

Week 2 The Chosen

Episode 1: I Have Called You By Name

Episode Passages - Isaiah 43:1, Luke 8:1-3, John 3:1-2, John 20:11-16

Opening Prayer

Lord, help us to know you, love you, and follow you. Open our hearts to the Gospel message. St. Matthias, *pray for us*. St. Charles, *pray for us*.

Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

Episode Summary

We are introduced to Mary Magdalene and a few of the disciples, getting to know who they are before meeting Jesus. The Pharisee Nicodemus attempts to exorcize a demon-possessed woman in Capernaum's Red Quarter named Lilith but is unsuccessful, causing him to question his faith. The brothers Simon and Andrew, who are fishermen, struggle with their tax and gambling debts. Following a failed suicide attempt, Lilith returns to her father, who is unable to help. As she is leaving, she encounters Jesus, who identifies himself as the Creator of humanity and calls her by her true name, Mary Magdalene.

Key Characters & Vocabulary

In Jesus' time, there were various sects, groups of people, that were clearly identified. Two of them were the Pharisees and Sadducees. Both were religious sects as well as ruling sects within the Jewish community. Both held positions of ruling power over the common Jewish community. They have some similarities and differences:

Sadducees	Pharisees
Literal interpretation of Scripture	Also oral interpretation of Scripture
God's law as written in Scripture	God's laws in Scripture as well as oral interpretation of other laws
Rejected belief in the Resurrection	Believed in the Resurrection of the dead
Denied the afterlife	Believed in life after death
Rejected unseen spiritual world	Believed in angels and demons
Held higher seats of power, including Chief Priests and High Priest	Represented the commoners
Open to Greek thinking	Rejected Greek influence
Power was in the Temple	Power was in the synagogues

Often focused on politics	Often focused on religion
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Essenes = Another sect were the Essenes who were most notable for withdrawing from society and public life. They believed most of what the Pharisees believed, but did so in their own mystic, monastic way.

Names of God = The Hebrew names of God were significant to the Jewish people - and several are used in *The Chosen*. These names represent specific character traits of the nature of God. Often names were spoken because of a personal way that someone experienced God's work and presence in his or her circumstances. For this episode, the names *Adonai* and *El Shaddai* are mentioned. *Adonai* means "Lord." It was used instead of using the name YAHWEH, which the Jews would not say out of reverence for God. *El Shaddai* means "The God of Heaven" or "God Almighty." This name identifies the might and strength of God, who created heaven and earth and is about to do all things.

Quintas = The Praetor, a senior Roman magistrate of senatorial rank. He was the highest ranking officer in the region.

Nicodemus = Was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling council in Jerusalem).

Mary = Was from Magdala and had seven demons cast out of her. The Bible never mentions Mary Magdalene being an alcoholic or using "Lilith" as an alias. The Bible does mention that Jesus "cast seven demons from her" (Luke 8:1-2; Mark 16:9-10). No other details are given. However, the fact that the show chooses to depict her in this way is at least possible. The name Lilith comes from Judeo-Christian mythology. She is sometimes said to be a demon, sometimes, "Adam's first wife," before Eve. This latter idea is not in the Bible; it's attributed to Kabbalistic beliefs. So "Lilith" is a fitting name for Mary's pre-deliverance alias. A woman, possessed by demons, taking on the name of a demon.

Matthew = was a tax collector, employed by the Romans but viewed as a collaborator with the enemy by the Jewish community. He likely made his money by charging more than the Romans asked him to collect.

Simon (Peter) = was married, a fisherman in Galilee, and had a brother named Andrew.

Read Luke 8:1-3 and John 3:1-2

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Episode Questions

- What details were present in the video that amplified your understanding of Scripture?
- We are being shown each character's "before Jesus" life. What does an encounter with Jesus do to people, both then and now?

Personal Reflection

- What would you say to someone who feels unworthy of Jesus' love and call to follow Him (like Mary)?

Closing Prayer

Thank you Jesus for relentlessly pursuing each of us. Help us each remember that Jesus knows us by name and has redeemed us. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.