

Episode 6: Dedication

This episode opens during the celebration of the Jewish holiday, Hannukah. The opening scene shows the disciples in a state of panic as they just escaped being stoned. The following scenes lead up to that frantic moment.

Hannukah is a holiday that is celebrated over 8 days. It came about as a group of Jewish fighters; the Maccabees won their religious freedom. They cleared out the temple and miraculously burned one day's amount of oil for 8 full days.

The disciples exchange gifts to celebrate Hanukkah. Matthew and John give each other gifts connected to the writings they have been recording. Matthew receives a quill, and John receives parchment to continue his work. Both Matthew and John are gospels in the bible. How does knowing that they were disciples, eyewitnesses to the miracles and teachings of Jesus, give you comfort to the accuracy of their accounts?

Yussif talks to his father and quotes Jesus. Read the passage below and circle what gifts the Father gives us.

- **Matthew 7:9-11 (ESV)** –⁹ *Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!*

What gifts and blessings have God provided for you? Write a short prayer thanking him for them.

Bible Reference

In this episode, the women sing the Song of Miriam. This was a song sung by the Israelite women after they escaped from the Pharaoh and the red sea parted.

- **Exodus 15:19-21 (ESV)** - ¹⁹ *For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them, but the people of Israel walked on dry ground midst of the sea. ²⁰ Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."*

DID YOU KNOW??

Miriam is the sister of Moses and Aaron. As seen in the verses above, the bible refers to her as a prophetess.

Jesus receives notification that Lazarus is sick. Circle what Jesus says about his illness.

- **John 11:1-4 (ESV)** - ¹ Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who had anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord he whom you love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

It's easy to think that Jesus is just plainly saying Lazarus is not going to die. Little do the disciples know this is not the case, he will die. But more to come on Lazarus later. The disciples and Jesus head to Jerusalem for another teaching. Jesus talks about being the good shepherd. **Read John 10:1-21.** What do you notice about the relationship between the sheep and the shepherd?

What does it mean to you that Jesus is the good shepherd? Do you feel like he is the shepherd of your life?

The Pharisees get very upset with Jesus' teaching. Scripture tells us that they were almost stoned by the Pharisees. Circle where you see this in the passages below:

- **John 10:31-33 (ESV)** – ³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. ³² Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" ³³ The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."
- **John 11:5-8 (ESV)** - ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again," ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and you are going there again?"

Luckily, the disciples and Jesus escape the stoning. But big James got hit on the head and was bleeding. As everyone is tending to James, the atmosphere in the home totally shifts when Jesus is notified that

Lazarus is dead. Jesus is upset but also knows that something big is coming that will increase the belief of the disciples. Underline what Jesus says to the disciples:

- **John 11:11-13 (ESV)** - ¹¹ After saying these things, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him. ¹² The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover,” ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.

Jesus states it more directly for the disciples. Lazarus is dead! Circle why Jesus is glad in the passage below:

- **John 11:14-15 (ESV)** - ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

It’s difficult to think that because someone has died, the disciples’ faith is going to be strengthened. But God oftentimes talks to us and comforts us most when we need him. When we stop being self-reliant and look to the one who loves us to guide our lives. If you have gone through a difficult time, struggled in life, dealt with pain and loss, you know Jesus is there for you. As we close, reflect below on how your belief has been strengthened at a difficult time. Thank God for being there for you.

*When Judas and Jesus are talking, Judas quotes **Matthew 10:16 (ESV)** – “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”*
