

Part 4, Paper 130, On the Way to Rome, Midwayer Commission

📅 Fri, Oct 04, 2024 7:39AM ⌚ 11:55

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Jesus's journey, unknown years, Mediterranean tour, cultural clashes, philosophical debates, Jonah metaphor, seeking truth, Caesarea ship repair, Alexandria library, world religions, Crete conversation, slave girl incident, Carthage priest, time perception, seven dimensions

SPEAKERS

John, Sarah

J John 00:00
Ready to travel back in time. Always

S Sarah 00:01
up for a good journey. Where are we headed today?

J John 00:03
Back to the first century, but with a twist, a twist.

S Sarah 00:07
I do love a good twist. Lay it on me.

J John 00:09
We're diving into the Urantia Book, specifically paper 130 it recounts a year long journey Jesus takes in his late 20s, years before his public

S Sarah 00:19
life kicks off. Okay, so not the Jesus we usually picture from sermons or scripture. Then

J John 00:23
exactly think of this as the unknown years chapter.

S Sarah 00:27
So what's he up to in this chapter, traveling the ancient world, maybe. Bingo.

J John 00:30
He's with an Indian merchant named gonod and gonad son ganid. It's a Mediterranean Grand Tour. Jerusalem, Caesarea, Alexandria even makes it as far as Rome. Now

S Sarah 00:41
that's a journey. Imagine the conversations, the cultural clashes. What a melting pot of ideas they must have encountered.

J John 00:47
It's like peeking behind the curtain of history. And the best part, we get to eavesdrop on Jesus's conversations about life, faith and everything in between, long before his famous teachings.

S Sarah 01:00
I'm hooked already. So where does this behind the scenes tour begin?

J John 01:04
Our first start is Joppa, a bustling port city here, Jesus meets gadaya, a Philistine, Philistine,

S Sarah 01:10
you say, for our listeners, those were the folks often at odds with the Israelites. Adds an interesting dynamic right off the bat,

J John 01:17
and gadaya, he's grappling with a story many know, Jonah and the whale, but he's struggling to square it with well, reality, I



Sarah 01:24

can relate whales, giant fish, men surviving inside him. It's a lot to take literally, and that's



John 01:30

where Jesus's teaching style shines through. He doesn't dismiss godias questions or try to correct him. Instead, he uses the story as a metaphor, a metaphor for what for running from duty. See, Jesus tells gadaya, we all have these whales of selfishness, those temptations, fears that pull us off course from our true purpose.



Sarah 01:50

Wow. I can see why that image sticks with people. We all face those whales in our own lives,



John 01:54

absolutely. But even in these early days, Jesus emphasizes that seeking truth, embracing what's right. That's how we overcome those internal struggles. It's not about blindly following rules, but about confronting our own whales head on. So instead



Sarah 02:09

of running from the tough stuff, we lean in. You got



John 02:12

it? He's not handing out easy answers. He's encouraging people to think for themselves, inspiring



Sarah 02:16

stuff. Now from the bustling port of Joppa, I'm curious. Where do they set sail for next



John 02:21

they head north to Caesarea, a bustling Roman city, and this stop gives us a glimpse of Jesus, the skilled carpenter, putting his practical skills to use.



- S** Sarah 02:30
Wait, hold on, they don't just whisk him from philosophical debate to philosophical debate. Nope.
- J** John 02:36
This time we see him getting his hands dirty, helping repair a ship. It's a good reminder that he wasn't some distant figure. He lived a real life, experienced the everyday struggles of the people he
- S** Sarah 02:47
met. I like that keeps things grounded, but I bet you're gonna tell me this stop also involves a meaningful conversation.
- J** John 02:53
What can I say? It wouldn't be a stop on this journey without one? This time Jesus meets a Greek worker named anaxand, who's troubled by the injustice he sees in the world.
- S** Sarah 03:04
That's a heavy topic. How does Jesus address that? Especially back then, when injustice was rampant, he
- J** John 03:10
did something unexpected. He doesn't tell anaxan to start a revolution or to become some kind of political activist. So what does he do? He encourages him to be
- S** Sarah 03:18
the salt. The salt. Okay, now you have to explain that one.
- J** John 03:21
He's saying, even in a world that often feels flavorless, even when surrounded by darkness, hold on to your goodness, your integrity, be a source of light, no matter how small, powerful
- S** Sarah 03:31
imagery. instead of being consumed by the darkness, you become the light. I love it. Me

imagery, instead of being consumed by the darkness, you become the light. Love is the

J John 03:36

too. Now from the shipyards of Caesarea, get ready to set sail across the Mediterranean. Our next destination, Alexandria, a city famed for its intellectual prowess and that legendary Library of Alexandria,

S Sarah 03:51

the Library of Alexandria. Now we're talking imagine a million manuscripts from across the known world, a treasure trove of knowledge just waiting to be explored like

J John 04:00

the ancient world's version of an all you can read buffet for the mind. And it's here, amidst the scrolls and philosophies that Jesus and Ganede dive into a comparative study of world religions. Oh, that's

S Sarah 04:11

interesting. So they're not shying away from exploring different belief systems, not at all.

J John 04:15

And here's the thing, according to the text, Jesus doesn't dismiss these other religions. He acknowledges their strengths, their insights, finding common threads, a shared belief in a universal God across many cultures that

S Sarah 04:27

speaks volumes about his character, even back then, it's not about claiming one true path, but about recognizing that shared human experience, that desire for something greater than ourselves

J John 04:38

Exactly. And you know that message feels more relevant than ever today. So with that in mind, next time, we'll pick up their journey, leaving the intellectual bustle of Alexandria and heading towards a more intimate setting, the island of Crete. Last time we left off with Jesus and his companions in Alexandria, soaking up knowledge in that incredible library. But their journey's far from over. Right? This time we're setting sail for Crete. Ah, Crete,

- S** Sarah 05:02
a place steeped in myth and legend. What kind of philosophical treasures await us on this leg of the journey? Well,
- J** John 05:11
for one, we finally get a glimpse into a conversation between Jesus and Ganod, the father up until now, remember, they haven't really dived deep into religion, right? More
- S** Sarah 05:19
about the shared experiences, the everyday moments of travel. Sounds like something shifts in Crete.
- J** John 05:24
It does. It's actually sparked by Ganod, always the eager student. Remember, he asks Jesus point blank, why not start teaching publicly now? Why wait?
- S** Sarah 05:33
I can just imagine young Ganod brimming with enthusiasm, ready to share Jesus's wisdom with the world. What's the response?
- J** John 05:40
Patience. Gen Ed patience, Jesus stresses the importance of timing. He compares his message to a seed. It needs the right conditions to sprout to flourish,
- S** Sarah 05:49
a seed metaphor, classic. It speaks to that deep understanding of human nature, the need to meet people where they are. But speaking of human nature creates also where we encounter a story that feels eerily relevant even today, the incident with the slave girl, right?
- J** John 06:03
It's a powerful and disturbing scene. A drunken man is harassing a young slave girl, and without hesitation, Jesus steps in as

S Sarah 06:11
you do, but it's how he intervenes that's striking. Exactly. No

J John 06:15
violence, no retaliation, he uses words and his presence alone to de escalate the situation. It's a

S Sarah 06:22
powerful example of leading with love, even in the face of aggression, and it makes you think, how often do we meet anger with anger? What if we tried a different approach, like Jesus in that moment,

J John 06:32
powerful questions. It's like he's living out the principles he'll later become known for, love, forgiveness, non violence, not just concepts, but actions, and

S Sarah 06:42
those actions speak volumes. All right, so from the shores of Crete, where do we set sail? Next? Next stop,

J John 06:49
Carthage. This city was a melting pot of cultures and beliefs, a perfect place for some serious philosophical sparring. I'm

S Sarah 06:56
ready for a good debate. Who does Jesus encounter in this hub of ideas, picture

J John 07:01
this Jesus in deep conversation with a mithraic priest. Okay,

S Sarah 07:07
now for our listeners who aren't up on their ancient religions, Mithraism, what was that about? It



John 07:11

was a mystery religion popular in the Roman world, with its own rituals and beliefs about things like good versus evil, the afterlife, even a bit of astrology thrown in. And here's the thing, Jesus doesn't shy away from engaging with this priest, even though their beliefs differed.



Sarah 07:26

Fascinating. So what kind of deep philosophical rabbit holes do they go down? Well,



John 07:30

they tackle some big ones, immortality, time, even the nature of reality itself. Those



Sarah 07:35

are some heavy topics. Any specific insights that jumped out at you from this conversation?



John 07:41

Well, take time. For instance. Jesus describes it not as a straight line, you know, past, present, future, but as a stream of events, ever changing, interconnected.



Sarah 07:51

Hmm. I like that. Not just minutes ticking by, but a more fluid, dynamic experience of time,



John 07:57

exactly. And he suggests that as we grow spiritually. Our perception of time changes. We start to see its cyclical nature, how it all connects. It's like we've been looking at time through a narrow window, and he's pulling back the curtains, revealing this expansive view, mind



Sarah 08:12

bending stuff, right? Okay, I gotta know what other mind blowing ideas did they discuss?



John 08:16

Well hold on to your hats because Jesus throws out this concept of seven dimensions of space

Well, hold on to your hats, because Jesus throws out this concept of seven dimensions of space. Okay, you're gonna have to break that one down. For me, he's basically saying that the mind, through spiritual growth, can partially transcend these dimensions. It challenges our very understanding of reality, suggesting there's so much more than we can perceive with our senses alone.

S

Sarah 08:36

Wow. Talk about expanding your horizons. Literally, it's incredible how he could weave together these complex ideas with such clarity. It makes you

J

John 08:45

think, are we just scratching the surface of what's possible, both in terms of understanding the universe and our place within it?

S

Sarah 08:51

Definitely something to ponder. So with our minds thoroughly boggled, where does this incredible journey take us next?

J

John 08:58

From the intellectual heights of Carthage, we shift gears a bit, focusing on individual encounters that highlight the lasting impact of Jesus' interactions. First up the island of Malta, last time we landed on Malta, a place of dramatic rescues and philosophical awakenings. Now picture this. After all those miles, all those encounters, they finally arrive in Rome, the center of the world, at least back then, you'd think

S

Sarah 09:23

this is where we get the grand finale, right? The climax of the journey, exactly.

J

John 09:26

But here's the thing, the Urantia Book doesn't actually tell us what Jesus did or who he met in Rome on this particular trip. Oh,

S

Sarah 09:33

no, that's interesting, almost like they left that part of the story unwritten intentionally,

J

- J** John 09:38
right? Instead of a big finish, we get this sort of open ending, an invitation to reflect on everything that came before.
- S** Sarah 09:44
I like that. It's not just about retracing Jesus' steps, but about grasping the lasting impact of those steps, like those footprints we keep talking about, the ones he left behind with each encounter,
- J** John 09:55
they don't just stop at Rome's city limits, do they? They keep going, leading outward precisely.
- S** Sarah 09:59
Think back on it. We followed this young Jesus from Joppa to Alexandria, Crete, Carthage, even those smaller stops along the way. He connected with merchants, philosophers, doubters, seekers, so many walks of life, woven together by this shared journey. And
- J** John 10:15
through it all, he nudged them to think differently, to see the world with more compassion. Planted those seeds of reflection that who knows, maybe they bloomed long after he was gone. That's the
- S** Sarah 10:25
beauty of it, isn't it? It's not about Jesus performing miracles or preaching to huge crowds, not in this part of his life. Anyway. This is about those one on one connections, the power of simple human interaction.
- J** John 10:36
He's showing that every encounter, no matter how brief, it, holds the potential to be profound, and
- S** Sarah 10:42
that's such a powerful message for us today. You know, in a world that often feels so fragmented, so divided, we can all learn something from that approach. It



John 10:50

makes you think about your own life, doesn't it, the people you've crossed paths with, who left a mark, the words, who challenged you, inspired you, maybe even changed the way you see things,



Sarah 11:00

who are the gadayas, the anaxans, the Ezras, in your own story, who's pushed you to think deeper, to open your heart a little wider, and maybe even more important, what kind of footprints are you leaving behind as you journey through the world? What



John 11:13

seeds of kindness, understanding, even just a listening ear, are you planting? Because that's what it's all about, right? Those small acts of connection, they ripple outward. We may never know their full impact, but that doesn't make them any less important, absolutely.



Sarah 11:28

And on that note, our deep dive into the Urantia Book comes to a close, but the exploration, the quest for truth, for meaning, for connection, well, that never really ends, does it and



John 11:41

hopefully, our conversation today has sparked some new thoughts, some fresh perspectives, maybe even inspired you to look a little closer at the journeys we're all on, both individually and together, until next time, keep seeking, keep questioning and keep those conversations going. You.