

Follow Him

Episode 6: Guest: Dr. J.B. Haws

Doctrine and Covenants 10-11

“That You May Come Off Conqueror”

Transcript

Hank Smith: (00:02)

Welcome to followHIM. A weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.

John Bytheway:

And I'm John Bytheway.

Hank Smith:

We love to learn.

John Bytheway:

We love to laugh.

Hank Smith:

We want to learn and laugh with you.

Hank Smith and John Bytheway:

As together. We followHIM.

Hank Smith (00:25)

My friends, welcome to another episode of followHIM, a podcast design intended to help you with your Come, Follow Me studies. I'm here with my co-host John Bytheway. Hello, John.

John Bytheway:

Hi Hank! How are you?

Hank Smith:

Yeah, well, I am excited to be at it again. I can't believe we're like on Episode 6. It's so much fun to just sit and learn from these incredible minds. Every week, John and I bring on what we would say is an expert in Church History this year. And we have another expert with us this week. His name is JB Hawes.

John Bytheway: (00:53)

I am so excited to have J.B. here because we were in our . . . our master's program together. And we had so much fun back in those days. We would have class two and a half, three hours long, and just learn so much. And it was tough. It was intimidating because I just thought, "I can't

do this." It was amazing, but we had a wonderful time. And so, so good to see J.B. again. Here's his bio from Religious Education at BYU says: JB Hawes is an Associate Professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU. He currently serves as Associate Dean of Religious Education. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Utah in American History. He's also interested in interfaith dialogue. Um, before coming to BYU, he taught seminary in Northern Utah, Salt Lake, and Weaver counties. As for his interest in history, generally, he asks, "How could you not be interested in history when you come from a place that in pioneer times, was known as Muskrat Springs." Which is now Hooper, not Hooper, right? But Hooper,

J.B. Haws: (01:54)

John, thank you for bringing that up right from the outset. It's always awkward when I have to try to, like work it into the conversation. So the fact that you just brought it up--just warms my heart.

John Bytheway: (02:03)

Let's see. He's married to, uh, the beautiful Laura Favero, which he submits there is another evidence that miracles have not ceased. He has three boys and a daughter. They love living in Provo and cheering, sometimes too fanatically, for the Cougars. I love this part. He served a Spanish-speaking mission in Raleigh, North Carolina. So, he speaks . . . speaks Spanish with a Southern accent. Can we hear some of that J.B.?

John Bytheway: (02:27)

Buenos dias, y'all.

Hank Smith:

John, didn't your favorite show take place in, in North Carolina?

John Bytheway: (02:35)

Gee, how nice of you to mention Hank. Uh, yes. Uh, not just my favorite show, but the world-renowned, uh, Andy Griffith show, uh, was supposed to have taken place in Mayberry, North Carolina then.

Hank Smith: (02:46)

Right, right. And we might as well bring it out. We haven't had a Barney Fife impression on the podcast yet.

J.B. Haws:

Yeah, this is my one request, the request to be, to join you today.

Hank Smith:

Why don't you do our introduction to follow HIM as Barney Fife?

John Bytheway: (03:00)

I think we want to stay on the air. Don't we? Yeah. Yeah. Well, I'll just do a little, a little Barney Fife and, and please, if you don't know who this is, don't be alarmed. I'm not having some sort of

medical issue. Alright, everybody, get ready. We're going to do, Come and follow HIM. That's how Barney Fife is now. Everybody cut that out. He talked like that--not at all like me. No.

Hank Smith:

There are teenagers listening right now, going, "Is he having a problem?" Yeah. Parents are like, "We'll show you later." It was the show.

J.B. Haws: (03:30)

See why? None of us ever complained about going to class with John Bytheway. That was something I looked forward to every week.

Hank Smith: (03:39)

-Impressions, John. I . . . I know most of the impressions you can do. So I think I'll bring them on one at a time throughout, so people will keep listening. They'll say, "What is he going to do this week? I want to jump in here to the Doctrine and Covenants Sections that we're on this week, but I'll just say one thing. I just want to add one thing to J.B.'s bio. If you, if you know J.B. Haws, or if you know someone who knows Dr. J.B. Haws, they will say the exact same thing every time. "That is one of the best men that walks the planet. He is such a nice guy." Yeah.

John Bytheway: (04:10)

My, uh, brother-in-law teaches seminary in Harriman. And he, on the group text of our extended family, said, "Hey, you've got to hear this BYU Devotional that I just heard." And it was, it was JB Haws. And it blessed a whole lot of people. Tell us the title of that one again, J.B.

J.B. Haws: (04:26)

It was "Wrestling with Comparisons."

John Bytheway: (04:29)

Yeah. And, and I there's, there's a treasure trove at Speeches.byu.edu. I mean, there's a ton of stuff on there, but go find a Brother Haws' talk on there. It'll bless your life.

Hank Smith: (04:40)

Yeah. Yeah, it will. Absolutely. I hope everyone will go look that up after . . . after they've finished this whole episode. Now, right now, J.B., you are a Church History expert. And so we, this week, are going to be in Sections 10 and 11. Now we've hit before in previous episodes, the loss of the 116 pages. Well, as Dr. Dirkmaat would say the, "stolen 116 pages." He was pretty adamant about that . . . that I don't know why we call them lost. If someone stole my car, I wouldn't say I'd lost it. I'd say someone's stolen it. Can you review for us? Um, just for those maybe who are just listening for the first time, or maybe just getting a good review. It's good to review. Tell us who Martin Harris is and lead us up to the loss of the manuscript.

J. B. Haws: (05:26)

It's such a pivotal episode in Joseph Smith's life--Martin Harris's life. I mean, the fact that they just kind of come back to them so often, and it comes up in so many narratives. I think it shows just how impactful this was--so many lessons learned, so much a part of the history of that coming forth to the book of Mormon. And let me say, I think this has come up in previous episodes of your podcast, but I don't think we can give enough of an underlining of the resources on the church's website and the Gospel Library app. So I just want to say (and I'll probably mention this a couple of times), if you go into the Come, Follow Me Resources, there's a big tab. It is this Doctrine and Covenants, Historical Resources. Everyone should make that . . . bookmark that, and make that a, a first place to go with the one-stop-shop.

J. B. Haws: (06:07)

You can click on all the people that are mentioned in every Section. You can see a historical background, a lot of great images, some video clips. So it's the place to start. There's a great biography--biographical sketch of Martin Harris there. The thing that I think probably most of us sense is that Martin Harris was a generation older than Joseph Smith, just over 20 years older than Joseph Smith. And he was a, a well-established and respected in the community member and sort of the first who had that kind of community standing, who believed in Joseph Smith and gave credence to what he was saying. I'm so sure that meant the world to Joseph Smith, to have someone of Martin Harris has stature and means to provide backing and to, to jump in, so enthusiastically--to even serve as scribe. And Martin serves as Joseph's scribe from April 1828 to June 1828, and together they produce this sheaf of the 116 pages of translated materials.

J.B. Haws: (07:02)

And, uh, you can just feel Martin's excitement for what's going on. The fact that he is so enthusiastic about showing this to his, his skeptical wife, and to other family members. He's, he's just convinced that this material is good enough that it will, it will allay their doubts and suspicions. And I think that speaks to the . . . his excitement, but also the quality of, of the, of what the material that they produced, that he's convinced this will be the missing piece. And that's why I think he pushes so hard to let him take him. Yeah. And, and, and then Joseph understandably feeling, you know, the respect he has for Martin and his esteem. I think that that's what pushes him to continually, uh, in opportuning the Lord to let him do it.

Hank Smith:

I've heard people say before, "Oh, you know, why did Joseph give into Martin?" And as a Junior Faculty member at BYU, I have felt the idea of a Senior Faculty member wanting me to do something. And of course, I want to do something because I have that respect for them. And I know how much they've done for me. I think, uh, Joseph probably feels that same way. "You've done so much for me. Um, I really want to do this for you."

J. B. Haws:

Yeah. Well said, I think it's so relatable. I think there's this . . . just a human, a human relate-ability, uh, in this relationship that it makes sense.

John Bytheway: (08:18)

I'm glad you used that word "just relatable," Because the more we've thought about this, the more I've thought, "Yeah." And the other thing was, Joseph just did not have the resources to publish this thing. Here's a guy who is willing, who has this huge farm, and who's willing to help. And maybe could, he even have thought maybe the Lord provided Martin. And I think he did. You know, uh, to, to financially fund the printing of the book, which he eventually does, you know, and, and, uh, it was fun last time to, uh, to bring in, uh, president Dallin, H Oaks' talk about Martin Harris. How he needs . . . What did he say, "Come out from under the shadow of that event?" And we all remember that he did, he did fund it. He becomes one of the Three Witnesses.

Hank Smith: (09:05)

And J.B., I want to ask you a question, and you can follow up with your response to John there, but, um, as a Church, what do you think our general feeling toward Martin Harris should be? Sometimes I think we . . . he's known for this mistake, but if I know you, you're going to say, "No, no, no, he should be known much differently." than men.

J.B. Haws: (09:25)

I think we're all sort of, um, feeling that same thing. Um, and I think John pointed that out well, too, that all of us. I think, had we been in this situation where we, we don't want our lives to be defined by our worst mistake. And I don't think Martin Harris should be defined that way either. One, sort of window into his soul, is the fact that these revelations call Martin Harris, "A wicked man" and, and he stayed. I think that says something. I mean, so he stays and becomes one of the Three Witnesses, finances the printing of the book of Mormon, even after that pretty stern rebuke from the Lord and. . . .

John Bytheway: (09:59)

Let's put that in print and send it to the world. Yeah.

J. B. Haws: (10:03)

It says something that he was willing to accept that. Uh, the same thing could be said about Joseph, that he was willing to accept the Lord's rebuke and print it. Uh, I also think that speaks to what Martin must've sensed about the authenticity of Joseph's revelations, that this was not something coming from Joseph. This was something coming from the Lord, and so he was willing to accept it, to repent, to move forward, and to stay with the movement and become a vital piece of the movement-- indispensable. So I think that's a great window into his soul. It's something that I find remarkable.

John Bytheway: (10:33)

And Hank, what is it that they do up in (uh, is it Smithfield?) that they have a kind of a festival every year? I think I went to it when I was a kid.

J. B. Haws: (10:42)

Yeah. I think in Clarkston where . . . where Martin Harris is buried.

John Bytheway: (10:45)

Yeah. I'm so glad you said that. I didn't want to get that wrong. Yeah. They have some sort of a remembrance, and I think his headstone is there. Or is it more of a monument, isn't it? Right. Yeah. I seem to remember going up there as a kid. My, my only Pioneer ancestors, I think uh, also settled up in Cache Valley.

Hank Smith: (11:05)

Yeah, so he was buried with a book of Mormon in his hand.

John Bytheway:

Wow. That, I didn't know.

Hank Smith:

Yeah. You can't love the book of Mormon, I guess, without loving Martin Harris. Maybe one of our hopes on this podcast is . . . to . . . for . . . our listeners to really get a positive view of Martin and his . . . his role in Joseph Smith's life. It is a crucial role in Joseph Smith's life--reminds me of Peter, right. When the Lord turned to him and said, "Get behind me, Satan." Right. But Peter stuck around. Yeah. He kept going.

John Bytheway:

That's a good comparison. I think that not only with Martin but with everybody in Church History, I always come back to Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's statement, "All the Lord has ever had to work with his imperfect people. It must be incredibly frustrating to him, but he deals with it. And so should we." I mean, just a great statement. Who else has he got, except for some imperfect folks, to try to move the work forward?

Hank Smith:

And then we find out that the Lord had planned on this mistake 2000 years ago. Right? Like, "I know how to work with these people. I just make up for their mistakes millennia in advance."

John Bytheway:

We've read through what the Lord told Joseph and Martin. And Section 3, we did that before J.B. What is . . . what is Section 10--3 and 10--are kind of right next to each other, even chronologically, at least part of Section 10. What does, how does that change in tone, and what does it add?

J. B. Haws: (12:22)

Yeah, but that's, that's such a great way to look at these is: How do we read these two together? And I think if we've all felt the anguish of Section 3. I mean, just the anguish that Joseph Smith was feeling and how, how soothing that must've been to learn that the work of God can not be

frustrated and that he had not destroyed everything that all was not lost. The full resolution of it. It doesn't come until Section 10. It is, as you said, John, the timing of this is important because in Section 10 is one of those that's hard to date. We don't have an existing manuscript copy. What's missing from the earliest, uh, collection of manuscript collection of the revelation book. There's some trickiness to the date, but currently, the Joseph Smith Papers Editors have dated it to April 1829, which seems to make a lot of sense.

J.B. Haws: (13:05)

So, we're talking about almost a full year after the loss of the 116 pages when Section 10 comes that instructs Joseph, how to resolve the loss of these pages. So I think that's, that's instructive in and of itself that the resolution wasn't immediate and Joseph moves forward in faith. He and Oliver start translating it. It seems like, in the midst of that translating work, that's when Section 10 comes--at least in its fullest form. There's some evidence that it might be a composite revelation, as you said, John, with pieces maybe from 1828 and then the full revelation put together in the spring of 1829. And now Joseph figures out, "This is how we're going to solve this missing pages problem." And there's so much to be said there.

Hank Smith: (13:46)

J.B. in my old scriptures that I have in front of me, my paper copy, which is about 20 years old, it says, "the summer of 1828." Is that now changed in-

J. B. Haws: (13:55)

Yeah. Good catching. That's really important for all of our listeners to know that the church in 2013 published a new printed edition. The vast majority of changes in that printed edition were in section headings of the Doctrine and Covenants because of the Joseph Smith Papers research because of new access to, um, the revelation manuscript books, a lot of dating issues work tweaked, and there were better dates put in. And so you're right, this is why I think it is important for all of our listeners to access the church's website and those historical resources can give you the full layout of why the dating has been changed. April 18, 1829, is, is the best current date now.

Hank Smith: (14:34)

Yeah. Yeah. And I love it. I love it that it's being updated.

J. B. Haws: (14:37)

The revelation becomes so much richer. I think when we think of that timing, that Joseph is waiting for several months to figure out, "How do we get this resolved? How do we fix this?"

Hank Smith: (14:47)

So J.B., when I get into section 10, I mean, I've got, I've got two teenagers and three elementary-aged kids. What do I do with Section 10 to make it come to life? To help them go, "This is how this matters to me."

J. B. Haws:

Yeah, great. I love one of your podcasts with, uh, Tony Sweat. And I loved, I loved Tony's approach of setting the historical context first. And this is one of those places where the historical context, I think just, just makes it come alive because of the story of the anguish and the loss. Uh, everyone can relate to that feeling where you just think, "Ah, I've ruined everything. Can I even come back from this? Is there any chance for me to be part of the Lord's work?" And so, I think I would always start with that to remind everybody, "You can relate to this. This is where Joseph Smith is." And, and then the thing that I, I think, just matters to all of us is the Lord's declaration in section 10, "His wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil."

Hank Smith
And that's verse 43.

J. B. Haws: (15:47)

Yeah. That is something that we can . . . we can build our faith on is that God's wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil and what a reassuring promise. And so I think as we see, one of the things I think Section 10 can do for us is it shows a real-life historical case of how God's foreknowledge, His infinite wisdom, and goodness works together with our agency. It doesn't compromise our agency, but yet still can help us when we've misused our agency, when we've made mistakes, how we can come back, and He can make it right.

John Bytheway: (16:20)

And I'm glad you, you, that verse 43, that you mentioned something that says right in the *Come, Follow Me Manual for Individuals and Families*, "My wisdom, the Lord said to Joseph has greater than the cunning of the devil." And then it adds, "That's a reassuring message in a day like ours when the Adversary's ongoing efforts are to weaken faith and intensifying. Like Joseph, we can be faithful and continue on in the work the Lord has called us to do." And I wanted to mention something that I can't, I mean, I'm hearing 3 Nephi 21, which kind of alludes to Joseph Smith. Right. And it is verbatim. It is exactly the phrase that we're talking about in verse 43. "I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil." That is the exact text in 3 Nephi 21:10. And I'm just wondering, which came first? One was Joseph Smith translating, and did he go, "Whoa, I've heard that before." Yeah. And it's talking about him too, you know?

J. B. Haws: (17:25)

Yeah. John, as usual, you're spot on. These 3 Nephi parallels in Section 10 are one of the . . . one of the reasons why I think careful editors are dating this to the spring of 1829. So that what seems to be happening is that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, they're encountering in the book of Mormon translation, these phrases that are also speaking to Joseph, uh, in, in the, in his current circumstances. I think you're right to sense that these two are coming virtually simultaneously, that he is, the Lord is speaking to Joseph Smith through the translation that he's having in the book of Mormon. And that's what lends some confidence to dating this spring of 1829.

John Bytheway: (18:04)

It's been fun for me to . . .to be in that Section with my students in 3 Nephi 21, and say, look at that phrase and say, "Who do you think this servant is that's going to be marred and stuff?" Who do you think it is talking about? And then to go down the footnotes and see D&C 10 to see the D&C 135 announcing the martyrdom of Joseph Smith and have them . . . kind of connect those dots. There is kind of a that's. . . so I'm glad to know they were almost simultaneous.

J. B. Haws: (18:31)

Yeah, I think that's that . . .that's another good scripture reading tool. You're, you're very good at this, and this is worth highlighting. Pay attention to those kinds of cross-reference connections between the scriptures to see how this interplay is happening, that the doctrine comes . . . is coming as Joseph Smith is during all of these other projects, like the transition of the book.

Hank Smith: (18:49)

Uh, there's a lot of Book Mormon language in Section 10. Um, you've got the "other sheep I have" that's 3 Nephi, right? I've got 3 Nephi with, "I will gather them as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings." That's what? 3 Nephi 10? 3 Nephi 9. You've got Helaman 5:12, right there, "Built upon my rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them." There's the idea of contention from 3 Nephi, Chapter 11. The people are in "Contention on the points of my doctrine." One thing I think I might do, uh, with my children, as I, as I look at this Section is . . . there's oftentimes in this section, the word hearts comes up in verse 10. It says, "Satan has put it into their hearts to alter the word which you have caused to be written." So he's talking about the manuscript.

Hank Smith: (19:34)

There you go to verse 13, "He has put it in their hearts to do this through lying. For behold, he has to put it into their hearts to attempt thee . . . to get thee, to tempt the Lord, thy God." That's a . . . 15, 16. "They say and think in their hearts, we will see if God has given him power to translate." Verse 20, "Satan has great hold upon their hearts." Verse 21, "Their hearts are corrupt." Verse 24, "Their hearts are filled with anger." I think this could be a good thing either with students or with my own children to say, "Okay, let's talk about hearts. And then let's go into this Section and look at what the Lord has to say about hearts." And maybe talk about, "What does it feel like to have your heart stirred in anger? For your heart to be corrupt?" I think that there's one later on about the "hardness of their hearts," in verse 53. So to me, there's . . . there might be a theme of the Adversary's work is to get to your heart and to . . . to change the way . . . you change the way you feel and see the world and see the work of God. Anything else in Section 10, John, J.B., that you guys are seeing that we could point out?

J. B. Haws: (20:37)

I love this focus on the hearts, uh, good stuff. And I think what you said right there at the end, Hank. This is something I think Section 10 offers us is a glimpse into how the Adversary works. So, not only Section 10 has a lot to say about the nature of God. Uh, His foreknowledge is infinite wisdom, his ability to . . . to turn all things for our good, even things that we think are disastrously, you know, over. But it says something about how the Adversary works. And I think it's this . . . this is also something that . . . that I think all of our families can feel. We're all in

situations where we can feel this. So something jumps out at me about what the Lord reveals about the plot that's going on. So . . . so he tells Joseph, "You're not going to retranslate those pages because there's a plot afoot to discredit you."

J. B. Haws: (21:24)

But the interesting thing is to look at the antecedents of what this plot is. So if you look at like, for example, verse 25, what's Satan doing? Well, he's saying to these conspirators, "To them deceive and lie and wait to catch that you may destroy. And thus, he flatters them." And who's the them? It's the conspirators. "And tell them that it is no sin to lie, that they may catch a man in a lie that they may destroy him." So Satan has convinced the conspirators, "Hey, you're doing a good thing because it's okay to lie to catch this liar in a lie." But then this next verse is so revealing about Satan. "And thus, he flattereth them and lead them along until he dragged their souls down to hell." The "them" and the "their" are the conspirators. So Satan is doing all this, "To drag their souls down to hell."

J. B. Haws (22:17)

And the thing that I think is just so revealing here is that Satan wants everyone to be miserable. And so he may, he may have swayed these conspirators--convinced them that they're doing a good thing. But in reality, what he's really doing is he's dragging their souls down to Hell. And I think where this might hit us, some of us at home is that sometimes we . . . we get caught up in that philosophy that the end justifies the means. And Section 10 is this, this strong reminder. The ends doesn't justify the means because you may end up, you know, feeling your own soul being dragged down. Think about times when we might find ourselves saying in a sporting event, "Well if they're going to play dirty, I'm going to play dirty." Or we might say, "My boss is underpaying me. So it's okay if I fudge a little on my hours. Someone spreads a rumor about me on social media. So it's only fair play to spread a rumor about them. I mean, if we're going to play hardball, I'm going to play hardball." And . . . and all of a sudden, we hear this Section 10 echoing, you know, that . . . that all, Satan's flattering us to say, "It's okay to lie to catch someone in a lie. But what he's really doing is dragging our souls down to him."

Hank Smith: (23:30)

Yeah. The Lord says in verse 28, "Wo, be into him that lies to deceive because he supposes that another is lying to deceive." So these conspirators are like, "Well, this guy, Joseph Smith, he's a terrible person. I've got to lie to take down, and it's okay. It's okay that I'm doing this." Well, I don't. . . I don't like that verse because it really cuts to my heart because I think there are times where I think, "You know, oh well, they're, they're so awful and terrible . . . It's. . . I . . . you know what they deserve it." And the Lord is saying, "Whoa, watch out! Warning! This is not okay!"

That's a great insight.

J. B. Haws:

I hear you, Hank. I think whenever, whenever I find myself wanting to justify . . .

Hank Smith:

Justify is the word . . .

J. B. Haws:

-justify my means because I think I'm somehow, I'm somehow heading for a noble end. And this is a kind of Section that can call me up short. to say that I'm playing right into the Adversary's game plan

John Bytheway: (24:22)

And J.B., I love what you're saying about Satan still. It's not like they're pals with Satan now. He's still going to drag them down to hell. And it reminds me, I put in my margin that verse 26 sounds a lot like the very last verse in the Korihor story: Alma 30:60. And kind of a couple of "thus we sees." And also, it reminds me of isn't Alma and Amulek that say to Zeezrom, "This was the plan of thine adversary?" And I've always looked at that word, not the Adversary, but he's against you, too, Zeezrom. And he's going to take you down, too, Zeezrom. And the cool thing about Zeezrom is all of a sudden, his gotcha questions--and this whole thing is a gotcha. Zeezrom, his gotcha questions become sincere. So it's good for Zeezrom. Another thing I thought was cool is in verse 45, here, they set up this plot.

Hank Smith: (25:11)

They stole the manuscript, and it worked. And the final product ends up being better. Look at verse 45, "There are many things engraven and upon the plates of Nephi." He's telling him, "Go get, instead of the book of Lehi, go get Nephi's account, "Which do throw greater views upon my gospel." I thought, "You try and mess it up, and it ends up being better!" And that . . . kind of can . . . go back to how we teach our kids. "Hey, listen, His wisdom is greater. And so just make sure your life's okay with . . . with God, all the things you'll go through, but God can even turn those things that go badly and make them better for you. And for . . .for all of us."

Hank Smith: (25:52)

That's really great, John. And I wonder if Nephi is pretty proud of, "Yeah, that's right." . . . that moment-

John Bytheway: (25:59)

"Well, thank you. Yeah. I . . .I threw some greater views on the gospel."

Hank Smith: (26:03)

-Nephi and Jacob high five up there, "Yeah, that's right that was us."

J. B. Haws:

I think this Section also, I have found it really powerful to address what can kind of become like pop theology that . . . that also can be bad theology. And I think in harm, harmful theology. Sometimes one of the themes that I think we hear a lot, and sometimes all of us are tempted to say, is "Everything happens for a reason." And I think sometimes, that's kind of pop fatalism to say, what people sometimes mean is, "Everything happens because God wants it to happen." And so if we say, "Everything happens for a reason," and we mean, "Everything happens

because it's got part of God's plan," then that's false doctrine. I think that's really potentially harmful doctrine. If we say, "Everything happens for a reason, and sometimes those reasons are because I'm dumb and I sin-

Hank Smith:

-an I make bad choices-

J. B. Haws:

-and I'm. . . I make mistakes." Yeah, then it works. But we can't miss that part--that everything happens because God wants it to happen. That's false doctrine.

John Bytheway: (26:56)

God did not want them to sin and lie and deceive.

J. B. Haws: (27:00)

Bingo. And God didn't want Martin and Joseph to lose 116 pages. He warned them against it, but he allows agency. But here's the part that I think can be so redemptive about this Section. It is because if we, first of all, come to grips with the fact that God did not want this to happen, but that, as Hank said, "This is a miracle two and a half millennia in the making." God still can work all things together for our good. He doesn't want us to sin. He doesn't want us to make bad choices, but when we return to Him and repent, He still can turn all things through our good and can still make the end result better--something greater than . . . than it would be without God. He's that kind of God, a God of the silver linings. He's that powerful.

John Bytheway: (27:44)

And it's something else that the manual says is, "To look for the 'I ams' and the 'I wills.'" And I'm looking now on my ancient paper scriptures at 30 or 50 57, 58, 59. And: I am, I am, I am. 60, 61 62. I've underlined: I will, I will, I will. And so, we're seeing here's man's plans--evil plans being frustrated. But we're teaching our children. "Hey, we can rely on God." Look, look how He's restating the end, "Hey, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Son of God. I came to my own and the light to shine in the darkness. I am He who said other sheep I have" [which Hank mentioned]. And then, "I will show," "I will bring," and "I will also bring," and "This will I do that I may establish my gospel." So, it's kind of our Martin, Joseph, "This is my church. I've got this and rely on me and listen to what I say." I love it.

Hank Smith: (28:41)

That's a fun tension, J.B that I think we need to be . . . that's a . . . it's a spiritual sense of spiritual maturity that, "My wisdom is greater than the cutting of the devil" or your mistakes Joseph! "My wisdom is greater than your mistakes, but I don't want you to make these mistakes." If there's a difference between God planned on him making this mistake, and God wanted us to make this mistake. And he tells him, "I don't want you to . . . to be, you know, conquered by this." He says, "Pray, always that you may conquer . . . that you may conquer Satan and escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work." So the idea is

the Lord is saying, "My wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil. I want your wisdom to become greater than the cunning of the devil."

J. B. Haws:
Yeah.

Hank Smith: (29:26)

"But I want you to pray always, so you can have that same sense about you." I love the tension there between the "God knew I was going to make a mistake and He's going to . . . He's going to help me make it right." Versus "God wanted me to make that mistake," or . . . or . . .you know, "designed for me to make that mistake." And all of a sudden. . . . "I'm not, I don't have to do anything." Weren't saying, "Well, I want you to . . . I want you to pray always." And how do I do that? How do you pray always? Obviously, the Lord doesn't mean I'm kneeling by my bedside always. So what does that phrase mean?

J. B. Haws: (29:55)

-I can't wait to hear what both of you have to say, but I love what Elder Bednar thought. Um, probably many of us remember when he suggested in Conference about the way he thinks about his morning and evening prayers working together. But he sort of . . . he sort of starts the day in this morning prayer with a plea for help and a commitment to be in tune with the spirit and to be listening. And then he sort of sees his evening prayers as kind of these moments of accountability and reflection on the day. And there's. . . I think there's something about that attitude that we see our start and end of our days, bookended by prayer in a way that we are cognizant. We're. . . we're thinking . . . we're conscious of the fact that we're always looking to God for help and for wisdom . . . that we see that as both a plea for help. And then in a reporting reflection in a plea to do better the next day.

Hank Smith: (30:44)

There's a temple theme there of, "I'm going to spiritually prepare my day." Yeah. And that, you know, spiritually . . . plan it spiritually. See it, and then I'm going to go out and physically do it. Then, I'm going to come back and return and report on how close the spiritual plan and the actual doings lined up together. And I like that idea, that then every prayer is connected, and it's a pray always . . . it's, by definition, I'm praying always because my prayers are a constant part of my day.

John Bytheway: (31:18)

I was just thinking of the idea of having, uh, always a prayer in your heart. We're not talking about kneeling down all day, but I'm thinking of Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof that was having this constant dialogue with the Lord. And, and uh, I think we all do that. I think we see things or apply, "I'm grateful for that." And, and, uh, you'll see something else. And if the Lord is the only one who knows your thoughts, I always, I feel like you are praying all the time, in a way.

Hank Smith: (31:46)

I was going to add one other thing from Section 10. Uh, the word destroy comes up a lot. I, you know, I look for these little patterns and, uh, you can see it in, in verse six. Uh, "They have sought to destroy you. They seek to destroy your gift, Joseph." In verse seven, verse 19, "We will destroy him." "They lie in wait to destroy." I think John, you've taught me this. There's a poem about it's so much easier to destroy something than it is to build something. Do you remember?

Speaker 3: (32:19)

Yeah. "The Builder and the Wrecker," it's not original with me, but uh, um, let's see.

I passed one day through a lonely town,

and saw some man tearing a building down.

With a "heave" and "ho" and a husky yell,

they swung a beam, and a sidewall fell.

I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled?

The type you'd hire if you had to build?"

"Oh no," he chuckled, "Oh no indeed,

the common laborer's all I need.

Why I can destroy in a day or two,

what builders have taken weeks to do."

I thought to myself as I walked away,

which of these roles have I tried to play.

Am I a builder, who works with care,

making his tools a ruler and square.

Shaping my peers to a well-made plan,

helping them be the best they can.

Or am I a wrecker who walks around,

content with the labor of tearing down.

Hank Smith: (33:00)

Wow. I did not know if you . . . if you would have had that memorized.

John Bytheway: (33:05)

-that was from the first talk I ever gave him in the Nineties-

Hank Smith: (33:09)

-the 19-hundreds! That's probably-

John Bytheway:

-it was the 1890s.

Hank Smith:

-destroying something is not a sign of intellect--being able to criticize someone or take them down or point out flaws in people. We often see that you know, online is . . . "Wow, I'm so smart. Look at all the ways I can point out the problems." Where the Lord is so busy building and doing the careful, difficult work of building. Where Satan is doing the easy work of destroying. And I just want to say this, and I'll hand it over to you to verse 33, the Lord tells Joseph Smith, "Satan

thinking to overpower your testimony." He's still doing it today. I would say to my teenage friends, "Don't . . . don't be overly concerned when someone's trying to destroy Joseph Smith, because it . . . it's going to happen until the Lord comes again. Satan is going to try to destroy Joseph's gifts--his work, uh, everything he's about to do." And we gotta be . . . I don't want him to say, "We gotta be okay with that," but that's gotta be something where we go, "Oh yeah, that's prophecy fulfilled."

John Bytheway: (34:20)

We've used that verse . . . our kids have heard about the war in heaven. I love to ask, "Well, what were our weapons? Did we have a spiritual F-16? What do we fight with?" They are usually a little puzzled because you can't kill a spirit. We're immortal beings. So how does this work? We eventually come up, you know, get to the Book of Revelation. "They overcame by the blood of the lamb," which is amazing since the Savior hadn't sacrificed his life yet. "By the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Rev 12:22). Oh, our testimony of Christ was the weapon. And that's what Satan will seek to overpower in Joseph. And in, in all of us, J.B. pointed out the pronouns. When we're talking about them, the enemies look in verse 48. "This was their faith--" he is talking about the Nephites who produced the record, "that my gospel, which I gave unto them that they might preach in their days, might come into their brethren the Lamanites, and also that all that had become Lamanites because of their dissensions. Now, this is not all--their faith in their prayers was that this gospel should be made known also, if it were possible that other nations should possess this land" (D&C 10:48-49).

And I was reminded of Enos's prayer. I always make my students look at the order of the things that he has prayed for. Do you remember what though? The first thing he prayed for was himself, himself. Right? Next-

Hank Smith:

--family,

John Bytheway:

--my brethren, the Nephites. And the Lord doesn't really tell him. The Lord's like, "Oh, I'll do with them what I promised." And, and then he prays for who the Lamanites and the Lord is more positive. "Yeah, I'm going to take care of the Lamanites." And then he prays for the records. And I just put Enos in the footnote here. Because I thought this, "Is he's answering the prayer of Enos that "I'm going to preserve that record. And it is going to go forth to the Lamanites and to anybody that possesses this land." I thought that's the answer to Enos there. So-

Hank Smith: (36:28)

I love that, John. I can almost hear the Lord saying, "I made a promise. Yeah and I intend to keep it."

John Bytheway:

And I'm sure Enos wasn't the only one, but that's just kind of stuck out.

J.B. Haws: (36:36)

Amen. I think that's such a great thing. I think you both underscored that so well, I mean, it's just a reminder that that Section 1 proclamation, "When I, the Lord have spoken, I've spoken and the . . . shall all be fulfilled." You know, "these prophecies and promises will be fulfilled." And I think that attention to the, to the promises with the records. So yeah, well said to both of you.

Hank Smith:

I'm grateful God keeps his promises.

J. B. Haws:

This verse 21 is really interesting to me. And this might go back to Hank, your thought about how do we pray always? This is again talking about the conspirators that are having this plot. "Their hearts are corrupt, and full of wickedness and abominations; and they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; therefore they will not ask of me." And I'm not even quite sure how to articulate this. But this has just . . . been . . . this one's just been jumping off the page at me that I think sometimes again, we, we, if we're not careful, we might, we might say that the conspirators are them, uh, rather than us. But sometimes, I wonder if this is also us that . . . do I find myself resistant about asking the Lord because I don't want the answer? Or that I, that I am, I don't really want to humble myself and, and face that perhaps there are some things that need to change. And that's such an interesting phrase. "They will not ask of me." The problem with the conspirators. They just refuse to find out. Could it be possible that Joseph Smith really is a prophet? They wouldn't even find out. They wouldn't even ask that because . . . and so this idea of asking myself, do I love light and darkness? And am I willing to humble myself to pray that? I wonder if that's part of this praying always attitude that I'm willing to humble myself that way.

Hank Smith:

Uh, I hate to admit this, but there are times where I've thought to myself, "I don't want to go into that spiritual place because I know what I'm going to hear, and it's going to hurt. And so I'll just avoid it. I'll go distract myself with a good season of Netflix or something, you know, because I . . . I'm like, "I know what the Lord's going say. Uh, and I don't. . . it's going to hurt." Right? I've told, I've told the youth that I've spoken to before. "How many of you have felt guilty and felt that sting?" And I have. "How many of you have tried to avoid that and get away from that?" And I, sometimes I do this with my own self, and I'd encourage all of our listeners to do this. Just let it sting for a moment. Right? Just let it just sit in it for a moment instead of avoiding it. Let it sting. Let that guilt hit you because, then if you'll just let that sit for a minute, you'll hear the end of the Section. "I am Jesus Christ. I am the light, which shineth in the darkness."

John Bytheway (39:10)

I am. I will. I will. I will.

Hank Smith: (39:12)

That comfort could come, but you got to face the music, right? That's verse 21.

J. B. Haws: (39:16)

It's beautiful. That's another way that praying always can help us come off conquer--to conquer that tendency. Yeah, that's beautiful.

John Bytheway: (39:23)

The Church has not been formally organized, you know, in Fayette. I know that Carl Anderson would say that largely the church was organized in Kirtland. That verse 67, "Behold, this is my doctrine--whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church" (D&C 10:67).

--That is a large definition of church, and there are a lot of people who love Jesus that are trying to follow Him throughout the world. I wondered if you could respond to it. What's the definition of a church at this time or throughout the scriptures. J.B.?

J. B. Haws: (39:55)

I think you're right. I think this should expand our idea. Or, or maybe another way of saying it is . . . it should give us a sense that church can have multiple meanings. And so this is a pre-formal organization of the Church of Christ, April 6, 1830. And I wonder if this also has some resonance for 1 Nephi 13-14. As the way, we think about there are two churches. Our own Stephen Robinson's great comment that "This is not about membership records, this is about who has your heart."

John Bytheway: (40:22)

Who has your records? Who has your heart? Yeah, let's give the reference, find the article called, "Warring Against the Saints of God" by Stephen Robinson, and it's a commentary on 1 Nephi 13 and 14, which is Nephi's vision of Lehi's dream in . . . in greater detail. And it's such a great resource.

J. B. Haws: (40:41)

-Such a great reference. . . I'm. . . and that was impressive again, John--Not writing poems but just have that off the top of your head.

John Bytheway: (40:48)

Well, in my class, I do it. So don't be impressed, please.

Speaker 4: (40:51)

No, I still am impressed. It makes me think of the Orson Whitney quote, that Ezra Taft Benson also quoted, "That the work of God is bigger than just we, as Latter-day Saint people can do, And He is using good people all over the earth and they are our partners," in this sense. And I think we, that expansive definition of church and that of God's working with all good people, fits really well with where Section 10 is. And I think it fits really well with a Latter-day Saint cosmology, the way we think of the universe, and the way we think of Postmortal preaching in the Spirit World. And that all good people who are working toward God can be used by God and can be influenced by him and are part of work--His Church.

Hank Smith: (41:34)

One last thing in section 10, in verse 63, it says, "The Lord says, "They do wrest the scriptures and do not understand them." As a reader of scripture, I might not know what that means. "They do wrest the scriptures."

J. B. Haws: (41:47)

Yeah, I think there are maybe a couple of examples that we could think about. Maybe this comes back to our idea of justification against self-justifying. If we use the scriptures, we twist them. We manipulate them to fit a definition that, that, that makes us feel better about ourselves or that contradicts some aspect of God's gospel--that creates . . . introduces confusion. An example that maybe comes to mind is, uh, what . . . how Jacob really rebuked the men of his time, who were using David and Solomon as justification for committing whoredoms and, and he rebuked them for wresting the scriptures that way that they were, they were twisting, justifying manipulating the scriptures.

Another good example might be Doctrine and Covenants 74 when the Lord helps clarify a 1 Corinthians passage that had for a long time been used to justify infant baptism. This was read wrong. It was wrested in a way to change the, uh, an ordinance, a practice, and to justify it as, as, as people were reading it, reading too much into it.

Hank Smith: (42:48)

Okay. So if I . . . if I were to define this term, it's using the scriptures to justify behaviors that I, I know . . . you know, that probably deep down, um, I know are not, they're out of The Strength of Satan pamphlet that I should not be doing yet, but I can find it in the scriptures, right. Relate them and justify it.

Speaker 4: (43:09)

It might be done by being . . . ripping it out of context or to, um, reading something into it. Sometimes, I think they could even be done in a well-meaning way, but where you're forgetting the whole of the scriptures. You're focusing too much on one verse in isolation and not seeing how this could work in the overall tapestry of what the gospel is. Some ways that that might be the more tendency for us.

John Bytheway: (43:31)

I think for people listening, they might hear the word wrest and not know this has a w in front of it. This is rest with the W--this is wrestle. This is wrestling. And I'm going to, I have a son who's wrestling in his high school right now, and he attacks me daily and tries to . . . tries to twist me and bend me in places I just don't want to go. And so when I think of, when I see wrest, I think that's the first syllable of wrestle. I'm going to wrestle with the scriptures and make them conform and pin them down to what I want them to mean. Wow,

J. B. Haws: (44:06)

-That's very good.

Hank Smith:

That's a great analogy.

Hank Smith: (44:08)

That is a perfect analogy.

John Bytheway:

Takedown!

Hank Smith:

So this is from February of 1978. This is a First Presidency Statement.

J. B. Haws:

Beautiful.

Hank Smith:

It says, "The great religious leaders of the world such as Mohammed, Confucius, and the Reformers, as well as philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and others, received a portion of God's light. Moral truths were given to them by God to enlighten whole nations and to individuals." Now, listen to this last piece, that almost sounds like an Article of Faith. "We believe that God has given, and will give to all people sufficient knowledge to help them on their way to eternal salvation." We've always had this view of . . . There are others outside of the church who receive inspiration from God to help others, uh, on their way to eternal life. Oh, I love this idea.

John Bytheway (44:59)

Yes, outside of our formal church organization, that could also be in the Lord's Church. I mean, Section 18. Is it verse 20 that says, "Contend against no church, save it, be the Church of the devil." Which tells us what? Don't contend against good. You know, there's a church of the devil out there, and there's a broader church of God. That's a fun one to ponder and wrestle . . . wrestle. Haha. Wrestle and to think about.

Hank Smith (45:24)

--J.B., you are, you're, you're part of the religious outreach program at BYU. So the idea that we're all on the same team here is a big part of your message.

J. B. Haws: (45:37)

Yeah. And you know, and I would say . . . also for all of us to pay attention to this, keep this in the back of our heads when we come to Section 35, what the Lord says to Sidney Rigdon. Sidney Rigdon, you know, how the Lord really praises him as a . . . as a John the Baptist sort of figure. And, uh, preparing the way. And I think there's just something powerful in thinking more broadly, uh, about God's working with his children and inspired people who, who love him and are, are operating, working with His Spirit--following and trying to bring more and more people to him as that great quote. You shared hang coming, that there they're lifting whole nations. I love that. That idea. Yeah.

Speaker 3: (46:17)

And this, this is a great-

I hope it gives our listeners something to do when they're confronted with 1 Nephi, "There are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, the church of the devil" (1 Nephi 14:10). And this is . . . that's okay. That's one verse, but let's look at all the verses that refer to a church. Let's, let's look at that statement of Hank. And I think I like what you said, J.B, "that there . . . that there could be multiple meanings. Like there are so many times in the scriptures with certain words." And that that helps us to have a charitable spirit as we look at what this could be.

Hank Smith (46:51)

They all mean, uh, excellent. Uh, man, I just really liked that. We could talk about . . . we can talk about this forever. That was . . . it has to be one of the things as we've heard in other, in previous podcasts, John, is that one thing that really bothered the Smiths was the idea that people told them because Alvin wasn't part of the right church. He's going to hell forever. Uh, and yet we can kind of get caught up into that. My church is true. Your church is . . . therefore, your church is false.

John Bytheway: (47:19)

All true. All false. That's a false dichotomy. It's this, or it's this. Yeah.

J. B. Haws (47:25)

And I'm really grateful that our Latter-day Saint leaders have been emphasizing recently, uh, in, in some very public proclamations, reminding people what Joseph Smith said about religious liberty and religious tolerance. And the kind of city ordinances they put in place in Nauvoo welcoming people of all faiths and Joseph Smith saying that he has been proven that he's willing to die for Latter-day Saint. He's just as willing to die for, uh, a Presbyterian or a Catholic. And that kind of generous heart that fits, I think, with the prophet of the Restoration. And it fits with what we're hearing in these revelations about the way God views His children. I love that generous spirit. I think that's part of the, part of the arithmetic of the Restoration.

Hank Smith: (48:08)

When I personally think of the church of the devil, I don't think of any church really at all. I think of the pornography industry making more than major league baseball, the NBA, and the NFL combined. That's what we contend against. That's what we're fighting again.

John Bytheway: (48:20)

It's what Steven Robinson, in that article, calls it, "The Great and Abominable." He uses the definition. And it may be in this chapter; it's historical. But in this chapter, it's typological. 1 Nephi 13 is historical. 1 Nephi 5:14 is more like all disassociated, evil, united against what God hates. That's, I think, how he defines it there. I listen to Christian radio all the time. And I'm just so many times I'm driving, thinking, "I'm so grateful that these folks are there. I'm sorry sometimes they misunderstand what I think, but I'm so glad that there are so many good people like this.

John Bytheway (48:55)

Please join us for Part II of this podcast.

Speaker 3: (48:59)

Join us for part two of this podcast.