

Part 4, Paper 154, Last Days a...Capernaum, Midwayer Commission

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Herod's dilemma, Jewish authorities, Chuza's report, Pharisees' pressure, synagogue closures, Hebron synagogue, Jesus's retreat, family drama, Mary's struggle, James' skepticism, Ruth's faith, Herod's agreement, Sanhedrin trial, Capernaum town meeting, Jesus's departure

SPEAKERS

Sarah, John



John 00:00

Okay, so get this right? We're diving in to some serious drama today, like a real life political thriller. Oh,



Sarah 00:08

absolutely.



John 00:09

We're talking about your excerpts from the Urantia Book, right, focusing on this one crazy week in Capernaum. And let me tell you, yeah, it gets intense for Jesus, like we all know the stories about the miracles and the teachings, but there's this whole other layer, this political drama unfolding behind the scenes. You know it's true.



Sarah 00:30

It's like Jesus wasn't just out there in isolation. You've got all these political and social forces at play that really add a whole new dimension to his story. Don't you think? Okay, so



John 00:39

let's break this down. Okay, we've got Herod Antipas was the big guy in Galilee, right? And remember, this is the same Herod who had John the Baptist, like, beheaded, oh, yeah, which kind of tells you everything you need to know about it. right? Yeah.

S Sarah 00:51
that's not a great look. And that whole execution that really weighs on Herod's mind as he's trying to figure out what to do about

J John 00:57
Jesus, like, is this guy gonna cause the same kind of trouble, exactly,

S Sarah 01:01
and the pressure is on, because Herod's also getting it from the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem. They want Jesus gone 100% they see him as a major threat. But here's the thing Herod, he's stuck. He's caught between a rock and a hard place, because on one hand, he has to answer to Rome, and they hated any kind of local uprising. They didn't mess around. No, not at all. And then on top of that, you've got Herod, who's, let's face it, a little superstitious. He's haunted by John the Baptist death. He's terrified of what might happen if he goes after another big religious figure. So it's like, damned if you do, damned if you don't, exactly. So he's stuck with the Jewish authorities breathing down his neck, and then his own fears and the Romans to worry

J John 01:43
about. Talk about pressure. So what does he do? Well, this

S Sarah 01:47
is where it gets juicy. The book mentions Herod getting this report from a guy named Chuza. Chuza, okay, and he's a member of Herod's court, right? But here's the kicker, his wife is a follower of Jesus.

J John 01:59
Whoa. Talk about an inside scoop, right? Talk about access

S Sarah 02:03
and choose it. He tells Herod that Jesus is only focused on spiritual stuff, not political upheaval,

J John 02:11
interesting. So he's got his own guy telling him hey, don't worry about it. This guy's not a

interesting. So he's got his own guy telling him, hey, don't worry about it. This guy's not a threat,

S

Sarah 02:15

exactly. And I mean, put yourself in Herod's shoes. You're getting all this conflicting information, you're scared, and then someone you trust, someone close to you, says, Don't sweat it.

J

John 02:23

I could see how that would, at least, you know, calm the nerves a little. It seems to have worked,

S

Sarah 02:27

at least for a bit. Herod's more willing to believe Chuza over everyone else. He starts seeing Jesus as this harmless, maybe even a little crazy, but not dangerous, which I think is so interesting, because it shows you how much influence these personal connections have, even when it comes to power. Oh, totally.

J

John 02:46

It makes you think like, what if Herod hadn't gotten that reassurance from Chuza?

S

Sarah 02:50

Oh, for sure, things could have gone very differently. But even with Herod kind of chilling out, the Pharisees, they are not done. They on a mission. They want Jesus gone, and they're not letting up on Herod. But then they also do something pretty drastic. What's that? They basically order all synagogues in Palestine, close to Jesus, and anyone who follows him

J

John 03:09

shut them all down. That's, wow. That's a power move.

S

Sarah 03:12

It was huge. Never been done before. I mean, before this, each synagogue was like its own little independent state, answerable only to their own Council, their own rules, and then suddenly, boom, you got the big dogs in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, coming in and basically saying, Nope, we're calling the shots now. It shows you how worried they were completely. And to really hammer it home, you've got that incident with the Hebron synagogue, oh yeah, the

one place that basically told the Sanhedrin to get lost, and then what happens? Their synagogue burns down under very suspicious circumstances, exactly, not exactly, a subtle message, yeah, you think the authorities had something to do with it. Who knows? But it's clear that things are escalating quickly. No

J John 03:55

kidding. So you've got this, like power struggle going on, right? Yeah, this head to head between Jesus and these religious leaders, and then right in the middle of it all, Jesus does something totally unexpected.

S Sarah 04:07

Yeah, it's wild, right? It's like he hits the pause button on this whole drama. He tells his disciples, take a week off. Guys, go home, chill out, recharge, and just, you know, spread the word quietly. It

J John 04:20

seems kind of out of left field when you think about it, right? It's like, wouldn't you think he would want to, like, keep pushing forward, maybe even use all this craziness to his advantage? Yeah,

S Sarah 04:30

you'd think so, right? But I think that's what makes it so interesting. It wasn't that he was giving up or anything. It was strategic. I mean, he knew his followers were stressed. They were exhausted from all the pressure, and you got to figure he probably needed a break himself. Oh, for sure. So this week, it wasn't just about resting. It was more like, okay, let's regroup, rethink things, come back stronger. It's

J John 04:52

like in those sports movies, exactly when the team's down and out and the coach calls a time out to, like, give him a pep talk. Yep,

S Sarah 04:59

totally. And it. Reminds me of that saying, like sometimes you have to retreat to regroup and come back even stronger, you know,

J John 05:05

totally but this break, it also gives us a chance to see another side of the story. What's that Jesus's family? And from what these excerpts are saying, they weren't exactly his biggest fans at this point. It's true.

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Sarah 05:18

It gets really interesting here, because we start to see the human side of Jesus, right? Totally the family drama, all the tension that comes with someone in your family becoming super famous and controversial, you know? Oh yeah, imagine

J

John 05:30

the Thanksgiving dinners,

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Sarah 05:32

right? Can you imagine being related to this guy? It's gotta be tough, especially for his mother, Mary. I mean, she's trying to wrap her head around this whole thing, how her son, the miracle child, became this radical teacher who's turning the world upside. Yeah, that's a lot to process for real. And the book paints this picture of Mary just being completely torn. She loves her son, obviously, but she's also getting pressure from all sides, especially the Pharisees.

J

John 05:57

What were they saying?

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Sarah 05:58

Basically trying to convince her that Jesus is, you know, not all there, that He's lost it, oh, wow, yeah, and that she needs to step in, bring him home, and basically make him be quiet. It's kind of messed up when you think about it. It's like they were trying to use her totally. They were trying to manipulate her, saying, you're his mother, you have to do something just

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John 06:18

adding fuel to the fire. So what about the rest of his family? How did they feel about all this? Well,

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Sarah 06:23

according to the book, it was a mixed bag. You have his brother James, who's like, totally skeptical, doesn't know what to make of Jesus's claims or all the commotion he's causing, makes sense. But then you've got his sister Ruth, okay? And despite all the pressure, all the

doubt, she becomes this unwavering believer, just a rock of support for him. Wow, a true believer, right? It really shows you how his message, his actions, they resonated on a personal level, even divided families, which, let's

J John 06:52

be real, is something that happens all the time, right? Even today. Oh, absolutely. I mean, how many families do we all know where, like politics or religion or whatever causes these huge riffs totally.

S Sarah 07:03

It's like a tale as old as time, that struggle between, like, staying loyal to your family and staying true to what you believe. Yeah, it's that age old dilemma, exactly. And in Jesus's case, those beliefs, they were about to be put to the ultimate test. So

J John 07:19

while Jesus is off trying to, like, give everyone a breather. It sounds like things back in Capernaum are about to explode. Yeah,

S Sarah 07:26

you could say that while Jesus is on that retreat, we talked about things are going down behind the scenes that are going to change everything. Oh, really, yeah. The Urantia Book, it talks about this second meeting happening between Herod and the bigwigs from Jerusalem.

J John 07:40

Okay, so this is like round two of the whole what do we do about Jesus debate, exactly. So what happens? What do they decide?

S Sarah 07:46

Okay, so this time they actually come to an agreement. Yeah, it seems like Herod. He's feeling the pressure, but he doesn't want to be the one to, you know, directly deal with Jesus, right? He's got to be careful Exactly. So he agrees to let the Sanhedrin, those religious leaders arrest Jesus and take him back to Jerusalem for a trial.

J John 08:05

Oh, wow. So he basically throws Jesus into the bus. Well, kind of,

S Sarah 08:09
but you gotta remember, this isn't just any trial. We mean, well, this is a religious trial run by the very people who see Jesus as like public enemy number one. Yeah, good point. So not exactly an impartial jury. No

J John 08:22
kidding. And it's not just the authorities who are all, like, divided about Jesus, right? The book also talks about that crazy town meeting in Capernaum.

S Sarah 08:30
Oh, yeah, that's a great scene. The book makes it so vivid, you know, like you can almost picture these people, just regular folks trying to wrap their heads around Jesus. I

J John 08:38
bet it was like a town divided totally.

S Sarah 08:39
You had some who thought he was harmless, maybe a little eccentric, but no big deal. And then you had others who were convinced he was dangerous, even possessed wild, right? Oh,

J John 08:50
totally. It's kind of funny though, because, like, haven't things really changed that much? I mean, people still have such strong opinions about, you know, controversial figures. Yeah, it's like history repeating itself. Yeah,

S Sarah 09:01
it's human nature, right? We struggle with things we don't understand, especially when it comes to faith and stuff like that.

J John 09:06
Totally. So we've got all this drama unfolding, and then in the middle of it all, Jesus is with his disciples and his family shows up. Talk

S Sarah 09:15
about bad timing, right? It's a really poignant moment, because they obviously care about him. They're worried, but you can also sense this, I don't know, maybe a little embarrassment about all the trouble he's

J John 09:26
caused. Yeah, I bet they just wanted him to come home and lay low, for sure.

S Sarah 09:29
And it's gotta be hard for Jesus too, trying to, like, impart this incredibly important message, knowing he might not see his followers again, and suddenly he's got his family there worried sick. Oh

J John 09:41
yeah, talk about pressure, right?

S Sarah 09:42
And this is where the Urantia Book gives us this really powerful glimpse into Jesus's dedication to his mission. When his family's all like, Come on, let's go home, he says something really interesting. What's that? He says, who's my mother and who are my brothers? You know, it's not that he's rejecting his. Family, right? It's more like he's saying, my purpose, my calling, it's bigger than all of us, even family, powerful

J John 10:07
stuff. Okay, so you've got all this going on, this incredibly tense family reunion, and then to make matters even worse, news arrives, right? It's

S Sarah 10:15
almost comical how the tension just keeps building. So

J John 10:17
what happens? Tell

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S

Sarah 10:18

me everything. The authorities are on their way. They're coming to arrest Jesus. Oh, wow.

J

John 10:23

Talk about an intense situation.

S

Sarah 10:24

Yeah. And in that moment, Jesus, he's got a choice to make. Does

J

John 10:28

he stay and fight Exactly?

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Sarah 10:30

Does he stay in Capernaum, knowing that a trial there would be a sham, right? Or does he do something else? And what he chooses to do really speaks volumes. What does he do? He decides to leave. He takes his disciples and they flee Capernaum. It's like this huge turning point. He goes from being a teacher with a home base to basically a wandering preacher relying on the kindness of strangers Exactly. And it makes you think about everything that led up to that moment, the politics, the pressure from the authorities, the family drama, the very real danger he was in. Yeah,

J

John 11:02

it definitely adds a whole other layer to the story, doesn't it? It's not just about miracles and teachings. It's about power struggles, personal sacrifices and having the courage to stand up for what you believe in, even when it means leaving everything behind

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Sarah 11:16

exactly it makes you wonder, how does knowing all of this change how we see Jesus. How does it impact our understanding of his message? It's

J

John 11:26

a lot to unpack, that's for sure. And on that note, that's a wrap on another deep dive. Big thanks to the listener for sending in these excerpts from the Urantia Book. It's been quite a journey. Make sure you subscribe to the show, because you never know what we're diving into next. But.

