

Part 4, Paper 146, First Preac...f Galilee, Midwayer Commission

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Galilee tour, Urantia Book, cultural crossroads, nature worship, spiritual alignment, prayer teaching, divine truth, philosophical encounter, miracle healing, pre-knowledge, spirit world, Midwayers, forgiveness importance, divine revelation, challenging assumptions

SPEAKERS

Sarah, John

- S** Sarah 00:00
All right, everybody get ready, because we are diving deep today. Diving deep, we are going on the road with Jesus, yeah, taking a look at his first big preaching tour all through Galilee, yeah. And for this, we're going back to our old friend, the Urantia Book, of course. And this is no quick jaunt around the Sea of Galilee. No, no. This
- J** John 00:20
is the big time. Two months on the road multiple cities. We're talking rimin jotapata Canna, wow, all these places, they were like cultural crossroads, you know, a real mix of people and beliefs.
- S** Sarah 00:33
And this is, like, their first time going out on their own, right?
- J** John 00:37
It is. Jesus is basically saying to the apostles, okay, guys, you're ready. Go out and preach
- S** Sarah 00:42
the good news. Go get 'em, but get back here in time for dinner in

 John 00:45
two months, exactly two months later.

 Sarah 00:48
So where do we even begin with this? I mean, there's so much to unpack here. Well, get us started at

 John 00:52
the beginning. Okay, our first stop is rimin. Now, Rimmon is really interesting because it's this blend of Babylonian and Zoroastrian thought, Oh, wow. So imagine, right? You've got this foundation of ancient Babylonian myths and rituals, yeah. And then layered on top of that, you have Zoroastrianism, with its emphasis on the conflict between good and evil, light and darkness,

 Sarah 01:17
right? So it's not just delivering a message. It's like you gotta untangle it. You've gotta untangle

 John 01:21
and weave it in. You've gotta make it make sense. Oh, absolutely, to people with this very different worldview, with a totally

 Sarah 01:27
different operating system, right?

 John 01:29
And the book even talks about, yeah, how hard it is to convert people from nature worship to a more, you know, spiritual ideal.

 Sarah 01:37
Oh, it's a huge leap, right? It's huge to go from what you can see and touch and feel to this concept of something beyond and

 John 01:46

 John 01:10
you know, what's fascinating is that the book doesn't say it's impossible, right? It just says it takes time, right? It's a process. It's a long game. It is.

 Sarah 01:55
It's fascinating. I never thought about it that way, yeah. And

 John 01:59
it makes you think, how many generations did it take for these ideas to really take root,

 Sarah 02:03
right? And how much cultural exchange had to happen? I mean, we see it even in, you know, some of those Babylonian and Persian ideas, they kind of found their way into Christian teachings, right? It did,

 John 02:13
like, the whole concept of good versus evil, light versus darkness. It's everything. Those ideas, they resonated with people, right? They provided a framework for understanding the world, yeah,

 Sarah 02:23
yeah, like a familiar language exactly for these new ideas. Yeah,

 John 02:28
exactly. It's like a cultural bridge. It is, yeah, that's a good way to put it.

 Sarah 02:32
But, you know, it's one thing to talk about these ideas. It's another thing to actually live them. Yeah, for sure. And that brings us to our next up, jotapata.

 John 02:42
Oh, okay, so what happens in jotapata? Well,

- S** Sarah 02:45
that's where we get this incredible teaching on prayer. Okay? And it all starts because Nathaniel, oh, boy. Nathaniel,
- J** John 02:52
he's he's always got questions. He's got questions. He's like, What is prayer really about? Yeah, is it just about asking God for things? Because sometimes it seems like it doesn't work,
- S** Sarah 03:02
right, like I've put in some orders and I'm not getting my delivery Exactly.
- J** John 03:06
And this is where the Urantia Book really shines, because it presents prayer, not as a vending machine, right, but as this incredible opportunity to align ourselves with
- S** Sarah 03:17
God. Oh, I like that. It's not gimme, gimme. It's more like it's, how can I
- J** John 03:21
be more in tune with you? Yes, how can I align my will with yours? Yeah, and that's a very different way of approaching prayer completely. And what I find really interesting is that the book even says that prayer which is inconsistent with the known and established laws of God is an abomination. Whoa, hold
- S** Sarah 03:38
on, an abomination that seems a little intense, it does,
- J** John 03:42
doesn't it, but it makes you think, right? Yeah, are there spiritual laws at play here that we might not be aware of? Right?
- S** Sarah 03:49
Like we think we're playing checkers, but it's actually 3d chess, exactly.



John 03:54

And maybe some of our requests, they're bouncing back because they're not in alignment with these bigger spiritual laws. It's



Sarah 04:01

like trying to order a pizza in a language they don't speak exactly. You're like, I want food. Why don't you understand?



John 04:06

So it's not just about asking, it's about understanding. Okay, so



Sarah 04:10

alignment is key. It's key. But then, and I find this part fascinating, yeah, the text, it talks about how just having certain things in your heart can block effective prayer,



John 04:21

like harboring iniquity in our hearts. Iniquity. What



Sarah 04:24

does that even mean? Like, I stole a cookie when I was seven. Is that gonna come back to haunt me?



John 04:29

Well, it's not so much about specific actions, okay, it's more about the state of our hearts. Oh, okay. Like, imagine you're trying to have a real heart to heart with someone, Yeah, but you're secretly holding on to resentment or bitterness towards them, right? Do you think you can truly connect in that state? No,



Sarah 04:48

probably not, right? You're not fully present, right? You're not really there,



John 04:52

and it's the same with prayer. Wow, if we haven't dealt with our own baggage, it creates a barrier. We're



Sarah 04:58

not showing up authentically. Yeah, exactly. Okay, but there's one more piece to this prayer puzzle, right? Yes, forgiveness, because it's not just about us being open, is it?



John 05:07

No, it's also about extending that same grace to others. And that's where



Sarah 05:12

things get a little tricky, right? They do, because the Urantia Book makes it clear that God's forgiveness, it's not dependent on us forgiving others. God's



John 05:21

love is unconditional, so we're good, right? Like God's got us no matter what. Well, here's the thing, okay, God's forgiveness is always there, but our ability to experience it fully, oh, okay, that's dependent on us extending forgiveness to others. It's like



Sarah 05:37

we're blocking the flow exactly by holding on to that grudge, that anger, that resentment, it's like holding our breath. Wow, yeah, you can't really breathe in fully until you let it go. That's a powerful way to put it, and



John 05:49

it ties into this idea of aligning our will with the Father's



Sarah 05:53

will, right? And it's not about earning forgiveness. It's about it's about removing the obstacles, removing the obstacles so that it can flow through us precisely. That's incredible. It is because we often think of forgiveness as this passive thing, right? But here it's an active choice. Absolutely, it's about aligning ourselves with a higher way of being. It's about

J John 06:14
becoming more like God. And that's

S Sarah 06:16
a powerful message. It is that's a really powerful message, and that seems to be at the heart of Jesus's teaching on prayer and Joe depata. It is. It's all about aligning our will with the fathers. And when those two are in harmony, that's when amazing things happen. That's when the real magic happens, exactly. And it's easier said than done, right? Aligning your will.

J John 06:35
Oh, tell me about it. It's a constant process.

S Sarah 06:37
Yeah, so much easier to just say, Hey, God, can

J John 06:40
I get this, this and this, right? Like a cosmic shopping list, exactly. But the real growth, the real transformation, happens when we make that effort to align.

S Sarah 06:48
So where do we go next on this tour?

J John 06:51
Well, from jodapata, they traveled to Rama. Rama, okay, and this is where things get really interesting, because Jesus encounters a Greek philosopher.

S Sarah 06:59
Oh, I remember this story. It's like a clash of the titans, right? It is. You've

J John 07:04
got philosophy versus divine revelation, and who wins? Well, that's the thing, Jesus, he doesn't even try to win. Oh, he actually treats the philosopher with a lot of respect that tracks he acknowledges the value of philosophy, its ability to engage the mind, right, to ask those big

questions exactly. But he also points out its limits, like, what? Well, philosophy can get us thinking about the whence, why and wither of existence. That's a mouthful. It is, yeah, but it can't necessarily provide the experience of those things. Oh, I

S

Sarah 07:37

see. So it's like philosophy can show us the map, right? But it's the gospel that actually takes us on the journey,

J

John 07:42

exactly. And you know who is really intrigued by all this? Oh, Thomas, Doubting Thomas, the one and only. He's like, Okay, this is all well and good, but how can we be certain about

S

Sarah 07:52

any of it, right? Like, how do you know this gospel stuff is true? And

J

John 07:57

that's a question that still resonates today, doesn't it? Yeah, how can we be sure about anything? It's the big one, it is. And what's amazing is how relevant Jesus's answer is, even now, what does he say? He lays out three pillars of assurance. First, there's personal experience of divine truth, what we might call faith,

S

Sarah 08:16

okay? That makes sense, like a gut feeling, yes, but

J

John 08:19

not blind faith, right? It's paired with the second pillar, spiritual understanding.

S

Sarah 08:24

So it's not just feeling it, it's also thinking about it exactly.

J

John 08:28

It's about consistently seeking, opening yourself up to the divine. Okay,

S Sarah 08:32
so faith and understanding. What's the third pillar?

J John 08:35
This one might surprise you. Okay, hit me. It's grappling with doubt. Wait, really, yeah. Jesus basically says, Don't shy away from the tough questions, huh?

S Sarah 08:44
That's not something you

J John 08:46
hear every day, right? But it's so important. Why is that? Because true face, it can handle scrutiny.

S Sarah 08:54
If it's real, it's not gonna crumble under a little questioning, exactly?

J John 08:57
And there's this one quote from this section that I just love courage is the confidence of thoroughgoing honesty about those things which one professes to believe. Wow, isn't that powerful?

S Sarah 09:09
It's like he's saying, if your beliefs can't withstand a little interrogation, maybe they need some work.

J John 09:16
Exactly. It's about being open to being wrong, to having our minds change. That's

S Sarah 09:20
true courage, right? There it is. Okay. So we've gone from deep philosophical discussions, and now we find ourselves in iron.



John 09:28

Iron, yes, not exactly the most glamorous stop on the tour.



Sarah 09:32

No, not quite as exciting as, say, Jerusalem, no, but it's a mining town. And what's Jesus doing in a mining town? Well,



John 09:40

the text tells us he spent most of his time there, not preaching from some mountain talk, but down in the mines with the workers, really. Yeah, getting his hands dirty. That's pretty remarkable. It is. It shows that Jesus wasn't afraid to get down in the trenches with everyday people.



Sarah 09:55

He wasn't just some distant figure. He was right there with them,



John 09:58

exactly. And it's in this very ordinary setting that we encounter what the Urantia Book calls Jesus's first deliberate miracle.



Sarah 10:08

Oh, wow. Which



John 10:08

one is this the healing of the leper, right? Of course. And this wasn't just about curing a physical ailment, no leprosy back then, it



Sarah 10:16

was a whole other thing. It was a social death sentence. You were completely ostracized, and



John 10:20

you can hear that desperation in the lepers voice when he begs Jesus, I would enter the kingdom if I could be made clean.

S

Sarah 10:26

He's like my body is preventing me from experiencing the kingdom,

J

John 10:30

exactly. And Jesus, moved by compassion, heals him, of course. But then, and this is where it gets interesting. Okay? He instructs the man to follow religious protocol. What do you mean? He tells him to show himself to the priest, as was customary. Wait.

S

Sarah 10:45

So even after a miracle, there are still rules, it seems.

J

John 10:49

So it's like Jesus is acknowledging the existing structures, even as he operates within them.

S

Sarah 10:55

It's like he's saying, Yes, I healed you, but go through the proper channels, exactly.

J

John 10:59

And of course, the man is so ecstatic, he runs off and tells everyone. Of course, he does. Can you imagine? You can't help but chuckle a bit, right? It's human nature to get excited and maybe not follow instructions to the letter,

S

Sarah 11:10

even when those instructions come after a divine miracle. It's kind of funny. It

J

John 11:14

is, but it also highlights this tension we see throughout the Gospels, what tension, the tension between Jesus's desire to teach and heal and the human desire for spectacle, for the miraculous, exactly. And that tension, it pops up again in our next story. Okay, where

S Sarah 11:32
are we off to now?

J John 11:33
But we're heading back to a familiar place, Cana. Cana, as in the wedding at Cana, the one and only. But this time, there's no wine shortage. Oh, what's happening this time? Well, we meet a man named Titus from Capernaum. Okay, and his son is deathly ill. Oh, no, so Titus begs Jesus to come back to Capernaum with him to heal his son.

S Sarah 11:56
What does Jesus do?

J John 11:57
He heals the boy remotely. Wow, really? But here's the thing, and this is where the Urantia Book throws us for a loop. We mean, it's very clear that this wasn't a miracle. It wasn't, no, it was an act of pre knowledge. Pre

S Sarah 12:08
knowledge. So Jesus knew the boy would

J John 12:10
recover Exactly. He understood, through his deep connection to the spiritual and natural laws that the boy

S Sarah 12:17
would be fine. So no supernatural intervention needed, not in this case, wow, that's that's really interesting. It

J John 12:24
is. It makes you think, how often do we mistake pre knowledge for a miracle? Right? Because we don't have that same level of understanding exactly. We see things through a limited lens.

S Sarah 12:34

And this theme of challenging assumptions, it continues, doesn't it?

J John 12:38

It does with the story of the widow's son in nain. Oh, right. This

S Sarah 12:43

is a well known story, it

J John 12:45

is. But the Urantia Book offers a very different perspective, like, what? Well, it explicitly states that the boy wasn't actually dead. He wasn't, no, he was in a very deep sleep, or perhaps a coma. But everyone thinks he's dead, everyone, including the apostles, and because of their miracle mindset,

S Sarah 13:03

they interpret it as a resurrection Exactly. So it's less about Jesus defying death, right? And more about people's perceptions shaping their reality

J John 13:10

precisely. They saw what they wanted to see, what they expected to see, and even

S Sarah 13:14

when Jesus tried to explain, they clung to the miracle narrative. It's

J John 13:18

human nature, isn't it? We crave the extraordinary even when the truth might be much simpler. It's

S Sarah 13:24

like we want to believe in magic, and

J John 13:27



John 13:27

sometimes the real magic is in the ordinary and the natural order of things. It's



Sarah 13:33

about opening our minds to see it exactly. Makes you wonder, how many other stories from history got, you know, embellished along the way? Oh, absolutely. We



John 13:41

see it all the time, right? People reinterpreting events to fit their own narratives



Sarah 13:44

totally. And it's not always intentional. It's just like you were saying human nature Exactly.



John 13:49

We see what we want to see. We believe what we want to believe. And that



Sarah 13:53

brings us to, well, a rather interesting stop on the tour, Endor. Ah,



John 13:58

Endor, the town with a bit of a spooky reputation, yeah, home of witches sorcery, right? The kind of place that sends shivers down your spine.



Sarah 14:06

And this is where Jesus decides to give us, well, a crash course in the spirit world. Yeah,



John 14:11

he gets real about those mischievous Midways, you know, the ones who like to impersonate the dead,



Sarah 14:16

oh. yeah. those auvs always causing a stir. And

...yeah, these guys always coming & coming

J John 14:19
he doesn't mince words, does he? He basically says their time is up.

S Sarah 14:23
So does that mean no more spooky encounters, no more ghostly visitations after this? What do you think? Well,

J John 14:29
it's not quite that simple. There are nuances. Of course. He explains that once he returns to the Father and the Spirit of Truth is poured out, these entities won't be able to deceive us the same way.

S Sarah 14:41
So less trickery, less mischief, exactly.

J John 14:44
But then he addresses this question that I think we've all pondered, which is, what about connecting with our loved ones who have passed on? Is that possible? Yeah,

S Sarah 14:53
is there any hope for a little chat from beyond the grave and Jesus?

J John 14:56
He's very clear on this point. What does he say? He's. Says that, as a general rule, spirits of the deceased, they don't come back for casual

S Sarah 15:04
visits. So no heartwarming reunions on this side of eternity. Not usually. No. That's a bit of a bummer. It is. I

J John 15:11

 John 15:11
think we all want to believe that we can stay connected with those we've lost.

 Sarah 15:15
So no messages from the beyond, no signs, no nothing. Well,

 John 15:19
the text does mention that after a certain period a dispensational age, there might be rare exceptions. Okay, so there's a glimmer of hope, maybe. But it emphasizes that these exceptions are usually for a

 Sarah 15:32
much higher purpose, not your average. Hey, how's it going from the other side?

 John 15:35
More like cosmic administration stuff, you know, important business. Got it.

 Sarah 15:39
So we shouldn't hold our breath for a casual phone call. Probably

 John 15:42
not. But you know, it's interesting, isn't it? How we keep coming back to this theme, which one the danger of letting our desires, our hopes, cloud our understanding of how things really work? Right?

 Sarah 15:53
We want to believe in miracles, in Grand reunions and things that defy logic, exactly

 John 15:58
and sometimes, the truest path is accepting the natural order of things, even when it's difficult.

 Sarah 16:05

So where do we go from Endor? Well, from

J John 16:08

there, they journey back to familiar territory, Capernaum, home sweet home, at least for now, right? But Capernaum will have to wait for another deep dive, because we're out of time for today. It's true. Time flies when you're traveling through Galilee with Jesus, it really does.

S Sarah 16:23

But before we go, any final thoughts on this whirlwind tour,

J John 16:27

you know, it strikes me that this whole journey has been about challenging assumptions. It has hasn't it looking beyond the surface of these stories and

S Sarah 16:34

maybe even questioning some of our own deeply held beliefs,

J John 16:37

exactly because sometimes the truth is far stranger and far simpler than we ever imagined.

S Sarah 16:43

It's been quite a journey, and I want to thank you, as always, for being our guide. It's my pleasure, always a joy to dive deep with you and to our listeners, thank you for joining us on this incredible journey through the Urantia Book. Until next time, keep seeking, keep questioning and keep exploring the mysteries of the universe.