and fermented for more than 18 minutes. In contemporary practice, as Jewish culture became established beyond the Middle East—Ashkenazi Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, for example—the prohibition was also extended to other localized grains such as rice, corn, and even legumes, though practices and interpretations vary from community to community.
2. **Note 20—Chag Semeach:** A phrase we've heard a number of times, it simply means, "Happy holiday" or "Happy festival," often paired with the word for Passover, *Pesach: "Chag Pesach Sameach."*
3. **Note 21—Pilate & Caiaphas:** S5E1, "Entry" is when we see Pilate demanding Caiaphas' compliance to maintain a peaceful Passover celebration. *However, there is no recorded interaction between the two men in the Gospels.*
4. **Note 22—Pilate & Massacred Jews:** There is only one such reference in the Gospels:

   Luke 13:1-5: *At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. [2] He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? [3] No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. [4] Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? [5] No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did."*

   But in addition, there are also extra-biblical references:

- After he used funds from the Jewish Temple treasury to build an aqueduct to bring water into Jerusalem, resulting in massive protests, Pilate sent Roman soldiers disguised as civilians to beat and kill a number of rioters.
- After he introduced Roman military standards bearing the image of the emperor to Jerusalem, a large crowd protested in Caesarea Maritima for a number of days. Pilate threatened them with execution, surrounding the protestors with soldiers but then backed down when the protestors bared their necks in defiance.
- After a group of Samaritan pilgrims gathered at Mt. Gerizim, their sacred site, Pilate brutally slaughtered them, resulting in complaints to Lucius Vitellius, the Roman governor of Syria and eventually Pilate is stripped of his office and recalled to Rome.

5. **Note 23—Seneca on the Jews:** Pilate here references a quote by the Roman philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca (ca. 4 BC – 65 CE) preserved by St. Augustine in his master work *City of God* (written sometime in the early 400s CE), which quotes Seneca's lost work *On Superstition.* There Seneca complained about the rising influence and spread of Jewish customs—i.e., observing the Sabbath, etc.—throughout the Roman Empire. He thought many of these practices inexpedient and superstitious.

Scene 6: Elsewhere in Jerusalem: More Confrontations*

00:42:43-00:50:42	**Scene Summary:** Kafni* and Atticus* exit the jail we saw them in over the night. Kafni* is defiant in the arrangement into which he has been forced, audibly complaining as Atticus* escorts him out. Around the corner, Zee lurks, overhearing Kafni* as he protests and Atticus* seems to apologize, "Ta'ot shli," in Hebrew, "My mistake." Curious about what has transpired, Zee begins to trail Atticus.* (Atticus* pauses for a moment to take his two head soldiers' swords—presumably to keep the tensions low in the city and not present a heavily armed presence.) Back at the house where they have holed up, Kafni* closes the door and prays, "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield..." (Ps. 84). He goes on to address his band, declaring, "Adonai has blessed and anointed our cause." They continue to apply various Scriptures (David, the prophet Jeremiah, Job, etc.) as parallels to their experience and as signs of God's blessing. But Kafni's* wife, Naomi doesn't see it that way at all: "You make a deal with the enemies of our people and our God, and call it divine purpose?" She shakes her head and walks out, spreading a pall on the men's celebration. Kafni* excuses himself and pursues Naomi*, finding her packing up to leave, saying, "It is the right thing to do." "Leaving Jerusalem hours before Passover?" he asks, "Using the Holy Scriptures to delude and justify yourself?" she replies, "It's pathetic." This angers Kafni* who demands Naomi not speak to him in that tone. "Or what?!" Naomi exclaims, "Nothing more can hurt me. My daughter is dead. My husband is a shadow. And we are in league with Rome?" Kafni* begins to recite the same litany we've heard already before, overlooking the "Roman blade" while assigning complete responsibility to Jesus. But Naomi proclaims Ramah's* love for her rabbi and her future husband as real. Kafni* is undeterred and commands that Naomi* will not be leaving, "I can't have Jesus taking both my daughter and my wife from me." But Naomi* is equally undeterred: "I love you, Kafni.* And I serve God and his laws. Which is why I pray that he will forgive me that I cannot stand by and watch what hate and guilt have turned you into." She walks past Kafni.* Meanwhile, Zee continues to tail Atticus,* following right into the Roman barracks and prison. Atticus'* back is turned but still he knows he's been followed, greeting Simon by name. (Remember, Atticus* was originally following Zee in his former life as a zealot guerilla fighter beginning in S2E4, "The Perfect Opportunity.") The two men begin to talk, Zee confronting Atticus* about his exchange with Kafni* from earlier in the scene and indicating that Zee knows Kafni* and suspects it was no mistake on Atticus'* part in detaining Kafni.* Atticus* replies, acknowledging Zee's risk of his very life to leave the Zealots the way he did to follow Jesus. Zee acknowledges in return that his life may yet still be threatened because of his following Jesus.

	Atticus* goes on to warn Zee of the danger Jesus is in, but Zee replies, "No jail could hold the Messiah. No prison bars or shackles could contain him." Atticus* only chuckles dismissively to Zee's suggestion that Atticus* seeks to arrest Jesus, when according to Atticus*, he only came to question a Zealot, "…a murderer who is being transferred into this prison right about…". At that moment, the prisoner he refers to is being escorted into the prison—presumably the one Pilate referenced earlier who will be publicly crucified as a demonstration of Rome's power and the fate of those who oppose Rome. Zee becomes even more somber as he realizes it is his old colleague from his own Zealot days, the one who let Zee go, proclaiming "Simon Sicarius…"—Zee's former identity—"…is dead." (S3E6, "Intensity in Tent City.") "Barabbas," Zee says, and Atticus* responds sarcastically, "Oh, you know him? Old friend? Well, your pal is scheduled for execution, in about…28 hours, give or take." (See **Note 24—28 Hours, Give or Take,** p. 14.) Zee recounts his relationship with Barabbas. Now Atticus* begins to turn up the heat, if not on Jesus—Zee continues to be zealous about earthly power's ability to contain Jesus—then on Zee and the rest of the disciples. Provocatively, Atticus* drops the two swords he took from his detachment of soldiers earlier. After a moment of deliberation, Zee picks up the two swords, discovering his *sica*, the curved dagger the Zealots were known to carry. (It was in S2E5, "Spirit," that Jesus threw Zee's *sica* into the river, and later in that episode, Atticus* discovers it, wraps it up, and tucks it into his belt when he is searching the campsite after Jesus and the disciples had left.) He takes the Roman swords, but leaves the *sica* behind.

Notes:

1. **Note 24—28 Hours, Give or Take:** This confirms *The Chosen* is following the Synoptic Gospels' timeline of Jesus' Passion instead of John's, placing this confrontation between Zee and Atticus* on Thursday morning. As we have heard a number of times, the Passover will begin that evening.

   Matthew:

   Sunday: Triumphal entry (Palm Sunday), clearing the Temple, and returns to Bethany (Matt. 21:1-17)

   Monday & Tuesday: Returns to Jerusalem, teaches in the Temple, questions on his authority by Jewish leadership and "Woe to you!", private teaching to his disciples about "the End" while on the Mt. of Olives, Jesus' anointing by an unnamed woman at home of Simon the Leper. (Matt. 21:18-26:13)

   Wednesday (sometimes called Spy Wednesday): Judas meets with Jewish leadership and agrees on a price for his betrayal. (Matt. 26:14-16).

   Thursday: Passover meal in Jerusalem; retreat to the Mt. of Olives; prediction of Peter's denial; Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and sleepy disciples; betrayal and arrest; trial before the Sanhedrin; Peter's denial and disappearance. (Matt. 26:17-75)

   Friday: Judas' regret and suicide; Jesus' trial before Pilate; *(Luke places Jesus' appearance before Herod here, Luke 23:6-12—no mention of Herod in Matthew or Mark)*; Pilate washes his hands and releases Barabbas; Jesus tortured by the Roman soldiers; crucifixion, death, and burial. (Matt. 27:1-61)

   Saturday: Pilate orders the tomb sealed and guards posted.

   John:

   Sunday: Triumphal Entry; Greeks who want to meet Jesus via Philip; the thundering voice from heaven—no location given; some believe, some don't. No indication of where Jesus is staying, other than, *"…Jesus went away and was hidden from them"* in 12:36 (John 12:17-50)

   Monday & Tuesday: No details or timeline given. No indication of where Jesus is staying.

   Wednesday: Last Supper—no bread and wine mentioned, because it would have not been present, at least not in the way it is for the Passover meal; foot washing; Farewell Discourse; retreat to the Mt. of Olives; betrayal and arrest—no mention of a previous clandestine meeting between Judas and the elders; trial at the High Priest's house; Peter's denial—no mention of Peter's disappearance. (John 13:1-18:27)

   Thursday: "The Day of Preparation for the Passover" (John 19:31); Jesus before Pilate—no mention of Barabbas; crucifixion, death, and burial (John 19:1-42)

Scene 7: *Nicodemus' Office

00:50:43-00:56:20	**Scene Summary:** Nicodemus is reviewing the evidence Matthias has collected for him over the past two+ years, focusing particularly on Isaiah at this point. There is an unanswered knock at his door as he continues to study. The knock comes again, this time a little firmer, but Nicodemus is enrapt in his studies. Suddenly, Yussif, disguised as a commoner bursts in startling Nicodemus. He reports Caiaphas' plot to arrest Jesus. But Nicodemus dismisses that, "Impossible. He doesn't have the authority." (Yussif doesn't roll his eyes—but he could, seeming to detect Nicodemus' naivete about the depths of Caiaphas' potential.) Nicodemus continues, "And according to my reconnaissance, no one is certain where to find Jesus." Yussif reveals, "There is talk of a collaborator. …From within the ranks of his own followers." Yussif continues, telling how "not all of the followers are in agreement on how they view Jesus," and conveying that he himself had seen such dissent at Laz's house. Nicodemus observes, "Even if one of them betrayed his whereabouts at this very moment, the Sanhedrin still have to convene for a trial. And it is illegal for a capital offense to be tried on the day of preparation for the High Holy Day…". But Yussif assures Nicodemus that Caiaphas does not see his hands as tied, mentioning Caiaphas' father-in-law, Annas, who has already been deposed as High Priest because of shenanigans like this. Yussif notes Nicodemus' use of the word "we" in speaking of possibly deposing Caiaphas, which encourages Yussif to try to draw Nicodemus formally into a centrist alliance to denounce Caiaphas' "brazen infractions." But Nicodemus continues either to be paralyzed or hiding behind policy, procedure, and rules, and Yussif confronts him, "Nicodemus, you know Caiaphas has no scruples. My informers say they will call an emergency meeting overnight, tonight, citing an obscure loophole authorization from the Sefer HaMakabim during times of national crisis." (See **Note 25—Sefer HaMakabim**, p. 15.) Nicodemus innocently observes, "But Jesus is not a national crisis…" and then begins to connect the dots…

Notes:

1. **Note 25—Sefer HaMakabim:** The books of the Maccabees—apocryphal books in our canon—are the ancient historical and religious texts that recount the Jewish rebellion led by the Maccabees against the Greek Empire in between 153-133 BC. It is from the books of the Maccabees that we hear of the story and eventual celebration of Hanukkah.

   Interestingly enough, they are not considered part of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) and hold no official status in Judaism. The Maccabees are the family from which the Herodian family eventually comes, and most rabbinic authorities around the time of Jesus viewed them with mixed feelings at best.

   What Yussif is suggesting is that Caiaphas and the Jewish leadership would invoke a "national crisis," authorizing them to take drastic, even illegal action (at least according to Jewish religious law) to address the alleged "national crisis." (Wait… you mean to tell me that leaders would manufacture an interpretation of "national crisis" in order to justify and enact their own hasty, extra-judicial, even illegal actions, in the face of alleged "national crisis." That sounds pretty farfetched to me.)