

Part 4, Paper 148, Training Ev...Bethsaida, Midwayer Commission

📅 Sat, Oct 05, 2024 8:48PM ⌚ 10:23

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Jesus's school, evangelist training, Lakeside encampment, diverse backgrounds, Peter's leadership, holistic approach, spiritual healing, medical facility, solitude for reflection, nature of evil, free will, suffering explanation, Job's story, compassion over legalism, change of heart

SPEAKERS

Sarah, John

S Sarah 00:00
Ever imagine Jesus running a school, a school, yeah? Like a real school, huh? Well, that's where our deep dive takes us today, first century Galilee, with Jesus leading a five month training camp for evangelists,

J John 00:14
five months. That's a long time. I guess you could call that a school of sorts,

S Sarah 00:18
right? And it's all detailed in the Urantia Book, paper, 148

J John 00:21
okay, I'm with you. So what's so special about this school? Well,

S Sarah 00:26
for starters, it wasn't just a handful of followers. We're talking 500 to 1500 people at any given time, all gathered at this Lakeside encampment, seeking teachings, healing, wanting to be close to Jesus. Wow.



J John 00:38
1500 people. That's like a small town springing up overnight, exactly. And

S Sarah 00:42
think about the logistics, the food, the lodging, they must have had some system in place. Oh, they did. The text even mentions sanitation systems. Wow,

J John 00:51
organized a first century pop up community. It really makes you think about the effort involved in spreading a message back then,

S Sarah 00:58
right? And speaking of organization, get this. The encampment housed a formal school for evangelists, a school within a school, pretty much. And guess who was in charge?

J John 01:08
Let me guess Peter.

S Sarah 01:09
You got it. Peter leading the charge, with over 100 students eager to learn, over

J John 01:14
100 students. That's incredible. But I have to ask, what kind of students were they? Were they all priests, scholars, actually,

S Sarah 01:23
no, that's what's so interesting. The text emphasizes their diverse backgrounds, diverse how they came from, all walks of life, different experiences, perspectives, the whole spectrum. And this wasn't about churning out cookie cutter preachers. There's

J John 01:36
no standardized dogma. That's pretty surprising, especially for a religious movement,

S Sarah 01:40

I know, right? The text actually says each apostle had their own style of teaching. The gospels. Imagine Peter, fiery personality that he was probably had a very different approach compared to say John.

J John 01:52

Yeah, John was more mystical, poetic in his teachings. Imagine those lectures. So with all these different takes on the Gospels flying around, how do they keep things harmonious? That's where Jesus steps in. Oh, I bet keeping everyone in line. Exactly.

S Sarah 02:05

The text portrays him as a facilitator, making sure everyone felt heard, respected, even if their views differed. He actually held weekly meetings really what for to address any conflicting interpretations or lingering questions about the teachings, basically ironing out any wrinkles.

J John 02:21

So Jesus, the original moderator, long before comment sections and online forums, that's a fascinating glimpse into early leadership. But hold on, amidst all this teaching spiritual stuff, there's something else going on in this encampment that caught my eye. What's that? Healthcare? The text mentions an infirmary, an infirmary, like a hospital, that seems so and it was overseen by a Syrian physician named Elman.

S Sarah 02:45

Interesting. So they had spiritual healing and a real medical facility all in one place, exactly.

J John 02:51

It's this fascinating juxtaposition. You have people drawn to Jesus for healing, believing in His powers, but at the same time, there's a functioning medical facility using all the known treatments of the time, almost

S Sarah 03:03

like a holistic approach to well being, taking care of both body and soul. And it wasn't just a small operation, either. The infirmary treated over 1000 people.

J John 03:12

J John 03:12
Wow, over 1000 this encampment was the real deal.

S Sarah 03:16
That's a lot of people seeking healing one way or another.

J John 03:19
It really makes you think about the power of belief back then, they didn't have all the medical knowledge we have today. So for many, their faith in Jesus was their strongest medicine.

S Sarah 03:29
And you know, the text does suggest that some healings might have been tied to transformations of mind and spirit. It's not necessarily discounting elman's work, but pointing to another layer of influence. Why?

J John 03:41
Like maybe a shift in perspective, a release from fear or anxiety, a surge of hope, brought on by being in Jesus's presence, all things that could have tangible effects on someone's health. It's

S Sarah 03:51
fascinating, especially now, as we learn more about the mind body connection, the placebo effect. But while Jesus was clearly a busy guy, healing teaching, the text also mentions him seeking solitude. Solitude.

J John 04:03
Why? You'd think he'd be exhausted?

S Sarah 04:06
You'd think so, right? But it seems he needed those moments to attend to what he called the father's business. Okay,

J John 04:13
now that's intriguing. The father's business, yeah, it sounds like something beyond his earthly

ministry. It

S Sarah 04:18
does. Doesn't it like managing universal affairs in his downtime. Wow,

J John 04:21
talk about a demanding side gig, right? But meanwhile,

S Sarah 04:26
back at the encampment, it seems the apostles were wrestling with some heavy questions of their own, like, what? Well, Thomas always the inquisitive one brings up something that has puzzled humanity for centuries. Let

J John 04:38
me guess, the nature of evil? You got it? Yeah, that's a question that continues to haunt us. How did Jesus address that?

S Sarah 04:45
Well, he offered a very nuanced perspective. He distinguished between evil, sin and iniquity,

J John 04:51
three different things. I always thought they were basically the same. It's easy to

S Sarah 04:55
lump them together, but Jesus makes a clear distinction, evil. Described as inherent imperfection in the universe.

J John 05:03
Inherent imperfection, you mean like a natural part of creation, exactly like a

S Sarah 05:07
built in flaw that comes with an evolving universe. Sin, on the other hand, that's a conscious

built in now that comes with an evolving universe. Sin, on the other hand, that's a conscious transgression. Okay,

J John 05:13
so it's not just about being good or bad, it's about awareness and choice,

S Sarah 05:18
exactly knowing what's right, but choosing to do wrong. And

J John 05:21
what about iniquity? Where does that fit in? That's

S Sarah 05:23
like digging your heels in and refusing to budge. It's persistent rebellion against what's considered divine will.

J John 05:29
So it's more than just a single bad decision. It's a state of being, a hardening of the heart.

S Sarah 05:35
That's a good way to put it, refusing to grow, to change, to align with a more divine way of being.

J John 05:41
It adds another layer to our understanding of human behavior, that's for sure. And it kind of leads us to another age old question, if there's a loving God, why is there so much suffering?

S Sarah 05:52
The age old question, and wouldn't you know it? Nathaniel brings up this very question to Jesus. He

J John 05:59
.....

was probably thinking about all the people seeking healing at the infirmary makes sense.

S

Sarah 06:04

It's a question that resonates with everyone then and now, and Jesus, in His response, doesn't offer easy answers. He acknowledges the chaos caused by going against divine will.

J

John 06:14

You mean like humanity is still dealing with the consequences of those choices, precisely.

S

Sarah 06:19

But he also emphasizes our free will. So

J

John 06:22

much of our suffering is a direct result of choices we make, individually and as a collective.

S

Sarah 06:27

Exactly, it's a consequence of straying from Divine Law, those actions that disrupt the natural order, you know,

J

John 06:32

and that has a ripple effect, doesn't it like throwing a stone in a pond? It's

S

Sarah 06:37

not about God directly punishing us, but more about experiencing the natural outcomes of our actions.

J

John 06:43

But it's not always our choices that lead to suffering, right? Sometimes bad things just happen, absolutely

S

Sarah 06:48

sometimes it's just part of living in an imperfect world. Things break down, people get sick,

natural disasters occur. It's a world still in progress, still moving towards something greater. It's a lot to process, free will, imperfection, ripple effects. It really makes you think about the human experience, doesn't

J John 07:07

it, definitely, and it reminds me of the story of Job, a man who remained devoted to God but still experienced immense suffering, right? Job?

S Sarah 07:15

It's a story that's resonated with people for centuries, and in this excerpt, John, one of the apostles actually brings it up to Jesus. He does. It seems he's troubled by the idea that just being righteous doesn't shield you from pain. I

J John 07:28

can see why that would be unsettling. So how does Jesus respond? Well,

S Sarah 07:32

he uses Job's story to challenge that very assumption. Interesting.

J John 07:37

So it's not about finding easy answers about why bad things happen, not

S Sarah 07:42

at all. It's more about how we find meaning and strength in the face of suffering,

J John 07:46

finding that connection that sees us through tough times, exactly.

S Sarah 07:49

And you know, sometimes that connection, that faith, might be the only thing that keeps us going. I think that's

—

J John 07:55
something a lot of people can relate to. But, you know, challenging deeply held beliefs, even in the name of compassion, it often rubs people the wrong way,

S Sarah 08:05
especially those in positions of power, like when Jesus healed that man with the withered hand on the Sabbath, oh yeah,

J John 08:11
that caused quite a stir.

S Sarah 08:13
Talk about challenging the status quo. You can practically feel the tension as Jesus calls the man forward, knowing the Pharisees are watching his every move. They were

J John 08:22
just waiting for him to slip up to break their precious Sabbath rules, right? And

S Sarah 08:26
Jesus, fully aware of their intentions, uses this as a teaching moment, but he doesn't get bogged down in theological debate. He cuts straight to the heart of the matter with that simple question,

J John 08:36
if your sheep fell into a pit on the Sabbath, would you pull it out

S Sarah 08:40
exactly. It was an act of mercy common sense. And by asking that, he exposed how absurd their rigid rules were, Compassion Over legalism Exactly. And the crowd totally got it. They understood the message, the challenge to authority. And then, right there, in front of everyone, he heals the man, a powerful

J John 08:58
.. . . .

display, and not just of healing, but of challenging the establishment in the name of compassion. It's

S

Sarah 09:04

a message that's still relevant today, but as we know, change isn't always easy, even when it's for the better,

J

John 09:11

true, and the text does mention that some people, especially those clinging to power, felt threatened, but amidst the resistance, there were those who were genuinely moved by what they saw, yeah,

S

Sarah 09:23

like those spies sent from Jerusalem. What happened to them? Well, the text says that three of them were so blown away by Jesus's teachings that they actually converted on the spot.

J

John 09:32

Wow. Talk about a change of heart. Proof that even in the most unexpected places, change can take root. And

S

Sarah 09:38

as these five months wind down. We see the evangelists going out into the world, each with their unique understanding of the teachings ready to spread the word. It's an ending and a beginning all at once. It

J

John 09:50

really makes you think about everything we've discussed, the nature of suffering, balancing faith with reason, striving for a more just and compassionate world. It's a lot to unpack. It

S

Sarah 10:00

is and while we may not have all the answers, engaging with these questions, seeking deeper meaning, that's what really matters. It's about embracing the journey and

J

John 10:09

continuing to learn and grow along the way, exactly. And on that



Sarah 10:13

note, we'll leave you to continue your own Deep Dive until next time. Keep questioning, keep exploring and keep seeking those nuggets of truth that resonate with your soul.