

# Explaining The Chosen: Season 1, Episode 7: Invitations

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It's in this episode of The Chosen that we see faith explained through the connection of two stories – one from the Old Testaments and one from the New. The Bible is one whole book, not two separate ones. The God of the Bible never changes and His story is found from cover to cover of the Scriptures.

[Looking for my other posts Explaining The Chosen? Find them here.](#)



[The Chosen: Season 1](#)  
[Click here to watch!](#)

If you haven't seen episode 7 yet, click the image to the right to watch it before reading on. There are spoilers ahead!

## Moses and Joshua

In the opening scene, we go into the Old Testament to witness a conversation between Moses and Joshua. From just a few verses in Numbers 21:4-9, this scene references God's response to the complaining Israelites. Having recently left Egypt, they realized that they had no water and food they didn't like. While I'd like to condemn them for this, I've complained about much less! It's clear that God gets just as sick of all of our complaints as He did of those of the Hebrew people. Who are we to complain in the midst of the lavish blessings He gives?

God told Moses to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole where everyone could see it. When they were bitten by one of the venomous snakes God had sent to punish

them, all they had to do was look at the bronze snake and they would be healed. Somewhere along the line, this became known by the Jewish people as the Nehushtan.

Joshua finds this a very odd practice and questions Moses (in the show, not the Bible). Since the snake on the pole was a commonly known as a pagan symbol, his questions are reasonable. This very pole made by Moses is the one King Hezekiah had destroyed in 2 Kings 18:1-6. So, why would God have Moses make it to look upon for healing?

The answer becomes more clear in the Gospel of John, chapter 3, verses 14 and 15.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

*John 3:14-15 (NASB)*



[Passover Seder Plate, Glass, 13"](#)

The lesson for the Israelites (and for us!) was one of faith. They were to trust God at His word and it would lead to their bodily healing in the same way our trust in Jesus's death on the cross heals our souls. The "pole" was also thought to resemble a cross, making the connection here even more apparent.

In this same conversation, Moses tells Joshua he's learned to do what God says, then says "You remember what happened at Meribah". Remember in Exodus 17 (verses 5-7), where the Israelites were quarreling about having no water? God instructed Moses to

use his staff to strike the rock of Horeb to bring forth water for all the people. Like Moses, we know we have a God of miracles. We can trust Him at His word, even if we don't fully understand!

### **Nicodemus's Grandson**

Zohara is excited to tell Nicodemus about the birth of his grandson and to get back to Jerusalem. She explains that they have rush to get back so Nicodemus can perform the Bris on the 8th day. This is the practice of both circumcising and naming a Jewish baby boy. It was done on the 8th day, as commanded in Leviticus 12:1-3. Circumcision itself, as a sign of the covenant between God and His people, started way back in Genesis (17:10-14), when Abraham was told to circumcise himself and his offspring.

Also called the Brit Milah, which can be translated as "covenant of circumcision", a Bris is often performed by a rabbi, which is why Zohara asks what people will think if "the great Nicodemus" were to miss it.

### **John Worries**

When Jesus and his disciples are setting up camp, John voices his concerns to Jesus. He says, "They'll be looking for us because of what you said about forgiving sins".

Verses like Isaiah 43:35, Daniel 9:9 and others suggest that only God has the authority to forgive sins. This isn't to mean people can't forgive one another when a wrong has been done to them. It means God is the only one with the authority to absolve the consequences of sin. This is what upset the rabbis when Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven (in episode 6). John's concern is valid but Jesus says they still have some time before that will happen.

### **Elisheva**

Matthew addresses his mother as "Eema" (which means "mom"), then corrects himself to call her "Elisheva". His status as a tax collector and a traitor had caused him to be expelled from the family which prevented him from calling her "mom". Elisheva is Hebrew for Elizabeth. It means "my God is an oath" or "pledged to God".

When she says that she couldn't have let him in if his father was home, Matthew asks where Alpheus is. Alpheus would have been the name of his father, according to Mark 2:14. Jesus will also call him "Matthew, son of Alpheus" near the end of this episode. Alpheus is also the name of the disciple James's father so that may have been a common name at the time. You'll notice in the verse from Mark above that it says Alpheus is the father of Levi, not Matthew though.

Matthew, the name used in the books of Matthew and John, is thought to be the same person as Levi, used in the books of Mark and Luke. This is similar to Peter also being called Simon or to Saul's name changing to Paul. This was not uncommon as there were a few different cultures and languages converged in this area at this time.

### **Why Does Jesus Touch the Doorpost?**

When leaving Simon's home to meet with Nicodemus, you'll see Jesus briefly touch the doorpost and put his fingers to his lips.



### [Hand-Painted Metal Mezuzah with Messianic Seal, Paper Scroll Included](#)

Many people (mostly Jewish people, but some Christians as well) have a little box attached to the doorpost in their home called a mezuzah. It contains a parchment with a verse on it, usually **the Shema** (Deut. 6:4-9). They touch it, and may even kiss the hand that touched it, as a reminder of just what the verses say in **the Shema**:

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

*Deut. 6:4-9 (NASB)*

Touching the mezuzah reminds us of our purpose in this world as we leave our homes and live our lives. We're first to love our God. We're to teach His words to our children and to make them our very identity. It reminds us that God is everywhere we go and that we belong to Him.

## Conversation Between Jesus and Nicodemus

My favorite thing about the conversation between these two is that both John 3:16 and 17 are included. While I love John 3:16 like most Believers, I hate that it's so often quoted without including verse 17.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

*John 3:16-17 (NASB)*

Especially to those new to our faith or outside of it, verse 17 is necessary as a further explanation of verse 16. I love that the writers of The Chosen saw that and presented them together, as they were written.

When Nicodemus kisses Jesus's hand, he recites Psalm 2:12 - "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way". And Jesus responds with the last part of the same verse: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him". Beautiful!

Love The Chosen? Stay tuned for the interesting things I found in episode 8: I Am He.

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