

Part 4, Paper 164, At the Feas...edication, Midwayer Commission

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Feast of Dedication, Jesus's ministry, religious authorities, Urantia Book, spiritual reality, Good Samaritan, legalistic mindset, blind beggar, physical disabilities, religious outcasts, healing challenge, Sanhedrin confrontation, spiritual sight, true belonging, deeper reality

SPEAKERS

Sarah, John

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John 00:00

Ready for another deep dive. Today, we're heading back to ancient Jerusalem, a city practically pulsating with this, well, this electric mix of religious fervor and political intrigue. Yeah, it's
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Sarah 00:10

a powder keg, really,
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John 00:11

totally and right in the thick of it is the Feast of Dedication. Now, this isn't just some historical footnote. This is a pivotal moment in Jesus's ministry, at least according to the Urantia Book, right?
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Sarah 00:23

And what makes this feast so fascinating, so revealing, is how it becomes this flash point, this collision between Jesus's teachings and the well, the guardians of the old ways, the established religious authorities. It's
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John 00:35

like a showdown, right? Old versus new tradition versus Well, something else entirely,

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Sarah 00:39

exactly. And to really grasp the magnitude of this clash, we gotta go deeper than the historical facts. The Urantia Book our main source for this deep dive, it claims to offer this like insider's perspective on Jesus's life, his teachings. It's

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John 00:53

like getting a glimpse behind the curtain right seeing the spiritual reality that's fueling all the drama,

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Sarah 00:59

precisely. And that perspective is, well, it's essential, because it reveals this layer of intentionality behind Jesus's actions, like take his decision to travel to Jerusalem for this feast. The Urantia Book tells us his apostles were worried, and I mean, rightfully so. Oh, for sure, they knew the risks, the danger, absolutely. I mean, the Jewish leaders were already suspicious of Jesus, threatened by his growing popularity. To them, he was a troublemaker, disrupting the status quo, but he still goes

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John 01:26

to Jerusalem. So why do you think that is why walk into the lion's den?

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Sarah 01:29

Because Jesus, he understands the opportunity. This feast represents the Urantia Book. It uses this phrase his determination to give these religious leaders, these keepers of the old ways, one more chance, one more shot to see the light. Those are the book's words. It's like

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John 01:46

he knows time is running out. This is his last ditch effort to get through to them

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Sarah 01:50

exactly. It adds this whole other layer of like urgency and tension to the story. It's like a ticking clock in the background, right? And it's a tension that just keeps building as he makes his way to Jerusalem, even as he's traveling, he's teaching, constantly engaging in these dialogs that, well, that kind of chip away at the very foundation of their beliefs. And that's where that whole story of the Good Samaritan comes in, isn't it?





John 02:14

Yeah, that's a good one, and it's so much more than just a feel good story, right? Oh, absolutely.



Sarah 02:18

It's a direct challenge to that whole legalistic mindset that, you know, permeated everything back then, the whole us versus them mentality, which



John 02:26

sadly, is still around today. Sadly, yeah, but



Sarah 02:30

the way Jesus uses the seemingly simple story, it's genius. Really, remember, a lawyer comes up to him, tries to trap him with this question about, you know, inheriting eternal life, and Jesus. While Jesus flips the script, he throws the question back at the lawyer, who then quotes the Scriptures about, you know, loving God and loving your neighbor.



John 02:49

And just when the lawyer thinks he's got Jesus backed into a corner, bam, Jesus hits with, who is my neighbor? Right? Talk about turning the tables, right. Mic drop moment, totally right. But why is that question so powerful, what's the deeper meaning there?



Sarah 03:02

Because it forces the lawyer and everyone listening to confront their own preconceived notions, their biases. The word neighbor, back then, it had a very narrow definition for a lot of those in power. It only applied to their own people, their own tribe. They're in group, as they say, right? But with this one story, Jesus explains that definition,



John 03:23

and to make his point even more dramatic, he uses a Samaritan as the hero of the story, exactly



Sarah 03:29

someone who is considered an outsider, a heretic, even by the religious establishment. And it's the Samaritan who embodies true love and compassion surpassing even the priest and the Levite, the supposed good guys in the story.

Levite, the supposed good guys in the story.

J John 03:44

It's such a powerful illustration of the universality of Jesus's message,

S Sarah 03:47

right? It cuts through all the dogma, all the religious rules and regulations, and goes straight to the heart of what really matters. It's

J John 03:54

a message that's as relevant today as it was back then, absolutely.

S Sarah 03:57

And that message, as you can imagine, is going to cause quite a stir once Jesus reaches Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication. Okay,

J John 04:05

so let's set the scene. It's the Feast of Dedication. Jerusalem is buzzing, right? Pilgrims everywhere, all there for this big celebration. It would have been quite a sight. And right in the middle of it all, we meet this fascinating character, someone whose life becomes completely intertwined with Jesus's mission. You're talking about Josiah, right? Josiah, the blind beggar. Now, this wasn't just a random encounter. Was it? The Urantia Book makes it clear that Jesus, he sought out Josiah. It's like Josiah was this, like this key piece of a much larger puzzle. That's

S Sarah 04:37

like Jesus knew exactly what he was doing and who he needed to interact with to make his point exactly.

J John 04:42

And it's interesting because Josiah, he represents a whole segment of society that was often ignored, pushed aside,

S Sarah 04:50

the marginalized, the forgotten. Yes, and



John 04:53

it's easy to read about a blind beggar and just kind of, I don't know, gloss over it, but we have to understand what his. Blindness meant back then, both socially and religiously,



Sarah 05:03

it was a heavy burden to carry. It really was



John 05:05

because it wasn't just a physical ailment, right? No, not at all. Back then,



Sarah 05:09

people believed that physical disabilities, they were a direct result of sin, either your own sin, or even get this, the sins of your parents. Imagine carrying that around with you that you were somehow marked cursed.



John 05:23

It's hard to even fathom the weight of that kind of judgment. And it wasn't



Sarah 05:27

just a societal belief, this idea, it was woven into the very fabric of their religious understanding. So



John 05:32

people like Josiah, they weren't just seen as unfortunate, they were seen as outcasts, almost like living embodiments of sin, which, when you think about it, puts a whole new spin on giving alms to the poor.



Sarah 05:43

It becomes this transactional thing, less about compassion, more about like, earning points with God,



John 05:43

J John 05:48

right? Like, if I give to this blind beggar, maybe God will overlook my sins. There's no real empathy, there no real connection. It's dehumanizing, really, absolutely so here's Josiah existing within this system, and then into this picture, walks Jesus. Now, we know from the gospels that Jesus healed a lot of people, but the way the Urantia Book describes the healing of Josiah, it's different. It feels intentional, deliberate. Oh, it definitely

S Sarah 06:15

was. The Urantia Book highlights how Jesus uses this healing as a direct challenge to the religious authorities, specifically the Sanhedrin.

J John 06:24

And just as a reminder to our listeners, the Sanhedrin, they're like the Supreme Court of Jewish law, right? Yeah, exactly.

S Sarah 06:29

They were, the top dogs, the ultimate authority on all things religious. So when Jesus challenges them, he's challenging the whole power structure, and he doesn't do it subtly either. Oh

J John 06:41

no, not at all. He

S Sarah 06:42

chooses the Sabbath, the holiest day of the week, to perform this healing. And he uses simple everyday materials, clay and spittle. It's

J John 06:50

like he's saying, I don't need your fancy rituals or your permission to heal. That's

S Sarah 06:53

exactly it. He's demonstrating His power and compassion in the most visible way possible. And the Urantia Book, it goes even deeper, revealing three specific reasons for Jesus's approach to this healing. Three reasons. Lay it on me. Okay, so first, he wanted to show that healing wasn't dependent on the individual's faith Josiah, at that point, he didn't fully understand who Jesus



John 07:15

was. He was just a blind man who was given a chance to see right. Second,



Sarah 07:19

Jesus wanted to meet Josiah, where he was at both physically and mentally. So he uses these physical actions, the clay, the washing in the pool of Siloam. He's speaking a language Josiah could understand, bridging



John 07:31

that gap between the miraculous and the everyday. Yes. And



Sarah 07:35

the third reason this is a big one is that Jesus was making a statement about the role of material things in healing, he's challenging this idea that divine intervention is the only way. So



John 07:46

it's not an either situation. It's both hand, spiritual and physical Exactly.



Sarah 07:50

It's a much more holistic approach to healing.



John 07:53

It's amazing how much depth and intentionality the Urantia Book reveals in just this one act of healing. But of course, this is just the beginning, because now Josiah, he's able to see he's brought into this whole new world, and he's about to become a major player in this unfolding drama. So we've got this incredible healing right in the middle of this huge religious festival. You know, word is gonna get around.



Sarah 08:18

Oh yeah, it spreads like wildfire. It's not long before it reaches the big guys, the Sanhedrin. And remember, this is the same group that Jesus, you know, kind of called out with his whole method of healing, right? Talk about awkward, total PR nightmare. These guys, they're supposed to be the guardians of the law, the ultimate authority. And then this nobody, this

blind beggar, he suddenly thrust into the spotlight because of something they couldn't do themselves. You're gonna be a blow to their egos, for sure, and the fact that it happened on the Sabbath, that just adds fuel to the fire, they can't ignore it. So



John 08:48

what do they do? Do they go after Jesus directly? They're hesitant



Sarah 08:51

at first, the Urantia Book, it suggests they were actually afraid of Jesus, not sure how to handle them. So they go after Josiah instead, classic



John 08:59

Power Play target the vulnerable one, right? But what they don't realize



Sarah 09:03

is that Josiah, he's gone through this massive transformation, not just physically, but internally as well. He's not the same guy anymore, not at all. He's gone from being ignored his whole life to suddenly standing before the most powerful religious council in Jerusalem, and it's like something clicks inside him. He doesn't back down.



John 09:23

What does he say? At first, he's



Sarah 09:25

just giving the facts right, straightforward account of what happened, the clay, the washing, the sudden sight. But as they press him, try to twist his words, use his past against him. You see this shift in him. He becomes bolder, more confident. He's not intimidated by their authority anymore. There's this one point where he just flat out says, whether this man is a sinner, I don't know, but one thing I do know, I was blind now I see powerful stuff, right? He's not playing their theological games. He's cutting through the BS. It's a truth they can't deny, and it throws the. Completely off balance. They're so focused on their own power, their own agenda, they miss the miracle that's standing right in front of them. But they don't give up that easily, do they? Nope. They double down. They try to force Josiah to say that God healed him, that Jesus had nothing to do with it, still



John 10:14

so blind to the truth

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Sarah 10:16

totally. And Josiah, he calls them out on it. He's like, Look, we all know God doesn't work miracles for sinners, right? And you're telling me this guy who healed me as a sinner, well, here I am standing here seeing for the first time in my life. So you tell me who's God working through here? He's not

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John 10:33

just seeing clearly now, he's thinking clearly. It's like he's become this

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Sarah 10:37

unlikely prophet. And the Sanhedrin, they don't know what to do. They're losing control of the narrative. So what happens? They do what they do best. They lash out. They kick Josiah out of the synagogue. Basically excommunicated him. Wow, just for telling the truth. It's a reminder that standing up for what you believe in, it comes at a price. But while all this is going down, the Urantia Book makes it clear that Jesus, he's right there in the temple, teaching in Solomon's porch. He didn't abandon Josiah. That's good. I was wondering about that. It's like this parallel narrative, Josiah challenging the authorities on a personal level, and Jesus challenging them on this whole theological level. And what's interesting is that the Urantia Book says Jesus uses this opportunity to talk about his relationship with God, his true identity as the Son of God. He's

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John 11:22

speaking to both groups at the same time, those in power and the everyday people, exactly.

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Sarah 11:27

And it's that multi layered approach that makes Jesus such a compelling figure. He's challenging the status quo, but he's also deeply compassionate, looking out for the underdog always.

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John 11:36

So what happens to Josiah? Well,

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Sarah 11:39

Jesus finds him, along with Nathaniel and Thomas. And can you imagine what that moment must have been like for Josiah, kicked out, feeling alone, and then Jesus finds him, and Jesus,

he looks at him with such love and compassion and asks Josiah, do you believe in the Son of God? After



John 11:54

everything, Josiah has been through that one question, it's a lot.



Sarah 11:58

It is. And Josiah, he gets it, he understands. And he says, Lord, I believe it's like in that moment, he realizes that true belonging, it doesn't come from following rules or being part of some institution. It comes from a heart that's open to truth, to the love of God as revealed through Jesus. That's



John 12:15

a beautiful message, and it makes you think about the true meaning of healing. It's not just about physical sight. It's about spiritual sight as well,



Sarah 12:22

right? It's about opening our eyes to a deeper reality. And that's what's so amazing about this whole story, this deep dive into the Feast of Dedication as told in the Urantia Book, it challenges us to look beyond the surface, to question our assumptions, and to be open to the unexpected ways that truth reveals itself, because



John 12:40

sometimes it's the people we least expect, the marginalized, the forgotten, who end up showing us the way Absolutely. Well, that was quite a deep dive. Thanks for joining us until next time. Keep exploring, keep questioning and keep seeking truth wherever it may lead.