

Season 3

Episode 20: The Man Behind The Curtain

Original Air Date: May 9th 2007

Facilitation Date: May 16th 2007

Episode Information:

Ben begrudgingly begins to introduce Locke to the secrets of the island, beginning with the mysterious Jacob. Meanwhile, Juliet's secret goes public.

Overall Episode Discussion Theme:

- "The Man Behind The Curtain" deals primarily with Ben's back-story. In this particular lesson we will be focusing on him in the context of blame.

New Characters:

- Annie - Ben's friend - Flashback on island
- Horace Goodspeed - Dharma mathematician - Flashback on island
- Roger Linus - Ben's father - Flashback on island
- Emily Linus - Ben's mother - Flashback off island

Key Show Facts:

- Locke returns to the "Others" and demands that Ben begin to educate him on the mysteries of the island.
- Locke forces Ben to take him to Jacob, the man Ben claims to answer to.
- Locke and Ben arrive at Jacob's home, where Ben proceeds to argue with an empty chair. But when Locke begins to leave, he hears a voice say, "Help... me". When he turns around the house begins to shake and Ben is thrown across the room.
- When Locke asks Ben who was in the house, Ben replies simply, "Jacob".
- On their way back to the camp, Ben takes Locke to the mass grave of Dharma workers killed in the Purge.
- Ben admits that he was not born on the island and, from time to time, he has lied to his people. He then shoots Locke in the gut, causing Locke to fall into the pit.
- The Survivors of flight 815 debate about what to think of Naomi, what to do with Juliet, and how to handle the "Others" impending raid on the camp.
- Flashbacks reveal insights into Ben's past, including the fact he was not born on the island, an alcoholic father, a possible romantic connection, and his role in the Purge.

Time for speculation on the show – Sample Topics

- Who, or what, is Jacob?
 - Why does he need Locke's help?

If you could look back on last week's show and plan this lesson... what would you focus on?

Review: What do we know about Ben?

Biblical Significance of the name Benjamin and relevant information as it pertains to the events in LOST - "The Man Behind The Curtain" -

In the bible, Benjamin is the son of Jacob and Rachel. Jacob later becomes Israel, the father of a nation, the twelve tribes (Benjamin being one of the tribes). According to Genesis 35:18,19, Rachel dies giving birth and Jacob chooses the name Benjamin for the child. The name "Benjamin" typically translates as, "Son of my right hand". In Genesis 37:1-24, Joseph, another son of Jacob, is thrown into a pit by his brothers, of which Benjamin could be included, who are jealous of Jacob's love for Joseph.

Scripture: **Genesis 3:8-13 (The Message)**

When they heard the sound of God strolling in the garden in the evening breeze, the Man and his Wife hid in the trees of the garden, hid from God. God called to the Man: "Where are you?" He said, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. And I hid." God said, "Who told you you

were naked? Did you eat from that tree I told you not to eat from?" The Man said, "The Woman you gave me as a companion, she gave me fruit from the tree, and, yes, I ate it." God said to the Woman, "What is this that you've done?" "The serpent seduced me," she said, "and I ate."

- What does the teaching mean to you?
 - What is the main theme/point of the passage?
 - What advice does it give?
- How does this teaching relate to what happened in this week's episode?

Clip 1: 17:37- 19:50 (Longer Version 20:43) "Kinda hard to celebrate on the day you killed your mom."

- What are some free association words that come to mind when you hear the term "blame"?
- What is blame?
- Definition: **blame** *noun, verb*

dictionary.com

1. to hold responsible; find fault with; censure
2. to place the responsibility for (a fault, error, etc.) (usually fol. by on)

urbandictionary.com

1. Something, which two humans do to one another in an painful procedure that can result in unpleasantness.

- What are a few examples of situations where you felt blame?
 - Was it valid?
 - Why or why not?
- What is the relationship between blame and fault?
 - Does blame address who is at fault?
 - Does blame redirect fault?
- In the clip we just saw, how is blame used?
 - Why does Roger blame Ben?
 - Is it valid?
 - How would you feel if you were in Ben's shoes?
- What other time on the island has someone used blamed or been blamed?
 - In which cases was it valid?
 - In which cases was it undeserved?

Clip 2: 21:29 – 23:42 – "He brought one of the "Others" back with him."

- Why do people blame others?
 - To avoid confrontation and responsibility
 - To attribute fault
 - In your opinion can the word blame truly be used to attribute fault? Or is a characteristic of the term "blame" that the "blamed" person has to be a scapegoat?
- What is wrong with blaming others?
 - Innocent individuals can suffer consequences for actions that were not their fault.
 - Relationships can be strained.
 - The real problem is never truly addressed.

- Interesting ideas about blame
 - Blame is considered a “hominid behavior”.
 - Koko, the female gorilla known for her ability to communicate through American Sign Language, signed “cat did it,” when confronted about a sink she had broken during an outburst.
 - Blaming is nearly universally observed in children. It seems to be an essential part of human development. When language skills develop, one of the first practical things that can be done with them is to apply them to blame others for one's own misdeeds, and get them sanctioned or punished while one simply continues to engage in more of same.
 - In organizations, some theorists believe the direction of blame gives direct insight into the integrity of an organization. “Blame flowing upwards in a hierarchy, proved that superiors were willing to take full responsibility for their orders to their inferiors and supplying them with the resources required to do their jobs. But blame flowing downwards, from management to staff, or laterally between professionals, were signs of organizational failure.”

- The survivors of flight 815 repeatedly confront Juliet.
 - Is she deserving of blame?
 - What fault can be directly attributed to her?
 - What blame is undeserved?
 - Why is she commonly the source of criticism?
 - Is she being held responsible for the sins of her people?
 - Will this change in the future?
 - Is blame related to a single event?
 - Can it carry over?

Clip 3: 27:41 – 33:23 – “That was Jacob.”

- Ben directly blames Locke for coercing him into leading Locke to Jacob.
 - Is this blame valid?
 - Why or why not?
 - Didn't Ben promise to help Locke unravel the mysteries of the island if Locke killed his own father?
 - Is Locke too anxious? Did Ben expect for him to be more patient?

- What does the scripture suggest in reference to blame?
 - That it's systemic? There's always someone else to point the finger at?

- What can be done to avoid blame?
 - You cannot control the actions of others?
 - When faced with circumstances where you are the subject of unwarranted blame...
 - How can you best handle these situations?
 - But, you can take responsibility for your own actions.
 - How can you best handle your own affairs?
 - Don't act carelessly.
 - Have good reasons for the decisions you make.
 - Take responsibility for your own mistakes.

- What can we take away from this episode?

Devotional Activity: (10 Minutes)

We have all, almost certainly, at one time or another blamed an event on someone else. Before the lesson prepare a series of flashcards. On each of the flashcards write a mistake or blunder (i.e. “You let the dog get out, You promised an employee a promotion that you cannot give them, You cheated on your significant other, You drank the rest of your roommate's milk , etc). After the lesson, have everyone get into groups of threes. Then pass one card to each person. Have everyone take turns, in their group, first coming up with as creative and outrageous of a story as possible, making sure to blame the situation on one of the other groups members, in order to explain the mishap on their card without taking any responsibility. Once the

first person has gone, rotate, so that the second person blames someone in the group for their mistake, and so on until each person has had the opportunity to blame someone else. Then, start with the first person again and have them admit to the mistake on their card, come up with a creative explanation for what happened on their card, finishing with an apology. Once again, everyone should rotate in their group until everyone has had a turn at both scenarios.

Further Speculation:

- Is Locke's wound fatal?
 - If not, who will help him?
 - Jacob?
 - The island?

- Why does it seem that Richard Alpert never ages?
 - It is clear he appeared to be older than Ben in their first encounter. Nearly thirty years have passed since that encounter and Richard doesn't look any older.
 - Is he one of the island's original inhabitants?

Clip times refer to episodes presented without commercials (i.e. On a DVD or legally downloaded through iTunes - <http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewVideo?id=252901095&p=200507719&s=143441>).

Most recent episode also available at <http://dynamic.abc.go.com/streaming/landing> - streaming only.

Scripture courtesy of <http://www.biblegateway.com>. Blame information courtesy of (www.wikipedia.com)

Definitions courtesy of <http://www.dictionary.com> and <http://www.urbandictionary.com>.

Curriculum written and prepared by Benjamin Kendrick and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 United States License.