

The Chosen – Season 4 – Episode 6a

Week 9 – August 14, 2024

Season 4 Episode 5b Review

- Jesus and disciples arrive in Bethany
- The Mary and Martha story
- Jesus tells the parable of the land owner who hires workers at multiple times from marketplace and each gets the same reward
- Judas meets with his former mentor / boss who pushes him to push Jesus and take a “cut” for himself
- Jesus has dialogue with his mother Mary
- Religious leaders turning up the heat on Jesus and through Rome

Season 4 Episode 6a

IN THE PERIOD OF SILENCE BETWEEN MALACHI AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

In the time between the return of Jewish exiles and the rise of the Roman emperors, the land of Judea was caught between two ruling powers: the Seleucid Kingdom of Syria in the north and Ptolemaic Egypt in the south. These kingdoms, both successors of Alexander the Great’s broken empire, warred with each other for more than a century while the Jewish nation sat at the crossroads. (An account of these relations, seen through the lens of prophetic visions, can be found in Daniel 11.)

Throughout most of this period, Judea remained in the periphery and was left alone. However, when Antiochus IV came to power c. 170 B.C.E., the Jewish people did not readily fit into the vision he had for his new empire. Embracing a form of imperial colonialism, Antiochus sought to bring about a sense of cultural uniformity in the hope of creating more socioeconomic stability. This included embracing the Hellenistic way of life and the worship of the Greek pantheon, especially Zeus. By taking the epithet Epiphanes (“God Manifest”), Antiochus even claimed to be Zeus incarnate. Many of the pagan nations embraced and welcomed these policies, but in the land of Judea they caused a cultural civil war, notably among members of the high priestly families. In the midst of this turmoil, according to the books of Maccabees and the Jewish historian Josephus, Antiochus plundered the Jerusalem Temple and carried off the sacred vessels—to help finance his campaigns.

ABOMINATION OF DESECRATION

Scholars generally agree that the first reference of these prophecies is the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes IV, who ruled Palestine from 175-64 B.C. Antiochus treated Israel with such violence and contempt that they rebelled against him. When he came to suppress the rebellion, his forces entered the temple, stopped the regular sacrifices, set up an idol of or altar for Zeus, and apparently offered swine there as a sacrifice. This is an abomination because it is idolatry, and it brings desolation because it defiles the holy place at the heart of Israel. This act was the abomination “of” desolation, the abomination “causing” desolation.

MACCABEES-TITLE NOT NAME-AND TRUTH OF HANUKKAH (CHANUKAH)

13 Facts About the Hanukkah Heroes By Menachem Posner

1. THE MACCABEES ARE THE HEROES OF CHANUKAH

The Maccabees were Jewish fighters who led the revolt against the Syrian Greek ruling class, who had suppressed Jewish religion in an effort to spread their Hellenistic customs and idolatrous beliefs. The Maccabee victory, and the subsequent miracle of the oil burning in the Temple menorah for eight days instead of one, is what we celebrate every year during the eight-day holiday of Chanukah.

2. THE NAME “MACCABEE” IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE TALMUD

The Talmud speaks little of Chanukah. The one time the story is briefly told, the leaders of the group (and their descendants) are referred to as the House of Chashmonai, the ancestral family of Matityahu, the pious and brave priest who led the group until his passing.

3. THE MACCABEES WERE FROM MODIIN

Matityahu began his revolt in the village of Modiin, where the Greeks tried to compel him to publicly engage in idol worship. When he refused, violence broke out and a group of Jews ended up taking refuge in caves among the surrounding hills.

4. THE MACCABEES ORIGINALLY REFUSED TO FIGHT ON SHABBAT

According to Josephus, after the Maccabees refused to comply with the Greek demands, they were attacked on Shabbat morning. Devoted to Torah, the Jews refused to fight back, and around 1,000 people, including many women and children, died from fire and smoke.

After that, Matityahu made it clear that Judaism is a religion of life, and that the Shabbat laws are temporarily suspended to save a life.

5. MATITYAHU HAD FIVE SONS

Matityahu's five sons—Yochanan, Yehuda, Shimon, Elazar, and Yonatan—joined the struggle. After a year of leadership, as the elderly Matityahu neared his end, he exhorted the group to follow Shimon's guidance in religious matters and to appoint Judah as their military leader.

6. MANY MEANINGS ARE ASCRIBED TO THE NAME MACCABEE

The term Maccabee, which was apparently first only associated with Judah, may be related to the Hebrew word for "hammer" or the Greek words for "strong" or "fighter."

Perhaps the best-known explanation is that the word "Maccabee" comprises the initial letters of a verse the Jewish people sang after G-d split the sea: "Mi kamocha ba'eilim Hashem (מי כמוך באילים י'), "Who is like You among the mighty, O G-d." It is said that this phrase was the Maccabean battle cry, written upon their banners and shields.

7. THE MACCABEES WERE DEEPLY RELIGIOUS

Matityahu and Judah were not merely fighting for political or national freedom. They saw themselves as fighting for G-d Himself. Josephus tells of many instances where they prayed to G-d for success in their battles. In one instance, he records Judah telling his troops that victory depends not on the number of soldiers but on their faithfulness to G-d. He bolstered his arguments with examples from Jewish history where a few pious Jews managed to vanquish thousands of enemies.

8. THEY USED GUERILLA TACTICS

At times, the Maccabees faced overwhelming odds, vastly outnumbered and out-weaponed by the massive armies of Greek soldiers and mercenaries sent their way. Yet, with a prayer on their lips, they managed to surprise the enemy and send them fleeing in fear time and time again.

9. THEY RESTORED THE HOLY TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM

After decisively routing the Greeks from the Land, Judah led his band of battle-hardened men to Jerusalem to restore the Holy Temple to its sacred use, which the Greeks had discontinued. They were met by a sorry sight: broken walls, overgrown courtyards, and pagan idols in G-d's home. On the 25th day of Kislev (the first day of Chanukah), they rededicated the Temple, lit the menorah, offered the showbread, and resumed regular worship.

10. G-D PERFORMED A MIRACLE FOR THEM-FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

As recorded in the Talmud, the Maccabees found just enough pure oil in the Temple to kindle the menorah for a single day. As they had done so many times before, they threw reason to the wind and placed their trust in G-d. They lit the menorah, and a miracle occurred: the oil burned for 8 days until more could be obtained. They declared that these 8 days be celebrated as the Festival of Lights, commonly known as Chanukah ("dedication").

11. THEIR DESCENDANTS SHOULD NOT HAVE BECOME KINGS

The Chashmonaim took for themselves the throne of kingship and establish a monarchy. This was a grievous mistake, since they were Levite priests and G-d had already promised that only the descendants of David (from the tribe of Judah) may be appointed to the throne (see II Samuel 7:12–15). Indeed, they were eventually usurped by Herod, an Edomite, who killed the Hasmonean King Antigonus and took the throne for himself.

12. JUDAH CONTINUED TO BATTLE

Even after he successfully trounced the Greek armies, Judah continued to fight off invaders from near and far. Sadly, he died courageously in battle and was laid to rest in Modiin.

13. CHANUKAH HAS SEVERAL GREAT FEMALE HEROES

Jewish lore tells the story of the brave Judith, who enticed a Greek general with cheese and wine before decapitating him, thus saving her townspeople from death. And then there is the story of Chanah, who encouraged her seven sons to die rather than cave to the Greek demands that they worship idols.

THE SONG OF MIRIAM

Read Exodus 14:29-15:21

KINGDOM OF GOD VERSES IN NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW 12:28 “But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”

MATTHEW 19:24 “Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

MATTHEW 21:31 Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.”

MATTHEW 21:43 “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.”

MARK 1:15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”

MARK 4:11 He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables...”

MARK 4:26 [The parable of the growing seed] He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground...”

MARK 4:30 [The parable of the mustard seed] Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?”

MARK 9:1 And he said to them, “I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”

MARK 9:47 “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell...”

MARK 10:14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them. “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

MARK 10:15 “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

MARK 10:23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

MARK 10:24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!”

MARK 12:34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

MARK 15:43 Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body.

LUKE 4:43 But he said, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

LUKE 6:20 Looking at his disciples, he said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”

LUKE 8:1 [The parable of the sower] After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God.

LUKE 9:2 .. and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

LUKE 9:11 “...but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.”

LUKE 9:60 Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” **LUKE 9:62** Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

LUKE 10:9 “Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘the kingdom of God is near you.’”

LUKE 10:11 “Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.”

LUKE 11:20 “But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.”

LUKE 13:18 [The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast] Then Jesus asked, “what is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to?”

LUKE 13:29 “People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

LUKE 14:15 [The parable of the great banquet] When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

LUKE 16:16 “The law and the prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

LUKE 17:20 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation...”

LUKE 17:21 “Nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”

LUKE 18:17 “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

LUKE 18:29 “I tell you the truth,” Jesus said to them, “No one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”

LUKE 19:11 [The parable of the ten minas] While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

LUKE 21:31 “Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.”

JOHN 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

JOHN 3:5 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”

ACTS 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

ACTS 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

ACTS 14:22 ...Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.

ACTS 19:8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.

ACTS 28:23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the law of Moses and from the prophets.

ACTS 28:31 Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 14:17 “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit..”

1 CORINTHIANS 4:20 “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.”

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9 “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.”

1 CORINTHIANS 15:50 “I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”

GALATIANS 5:21 “...and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

COLOSSIANS 4:11 “Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God...”

2 THESSALONIANS 1:5 “All this is evidence that God’s judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.”