

The CHOSEN with Hosanna!



SEASON 4: EPISODE 6 Dedication

SCHEDULE

November 13-25 - Watch Episodes 5-6

November 26, 6:00-7:15 - Discuss Episodes 5-6

November 27-December 9 - Watch Episodes 7-8

December 10, 6:00-7:15 - Discuss Episodes 7-8

Hosanna's Study Website: www.hosannatogether.org/chosen

BACKGROUND NOTES

- In the introduction, Big James is injured. After the credits, things go back 7 days in time.
- They are celebrating the Feast of Dedication, which is also known as the Festival of Lights and Hanukkah. They celebrate one day's worth of oil lasting eight days in the Temple lamps when it was rededicated after its earlier desecration. It symbolizes God's providence and faithfulness beyond human understanding. They light another candle of the menorah (in the episode, pots of oil) each day.
- Solomon's Porch is an area on the outer parts of the Temple complex in Jerusalem where people gather. It was named after King Solomon, who led the building of the Temple.
- Stoning was a form of capital punishment where a crowd would throw stones at someone until they died. It applied for things such as blasphemy, breaking the sabbath, adultery, and other major crimes. It could be administered on the spot.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What is your experience of Hanukkah?
 - How are the traditions you see play out similar or different than how we celebrate at Christmas?
- When they are debating what gift to give Thomas, they lament that anything they give him will remind him he can't share it with Ramah. How can this dilemma lead us to doing nothing when we know someone who is hurting?

- Matthew and Judas argue over how the money should be spend. Should we spend money on gifts, comforts, and other seemingly frivolous things? Or should it all be put to bringing about God’s Kingdom? What does that even mean?
 - What are the implications for our congregation’s budget?
 - What are the implications for how you spend your own money?
- When Peter and Thomas talk, Thomas says he is “supposed” to feel grateful during the celebration, but in reality he feels horrible.
 - How has loss (death of a loved one, kids moving away, loss of a job, loss of health, etc.) changed your celebration of holidays (like Christmas)? Do you struggle to find joy when you feel like you are “supposed” to? How do you cope? Have these things given new meaning to old holidays?
 - How do we care for and support those who struggle with loss at the holidays?
- Thomas says he doesn’t feel awful when “there is something important to do.” How can keeping ourselves busy help us process and move through grief? When can keeping ourselves busy go too far that we never deal with our grief?
- What emotions does the conversation between Peter and Thomas about why God lets things happen bring up for you? Thomas says he knows all the “right” words, too. Do they actually help you? What does help?
- John tells Judas that he thought his ambition was for the ministry, but realizes now it was based on their own understanding and their own ambitions.
 - How do we know the difference between God’s will and our own ideas or ambition?
 - Judas asks, “Does Jesus not want us to be creative? To use the gifts that Adonai has given us?” How would you have answered those questions?
- Jesus spends a lot of time in this episode looking at, thinking about, and talking about sheep. Consider reading John 10. What do you think Jesus is saying in all of this?
 - Why use the image of a shepherd?
 - Do you think of yourself like a sheep? What does that mean for you?
- When Mary asks Jesus where he hurts, he says, “Everywhere. Inside and out.” Based on this conversation and the look on his face throughout this episode, what do you think Jesus is feeling as people are getting sick and getting hurt?
 - Why does he put everyone at risk if they are getting hurt? Do you think it bothers him that people get hurt because of him?
 - What does this emotion from Jesus tell us about the character of God?
- Trust is a major theme of this episode--God’s faithfulness confirmed in the Festival of Lights, sheep knowing the shepherd’s voice and following, trusting God’s ways in the face of pain and loss, etc.
 - In what ways are you good at trusting God? In what ways do you struggle to trust?
 - Looking back in your life, when has God followed through on God’s promises, even though you couldn’t see it at the time?
 - How do you keep moving forward with trust in the *middle* of difficult times?
- Near the beginning of the episode, when Jesus and the disciples are celebrating, they recite Psalm 118. Consider reading it. After watching the episode, what stands out to you?
 - Do you feel that you could honestly pray these words?