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Chandalee

Welcome to today's episode. I'm very excited to introduce you to Lois, Tverberg. I love sharing her book. *Sitting at the feet of Rabbi Jesus*. It's such a great introduction and exploration of Jesus's Jewishness. Enjoy our conversation as we explore some of the differences between Eastern and the Western mindset when it comes to being Talmudic.

00:00:31:23 - 00:00:34:20

Chandalee

Welcome to the podcast today. I'm Chandalee.

00:00:34:23 - 00:00:35:19

Jenn

And I'm Jenn.

00:00:35:23 - 00:00:47:22

Chandalee

And we are excited to introduce you guys to Lois Tverberg. She is the author of one of my favorite books ever, *Sitting at the Feet of Rabbi Jesus*. Lois, can you tell us a little bit about the book.

00:00:48:09 - 00:01:21:00

Lois

Sitting at the feet of Rabbi Jesus? It has been out for a while. It was the first of. I have three. Two more. And it is about the Jewish context of Jesus, what it meant that Jesus was a rabbi and he raised up disciples. And it talks about the feasts and the and the prayers and all of these things that are going on in the background that make everything about his life and ministry make a ton more sense.

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Lois

And so it's I, it became it's the first book that that was published widely that describes kind of this fascination that I have with understanding the Bible in its cultural context.

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Chandalee

Great. What is your favorite archeological site to visit?

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Lois

I have one in particular. That is the current dig at what is very likely B.C. to the fishing village on the Sea of Galilee. And the reason why it's my favorite is because I and I myself have been a part of it. And I tell you, as you mention it, even this morning on my Facebook, the first thing that popped up is their their most recent results.

00:02:17:22 - 00:02:38:16

Lois

And they only dig two weeks a year because just in that two weeks, you you can you get lots and lots and lots of stuff. And then it takes you the rest of the year just to figure out what it is. So, so I'm very excited. And they even just this morning, they were like, wow, look at all the cool stuff that's going on.

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Lois

Yeah.

00:02:39:06 - 00:02:40:21

Jenn

So that is exciting.

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Chandalee

That is one of my favorite times each month is when my bar magazine comes in. Okay. The Biblical Archeological Society magazine, when it comes in, I love getting in that in and digging in, see what's going on.

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Lois

Yeah, I'm sure you will see the latest results that will be coming out in probably and probably by the end of the year they'll have that published there. So yeah. Cool.

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Chandalee

So why is that? Why is that one of your favorite places?

00:03:12:03 - 00:03:37:07

Lois

Well, obviously, it's one of Jesus main places that he hung out. I mean, his his several of his disciples come from the cedar and he was often preaching on the north side of the Sea of Galilee. And so that was his area of ministry. So it's one of the most important places on the planet. Yeah, it's pretty important.

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Lois

So, yeah, I when I go there and I dig, I am literally powdering myself in the dust of his feet, which is what they tell you to do. Yes.

00:03:47:22 - 00:03:50:08

Chandalee

Yes, absolutely. Yes, absolutely.

00:03:50:22 - 00:04:03:16

Jenn

Well, what led to your interest in studying the Jewishness of Jesus? Even the subtitle of your book is How the Jewishness of Jesus Can Transform Your Faith. Like, what is it about that that was important to you?

00:04:04:08 - 00:04:30:04

Lois

Good question. And especially it sounds like almost an oversell, but it's true. I actually was I have a Ph.D. in biology. I'm kind of a nerd. I like to study. And I grew up in a family that was faithful and loved the Lord and loved to study. I'm not Jewish in any way. I'm come from a Lutheran Norwegian background.

00:04:30:12 - 00:05:08:14

Lois

Herberg Burg is a Norwegian name. And but you have to admit, when you read your Bible, there's all sorts of head scratchers like what is what's going on here? What? I don't get that.

And it was when it was a couple of years after I started teaching biology at the college here that I had a seminar at my church that got me absolutely fascinated because it was like all the lights turned on once you start understanding Jesus's Jewish context.

00:05:08:22 - 00:05:33:03

Lois

So even though I don't have any personal genes or whatever, a lot of people are kind of looking for how they secretly are Jewish. You know, it's because my Savior and Lord is that and I need to know more. If I want to understand him better, I need to know his family and his life and how he lived and where he's from.

00:05:33:16 - 00:06:12:21

Chandalee

Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. I think going to Israel in 2017, I have I feel drawn I feel drawn back to the land. I just can't wait to get to go back. But it it transforms, formed my interpretation and reading of scripture from I've heard it said before it from black and white to technicolor. Yeah, it just, it, it puts a whole new level of things on it for me to be able to look at the Jewishness and understand the cultural and the geographical and the political stuff that's going on.

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Chandalee

Well, for those head scratchers.

00:06:15:19 - 00:06:33:00

Jenn

Yes, I'm hoping to get there myself either next year or the following year. And the way I've heard it said is that it makes it 3-D. You know, like it's like a 3-D experience, obviously, because you're walking in the in the same place Jesus did, as you mentioned, the same dust, you know?

00:06:33:24 - 00:06:53:21

Lois

Yeah. Mm hmm. I have to say, you don't have to be there. Don't have to go. It's fun. Sometimes I think people are trying to oversell you on a trip because people make a little money when they make to come. But there are books you can read and I know who could sell you some books.

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Chandalee

So for those that are questioning, it's this book right here that you can get Lois's book sitting at the feet of Rabbi Jesus pretty much anywhere books are sold to be able to to get this without actually having to go to the land and to start that interpretation and that understanding in your own walk.

00:07:13:18 - 00:07:14:13

Lois

Mm hmm.

00:07:15:01 - 00:07:24:00

Chandalee

Yeah, well, there's a phrase, Lois, you use in your book called Stringing the Pearls. We explain that for us a little bit and flesh that out here with our listeners.

00:07:24:22 - 00:08:13:18

Lois

Well, sure, it's it's a reference to a habit that rabbis had from very early on. And you actually find it in a very orthodox rabbi is even today is they love to quote little tiny snippets of scripture. And they'll do it not just a little bit, but a whole bunch of times. Girls are like pearls of wisdom and two string pearls is to string together words of scripture and with the assumption that people understand where they came from and if you know where they came from, you get this incredible wow.

00:08:13:24 - 00:08:44:14

Lois

When you see how they say something new. Mm hmm. One simple one that you in Jesus does this a lot. Yeah, I actually his father does this a lot. When he says when the heavens open and the dove comes down at the baptism, he says, you are my son, whom I love, with whom I am well pleased. Right.

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Lois

And you say, well, that's nice. But you didn't say he didn't realize. God just quoted three different scriptures. He quoted Genesis 22. My my son, whom I love. He quoted Psalm two today. You are my son. You have to go read that in Isaiah. The last part is Isaiah 42. And this is my son who know behold my servant, with whom I am well pleased.

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Lois

And and each one of those has a reference in a song to is this incredible kingly passage about the Messiah. And he's going to be the Son of God and he's going to rule the world. But then Genesis 22 is from the story of Abraham and of being asked to sacrifice Isaac. And in some ways it's already hinting at This is my Isaac.

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Lois

Yeah, it's really powerful. And then Isaiah, let's see, 42 is it says they're going to make sure I get it right and I place it on him. It's it's what's ironic is that it comes straight from the context of what's happening is good spirit is descending upon Jesus. So it's there are just rich and beautiful connections. And if you know your scriptures well, which is what they did, the what we call our Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible was very, very well known.

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Lois

And so the whole chapter is about the many, many times that Jesus puts in these little tiny hints and quotes from his scriptures that are really important for knowing what he's talking about. And that's that's the whole point of that chapter. Stringing pearls.

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Chandalee

Yeah, great. Because I think in in teaching so many people have said to me, but I don't understand Hebrew, I don't understand the language. I don't I don't know. I don't know. I don't understand or know how to get that information. Yeah. It's not a requirement to understand this. This way the Holy Spirit can interpret for us what these passages mean.

00:11:21:20 - 00:11:31:09

Chandalee

But I always explain that it gives it such a deeper, richer, fuller understanding when we can go back to that original context and the layering of the Scripture together. Mm hmm.

00:11:31:18 - 00:11:52:24

Jenn

And it just reiterates how important the Old Testament is to our continued study of the word. You know, we're I think people are drawn to the New Testament because there's a lot in there about Jesus and a lot of in there about the church and how to live. And but so much of it is based on what we get from the Old Testament.

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Jenn

And if you go back, that's where the stringing the pearls comes in because you're able to see how those things are connected. And the Bible really is just one love story from beginning to end about restoration and redemption and and all those beautiful themes that go from the beginning to the very end.

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Lois

Amen. Great. Very well said. Perfect.

00:12:15:16 - 00:12:23:04

Chandalee

So as as we live in our faith, walks in community together, there's a concept called Talmudic.

00:12:23:21 - 00:12:24:05

Lois

Mm hmm.

00:12:24:15 - 00:12:27:06

Chandalee

Give us a little bit of a definition or an explanation of that.

00:12:28:05 - 00:13:04:24

Lois

Well, okay. This is a the word. The word Talmudic is actually plural of to mean a to me is a disciple and a learner who learns from a rabbi. And it helps us understand those scenes of Jesus inviting men. Jesus, come follow me. And if you have no context, you say, Wow, Jesus is like the Pied Piper. It's because of his glowing halo, you know, this big glowing thing.

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Lois

Well, I would follow that to just to figure out what's up with that is, of course, because Jesus is the son of God. Well, why wouldn't he glow? Why not? Well, actually, there was a context. People were actually already doing this. The first century Jewish culture actually already had a tradition of educated laypersons, not necessarily priests, or they they haven't gone through some seminary, but they have been studying and teaching in their synagogues.

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Lois

And they would be invited to travel to other synagogues and teach there. Well, they would in between when they were teaching, they would often be holding sessions for students, people who were fascinated and wanting to learn along with them. And so there would be very obvious laypeople. This was a fasting nation among everybody. It's kind of as much as we're passionate about football.

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Lois

They were passionate about understanding the Torah. How do we live this out? What is it about? And so and there were a few, just a few who would say, boy, I'm going to devote my time and follow you everywhere you go. And so there's actually some there are other stories of a rabbi with his to tell me team or maybe and then maybe another rabbi.

00:14:43:11 - 00:15:21:21

Lois

And they would get up and go to the town down the way in order to teach in their synagogue or do some business. And the students, then they would have a conversation about some important line in the Torah. One actually is a discussion of the same thing that, you know, Jesus talks. There's a passage where it says some of Jesus's disciples were plucking the heads of grains on the Sabbath.

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Lois

This actually they're having that same conversation because they're also walking and plucking grains or it happened recently. And so it's fascinating to see these parallel stories. So that's it's interesting because it gives you a context of what actually was this was expected of disciples. And when Jesus says raise up or he says, go make disciples of all nations, well, we got it.

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Lois

Know what that means? Right. So that's what is important. Yeah. Mm hmm. Yeah.

00:15:56:19 - 00:16:01:20

Jenn

How is the process of being Talmud Dean lived out in this first century.

00:16:03:08 - 00:16:22:10

Lois

Well, I think I've kind of just said a quite a few of those things. One, there are some interesting little comments. They said that a disciple needed permission from his wife to be gone from home for over 30 days. Or.

00:16:23:02 - 00:16:23:19

Chandalee

Interesting.

00:16:24:18 - 00:16:47:00

Lois

So it does tell you that people would spend chunks of time that they would that they you know, and when you see the disciples that sometimes they would be fishing nets and sometimes they'd be walking after Jesus. And I've seen people say, Oh, they did not have enough faith. They should always walk after Jesus and never fish. Hmm.

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Lois

No, that's not true. You actually see disciple that they would they would have sessions for certain months, but then they would people would go off and harvest their fields and then they would come back. You see many scenes that are reminiscent of Jesus's teaching by the galley or in the marketplace. You see things like that. Disciples were so opposed to emulate Elijah and Elijah.

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Lois

You remember how Elijah, when Elijah called Elijah, Elijah burned his plow in order to show his commitment. And Jesus, you know, when some guy says, Oh, I will be your disciple, but I want to have to bury my father first. And he says, anybody who puts his hand to the plow and then looks back is not worthy of the Kingdom of God.

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Lois

Well, there you go. There's your context.

00:17:50:23 - 00:18:07:05

Chandalee

Yeah. Let's talk through for a few minutes some differences between an eastern view of discipleship and a Western view of discipleship, because they're they're pretty vast at times. Sure. So what are what do you see as some differences?

00:18:08:04 - 00:18:34:14

Lois

It was right around this time that the Greeks kind of took over the world and came up with this new way of doing things. And Europe and America and the modern West, that's what we call the West. Our American ways are the Western ways. The way we think is Western. That's a long discussion of its own. But the Greeks love to think.

00:18:34:18 - 00:19:08:05

Lois

They love to think about thinking. They they love love, love to think about thinking. And and so that's what when you see, we assume that to be disciple was would be to take a class that would teach you proper doctrines and systematic theology. And so you'd get your head all stuffed full of the correct opinions and data and knowledge that we should that a person should have.

00:19:08:13 - 00:19:39:05

Lois

And that's a good thing. You know, information is they almost you've heard of Gnosticism. There's this idea that a person who has secret knowledge will go to the heavenly because of their secret knowledge. You're learning secrets of knowledge, and it's all about that. That's Western. Mm hmm. Okay. The Eastern view is God is given his Torah, and he's commanded us to live it out.

00:19:39:18 - 00:20:11:14

Lois

His instructions are the instructions to do his will on earth. What a privilege it is to be able to do his will on Earth. And so your rabbi is both your teacher of what are those? His instruction is, but he's also actually a source of models modeling that you watch. How does he observes Shabbat? How does he what does he do to rest or how does he give to the poor?

00:20:12:06 - 00:20:37:04

Lois

What things are important to him? And so when you see Jesus and his disciples go to eat with tax collectors. Jesus is sure He's making a statement, but he's also training His disciples that they otherwise. Honestly, I have a hard time. Just, you know, Jesus, tell you something, do something that sounds hard. You know how to do that?

00:20:37:05 - 00:21:03:09

Lois

I think I won't. You know, it's I'll spiritually say, oh, that's good. And then I won't actually do it. But it's when you actually go with somebody, when they do something and you say, okay, we're going to practice doing it a few times together so that you learn by my example how to live. Yeah, that's a disciple in an eastern way.

00:21:03:09 - 00:21:09:03

Lois

It's not just about information, it's about transformation.

00:21:09:08 - 00:21:33:18

Chandalee

Thanks for listening today. You can find Lois at ourrabbijesus.com and you can find Jenn and I over at goandequip.com or you can check out the videos of our podcast episodes on our YouTube channel. The links to all of these sites are in the show notes. See you next time.