

# Part 4, Paper 173, Monday in Jerusalem, Midwayer Commission

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Monday in Jerusalem, temple chaos, money changers, animal sacrifices, religious exploitation, Jesus's anger, direct action, temple cleansing, religious elite, Sanhedrin authority, parables, two sons, absent landlord, marriage feast, authenticity

## SPEAKERS

Sarah, John

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- S

Sarah 00:00

Okay, so are you ready to dive into another fascinating, deep dive into the Urantia Book?
- J

John 00:05

Absolutely. Let's do it
- S

Sarah 00:06

this time. We're looking at paper 173 and, wow, it's a bit of a powder keg, right? We're talking about Monday in Jerusalem, right after Jesus's, you know, triumphal entry.
- J

John 00:17

Yeah, talk about a Monday, right? The
- S

Sarah 00:19

air is thick with anticipation and well, I don't want to give too much away, but let's just say things are about to get really interesting, really fast. No
- J

John 00:26

kidding, especially when you consider where we're headed, the temple. But forget any images

riding, especially when you consider where we're headed, the temple. But forget any images of peaceful contemplation you might

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Sarah 00:33

have. Yeah, this is not your typical Sunday service, not even close. It's

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John 00:37

more like stepping into a bizarre, bizarre picture this livestock crammed into pens, money changers clinking coins like they're running a casino, merchants Hawking their wares. Not exactly the tranquil sanctuary you'd expect, right? It's mind boggling.

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Sarah 00:52

It feels almost sacrilegious. So help me understand this? Why was all of this commerce happening in the temple? Well, it's important

J

John 00:58

to remember the historical and social context here, which is something the Urantia Book really helps illuminate. Basically, it boils down to a system of religious obligation that had been well twisted into a money making scheme.

S

Sarah 01:13

Okay, so break it down for us. How did it work?

J

John 01:16

So you've got people coming from all over to pay their temple dues, right? But they couldn't just use any old coins. They needed specific

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Sarah 01:24

Jewish shekels. Ah, so that's where the money changers come in. Exactly.

J

John 01:27

They swooped in, charging exorbitant fees to exchange Roman currency for these required temple shekels, essentially preying on the faithful.

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Sarah 01:35

So it's like those airport currency exchanges. You know, you're getting a raw deal, but you don't have another choice. Yeah,

J

John 01:40

spot on. But it gets even wilder when you factor in the whole animal sacrifice thing. Remember the rules back then, as laid out in the Levitical law, demanded these animals be perfect, not a single blemish. And guess who got to decide what passed inspection? Let me guess, Temple officials bingo. Talk about a conflict of interest, right? I think

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Sarah 02:00

a rigged game. I can just imagine these poor farmers showing up with their prized livestock only to be told, nope, that goat has a crooked ear, not good enough for the almighty you're

J

John 02:09

catching on. And guess who conveniently offered pre approved perfect animals at a shall we say, marked up price the temple itself. It's

S

Sarah 02:19

like a holy racket. So we're talking about exploiting people's faith for profit. And it sounds like the Urantia Book doesn't shy away from calling this out Not

J

John 02:27

one bit. And it gets worse. The Urantia Book mentions the temple treasury overflowing with what would be millions in today's money, while ordinary people struggle to make ends meet. That's a stark contrast. It really is. And the Urantia Book points specifically to families like the sons of Annas, a priestly clan notorious for setting up their own little mini markets right there in the temple.

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Sarah 02:51

So they're like the original temple vendors.

J

John 02:53

You could say that these guys were raking it in, and it definitely didn't go unnoticed by the

people. In fact, the text even foreshadows their downfall, mentioning how they were eventually driven out by an angry mob a few years later.



Sarah 03:04

Oh, wow, foreshadowing. I can practically feel the tension rising.



John 03:08

You can cut the tension with a knife at this point. So



Sarah 03:10

we've got this chaotic scene, this blatant disregard for the sanctity of the temple. How does Jesus react to all of this?



John 03:17

Well, let's just say he's not about to whip up a batch of fundraising cookies. I



Sarah 03:21

bet, from what I remember, things are about to get a little bit how should we say it active?



John 03:27

Let's just say Jesus is not known for his passive resistance. The text describes this slow burn of righteous anger building in him as he witnesses this blatant hypocrisy. And let me tell you, you do not want to be on the receiving end of that kind of anger.



Sarah 03:45

And we all know what happens when Jesus gets fired up. That's where things are about to get really interesting. And we all know what happens when Jesus gets fired up, that's where things are about to get a little bit how should we say active? A little



John 03:56

bit active. That might be the understatement of the century. Look, Jesus, he wasn't just about preaching against injustice. This guy took action. Direct Action, okay,



Sarah 04:05

yeah, direct action. We're talking like full on Righteous Fury, right? Oh,



John 04:09

you better believe it. The urentia book doesn't sugarcoat it. It describes him grabbing a whip like an actual whip. Whoa. Okay, things are getting real. Now it gets even better. He starts driving out the animals, cows, sheep, doves, the whole Menagerie. And then he starts flipping over those money changing tables, sitting coins flying everywhere. Can you imagine the scene? Oh, I



Sarah 04:32

can only imagine the noise, the commotion. Talk about a statement. So wait, the people just let him do this. Let



John 04:37

him try. Joined him.



Sarah 04:39

What are you? Serious? They didn't try to stop him. Nope.



John 04:42

The urentia book describes how the crowd, instead of panicking or trying to defend this den of thieves, they joined right in. They were so fed up with the hypocrisy, and in that moment, they found their voice through Jesus's actions. Wow.



Sarah 04:57

It's like this collective righteous. Anger just boiled over. They were waiting for someone to to what call out the elephant in the room, or, I guess, the livestock market in the temple, and



John 05:07

Jesus standing there amidst all the chaos, the overturned tables, the scattered animals. He quotes the prophet Isaiah,



S

Sarah 05:14

okay, and what's he say?

J

John 05:15

Oh, just a casual My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of robbers. Talk about a mic drop moment, right? It gives me chills just thinking about it. This. This was a pivotal moment.

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Sarah 05:29

You know? It forces us to ask ourselves, like, what are our priorities? Are we so caught up in the everyday hustle, the business of life, that we forget about the true meaning of faith?

J

John 05:38

It's a timeless message, isn't it? It's as relevant now as it was back then. But while all of this was happening, while the people were celebrating the temple being cleansed, the religious elite, those priests and scribes, they were witnessing their authority vanish right in front of them, and they were terrified,

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Sarah 05:55

I bet I mean, talk about a loss of control, right? It's

J

John 05:58

palpable in the text. The Urantia Book, really emphasizes the fear that gripped them. I

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Sarah 06:04

mean, can you blame them? They see Jesus, this, this nobody from Nazareth capturing the hearts and minds of the people, challenging their authority, their entire way of life. And

J

John 06:14

that's when they decide they've got to do something about it. And well, it's not pretty. They begin plotting to eliminate him. But even they recognize they can't just waltz in and arrest him,

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Sarah 06:24

No way, especially not after that whole temple cleansing thing. It'd be political suicide. They

no way, especially not after that whole temple cleansing thing. It'd be political suicide. They needed a new strategy, something a little more well subtle, more subversive, and

**J** John 06:34

that's where things get even more interesting, this very public spectacle. It throws a wrench into everything. All of a sudden, the issue of authority is front and center. And well, in this society, in this time period, in this system that was so steeped in tradition, there was one group, one body, that held all the cards. You're talking about, the Sanhedrin. We have a winner. The Sanhedrin the ultimate authority in Jewish law. Okay,

**S** Sarah 07:00

so for those of us who aren't scholars of ancient Jewish law, break it down for us, what was the Sanhedrin Exactly? Why was their authority so absolute?

**J** John 07:07

So in a nutshell, the Sanhedrin was the highest court in Jewish law, kind of like, I don't know your Supreme Court, but for religious matters, yeah. Ah, okay, so they were the big dogs, exactly, and they were the only ones who could ordain teachers, meaning, if you didn't have their stamp of approval, you were basically a nobody in the religious world. It's like having a PhD in piety.

**S** Sarah 07:29

Got it so they had this system, this hierarchy, and here comes Jesus, shaking it all up, shaking

**J** John 07:36

it, rattling it, turning it upside down. And the day after the temple incident, they decide they've got to take him down a peg. So picture this Jesus is teaching in the temple courts bold move after yesterday's events, right? But Jesus, he's not afraid of a little confrontation. So as he's teaching a group of these priests and elders, these pillars of the establishment, they approach him all casual like and they hit him with this seemingly simple question, they ask, by what authority do you do these things? Oh, I

**S** Sarah 08:04

see where this is going. Talk about a loaded question. Oh,

**J** John 08:07

it's a trap. They're trying to back him into a corner, because if Jesus claims divine authority,

it's a trap. They're trying to back him into a corner, because if Jesus claims divine authority, bam, they can accuse him of blasphemy,

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Sarah 08:15

which, let's be honest, wouldn't go over well with the powers that be, not at

J

John 08:20

all. But if he says his authority comes from, you know men well, then they've got him there too, because he wasn't ordained by them. It's a classic lose, lose situation. So what does he do? Does he take the bait? Oh, does he ever but not how they expect. This is classic Jesus right here. Instead of answering them directly, he flips the script. I like where this is going. He hits them with this counter question that leaves them speechless. He's all the baptism of John. Where did that authority come from? Was it from heaven, or was it from men? Boom, talk about turning the tables, right? And the Urantia Book does this amazing job of describing the panic that watches over them. They know they've been outsmarted if they say, oh, John's authority was from heaven. Well, that opens up a whole can of worms, right? They'd be acknowledging a power higher than their own. But if they say John's authority was from men, well, they risk inciting the anger of the people who absolutely love John the Baptist.

S

Sarah 09:15

They're caught between a rock and a hard place, all thanks to their own little power play, exactly,

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John 09:19

and Jesus, he sees right through their hypocrisy. He knows they're not actually interested in the answer. They just want to discredit him, so he refuses to answer their original question. Oh, I love it. What does he say? He just like, Nope, not gonna tell you. Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

S

Sarah 09:36

That's amazing. This whole episode is like a master class in what? In challenging the status quo, in calling out hypocrisy, no matter who it's coming from.

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John 09:46

No kidding, but Jesus isn't done yet. He's about to take this whole confrontation to a whole new level.

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Sarah 09:52

Okay, now you've got me on the edge of my seat. What does he do next? Pull out a scroll and start dropping some more knowledge. Even

J

John 09:58

better, he starts telling. Stories, but not just any stories. We're talking parables. Oh,

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Sarah 10:03

here we go. Parables, those seemingly simple stories, but with all those hidden depths and layers of meaning, this is where things get really good. This is where things get really good.

J

John 10:14

Oh, yeah, you said it. This is where we really see Jesus's, I don't know, almost like his genius for connecting with people. You know what? I mean, he wasn't just up there lecturing or quoting Scripture. He was he was painting these vivid pictures with his words stories that would stick with you long after you

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Sarah 10:32

heard them. He was a master storyteller, that's for sure, absolutely like

J

John 10:35

he knew. He just instinctively knew he had to find a way to bypass all the intellectual gatekeeping of the like religious elite. And just talk to people, right to their hearts, yeah, directly to their hearts, to their gut. And so, so you tell three parables in this section, there's the parable of the two sons, the parable of the absent landlord, and the parable of the marriage feast. And each one, they're all different, but in their own way, they expose the hypocrisy of, you know, the religious leaders, and they reveal something deeper about faith, but what it really means to follow God. Okay, so

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Sarah 11:07

let's take a look at each one. Let's start with the parable of the two sons. I always found this one so interesting. You know, it's about this father who asks his two sons to go work in his vineyard. Exactly.

J

John 11:19

That's the basic setup. And of course, one son, he's like, nope, not interested. But then later

That's the basic setup. And of course, one son, he's like, nope, not interested. But then later he's like, fine, and he goes and does the work. And the other son, he's all, oh, yeah, dad, sure thing. I got you. But then he never, actually, you know, does anything classic. It's total classic. Yeah. And it's such a brilliant way to highlight this point that Jesus makes over and over again, which is that it's not enough to just talk the talk. You gotta walk the walk. You know, actions

 Sarah 11:43  
speak louder than words, 1000

 John 11:45  
words exactly. And I think what's, what's particularly striking is how the Urantia Book, it connects this parable back to those religious leaders. You know, yeah, totally. They were so focused on meticulously following all the rules, the letter of the law that they completely missed the spirit of it. You know, the heart of what it meant to be a person of faith.

 Sarah 12:08  
It's so easy to get caught up in the outward appearance of things, isn't it? Oh, it really is. It's

 John 12:11  
a tra it's so easy to fall into even today, right? Like thinking we're good with God just because we check all the right boxes,

 Sarah 12:19  
absolutely. It makes you wonder, have we ever been guilty of that, like saying we believe one thing and then turning around and acting in a completely different way?

 John 12:27  
It's a question worth asking ourselves, for sure. But Jesus, he doesn't stop there. He then launches into this other parable, the parable of the absent landlord. And this one, this one takes on like a darker tone. Yeah,

 Sarah 12:40  
this parable is always kind of, I don't know, sends chills down my spine a little. Oh, yeah.

 John 12:44



John 12:44

It's about this landlord who sends out servants to, you know, collect rent from his tenants, and it escalates. Oh, quickly, it's



Sarah 12:52

like, Whoa. Okay. Things got real, really fast in this parable. No



John 12:55

kidding. So the tenants, they're like, nope, not paying. And they start, they rough up the servants, and then when the landlord sends his own son, they kill him. They kill him, hoping to, like, get away with the whole thing, you know, thinking they can just inherit the property. It's brutal,



Sarah 13:11

it's intense. But obviously, Jesus is using this to illustrate something much deeper, right? Absolutely,



John 13:17

he's drawing a parallel to how God's messengers, the prophets were treated throughout history. Yeah.



Sarah 13:23

And the Urantia Book makes this really clear connection between the fate of the landlord's son and Jesus's own fate, both rejected, persecuted, even killed by the very people that came to help.



John 13:36

It's almost like it's almost like a prophecy in itself, right? Foreshadowing what's to come. It's



Sarah 13:40

a reminder that sometimes speaking truth to power, standing up for what's right. It comes at a cost. It



John 13:47

does. It does. And then Jesus, he shares one more parable, kind of like a grand finale, right? And he saves maybe his most subversive parable for last, the parable of the marriage feast. This

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Sarah 13:56

one's interesting because it it feels almost like, I don't know, like a direct slap in the face to the religious elite, you know, like he's calling them out directly. Oh,

J

John 14:05

absolutely. It's like he's holding up a mirror to their sense of entitlement. Yeah. So imagine this. You've got a king throwing this lavish banquet, right? And he sends out invitations, but the people he invites, they're all like, Nah, too busy, or they make excuses. They just refused to come. Can

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Sarah 14:20

you imagine being too busy for a royal invitation?

J

John 14:23

It's unbelievable. It'd be like winning the lottery and then being like, yeah, no, thanks. I've got, I've got stuff to do. But that's exactly what happens. So the king, he's understandably a little ticked off. So what does he do? He opens the doors to everyone, good, bad, rich, poor, everybody and their brother is invited to come feast and celebrate. It's

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Sarah 14:41

this beautiful image of, I don't know, of radical inclusion, God's love and grace just being offered freely, unconditionally to everyone,

J

John 14:52

yes, and think about how that would have landed in that context. You know where you have these religious leaders who see themselves as the gatekeepers of faith? Right? And Jesus is basically dismantling that whole system, showing them that it's not about status or power, it's about the heart.

S

Sarah 15:07

It's powerful stuff. So we've got Jesus standing there in the temple courts, you know, just hours after that whole cleansing episode, and he's systematically dismantling the authority of the

religious leaders with these incredible stories, these parables that cut right through to the heart of the matter. How are they reacting to all of this? Oh, they

**J** John 15:23

are fuming. The Urantia Book. It doesn't mince words here. Their anger, it's reached a fever pitch. They are officially plotting to kill him.

**S** Sarah 15:30

It's crazy how this one day, this Monday in Jerusalem, becomes this, like, this major turning point. You know, it's like, from this point forward, everything changes Absolutely.

**J** John 15:38

This day set so many things in motion. And you know, it's moments like these that I'm so grateful for the Urantia Book, because it gives us this unique perspective, this incredible detail and insight into what was happening, what was going on in the hearts and minds of everyone involved. It's

**S** Sarah 15:56

true. It's like we're right there with them, you know, feeling the tension, the excitement, even the danger of it all. So as we wrap up this deep dive, this, this powder keg of a day, what's, what's the one thing you hope our listeners take away from this, this exploration, this look at paper, 173 you

**J** John 16:12

know, when it comes down to it, I think the most important takeaway is the power of authenticity, like truly living a life that's aligned with your values, even when, or maybe especially when, it's hard. Jesus, he didn't shy away from challenging the status quo even when it meant putting himself in danger. He spoke truth to power. He offered this, this vision of faith that was inclusive and accessible to everyone. And that's a powerful, powerful message. It

**S** Sarah 16:40

is. It's a message that trend sends time and place. So as we sign off, I want to leave our listeners with this question, what resonates most deeply with you from this pivotal day in Jesus's life, what challenges to authority do you face in your own life, and how can you respond with that same courage, that same compassion, that same authenticity, until next time, keep asking questions, keep seeking truth and keep diving deep. You.

