

## Episode 1: Thunder

As we start the next season, two brothers from last season finally get the spotlight. This episode is all about James and John, the Sons of Thunder!

Of the four gospels, two of them are written by Jesus' disciples. The book of Matthew and the book of John. Take a look at each of the gospels and note how they start off:

Matthew 1:1 –

Mark 1:1-4 –

Luke 1:5-13 –

Luke 3:23 –

John 1:1-5 –

John 1:6-9 –

What similarities did you notice? What was the main difference you noticed?

The episode starts many years from the end of the last season. John is interviewing the disciples and eyewitnesses (Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus) as he is writing his gospel. Everyone has come together as Big James (John's brother) has died and they are sitting shiva. When talking with Mary, John said he wanted his gospel to be different from Matthew's. He knew Matthew would start with Jesus' ancestry (Matthew 1:1-17), but he wanted to start from the beginning. The very beginning! Read John 1:1-9 on the next page.

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*John was the last of the gospels to be written. Mark is believed to be the first gospel written, followed by Matthew and then Luke. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called synoptic gospels which means they share a similar structure, content and phrasing.*

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- **John 1:1-5 (ESV)** – <sup>1</sup> *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
  - Who do you think verse 2 is talking about?

John explains the connection of the beginning of his book to the beginning of the world in Genesis. Let's take a look at Genesis and see if you can pick out the similarities. It's interesting to see the parallels between the two books.

- **Genesis 1:1-4 (ESV)** – <sup>1</sup> *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.*
  - Read verse 1 of Genesis 1, who made all things through him, and without him was not anything made that was made?
  - Read verse 3 of Genesis 1 and verse 4 of John 1, what are both verses talking about?
  - Read verse 4 of Genesis 1 and verse 5 of John 1, what is separated?

Isn't it neat how similar the two books start off! In this episode, James and John are trying to figure out their role and place with the other disciples. Jesus asks them to sow a field while the other disciples are in town. Jesus praises them for the work they did and this creates a power struggle amongst the disciples of who the lead disciple is. Meanwhile the rest of the disciples are getting supplies to make a dinner. More to come on that towards the end of the episode.

Next, Jesus teaches in Samaria. He talks about the parable of the lost sheep. Read below and circle the reaction to finding the sheep.

- **Matthew 18:12-14 (ESV)** – <sup>12</sup> *What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountain and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup> And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup> So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*
  - This is also mentioned in Luke 15:3-7

- This parable is so encouraging, if we stray from our faith God and the angels are rejoicing when you come back. Has there been a period in your life when you strayed from God? Are you currently straying from God? How does it feel that he wants you back?
  
- It's interesting how Jesus starts this parable off by saying "What do you think?". In the show he asks questions and gets the shepherd to provide the answers that make up the parable. As we hear this parable in the show, it is not the method that is stated in scripture. However, the way the verse starts out does make me think it is one possible way he could have taught the parable, through questions.

The other parable that is in this episode is the Good Samaritan. It is kind of hidden as it isn't a story that Jesus tells like the Lost Sheep story. It is interesting how the creators of The Chosen tell the other side of the story. The parable is focused on the Jew who was hurt and how no one except the Samaritan helps him. In the show, they created a story of the robber that left the man on the side of the road to die. Let's read the parable and see if you recognize how this parable related to the Samaritan Jesus and the disciples ate dinner with.

- **Luke 10:30-37 (ESV)** – <sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> And the next day he took two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved to a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" <sup>37</sup> He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."
  - The crippled man that Jesus and the disciples ate dinner with was the robber in verse 30. Although he has a minor part in this parable, the lesson that we learn through the Chosen's depiction of this story is about the guilt of the robber. Is there anything that you feel guilty or regret about? Use the space below to write a prayer asking Jesus for forgiveness. Know he will forgive you because he loves you.

- This parable is a great example of serving others, especially our enemies. Samaritans and Jews did not get along as we will see when Jesus, John and James encounter Samaritans on the road. But the good Samaritan not only helps the Jew, but goes the extra mile to take care of him for days afterwards. How are you serving others? Is there somewhere you can serve? Has God put anything in particular on your heart?

In one of the last scenes of the episode we find out why James and John of Zebedee were named “Sons of Thunder”. In the show Jesus, James and John encountered Samaritans on the road and James and John wanted to send something down on the people. Fill in the blank below:

- **Luke 9:51-55 (ESV)** – *<sup>51</sup> When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup> And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. <sup>53</sup> But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup> And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell \_\_\_\_\_ to come down from heaven and consume them?” <sup>55</sup> But he turned and rebuked them.*

James and John are angry at the disrespect that the Samaritans are showing Jesus. They take their anger a bit too far, okay way too far! But their hearts are all for Jesus. They want to protect him and have others show the right amount of respect to Jesus. Have you been in a situation where you saw someone disrespect Christians, Jesus, or your faith? How did you react and how do you think you should act in the future based on Jesus’ response to James and John?

The nickname given to James and John came right out of the book of Mark. Fill in the blank below for the name Jesus gave them:

- **Mark 3:17 (ESV)** – *James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is “Sons of \_\_\_\_\_”)*

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*John said to Mary exactly what he wrote at the end of his gospel **John 21:25 (ESV)** - Now there are also so many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.*

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