

Part 4, Paper 145, Four Eventf...Capernaum, Midwayer Commission

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Capernaum story, Urantia Book, Jesus's teachings, miracle catch, Sabbath sermon, epilepsy misconception, Peter's mother-in-law, mass healing, divine energy, compassion's cost, miracle frenzy, faith transformation, individual belief, lasting change, profound humility

SPEAKERS

Sarah, John

S Sarah 00:00

All right, so let's, let's dive into a story. Okay, we're headed back to first century Capernaum. Picture this bustling marketplaces fishermen prepping for a day on the water and get ready for a few days that turn out to be anything but ordinary.

J John 00:15

And we're exploring this story through the lens of a text some might find a little unexpected, the Urantia Book, okay, it's presented as a revelation, offering an expanded perspective on the life and teachings of Jesus. And

S Sarah 00:29

just to be clear, our deep dive today isn't about debating scripture. We're more interested in the story itself. The Urantia Book gives us these fascinating glimpses into Jesus's leadership, the unpredictable nature of faith, and those times when even miracles don't quite go as planned, yeah, it kind of makes you think about what we might be missing in those familiar stories,

J John 00:48

exactly, and what we find in these particular passages is this remarkable blend of the ordinary and the extraordinary, which I think is what makes it so relatable, even today.



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Sarah 00:58

Okay, so the scene opens with Jesus back in Capernaum, he's been teaching by the Sea of Galilee, drawing huge crowds. You can practically feel the energy, the anticipation. Keep in

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John 01:09

mind, this is right after the death of John the Baptist, so there's already a sense of heightened tension in the air, right?

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Sarah 01:13

Like anything could happen. And what does happen is pretty interesting. Jesus is at the home of Zebedee, and one morning, he's down by the water. The crowds are gathering again. It's a lot. He actually needs to hop into a nearby boat just to create some space to teach. And you know, the Urantia Book points out it's not just any boat.

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John 01:31

It's actually the boat named Simon, the one that used to belong to Simon Peter, the fisherman. The text even mentions that Jesus himself had a hand in building this boat back in his carpentry days.

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Sarah 01:42

Wow, I never thought about that detail. Talk about a full circle moment, right? Yeah. But on this particular morning, it's not Simon Peter at the helm, it's David Zebedee and a couple of his fishermen buddies. They've been out all night fishing and haven't caught a thing. Can

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John 01:54

you imagine the frustration? They're exhausted, probably feeling pretty defeated, as they're cleaning their nets, getting ready to call it a day. Yeah. And that's when Jesus approaches them, and he

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Sarah 02:05

doesn't just ask for a lift back to shore, according to the Urantia Book, Jesus turns to David, who's in charge of the boat, and says, Let's go fishing. Now, if I had been fishing all night and caught nothing, fishing would be the last word I'd want to hear,

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John 02:18

right? And these are experienced fishermen. They know the lake. they know the patterns of the

fish. You'd think they'd trust their own judgment, but there's something about Jesus, a presence and authority, that compels them to say yes, even though

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Sarah 02:31

one of the fishermen, also named Simon, speaks up, points out, they've been at it all night with no luck. It's like he's voicing the doubt. They're all feeling right, but he still agrees. They let down their nets, probably wondering what Jesus could possibly know that they don't.

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John 02:46

And that's when the story takes this almost unbelievable turn. Their nets are overflowing with fish. We're talking so many fish, they have to call for help from other boats just to haul it all in. Okay,

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Sarah 02:55

so maybe we've all heard the phrase miracle catch before, but the way the Urantia Book describes it. It's almost cinematic. Three boats packed to the brim with fish. You can practically hear the shouts, the commotion, the utter shock,

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John 03:08

and what strikes me is the reaction of the fisherman, especially Simon Peter. It's not just excitement, it's awe, even fear. He realizes he's in the presence of something beyond his understanding. It's a moment of profound humility, which is

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Sarah 03:23

so interesting because it seems like the Urantia Book goes out of its way to say this wasn't a miracle in the way we typically think of miracles.

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John 03:30

You're right. The text suggests Jesus used his knowledge of the lake, the currents, the behavior of the fish, to guide them to the perfect spot at the perfect time. It's framed more as an example of deep expertise, of profound understanding of the natural world.

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Sarah 03:43

So it's less about magic, more about really knowing your stuff. But isn't that kind of amazing in its own right? Like we're talking about leadership here, and what could be more inspiring than someone who can see what others miss. who can guide you to success. even after you've been

trying all night and coming up empty, which makes you wonder, what are the fish in our own lives? Are we willing to trust someone else's guidance, even when it seems counterintuitive, but that incredible catch, it's just the beginning of this story.

J John 04:13

It really is just the tip of the iceberg, because the very next day is the Sabbath, and that's when things go from extraordinary to downright chaotic, right?

S Sarah 04:21

It's like the Urantia Book is building this incredible sense of momentum. So it's the Sabbath. Everyone's gathered in the synagogue waiting to hear Jesus speak. You've got to imagine, after that display on the lake, the energy in that room must have been electric, absolutely.

J John 04:33

And this time, Jesus delivers this powerful sermon, one that emphasizes a direct and personal connection with God. He even quotes the prophet Jeremiah talking about this future where everyone from the least to the greatest, would know God for themselves, no middleman, no rituals, just pure individual faith. Wow.

S Sarah 04:53

That's a pretty radical idea. Even today, you can see why people were drawn to his message, and

J John 04:58

they were even the. Apostles who had witnessed firsthand his compassion and authority are described as being deeply moved by his words, yeah. But then in the middle of all of this, a young man in the crowd has a seizure,

S Sarah 05:08

and of course, this being the first century, people assume the worst. Exactly. The

J John 05:13

Urantia Book calls it ordinary epilepsy. But at the time, seizures, especially dramatic ones, were often attributed to demonic possession. So naturally, when this happens in the middle of Jesus's sermon, Jesus' sermon, everyone jumps to the conclusion that he's just performed an exorcism.

Oh, man,

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Sarah 05:27

talk about a tough situation. Did Jesus correct them? Did he explain that it was a medical condition, not a demonic attack?

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John 05:33

That's the interesting part. The text doesn't say he did. It describes him calming everyone down, tending to the young man and then moving on. But the damage is done. The rumor mill is already churning. Of course,

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Sarah 05:46

word spreads like wildfire. Jesus cast out a demon. He healed a man in the synagogue. You can't unring that bell. And

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John 05:53

here's where we see the human element, the way that hope and expectation can sometimes cloud our perception. People are already looking for a miracle, and now with a supposed exorcism, they found one, or at least they found what they believed to be one. It

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Sarah 06:05

makes you think about how easily we can misinterpret events to fit our own narratives, especially when it comes to things we don't fully understand. But it doesn't stop there, does it? The story takes another interesting turn later that day, back at zebedees house,

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John 06:18

right? Peter's mother in law is sick with a fever, and Jesus, being the compassionate guest that he is, goes to check on her. And wouldn't you know the fever breaks shortly after? Okay,

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Sarah 06:29

but couldn't that just be a coincidence? The Urantia Book actually

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John 06:32

suggests as much. It points out that she doesn't fully recover until later that night, during a

much more dramatic event. But again, timing is everything. The apostles already reeling from the supposed exorcism see this as further proof of Jesus's miraculous powers.

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Sarah 06:48

They had already seen him turn water into wine at the wedding in Cana. In their minds, this was just par for the course for Jesus, exactly.

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John 06:54

And the Urantia Book makes this insightful point, one that feels very relevant even today, says that wonder seeking generations miracle minded people will always look for these kinds of coincidences as proof of the supernatural,

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Sarah 07:08

because it's easier, maybe even more comforting, to believe in miracles than to accept the possibility of random chance. But what's fascinating to me is that Jesus himself doesn't seem entirely comfortable with this miracle frenzy that's building around

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John 07:20

him, you're right, and that tension, that inner conflict, is what makes this story so compelling. As the sun sets on Capernaum, the scene is set for an event that will test even Jesus' extraordinary abilities and perhaps even his faith.

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Sarah 07:34

And as darkness falls, a different kind of tension grips Capernaum, and I have to admit, this next part, it always gets me. It makes you think about the cost of compassion on a scale most of us can't even imagine.

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John 07:44

The Urantia Book describes it as this almost palpable wave of need and desperation. Remember, Word has spread like wildfire about Jesus's supposed miracle healings, and since seeking out medical help on the Sabbath wasn't permitted under Jewish law, as soon as that sun sets, it's like the floodgates open, right? It's absolute chaos. Hundreds of people descend upon zebedees house. Imagine being Jesus in that moment. You're not just a miracle worker, you're a teacher, a spiritual leader, and you're facing this throng of suffering humanity, all looking to you for a physical cure. The weight



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Sarah 08:18

of that must have been overwhelming. Did he turn people away? Did he try to reason with them? Explain that his mission was about something deeper than just physical healing.

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John 08:26

It's interesting. The text describes him as being visibly troubled, almost surprised by what happens next. What happens this is the part we've all been waiting for. It's this incredible outpouring of divine energy. The Urantia Book describes it as 683 people, men, women, children, being instantly healed from all sorts of ailments. Can you imagine witnessing something like that, 683 people

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Sarah 08:47

instantly healed? That's not just a miracle. That's, I don't even have words. It makes you wonder if there are limits to what's possible, even for us when we tap into that kind of extraordinary compassion. But you said Jesus was surprised.

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John 08:59

That's what makes this moment so profound, it suggests that even Jesus was taken aback by the sheer magnitude of what unfolded. It's like his deep empathy, his desire to alleviate suffering, somehow merged with the Father's will, and this incredible outpouring of healing energy was unleashed. Wow. It makes you think about those moments in our own lives when we're driven by pure compassion and the unexpected results that can follow. So

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Sarah 09:21

you have this incredible display of power, this mass healing, you'd think everyone would be celebrating, right? But the story takes another unexpected turn. The Urantia

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John 09:30

Book describes the apostles searching for Jesus later that evening, wanting to celebrate, but he's nowhere to be found. He's actually withdrawn by himself, clearly troubled by what has transpired,

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Sarah 09:40

troubled but He healed all those people. Why wouldn't he be happy about that? Because

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John 09:45

he understands the true faith lasting change. It doesn't come from miracles alone. The text describes him realizing that while powerful, miracles can be fleeting, they might address an immediate need, but they don't necessarily lead to the kind of deep spirit. Spiritual transformation that he's ultimately there to inspire. It makes you think, doesn't it about the things we place our hope in the things we believe will bring us lasting happiness.

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Sarah 10:08

It's like he's saying, I can hear your body, but what about your heart? What about that deeper connection to something greater than ourselves? But the crowds don't just disappear, do they? No,

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John 10:18

they don't. The next morning, it's Sunday, and even more people have gathered, hoping for a miracle. The apostles practically beg Jesus to go back to show himself, but he's adamant. He sends them out instead, tells him to focus on spreading the message of the Kingdom, on nurturing faith, not on performing miracles. It's like he's shifting the

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Sarah 10:36

focus from himself, from the spectacle of the miraculous, to something far more enduring the power of individual belief, the transformative power of connecting with the divine. So where does this leave us? What do we do with the story of overflowing nets, of chaotic healings, of crowds seeking miracles and a leader grappling with the true nature of faith and the limits of even his own extraordinary abilities?

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John 10:57

It challenges us to look beyond the surface, doesn't it, to ask ourselves, what we're truly seeking. Are we chasing after quick fixes, instant gratification? Are we willing to do the harder, more rewarding work of cultivating genuine faith, of building a life of meaning that extends far beyond the allure of the miraculous? That's the question this story poses, and it's one I think we all grapple with in our own ways, it

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Sarah 11:21

certainly gives you a lot to think about. Thanks for joining us for this deep dive into the Urantia book's account of those extraordinary days in Capernaum. It's a story that reminds us that sometimes the most profound transformations happen, not in the grand gestures, but in the quiet moments of reflection and deep inner work.