

SERIES: COME FLY WITH ME

SEASON THREE

EPISODE #21

"EMPTY NET SYNDROME"

(Zebedee - pre-judging)

Written by  
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Based on *They Met Jesus*

A TRUE STORY

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LAST SEASON (#2 - DREAM MAKER)

- 11 - **Revolutionaries** - Weapons of Dust
- 12 - **John the Baptist** - Hesitant Herald
- 13 - **Evil One** - The Great Pretender
- 14 - **Andrew & Philip** - Odyssey of Truth
- 15 - **Nathaniel** - God Eyes
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SEASON 3: HEARTS AFIRE

Episode #21 - "EMPTY NET SYNDROME"

TITLE SEQUENCE

BLACK:

OUTER SPACE

A shooting star streaks through the sky and lands on planet earth.

EXT. EARTH - DAY

Angry waves churn, then calm to circling ripples. A crown rises out of the baptismal water.

MUSIC similar to *Army of Kings* or Mozart's *Coronation Mass*.

Next rising out of the water is his head, shoulders, torso.

GOD-KING JESUS (30) has black eyes and hair to his shoulders and a short beard. He looks Middle-Eastern.

He is muscular like the lumberjack and carpenter he is. He wears a sparkling gold robe and holds a diamond-tipped gold scepter.

He continues to grow until his head is among the stars.

UGLY EVIL ONE looks down at him from a top corner of the sky.

God-King Jesus points his scepter at him.

GOD-KING JESUS  
I will destroy you!

Lightning flashes out of his scepter.

He lowers the scepter and shrinks down until he is normal human size.

Tall trees surround him. He hangs his robe and crown on one of the branches.

He picks up an ax, finishes felling a tree, hoists it (minus its branches) onto one shoulder, and heads out of the woods with it.

### TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. JOSEPH'S & MARY'S COURTYARD - DAY

SUPER - NAZARETH, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE - BC 5

The courtyard is small. At one end is Joseph's carpentry area with logs on the ground and boards propped up on the compound wall.

There is a knock on the gate.

MARY(19) has black hair in her eyes but is happy. She opens the gate.

MARY

Come in, Salome. What are you up to wandering from home like this?

SALOME (16) has reddish-brown curly hair half covered with a red shawl. Her tunic is yellow and her robe is green. She wears large wooden circle earrings.

Salome lunges at Mary with an embrace.

SALOME

Oh, Mary I'm in love. And I'm going to marry him.

MARY

In love with who? Marry who?

Salome turns toward the gate and tugs at a man's hand.

ZEBEDEE (26) has black hair, wears an anchor earring, and has is muscular and has a loud voice.

ZEBEDEE

Well, well, so this is the big  
sister you've been telling me all  
about, honey-cake.

Mary blinks, forces a smile, and holds out her hand.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Well, you're no bigger than the  
buggy eyes of a lobster.

JOSEPH (29) is a big lumber-jack type man with a base voice  
which he keeps under submission.

SALOME

Oh, Joseph. Come meet your new  
brother-in-law, Zebedee.

MARY

You're already married? Salome,  
how could you?

SALOME

Technically we're not quite  
married. Yet. But our parents  
will say yes, I'm sure. You know  
how Papa lets me have my way when I  
bake him raisin cakes.

Joseph brushes the sawdust from his hair.

JOSEPH

Come on in. We have our own well  
and can serve you some of the best  
water in Galilee.

The men sit while the women get out jugs to fill.

ZEBEDEE

I can tell you have never drunk  
water from the great Lake Galilee.  
That water is so fresh and clean,  
you can watch the fish plotting how  
to escape my nets. Ha, ha.

SALOME

In that case, you wouldn't want any  
of my sister's water that comes out  
of a dark hole in...

Salome winks at Mary and Zebedee lunges at his mug and takes  
a big swig.

ZEBEDEE

Isn't she something else? Never  
dull around my new catch.

JOSEPH

So, you live over by the big  
Galilee lake?

ZEBEDEE

Live by it? Live by it? I live on  
it. And beside it and sometimes  
even in it.

SALOME

He means that he have to dive down  
and get his net unsnagged when...

ZEBEDEE

Aw, honey cake, they don't want to  
hear all about that fishin' stuff.

Mary, rushes to get a word in.

MARY

So, it sounds like you're going to  
be leaving Nazareth for good.

ZEBEDEE

Yup. I promised my little honey  
bun the nicest house in the  
neighborhood. Of course, there's  
all kinds of neighborhoods...

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Zebedee rushes up to Mary picking over fruit at a booth. His  
eyes are red, his breath comes fast. He looks in every  
direction as he talks.

ZEBEDEE

Have you seen my honey bun? We  
were supposed to meet in Bethsaida  
yesterday to look at a house she  
might like. Is she mad at me?

Mary sets down the fruit she had chosen to buy. She looks  
around.

MARY

She wouldn't skip something like  
that.

Heli and Sarah rush up to Mary from the opposite direction. Heli hugs Sarah to him as though trying to hide her from a terrible fate hovering over them.

SARAH (35) wears a long pastel tunic and a shawl.

HELI (45) wears a long brown tunic. His hair is gray from dry plaster.

HELI

Have you seen Salome?

Sarah's eyes are red. She wipes them, her hands trembling. The tears come anyway.

SARAH

She came home for a few minutes yesterday, rushed to her bedroom...

HELI

...then said she had to run back to the market...

SARAH

...but would be back in time to help fix dinner.

HELI

I've been up all night looking for her.

Mary looks around.

MARY

She hasn't been to my house in nearly a week. And I haven't seen her here today.

ZEBEDEE

None of us has seen her? She couldn't have vanished.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. MARKET - DAY

HELI

Salome is definitely not in  
Nazareth.

MARY

Maybe she ran to Cana to see our  
cousins.

ZEBEDEE

That's ten miles from here.

MARY

You don't know Salome very well.

Sarah tries to smile.

SARAH

Time means nothing to her.

HELI

Or distance.

MARY

Joseph is working on some doors at  
home. We'll check Cana.

HELI

We'll check Sepphoris. I've been  
building new servant quarters near  
the palace.

Sarah wipes her eyes and speaks to the ground.

SARAH

She's always pretending she's a  
princess.

ZEBEDEE

I'll go back to Bethsaida, get my  
fishing buddies, and we'll check  
all the towns between home and  
here.

Zebedee turns away, then calls back to the others.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

God forgive me if she's been  
kidnapped.

INT. COURTYARD - DAY.

SUPER - CANA, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE

Mary and Joseph stand just inside the gate.

MENDAL (25) wears an Egyptian kilt. His hair is black and thick and straight as though made out of wire.

Joseph carries two-year-old Jesus in one arm and has the other around Mary.

MENDAL

What brings you our way, Mary?  
Hello, Joseph. And how is our  
little Jesus today?

Mary wipes a tear and hugs up to Joseph.

NAOMI (16) joins them in the courtyard. She wears a tapestry tunic, walking as though she were gliding.

NAOMI

I thought I heard company. You  
brought Jesus over to play with his  
cou... What's wrong?

JOSEPH

It's Salome. She's missing.

NAOMI

She couldn't be.

MARY

Do you know something?

JOSEPH

You know how impetuous she is.

MENDAL

She was here last week. You knew  
that, didn't you?

MARY

What did she want?

NAOMI

Didn't you know? She wanted to see  
samples of Mendal's tapestries.  
He's the best weaver in the  
kingdom, you know.



MENDAL

When is her betrothal? She seemed in a hurry.

MARY

My sister is always in a hurry. Was anyone with her?

NAOMI

No. She did say something about picking out her jewelry next.

MENDAL

Didn't say where. Or when. I'm sure your sister is fine. She just lost track of time.

MARY

All night?

EXT. COLONADED CITY STREET - DAY

SUPER: SEPPHORIS, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE

HELI

I made the mistake of letting Salome come to work with me last week.

SARAH

I remember. She always comes home from the royal city with stars in her eyes.

HELI

I know. But, when she makes up her mind, she pesters you...

SARAH

And you always give in to her.

HELI

A wedding procession passed us. She wanted to join them.

SARAH

Do you know where the bride and groom live? Maybe...

HELI

...she came back? Why? She didn't even know them.

SARAH  
It was a wedding. That's all she  
talks about.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Heli and Sarah look up and down the rows. Sarah blinks away  
her tears and forces a smile.

Heli moves his protective arm away from his wife and speaks  
loud enough, shop keepers and customers hear and turn in  
their direction.

HELI  
Ah, this is a good day for  
surprises. Let's surprise our  
daughter with something special for  
her wedding day.

COPPER MERCHANT (40) calls out to Heli.

COPPER MERCHANT  
Then you came to the right place.  
I have copper bowls, perfect for a  
new bride.

Sarah steers Heli to another booth.

SARAH  
Our daughter could care less about  
kitchen things. But, uh, what  
about jewelry?

Heli raises his voice again.

HELI  
Jewelry anyone? Where might we find  
nice jewelry for a bride?

GOLD JEWELER (50) calls out to the couple. He holds up a hand  
with three rings on it.

GOLD JEWELER  
Ah, yes. Just last week one of my  
customers wore the finest of  
Senegal gold on her delicate ears  
and matching four-strand necklace.

Sarah rushes to the merchant.

SARAH  
What did she look like? Was she  
about my height? Brown curly hair?

HELI  
Giggled a lot?

GOLD JEWELER  
Afraid not. She had two maids and  
they did the talking for her.

Heli and Sarah turn away.

GOLD JEWELER (CONT'D)  
But there was a new guy hanging  
around here that day. No booth.  
Just hustling the regular  
customers. I noticed he went up to  
her and showed her something gold.

Heli and Sarah turn back with hope. Dare they smile? Dare  
they weep. Sarah sucks in air. Heli clenches his fists.

HELI  
What did he look like?

GOLD JEWELER  
Big guy. Didn't like his looks.

EXT. WATERFRONT. DAY

SUPER: BETHSAIDA, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE

Zebedee is on mule back. He hands the reins of the other  
mules to two fishermen.

ZEBEDEE  
Got it? We cover the northwest  
side of the lake.

SHORT FISHERMAN  
I can't leave town. I'll search  
Bethsaida again.

TALL CREWMAN  
I'll take Chorazin. Tomorrow we  
cover the southwest part of the  
lake?

Zebedee looks around as he speaks.

ZEBEDEE  
Pray we find her by nightfall.

Zebedee turns his mule and kicks it into a gallop. His hair  
flies in the wind. His eyes strain.

SUPER: MAGDALA, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE

Zebedee enters the city through the majestic gate. The market is there. He dismounts, stares up into the sky, and whispers.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Please. I cannot lose her.

As he walks down the aisles, he hears a man shouting to prospective customers.

GOLD DEALER is inches taller than Zebedee, and wears a red coat over a gold tunic. He has a turban on his head and large loop gold earrings.

GOLD DEALER  
Behold this little lady and how  
beautiful my gold jewelry makes her  
look. Behold!

Zebedee turns in the direction of the voice. He stops, stares, and rushes forward. He grabs Salome's hand.

ZEBEDEE  
What's he doing to you? Let's get  
out of here.

GOLD DEALER  
Whoa there, mister. You're going no  
where with my slave.

Zebedee swells out his chest, holds his head high, and marches forward, battle in his eyes.

ZEBEDEE  
She's no slave and you have no  
rights on her.

GOLD DEALER  
Yeah?

ZEBEDEE  
Yeah.

GOLD DEALER  
Who are you? She's my property and  
I can prove it.

Zebedee's brows furrow as his eyes shoot daggers to the one who has stolen the love of his life.

Salome backs up away from the men.

Gold Dealer pulls out a small scroll from a pouch at his waist and thrusts it at Zebedee.

Zebedee read it then throws it on the ground.

By now a crowd is gathering around them.

ZEBEDEE

You forced her to sign this.

Zebedee looks over at Salome.

SALOME

Well...

ZEBEDEE

Salome! What have you done?

GOLD DEALER

She put that necklace and earrings on but said her money was at home. I trusted her to go get it.

SALOME

Well, someone grabbed my money pouch out of my hand and...

GOLD DEALER

Good thing I saw her. Wasn't my fault she got robbed. Now she works for me until she has paid it off.

ZEBEDEE

Why didn't you go home and get the money from your father?

SALOME

He would have grounded me for a month, and wouldn't have let me marry you, and didn't have the money anyway.

Zebedee turns toward Gold Dealer while reaching into the pouch at his waist.

ZEBEDEE

How much?

GOLD DEALER

She's not for sale. She's doubled my sales.

ZEBEDEE

How much?

Zebedee throws his money pouch at Gold Dealer, grabs Salome, hoists her up onto his mule and gallops through the market with her.

Gold Dealer pours the contents of the money into his hand and grins.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

We're getting betrothed and married tomorrow. Do you hear me?

Salome giggles and snuggles up to her man.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. JOSEPH'S & MARY'S COURTYARD.

SUPER: NAZARETH, GALILEE PROVINCE - BC 4

A knock at their gate. Mary opens it, receives a small scroll, and hands the unseen delivery person a coin.

She turns toward the workshop end of the courtyard where Joseph is working, reading as she walks.

VISION: Zebedee's and Salome's courtyard.

Zebedee sits at a table writing on a small scroll. He reads aloud.

ZEBEDEE

Dear Joseph and Mary. Greetings from Bethsaida. You now have a nephew. We named him James after your second son. Come see him. And us. We promise not to take you fishing and drown you. P.S. I need you, Joseph. Salome is wanting to buy more furniture.

BACK TO NAZARETH.

INT. JOSEPH'S & MARY'S COURTYARD - DAY

SUPER: NAZARETH, GALILEE PROVINCE - BC 2

A knock at their gate. Joseph opens it, receives a small scroll, and hands the unseen delivery person a coin.

Mary grabs it, opens it, and reads.

VISION: Zebedee's and Salome's courtyard.

Zebedee sits at a table writing on a small scroll. He reads aloud.

ZEBEDEE

Dear Joseph and Mary. Greetings from Bethsaida. You now have a second nephew. We named him John after Priest Zechariah's and Elizabeth's boy. Their John is supposed to be some kind of prophet some day.

(MORE)

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Wonder if he could prophecy where  
the fish are biting. He must be 8  
or 9 by now. Jesus too. P.S. My  
rosebud bought a gold laurel wreath  
for her hair. Loves the stuff.

BACK TO NAZARETH

Joseph begins to re-roll the scroll, then stops.

JOSEPH

Mary, I think this part is for you.

Mary takes the scroll and sits to read it while Joseph waits.

MARY

Oh, they have another son, John.  
And Zebedee's fishing partner,  
Jonas, had a son a week later --  
Peter. She's inviting us to come  
see them. Oh, can we?

JOSEPH

I'm between jobs right now. I have  
heard talk Herod Philip is going to  
wall up the city and build new  
government buildings. I might find  
work there.

MARY

This will be fun. I wonder if  
Jesus remembers his aunt Salome?

INT. ZEBEDEE'S & SALOME'S COURTYARD - DAY

SUPER: BETHSAIDA, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE - BC 1

MARY (O.C.)

Oh, Salomeee.

Salome drops her embroidery work, claps her hands fast  
together, and skips to the front gate.

SALOME

"Oh, Maryyy.

Salome breaks free of Mary and stoops.

SALOME (CONT'D)

Who are these two young men?  
Jesus, you've grown so big. How old  
are you now? And this must be  
little James.

(MORE)



SALOME (CONT'D)

I see he's big enough to walk and get into trouble. Ha, ha. Oh, and Joseph. Zebedee should be waking up soon.

Mary looks around.

MARY

Where are James and John?

SALOME

I put them to bed an hour ago.

Zebedee walks out. His hair is unkempt, he yawns, and he rumbles.

ZEBEDEE

What's going on out here? Crash, bang, shouting like the house is on fire. How's a man supposed to sleep?

Salome blinks, puts on an artificial smile, and hurries to her husband, slipping her arm through his.

SALOME

Sweetie, you remember Mary and Joseph were coming to see us. Remember? We invited them. You remember, don't you? Now they're here. Isn't that wonderful?

Zebedee pushes his hair out of his eyes, splashes water on his face, puts on a shabby robe, grabs some rolls and cooked fish, throws them in a basket and turns to Joseph.

ZEBEDEE

You coming? Gotta go when the fish are biting.

Joseph looks at Salome who grins big and nods her head. She whispers.

SALOME

He likes you.

ZEBEDEE

Don't worry. Got plenty of food here for us both. And me? My squawk is louder than my claws. Gotta have a little fun sometimes.

EXT. BANK OF LAKE GALILEE - DUSK.

The two men walk side by side in the growing shadows.

JOSEPH

So, who do you work for?

ZEBEDEE

Don't work for anybody. Have my own boat. Business is good. Lots of opportunities to build a business here. Mine's growing all the time. Ha! Gotta keep Salome's bills paid. You should move here. Nazareth is too small.

THE NEXT DAY - COURTYARD

Salome enters the courtyard carrying a baby. Two-year-old James hangs on to her tunic and toddles beside her.

SALOME

Good morning everyone.

MARY

Salome. It's been so long since I've held a baby. Can I hold your little John?

Mary walks around the courtyard swaying back and forth and humming a tune.

MARY (CONT'D)

He looks just like his namesake. Elizabeth's John is six months older than Jesus. How do you handle him? Zebedee?

Salome grins and puts her first-born James on the floor. He toddles over to Mary's second-born James.

SALOME

Ha. Sometimes I wear earplugs and let him bluster all he wants. When he tries to pick a fight, I agree with him and give him a honey bun. Or rub his back without replying. He's still a lot of fun. You'll see this afternoon when our company comes. Now, Jesus, don't throw the ball too hard to James.

(MORE)

SALOME

He isn't old enough to understand  
what he's supposed to do with it.

8-YEAR-OLD JESUS

Okay, Aunt Salome.

MARY

Does Zebedee understand who Jesus  
really is?

SALOME

I don't know. I explained about the  
angel appearing to you and the  
times the angels spoke to Joseph.  
But, no. I don't think he quite  
does.

EXT. FLAT ROOF TOP - EARLY EVENING

ZEBEDEE

So, what was it like in Egypt? Did  
you see any Pharaohs? Oh, that's  
right. You were in hiding.

Mary looks down at the courtyard below where the children are  
playing. She steps over to Salome, takes baby John in her  
arms, sits, and hugs him up to her bosom.

Salome stares at her husband and shakes her head slightly.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

You know what I woulda done if any  
soldiers were after my kid. I'd...

Salome picks up a plate and steps over to Zebedee.

SALOME

Have a honey bun, Zebedee...James  
is going to be a politician when he  
grows up, you know. He's going to  
run the Romans out of our kingdom.

Salome sets down the plate and picks up her baby John.

SALOME (CONT'D)

And baby John will probably take  
over our company and expand it to  
the largest fishing business on the  
sea.

The afternoon sinks lower in the sky. Sunset greets them.

ZEBEDEE

Time to go to work. Knowing my partner, Jonas, he's already down there. Coming, Joseph?

EXT. SEASHORE - DUSK

Joseph helps Zebedee turn his boat upright and put baskets in it. Zebedee untangles a net.

JOSEPH

Did you know while we were in Egypt I made boats?

ZEBEDEE

You, my brother, are going to have to move to Bethsaida so we can form a partnership. You make 'em and I sail 'em.

JOSEPH

I don't know if I will ever leave Nazareth. I find small villages are much safer than large cities like you have here.

EXT. ZEBEDEE'S & SALOME'S COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

A knock on the gate. Zebedee answers it.

ZEBEDEE

Well, hello there, Jonas. Give up on tangling my nets? Come on in anyway.

SALOME

This is Jonas and his son, Peter. Peter is a year older than our James. And over here are my sister, Mary, her husband, Joseph, and their children.

JONAS (30) has black hair and wears a rope around his neck from which hangs an oar.

JONAS

This is my wife, Anna. And the newest addition to our family, baby Andrew.

EXT. SEA SHORE - SUNRISE

SUPER: BETHSAIDA, GALILEE PROVINCE - 25 YEARS LATER

ZEBEDEE (60) is husky and has salt-pepper hair that hangs down over his eyes when he works. He wears a dirty loin cloth and an anchor earring.

Two fishing boats approach shore. On their side in big letters is written: ZEBEDEE & SONS.

Zebedee climbs out of one of two boats and wades to shore. He turns back toward his boats and shakes his head. He looks up at the sky.

ZEBEDEE

Why?

FISHERMEN wear only loin cloths. They stare down at baskets half full of fish in their respective boats.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Don't bother counting them.

TALL FISHERMAN

Maybe things will be better when your sons get back.

ZEBEDEE

That upstart, Jesus. Why did my wife tell them they could go with him?

SHORT FISHERMAN

Things will be better tomorrow, sir. I can feel it.

ZEBEDEE

That's what we said last week. And the week... Just go home. All of you go home.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DAY

Zebedee, James, and John work on boat repairs, hammering, filling cracks with mud, sanding.

JAMES (26) wears an anchor earring and wears a short work tunic. He resembles his father, being dark, but is trim and muscular.

ZEBEDEE

I'm glad you have finally settled  
back down, James. You and your  
brother are going to have to run  
the business after I retire.

JAMES

Yes, Father.

Zebedee looks down at a crab grabbing a piece of fish to eat.

ZEBEDEE

You boys cannot go gallivanting  
around the country with Jesus any  
more.

He clears his throat and takes a deep breath. How can a  
father beg? And his own sons.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

You are needed here at home in the  
business. I need you. Jesus does  
not.

JOHN (24) also wears an anchor earring. He resembles his  
mother with brown wavy hair.

JOHN

You're right, Father.

John picks up a tattered sail in the bottom of the boat. He  
holds it out.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Father, when are we going to get  
the sails fixed for this boat?  
Can't keep putting it off.

Zebedee picks up his hammer and bangs hard on the boat.

ZEBEDEE

You know fishing hasn't been good  
lately. I don't know how much  
longer I can keep hanging on.

JAMES

(whispering to John)  
Should we tell him about  
Mother buying that silk  
for a new cloak?

SAME - SUNSET

Zebedee fills his boat with empty baskets.

JOHN

Mother just left. She brought us a meal for tonight.

JAMES

Middle-of-the-night meals. That's some life.

ZEBEDEE

James, that's your life. It will always be your life.

HIRED FISHERMAN SHABBAT

Samuel had to take off tonight. He's fighting a bad cough.

ZEBEDEE

Is everyone else here?

HIRED FISHERMAN SHABBAT

Four of us plus your sons.

HIRED FISHERMAN SHAGRA

Andrew and Peter have already gone out.

ZEBEDEE

Let's get these nets loaded so we can shove off and see what's not out there.

GOD-KING JESUS (30) is tall and muscular. He has a short black beard, a broad grin, and a resounding voice that easily carries in crowds.

GOD-KING JESUS (o.c.)

Wait!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

Zebedee freezes. The veins in his neck pulsate. He grits his teeth. A growl emerges from deep in his throat. His eyes squint as though warn his enemy how tough he is. To warn his enemy to back down.

ZEBEDEE

It's that Jesus again.

He refuses to turn and make the interruption a reality.

Andrew and Peter are with Jesus.

ANDREW (24) is slim with straight chestnut hair. When he walks, he bounces. When he runs he gallops. He wears a cord around his neck with a carved oar hanging from it.

PETER (26) is dark and bulky. His eyes dart everywhere, even when he talks, like the spirit within him.

JOHN

Hey, what are you doing with Jesus?  
We thought you cast off half an  
hour ago.

John stares, grinning, at Andrew, Peter, and Jesus.

ANDREW

Well, we did. We weren't very far  
out when Jesus called us back to  
shore.

Zebedee with his back still turned to them.

ZEBEDEE

And of course they did what he  
said.

PETER

We thought there was some kind of  
emergency.

ANDREW

When we got back to shore, Jesus  
said he was going to teach us to  
fish for people.

PETER

Starting right now. Isn't that  
right, Jesus?



James and John stare at their father, the fishing boats, the hired hands, and back at Jesus.

GOD-KING JESUS

James. John. I have a job for you.

Zebedee still refuses to turn and face his enemy.

ZEBEDEE

Of course, he does. Forget earning a living. Forget supporting Salome. Forget mortgaging the house to pay the bills.

GOD-KING JESUS

I am going to show all four of you how to fish for people. Come with me.

Zebedee turns, picks up an oar and throws it at Jesus. He reaches inside the boat and throws a basket at him. He picks up pebbles and throws those.

ZEBEDEE

Jesus, you ruin everything.

JOHN

Father?

Zebedee's shoulders droop. He replies with a low growl.

ZEBEDEE

What, Son?

JOHN

We want to go with Jesus tonight. You've got enough help.

Zebedee stares at the fast-sinking sun.

JAMES

Please, Father. It's important. It's just one night.

Zebedee climbs into his boat.

JAMES & JOHN

Thanks, Father. We'll see you in the morning.

ZEBEDEE

Cast off! We've got bills to pay.

The moon rises in full glory.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MOON-LIT NIGHT

CROWDS disperse, some talking to friends with animation, others near tears.

Jesus steps down from the small elevated forum surrounded by four columns typical of town squares. He looks over at his four trainees, smiles, nods his head, and leaves.

ANDREW

Did you see the size of the crowd?

JAMES

A politician's dream.

JOHN

We're not the only ones who believe  
he'll take over the kingdom some  
day.

PETER

Well, we've still got time to get  
in some fishing. My boat is still  
down there.

EXT. IN A BOAT ON LAKE OF GALILEE - NIGHT

Andrew and John man the oars in the middle of a lake full of nothing.

James holds a torch over the water in a pretense of spotting fish he knows are not there.

Peter throws out the net again and again. It is good practice.

ANDREW

Your father is getting older, you  
know. We'll keep pulling our  
weight.

PETER

Yeah. If we work things right, we  
can fish at night for your father  
and stand with Jesus during the  
day.

JOHN

I know Jesus better than the rest  
of you.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

He's not going to be satisfied.  
He's going to want us to go with  
him on another tour.

ANDREW

Well, we'll just have to figure  
something out when the time comes.

JAMES

He wants us along to train us.  
We're going to be officials in his  
kingdom. You just wait and see.

PETER

Well, it's almost dawn. We may as  
well go ashore. It was a waste.  
Nothing. Empty nets.

INT. ZEBEDEE'S & SALOME'S COURTYARD - DAY

SUPER - BETHSAIDA, GALILEE PROVINCE, PALESTINE

Being upper-middle class, their courtyard has clay tiles and  
columns holding up the second floor painted to match the  
floor.

James and John walk into the courtyard, hair mussed, yawning  
and stretching.

JOHN

Is Father up yet?

SALOME (35) wears two large gold earrings, three gold  
necklaces and a ring on her finger. Her tunic and robe are  
bright contrasting colors.

SALOME

He's still asleep. Exhausted, poor  
dear.

As James and John splash water on their faces, there is a  
knock on their gate.

Salome answers it and takes a small scroll. She turns and  
hands it to James.

SALOME (CONT'D)

Go. I'll explain it to your father  
when he gets up.

James and John disappear and reappear wearing knee-length  
tunics and with a pack on their backs.

Salome hands each of them a basket.

SALOME (CONT'D)  
I keep it packed for you. I baked  
bread this morning so it is still  
fresh. Go now. Go!

COLLAGE

-- JESUS, PETER, ANDREW, JAMES, JOHN WALK DOWN HIGHWAY.

-- JESUS LETS ANIMALS LOOSE IN JERUSALEM. THE 4 STAND BY.

-- ZEBEDEE FISHES ALONE ON LAKE GALILEE.

-- JESUS WITH WOMAN AT WELL IN SYCHAR. THE FOUR STAND BY.

-- ZEBEDEE FISHES ALONE ON LAKE GALILEE.

-- SQUIRE CHUZA BOWS BEFORE JESUS. THE FOUR STAND BY.

-- HIGHWAY BACK TO HOME.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DUSK

James and John walk down the embankment to the shore of the lake.

ZEBEDEE  
So you decided to come home. Is it  
to take your rightful place as  
future owners of the business?

Zebedee's voice reflects his bitterness, his fears, his hopelessness.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Or is it to get fresh clothes, earn  
a few coins, and be gone again?

James and John take off their tunics and sandals, throwing them into the boat. They gather up equipment and supplies and throw them in also.

JOHN  
Father. You don't understand.

ZEBEDEE  
You're right about that. I don't understand. Your first obligation is to your family.

Zebedee stops working and stares at his sons.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
The tiles in our courtyard are working themselves up and need replaced. The stucco on the outside of our house is chipping off. Our front gate is warping. My fishing boats have been patched so much, the originals aren't even there.

JOHN  
You just don't understand.

Zebedee charges up to John until they are nose to nose.

ZEBEDEE  
You're right about that.

Zebedee flings baskets into the boat, some of which fall short or fly over it.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
What is it about Jesus? That hold he has over you?

Zebedee climbs into the boat, his sons push it out far enough it will float.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Well, I keep praying the whole thing will blow over and you will come home and settle down before it's too late.

Zebedee looks up at the stars.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Only God can stop what's going on now.

EXT. ON LAKE GALILEE - NIGHT

ZEBEDEE

I don't know how much longer I can  
pay the crew in our other boat.

JOHN

(Almost in a whisper)  
Fishing will get better.

JAMES

Jesus promised us our business  
would pick up.

JOHN

He knows things other people don't.

JAMES

We believe him, Father.

Zebedee looks up at the stars, raises his arms and shouts at  
them.

ZEBEDEE

God! Do you hear me, God? We need  
a good haul tonight! Do you even  
hear me any more?

His voice normal now.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Where ever you are!

His voice softer.

My business. It's sinking.

Now whispering.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Fish with us, God! Fish with us  
tonight!

SUPER - 9:00 PM

They cast out their nets and catch nothing.

SUPER - 11:00 PM

They cast out their nets and catching nothing.

SUPER - 1:00 PM

They cast out their nets and catch nothing.

SUPER - 3:00 AM

They cast out their nets and catch nothing.

SUPER - 5:00 AM

They cast out their nets and catch nothing.

SUPER - 7:00 AM

Zebedee looks inside the baskets that should be overflowing. The baskets that are empty. All but one. He takes it, half full, and dumps its scarce contents back into the lake.

He calls out to the other boat where his hired hands are.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Pull them in, men. We've circled the lake. We've done the best we could. You all have been loyal. I'd hire you all over again if things were different. Let's go in.

JOHN

What's father saying?

JAMES

Don't ask.

Zebedee watches his hired hands pour their entire catch into one basket.

ZEBEDEE

Just set them free, men. Set the fish free. Set everyone free.

Slowly they make their way back to the shore. Silently through trembling waves picking up with the morning breeze. Silently through time, creeping and eeking. Silently toward resignation to God's strange will.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DAYBREAK

The youngest and strongest jump out of their boats in waist-high water and pull them in to shore.

ZEBEDEE

Wash those nets good, men. After the seaweed's out, scrub them down with a brush.

HIRED FISHERMAN SHABBAT  
He doesn't usually get this  
particular except at the end of the  
season.

ZEBEDEE  
Then the boats. Take everything out  
that belongs to you.

The fishermen hear loud crowds at the top of the bank.

JOHN  
What's going on up there?

JAMES  
They're mad. A riot brewing?

ZEBEDEE  
Probably all my creditors. Fighting  
over who's going to get what from  
what I have left.

EXT. HILL ABOVE LAKE GALILEE - DAY

People run to catch up with the crowd.

People already in the crowd push and shove at each other.

In front is Jesus.

ANDREW  
That's Jesus! They're practically  
trampling him.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DAY

Zebedee looks up from his work and mumbles to himself.

ZEBEDEE  
Go away, Jesus. We need to be  
alone.

Jesus looks over at Zebedee, then to Peter.

GOD-KING JESUS  
Am I glad to see you! Could I use  
your boat? These good people are  
squeezing in so tight...

PETER  
Sure. You coming, Andrew?



ZEBEDEE

My boys have work to do. You two go  
on with Jesus.

The boat goes out just a few feet from shore.

GOD-KING JESUS

You are the most blessed if you are  
poor. Then you will be part of the  
Kingdom of Heaven!

You are the most blessed if you are  
hungry. Then you will be filled  
with food for the soul!

You are the most blessed if you are  
crying. God will give you laughter!

Silence in the crowd. Silence among the fishermen. A holy  
silence in heaven in preparation.

GOD-KING JESUS (CONT'D)

Now, Peter, it's time to go  
fishing. Go to the deepest part of  
the lake and lower your nets.

ANDREW

Jesus? You obviously don't know  
anything about fishing.

Jesus just smiles.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

PETER

Jesus, we've fished hard all night.  
We've done everything we could  
think of to lure the fish to us.  
It's no use. The fish just are not  
there.

Jesus sits and puts his hands behind his head. Still he  
grins.

ANDREW

Zebedee is going to close down the  
business. If he does, we may as  
well too. One more throw out is  
not going to make any difference.

Jesus brushes sand off his clothes.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You may be a good carpenter, Jesus,  
but you're no fisherman.

Jesus double checks the straps tying his sandals on.

PETER

You don't get fish out in the deep  
water. Besides, the nets don't go  
down very far.

Jesus picks up one of the empty baskets and puts it in his  
lap.

ANDREW

It wouldn't make any difference.  
They don't feed when it's hot.  
It's nearly noon.

Jesus reaches over and straightens out one of the nets.

PETER

Better stick with what you know.

Jesus picks up a second basket to hold.

ANDREW

Jesus, you probably slept all  
night. We didn't. Have mercy on us.

Jesus leans over the side of the boat and drags his hand in  
the water.

PETER

Jesus, we're really tired. We've been fishing all night. It was great hearing you speak again, but we need to go home and go to bed now.

Jesus smirks.

ANDREW

We're not going to out talk him, are we, brother?

Jesus gathers a third basket to his crowded lap.

PETER

Jesus, you are so stubborn. More stubborn than me. Okay. Okay. We're at the deepest part. Now what?

Jesus stands, pulls a crumpled net out so it is straight.

ANDREW

The fish are gone. This lake has been fished out.

Jesus sits again, gathering up his baskets again.

PETER

We're doing this just because it's you, Jesus. We wouldn't do it for anyone else. Okay, Andrew. Let 'er fly.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DAY

ZEBEDEE

What are those fools up to now?

James, John, and the hired hands stop washing nets and stand to watch.

JOHN

Father, they were really depressed this morning. I was worried about them.

JAMES

What's Andrew doing on the edge of their boat?

ZEBEDEE  
Life's hard, but suicide?

JOHN  
Oh, no.

ZEBEDEE  
They're young. They've got their  
whole life ahead of them. They can  
start over.

MOS

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Or is that Jesus telling people  
they should die for him? He's in  
the boat with them, isn't he?  
What's going on out there?

JAMES  
Their boat's rocking!

HIRED FISHERMAN SHAGRA  
Is he purposely trying to turn it  
over?

JOHN  
No! Wait! Look! They're pulling  
in their nets. It's fish! It's  
gotta be fish!

JAMES  
Look! They're waving at us. They  
need us to come help them!

JOHN  
Come, Father! Let's get in on a  
miracle!

The sons each take a hand and pull their father on board. The  
rest of the crew pushes them off into the water.

EXT. LAKE GALILEE - DAY

ZEBEDEE  
What are you boys...

The oars take them as fast as the young men's muscles can  
force them to move.

Adrenalin shooting through the body. Life zipping through  
the blood stream. Heart returning to the soul.

Zebedee and sons arrive along side the miracle boat. James and John jump over to their partners' boat.

PETER

The nets are about to break. Grab hold!

The four tug and struggle and pull in the net. Countless fish. Fish all reserved and ready for the right moment in time. The right spot on earth.

Jesus continues to watch and grin. The angels grin. God grins.

Zebedee stares alternately at the nets and Jesus.

JAMES

Get in our boat. We can catch more there.

Jesus sweeps his hand over in the direction of Zebedee.

GOD-KING JESUS

By all means. Be my guest.

Zebedee moves toward the bow of his boat to make room.

The four younger fishermen jump over to Zebedee's boat.

Grinning, Jesus looks over at Zebedee.

Zebedee's brows lower. He stares into young Jesus' eyes. His own eyes squint.

The four young fishermen throw their nets out into the lake and strain to pull them in.

Tugging, grunting, muscling in the miracle.

The lake shivers in delight as it gives up its hidden treasure.

They stop. Neither both can hold more.

For the first time, the four fishermen look at their miracle load. Really look at it. Then over at Jesus.

Peter wades through the miracle, struggling to reach Jesus. The other three follow.

Peter drops to his knees, shakes his head, and struggles with tears. His voice chokes.

PETER  
My Lord! My God!

Peter's body trembles.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Leave me.

His voice trembles.

PETER (CONT'D)  
I sin.

His heart trembles.

PETER (CONT'D)  
I do not deserve to be in your  
presence.

By now, the other three fishermen have joined Peter

JOHN  
Leave us, Lord.

ANDREW  
Don't try to be our friend.

JAMES  
We cannot measure up to you.

Zebedee watches, his eyes big, pushing hair out of his face.  
He stares at this miracle man young enough to be his son.

ZEBEDEE  
Uh, Jesus, we do need to get  
ashore.

As the four young men man the rows, Zebedee stares  
alternately at the fish, his sons, then Jesus.

Zebedee stares at the fish and counts on his fingers. In his  
excitement, he leans over to count on his toes.

Zebedee looks over again at Jesus in the other boat, but for  
a longer time now.

Jesus winks. He nods his head in assurance.

Zebedee points to himself.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
For me? For my sons and me?

Jesus nods his head.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE GALILEE - DAY

A thud interrupts them. They are at the shore.

The crewmen wade out with more baskets to lighten the boats. The four fishermen join them.

Zebedee and Jesus climb out of their respective boats, water up to their waists, and wade to shore

They reach shore, then climb half way up the bank. They sit and watch the men unload the boats and count.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Jesus, I understand now. You're not going to let anything happen to my business.

MOS

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

In exchange for your offering, I offer you my sons. Is that how it works?

GOD-KING JESUS

Yes, that's about it.

The two sit side by side on an old over-turned boat while the young men separate and count the fish, and look up at Jesus now and then.

James calls up.

JAMES

One hundred and fifty-three!

JOHN

All healthy and huge!

Zebedee stands. Jesus does too.

ZEBEDEE

James. John. You too, Andrew and Peter. Come here.

No one moves.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Now obey me.

The four continue to hold back.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Jesus has something to tell you.

PETER  
No! We cannot get near Jesus  
again.

ANDREW  
Don't ask us.

JAMES  
We don't understand him any more.

JOHN  
Please, Jesus, just leave.

Zebedee looks over at Jesus and shrugs.

ZEBEDEE  
They're stiff-necked and stubborn.  
Just like you.

GOD-KING JESUS  
They're going to need it in years  
to come.

ZEBEDEE  
Years?

Zebedee clears his throat and takes a deep breath.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
Come on, boys. You need to hear  
this.

A few hesitating steps at a time, the four walk from their  
miracle to their miracle maker.

Still several yards from Jesus, they stop and bow.

PETER  
Please, Lord, leave us now.

GOD-KING JESUS  
Don't be afraid. I made you a  
promise. I keep my promises.

The four fishermen look at each other, their brows lowered  
and wrinkled.

GOD-KING JESUS (CONT'D)  
From now on, you will be catching  
people for me.



ANDREW

What do you mean?

PETER

We already said we'd do that with you whenever we could get off work.

GOD-KING JESUS

Come! Follow me wherever I go.

ZEBEDEE

Sons, come over here. Well? Help me up! Now quit eyeing Jesus and look at me. We've had a discussion, Jesus and I. We've reached an agreement. You may not like it.

JAMES

Father, we will try to keep fishing for you at night and stay awake during the day to help Jesus.

JOHN

We'll try our best to put you first.

ZEBEDEE

No, you won't! Stop that! Just stop that! You are going with Jesus and you're doing it now. I'll explain everything to your mother.

JAMES

But, Father, we thought...

ZEBEDEE

Quit thinking. Now go. Get out of here. And if I see you in town tomorrow, I'm going to have you run out.

JOHN

But our fishing business.

ZEBEDEE

We'll just call the business  
ZEBEDEE AND ASSOCIATES.

GOD-KING JESUS

Come.

ZEBEDEE

Go on with him. Your mother and I will send you some money.

Zebedee looks over at Jesus. Jesus winks.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)  
After I get paid for this month's  
catch... that we hauled tonight.

JOHN  
Do you mean it, Father?

JAMES  
It's not just for the day this  
time.

JOHN  
It's a long-term commitment.

JAMES  
That's what Jesus means.

Zebedee stands.

ZEBEDEE  
Excuse me, Jesus. You're in my way.

The four fishermen stare at each other and at Jesus.

JOHN  
Father!

JAMES  
You don't talk to him like that.

Jesus stands and joins Zebedee to lift the old boat over a  
few yards.

Zebedee digs in the ground and reveals a leather money bag.  
He holds it out to his sons.

The four wade back to their now-empty boats and haul them  
into shore the rest of the way.

They return to their father and James takes the money bag.

James and John embrace their old father.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Thank you, father.

JOHN  
You'll be okay now, won't you?

ZEBEDEE

You bet. Who knows? Things just  
may get better after I get rid of  
you four.

Zebedee clears his throat to get control of the trembling in  
his voice.

Andrew steps forward to embrace the old man.

ANDREW

Ever since our father died...

ZEBEDEE

I know. I know.

Peter is the last to say goodbye.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

Now get going before I change my  
mind.

Jesus stands next to Zebedee and puts his arm over his  
shoulders.

ZEBEDEE (CONT'D)

You know, your mother has plans on  
what to convert your bedrooms into.

VISION:

As Jesus, and Zebedee walk behind the four recruits Lake  
Galilee's embankment gradually morphs into a field.

They are joined by the ones Jesus encountered in previous  
episodes.

Ugly Evil One stands to one side.

UGLY EVIL ONE

Noooo!

The sands of the field sparkle like diamonds. Sun rays slide  
down the heavens onto Jesus and his growing number of  
followers.

Jesus is back in his sparkling robe and crown.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE #21