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Episode 12 Part II : Dr. Kerry Muhlestein

Doctrine and Covenants 27-28

- Hank Smith: 00:02 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast. Now, let's jump into what you said about Ephesians.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 00:10 And again, I see this as tying in and I don't know that we need to spend a long time on this, but he's got this beautiful bunch of verses about girding up your loins and taking on the breastplate of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace and helmet of salvation and sword of my spirit. All of this is really coming right from Ephesians, but the interesting thing is, and again, convenience on my brain but I'm going to feel okay about it because you told me I could-
- Hank Smith: 00:35 You could.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 00:37 ... promises in the covenant include words like I will be your shield. I will be your protector. I think the idea is that protection is one of the blessings promised to Israel. If we're going to look or those blessings, it's one of the blessings promised. Again, I see this as a logical transition. We're talking about the covenant and the keys of the Kingdom that have been committed as part of this, and as a result, I want you to gird up and be ready, both to be protected but to go out and do the battle that will bring other people into that protection. A cohesive section, I think, that helps us understand what God wants us to do and how it's tied into the sacrament and doing the sacrament with an eye signal to his glory.
- John Bytheway: 01:22 I cannot equate the Armor of God with the sacrament because I think of the precept there saying that they may always have his Spirit to be with them, and I think of the sword of the spirit and how we go and we rearm every time we go to the sacrament table. And as my mind is racing here, I'm thinking about looking back to the sacrament table like it's an altar, the body and the blood of Christ, looking forward as if the sacrament table is a table of communion where we will have a sacrament meeting again with Christ as we've just talked about. I see it both as a table and an altar.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	02:03	That works because anciently, often sacred meals were associated with sacrifices and the idea is that this is a communion. You enter into this together. I think it's intended to be understood that way.
John Bytheway:	02:14	I love it and I used to tell my Ward when I was a Bishop that it says in the handbook we shouldn't have visual aides for sacrament meeting, but there is a visual aide and it's bolted right there to the floor. And every week that you come in, you have a visual aide of the Savior's mercy and his love and his sacrifice for us. And I just think, how do you miss this visual aide? We are let in at Christmas and Easter. It's right there every single week, and how beautiful and merciful that is that the Lord would say, "Come back. Let's do this again."
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	02:51	And I think it does give us that protecting power. It's talking about and that you talked about, that covenant renewal-
Hank Smith:	02:57	The sword and the spirit.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	02:58	... gives us both the sword and the spirit, but just protection.
Hank Smith:	03:01	Yeah.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	03:03	Renewing that covenant is protection.
Hank Smith:	03:06	This is amazing to me because here's Joseph on his way to get some wine. He's like, "We've got to get some wine." And the Lord's going, "Okay, yeah, wine. The wine's important." Actually, let's talk about the reason we do all this-
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	03:19	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	03:19	... and I like what you said, Kerry, because I had never tied in the armor of God with the covenant, but it's almost says if the Lord is saying we're going to restore the Gospel, we're going to restore the covenant, and we're going to gather Israel, and it's going to be a battle. So, put on your armor with the sacrament. Put on your armor, take on your covenants and be ready. This spiritual protection that comes. Man, this, to me, is a beautiful section. What's funny is I see these sections one way and then we talk about them, and now I'm like, "This is the best section ever." This one is the best one.
Hank Smith:	04:00	I just always like to picture Joseph when he gets home to Emma and Emma says, "So, where's the wine?" This happens to me all the time. I sent you out to get some, where's the wine? But he's

got a good excuse and he says, "Well, I met someone. Let's talk about this."

John Bytheway: 04:12 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 04:13 "Let's talk." Great family conversation.

John Bytheway: 04:17 Why not finish this. What did happen? Did they go back? Did they finish the meeting?

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 04:22 Sounds like it.

John Bytheway: 04:22 Did they get confirmed? Were they able to take the sacrament?

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 04:26 They made grape juice. They made it right there, so it clearly ends up not being fermented. Sometimes we say wine, when it talks about in the scriptures, is not fermented. No, they used fermented wine many times after this as well. So, that's not what it is. But in this case, they just squeeze some grapes right then, made their own grape juice, and they did the whole thing.

Hank Smith: 04:46 That's so fantastic. I've often thought in the Gospel of John when The Savior has his talk with the woman at the well. He was preparing the world for a sacrament that uses water because he calls himself living water. I often think that was just squeezed in there because, yes, we're going to use wine for a while, but we're going to use water because it mattereth not, like you said. Oh, and by the way, that is a great symbol of me. Look at John chapter four.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 05:17 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 05:17 I've got it all prepped.

John Bytheway: 05:19 In John chapter seven, living water and then is it in Alma somewhere who talks about partaking of the bread and waters of life freely? And I've always thought, ooh, is that an allusion to the sacrament right there?

Hank Smith: 05:29 Right.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 05:30 Yeah. Yep.

Hank Smith: 05:31 For those of you listening who wonder why we get so excited, this is our idea of a good time, just so you know.

John Bytheway: 05:39 If you're going, "Wow."

Hank Smith:	05:40	This is why our kids think we're strange. It really is. "Dad, can't we just finish the chapter?" I'm like, "No, no, no. This is amazing. You're going to want to see this." It reminds me of Alex Baugh. He's going to come on the podcast soon saying to his kids, "That is where Wilford Woodruff was ordained an Apostle. You put your hand on that, I'm going to take a picture." We as dad's get so excited about these things, but they're exciting. Once you catch the vision of Section 27, once it clicks its exciting stuff. The covenant is exciting. You can see why President Nelson is so excited.
Hank Smith:	06:17	How old is President Nelson and here he is still so excited about the Abraham at Covenant?
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	06:23	You can feel it when he talks.
John Bytheway:	06:25	The greatest work you could ever be involved in.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	06:29	Yeah. You shouldn't take those kinds of words lightly.
John Bytheway:	06:32	He uses really strong words, doesn't he, when he talks about it.
Hank Smith:	06:35	I think at one point he said to the youth in that youth meeting with Sister Nelson, he said, "This ought to be the most important part of your life. This ought to be the most important part of your life." To me, like you said, Kerry, we can't miss that.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	06:53	Yeah. You can't let those words fall to the ground, as it were.
Hank Smith:	06:56	Let's move into Section 28, Kerry. The heading tells us that a church member by the name of Hiram Page, who we've heard of before, he's one of the Eight Witnesses that we talked about. He claimed to be receiving revelation from a certain stone, which we've talked about Joseph Smith's stones here before, but for the entire church, and it seems like the Whitmer's, who I believe Hiram Page was a member of the Whitmer family-
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	07:21	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	07:22	... I think he had influence the Whitmer's including Oliver Cowdery, who was also a member of the-
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	07:27	Or about to become one.
Hank Smith:	07:28	Is he not married yet?
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	07:30	Not quite yet.

Hank Smith:	07:31	Okay. Explain to us what was happening and what led up to this revelation.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	07:37	There are so many fascinating things here, but you're right. They've been in harmony with Emma's family and things are getting dicey there. There's a lot of persecution. That's why they couldn't do the confirmation and so on. There's a lot of tough stuff going on there. And even Emma's father and mother are no longer still thrilled with having them there, and they're not able to shield them as much. So, they're thinking of going back to Fayette and that's where they decide to have... And Fayette's where they lived and finished translating The Book of Mormon and so on, but that's where they're going to have this conference.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	08:08	They're going back for this second conference. The first one in April, this one's in September. As they get there, they've heard about this stuff that Hiram Page, he's been receiving through this stone some inspiration revelations, particular about Zion. And as you said, Hiram Page has married one of the Whitmer daughters. Oliver Cowdery will soon marry a Whitmer daughter, I think about a year and half later, somewhere in that range, but he has become very good friends with the Whitmer's. The Whitmer's are a key family in the church and that's why they're all part of the Eight Witnesses and that's why Hiram is because he's the brother-in-law and so on, and I don't think Hiram has any bad intents here. The fact of the matter is the church is still figuring out what's going on. Like you said, this is the four month old church. This is the little baby church trying to figure out what's going on.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	09:06	It's so wonderful to have the principle of revelation restored and inherent in there, and we still get this today, we preach this, everyone should be receiving revelation, everybody. And in fact, the way Moses puts it is he wishes that everyone in Israel would be a prophet. And it's interesting because in the days of Moses they actually have the same problem. Revelation is restored. Things are going for them right and Moses is the prophet receiving revelation. He tells everyone be a priest. Everyone receive revelation. Aaron and Miriam come to him and say, "Hey, we receive revelation. You're taking too much upon yourselves," and God has to set that right. A little while later, Korah and a bunch of Levites say, "Hey, we receive revelation. You're taking too much upon yourselves." It seems to be inherent this idea that once revelation is restored and the idea that we should all receive revelation, that we all start receiving them for everyone in every sort of way. And then God has to say, "Hang on. Personal revelation is for you. I need some

kind of order in my church or in my kingdom. So, we can't have everyone receiving revelation for everybody else. We're going to have a structure where this works." And I don't think you can blame anyone for not getting that until God teaches it.

- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 10:25 God could have taught it at the very beginning and he didn't. Now, I can't read God's mind, but I just make the assumption it's because he doesn't want to quash the idea that people should receive personal revelation.
- John Bytheway: 10:37 Oh, wow.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 10:37 He wants to encourage that idea.
- John Bytheway: 10:39 Yeah.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 10:39 He just doesn't want them to say that they can all receive it for the whole church. And that's really what Section 28 is about is establishing how revelation works organizationally for the entire church, which is separate from how revelation works for you as an individual.
- John Bytheway: 10:59 I love that he brings up Moses. What do you think that means, Kerry, that Joseph, let's see, at the end of verse two, Joseph Smith Jr. "For he receiveth them even as Moses." He's better at it or what does that mean exactly?
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 11:16 I think, again, we want to look at the context because this is hot on the heels. In June, he's gotten Moses Chapter One, which expands your view of who Moses is. This is Moses who has a vision where he sees every soul on earth and has this deep communion with God, and then Satan comes and he has a tussle with Satan, and then Satan leaves, and Moses has a more comprehensive vision of seeing every soul and every particle on earth. After Moses Chapter one, you have a different understanding of Moses than you did before that, and they've just received that. I don't know that everyone has read it, but I'm convinced that lots of people know Joseph has received it and that some people have had the chance to read. So, they've got a new conception of what it means for Moses to be a prophet.
- John Bytheway: 12:05 I have never connected that before that... Ah, that's so cool that Moses is brought up here and the just received the Book of Moses and maybe some have even read Moses Chapter One, which is amazing.

Hank Smith:	12:18	Let's make sure that everybody understands this, Kerry, that the Book of Moses is Joseph Smith's.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	12:24	Yeah. He's going through the Bible and it's Genesis.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	12:27	Basically the JST of Genesis.
Hank Smith:	12:29	However, Moses One is brand new. Can you just explain where the Book of Moses, its structure, where it comes from and how it's connected to the JST?
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	12:39	Yeah. I would say Moses One is the preface to Genesis like Section One is the preface to the Doctrine of Covenants. Somewhere in that same time period that Joseph receives the vision of Moses, as he calls it, that will eventually be compiled in what we call the Book of Moses; but somewhere in there as he receives it, he's also told to go and translate The Bible. We don't know if he has that vision and then is told now go translate The Bible or if he's told to translate The Bible and then the next step is this and then so on. But he does immediately after that start to sit down with an English copy of The Bible to go through and correct it and made additions to it by inspiration and that's when he's going to get what we call Moses Two, Three, Four. All of those are the Joseph Smith translation of The Bible.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	13:27	The Book of Moses is what we call it the Joseph Smith translation. He called it the New Translation. Other's call it the Inspired version. The Book of Moses is the Joseph Smith translation of the first several chapters of Genesis. And it had so much new material that it doesn't work as an appendix or a footnote. It was so much new material he published it in the church's newspaper and then eventually that gets compiled into a booklet called The Pearl of Great Price that eventually becomes the scripture The Pearl of Great Price. Really all it is, I say all it is that makes it sound like it's not much, it's amazing in a ton, but we understand it best if we understand this is the Joseph Smith translation of Genesis and Moses One is the preface.
Hank Smith:	14:11	That's wonderful, and I want to remind our listeners of something. Do you remember Dr. Janice Johnson said about translation. She said because when you hear that word that you don't automatically assume translation because this is Joseph taking it from English to English.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	14:25	And giving it something that wasn't there in the first place-

Hank Smith:	14:27	Right.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	14:27	... in the English version he's looking at.
Hank Smith:	14:30	Right. I like the term she gave us with translation. She said think of translated beings of perfecting them, of, what did she say, John, of transforming, bringing something to a higher level, a higher plane.
John Bytheway:	14:45	They're clarified.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	14:47	And if you look at the Webster's Dictionary definition of translate in Joseph Smith's day, that's actually its first definition.
Hank Smith:	14:53	Its first definition. Transform-
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	14:55	Is to transform or change.
Hank Smith:	14:57	Because we use that term Joseph Smith translation and my students will ask, "What language was it in before?" I'm going, "No, no, no. It's a different definition of translation," I think, in this case.
Hank Smith:	15:10	Let's get back into Section 28 then. Do you think it was an awkward moment for Joseph Smith because he didn't want to discourage people from receiving revelation. In my reading of Joseph, it was always go to the Lord yourself. You can receive your own answers and yet here he's saying, "Well, yes and but we've got to have stewardship." We've got to have who can receive revelation for who involved in this work.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	15:37	It's especially awkward because his closest friend and in a way ally, is Oliver Cowdery and Oliver Cowdery is-
John Bytheway:	15:46	That's right.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	15:46	... close with Hiram Page and Hiram Page has convinced Oliver. Oliver believes that these are revelations from God and so does the whole Whitmer family. And so it's Joseph against everyone else in saying, "Yeah, this stuff isn't so good."
Hank Smith:	16:00	I think I read it this time there's a whole 62 members of the church at this point. Now, that's 10 times what they had in April, don't get me wrong. That's wonderful. I would love to go 10 times. I don't know if we could handle that kind of growth, but that had to be an odd, awkward moment of yes and no.

- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 16:20 I think it can't be easy. Joseph is often put in the position of being the Lord's mouthpiece to say, "My mouthpiece is important. Don't mess with him." That's an awkward place just to be. Let me be the one to say this about me, but it really is from God, and it's true. It is, but that's just got to be a little bit awkward as well, and especially he has to take Oliver aside and convince him of this before he presents the revelation to everyone. And in a lot of ways, he is doing exactly what he will later receive revelation to do, which is take thy brother aside and between he and the alone work this out. Don't do this in public. He works with Oliver and he gets Oliver to work with Hiram so that by the time they will read this revelation, which we understand was received just days before the conference. By the time they get to the conference, Oliver and Hiram are okay with this revelation.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 17:16 Again, it's just a fantastic example of Joseph doing things under correct principles. He could have easily just gone to the conference, read this revelation and how horrible that would have been for Hiram and Oliver, but when they're prepared and ready to support him ahead of time, then it's a great unifying experience.
- Hank Smith: 17:37 Wow. That tells you about the inspiration of the prophet, but it also tells you about his character. He wasn't out to make people feel foolish publicly or he just wanted to do things right, I think.
- John Bytheway: 17:51 That advice is in the revelation. Go alone, in verse 11. Again, "Thou shalt take thy brother, Hiram Page, between him and the alone." That's like the Lord dismissing the group, the woman taken in adultery in John chapter eight. Dismissing the group and then he talks to her one on one and has such respect for someone even in that position. I like that.
- Hank Smith: 18:20 We've mentioned some of these verses. We've jumped into it. Kerry, do you have any specific ones you want to highlight and look at in Section 28 and talk about?
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 18:29 I think that the key is given. We've already mentioned verse two. We read the second part, let's make sure we get that first part. "No one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church excepting my servant Joseph Smith Jr." That's a principle that is still true today. The only one who can give direction for the entire church, the only one who can receive revelation for the entire church is the presiding high priest or president of the church, and that's just how it is. Now, typically in our day, he's going to do that in conjunction with the first presidency in the Quorum of the 12, but it has to come

from there down. And so in verse two is in some ways one of the most important verses for church organization in all of scripture. This is the way it works.

- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 19:14 Now, verse four, "If thou art led at anytime by comforter the to speak or teach or at all times by way of command under the church, thou may do it, but thou shalt not write by way of commandment but by wisdom." The idea is as you receive inspiration, go do it. You're inspired to preach repentance, go do it. YOu're inspired to do this, go do it, but don't say you're doing it by way of commandment to the entire church. You don't have the rights or prerogative to do that. There's only one person that can do that. And that's still applicable to us today. If you're inspired to say something to someone, do it. Don't pretend, though, that you have stewardship over them unless you really do.
- Hank Smith: 19:54 Right. I like that. I like how you translate the verse in to a way I can understand. The Lord is saying, but by wisdom, I think he's saying yeah, you can definitely give advice to other people. You can speak. I'm a gospel doctrine teacher in my ward right now. I can speak and teach and I hope I'm speaking and teaching by the spirit, by the comforter, but I would never say this is revelation for the people in my class. God told me to tell you this.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 20:21 That's right.
- Hank Smith: 20:21 The Lord is saying temper that a little bit. Let's help each other-
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 20:26 But your Bishop could do that.
- Hank Smith: 20:27 Right.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 20:27 And that's the thing we need to understand. And verse nine, this is interesting because this is where Hiram Page, part of his revelations were about where Zion was going to be established. That's interesting because we haven't had a lot of talking about Zion up to this point. Although, it is possible, we don't know and it seems like it might be just after this, but it is possible that some of the revelations that have to do with Enoch are being received. It seems like that's coming after that, but it could come right before it. In one way or another, either this just precedes it or it's just preceded by, but this idea we were talking about earlier that we're getting step by step, God's just giving him a little bit more and a little bit more. Somehow this

idea is interacting with what they're going to learn about Zion by learning about Enoch.

- Hank Smith: 21:20 The Lord has dropped little hints along the way. The cause of Zion. I have seen his weeping for Zion. I'm going, "What's Zion?" And now we're going to hear-
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 21:30 And it's mentioned a little in the Book of Mormon, but not a ton. But that's what Hiram has been receiving revelation for, but it's false revelation so God's letting him know, "Well, you don't know where the city of Zion is. I know and I'll tell you at some point, but I'm not telling Hiram. I'm going to tell Joseph." That's the key to this whole thing.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 21:53 In the meantime, he's saying don't go off building Zion anywhere that anyone is telling you until I tell Joseph where it's going to be. And that's really what the next couple verses are until we get to verse 12. I don't know if one of you would like to talk a little bit about verse 12 then?
- Hank Smith: 22:09 I want to come back just to verse six where he say, "Thou shalt not command him who is at thy head and at the head of the church." It's interesting to me that Joseph, maybe to some people, seems like someone you can overstep a little bit. Just kind of someone, yeah, yeah, Joseph. I'm going to do that and then I'm going to take over from here, and the Lord, "Everybody back up. He's still the one I'm talking to." This would be, like you said Kerry, a really awkward place to be, but it's an important place to be-
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 22:40 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Hank Smith: 22:41 ... to say we can't have more than one person receiving revelation for the church because then we're going to be serving two masters. We're going to be trying to go east and west at the same time. So, the Lord is saying, "Listen, this is not so much a he's more important, but he's the one I've chosen. This is how we're going to do this." And that's the same thing with my Bishop, my state president. I might-
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 23:07 Nation president.
- Hank Smith: 23:07 ... they might not... Right. They might not have the personality where I can get running ahead, but the Lord's saying, "Easy, easy. Don't do that. Don't do that. Don't command him that is at thy head."

Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	23:19	He'll later say this by saying, "My house is a house of order." It's the same idea. We can't just get two confused here.
Hank Smith:	23:27	So, maybe our little baby church has stumbled a little bit, but that's okay. All children stumble. I never got mad at my toddlers for stumbling. I was like, "How dare you? In this house we walk." They are learning. They're learning as they go.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	23:42	And I do think that this was part of the process of learning about revelation and that revelation was the first important principle and then stewardship and order was the second important principle. And it was taught that way and teaching it that way you're going to have to stumble. Verse 12, "For behold these things have not been appointed unto him, neither shall anything be appointed unto him." And this is Hiram Page, who in the verse before it says Satan has deceived Hiram, so not going to be appointed unto Hiram. "Neither shall anything be appointed unto Hiram or unto any of this church contrary to the church covenants." And I do think, while we've been talking about covenants a lot, I think this is specifically referring back to Section 20, which is the Articles of Covenants of the Church, this organization. So, this is another crucial step of organizing the church. And this is something we're just going to have to keep our eye on throughout this year studying church history that the Lord organizes it just a little bit at a time.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	24:36	To begin with, it's a first and second elder. It will eventually become a first presidency, and then a first presidency and Quorum of the 12, but it's not all of that all at once. We could quote Isaiah line upon line, precept upon precept. He's just giving him a little bit and as they're ready for the next step, then the step, and the next step, and so this is one of those next steps in understanding church organization that started with Section 20.
Hank Smith:	25:04	I like that a lot. All things must be done in order and by common consent in the church. That's this idea that everybody takes part, that everybody gets, I don't want to say a vote, but everybody has a voice.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	25:19	In a way it is a vote, but not the way we think of voting. We had this actually in Section 20. It says the same thing that when someone is appointed to do something then it's by consent of the whole church and that's exactly why. We actually read that in my come follow me family scripture study with my family this morning and I told them, you remember on Sunday when we sustained so and so? This is why we do it. It's by revelation and it's there in Section 20 and it's here in Section 28.

- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 25:52 It is by revelation that when someone is appointed to something we all get the chance to say we sustain or we don't sustain it. If we don't sustain it then we can go talk about why, but in the end, it comes down to the person who's in charge, so it goes back to that stewardship thing. So, this is that same tension we were talking about. We all get personal revelation, but there's someone who receives revelation for the whole church. That person can put someone forward and say, "We'd like to sustain this person to do this." We all get to say whether we support it or not. That doesn't mean we're making that determination, but we get to be part of this and it gives us the opportunity if we think there is something that presiding authority should know then we can go tell them. Which is what happens even in general conference, where they say if there was a dissenting vote please talk to your state president. The state president can bring it to the general authorities and so on and so on, so that everything is done in order.
- John Bytheway: 26:44 The name of the church itself is instructive. It's the Church of Jesus Christ and then there's another of. There's two of's, of Latter-Day Saints. It's his and it's ours in a way. We have a participation in it. There's a hierarchy in it, too. It's the Church of Jesus Christ, but we don't vote in people of vote people out. It's not that kind of thing as you've just talked about, but I've always loved the double of in the title of the church. It's ours, too, by common consent.
- Hank Smith: 27:16 I like that a lot, John. What was Hiram Page's reaction to Joseph? Oliver, it seems like, humbled himself and said, "Okay, I'll follow you, Joseph."
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 27:26 And then Oliver went and convinced Hiram and Hiram also said then, "Okay. I'm okay with this." And they agreed that they would get rid of the stone. We actually have two different accounts of what happened to the stone he was using, so we don't know which is correct. One says that they ground it up into powder and got rid of it, but then another guy later says, "Well, we had that stone for years. We just got rid of it later on." Who knows exactly what happened, but it is clear that they also said, "Okay." Oliver convinced Hiram and then when the two of them were onboard then everyone else was easier to get onboard and that he would forsake this stone and that it was of the devil.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 28:05 And that brings up another important point. Joseph and a seer stone and the Urim and Thummim are seer stones. So, again, this is just natural for people to think well, he has one. I could have one and so on. Joseph was not opposed to the idea of

people having seer stones. He thought that was great. In fact, he was trying to tell Parley P. Pratt where he could go find one and he described it for him. I think it was some Korean Buffalo, if I remember right, and Parley never went and got it. And so, maybe we should get a field trip and go find that thing-

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| Hank Smith: | 28:30 | We should go look. |
| Dr. Kerry Muhle...: | 28:30 | I don't know. |
| John Bytheway: | 28:32 | I got to Buffalo a lot. I'd love to go. |
| Dr. Kerry Muhle...: | 28:35 | So, he wasn't opposed to this idea and really, in the end, a seer stone is an object that helps us with inspiration. It helps us receive inspiration. In their day, in their culture, that's how they're expecting to find it. In our day, so for us, we think of a seer stone as listen to the tabernacle choir and go to the celestial room. It's the thing that helps us focus and be open to inspiration. I think when the Lord says he speaks to us according to our language and culture that means not just whether it's English or Portuguese, but it's also this is how you expect me to speak to you. Someone else expects it in a different way. Maybe they're expecting a dream, so it could be a dream and I'm expecting it when I'm in the temple, so it comes to the temple. He'll work with us where we are. For them, seer stones was part of that, but it was easy to be deceived and he was deceived. |
| Dr. Kerry Muhle...: | 29:28 | Hiram Page should be a role model for us. I would guess at some point we're all deceived on something. I'd be shocked if that doesn't happen. Hiram Page accepted correction, and this was probably pretty tough. He'd been public about this. He had things written down. A lot of people are following him. This is prestigious for him. It's exciting and then he gets some correction and says, "Actually, you were deceived that you were believing stuff from Satan." That's got to be a little bit humiliating. I know I'd have a hard time if a prophet said that to me. "Well, you know, that was a nice book, but it was actually from Satan. Thanks for writing it, though." That would be tough, but Hiram Page accepts it, and he says, "let's get rid of the stone and we'll try and do things the way that you're teaching me to." |
| Dr. Kerry Muhle...: | 30:13 | Unfortunately, the sad ending of the story is that eventually the whole Whitmer family had some problems and leaves the church. And as part of the Whitmer family, he leaves as well. And that's a sad thing, but he never ever, ever denied his testimony as one of the Eight Witnesses. Neither did any of the other Whitmer's. And so, while he left the church, he didn't really ever leave his testimony and that's a comforting thing. |

Hank Smith:	30:38	I really like that. That idea of I will be humble and I will take correction. I love that. He should be an example for us, but we need to make sure that the person giving us that correction is the right person to offer that correction because I can't go over to John, pull him aside and said, "I'm going to give you some correction." I've tried a couple of times and-
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	31:00	I was going to say, he told me that.
Hank Smith:	31:03	But I can see people taking that idea of I am at the head, so I can start doling out correction where Joseph wasn't that way. I don't get the feeling that Joseph was, here, let me correct everyone and everything. We're walking a beautiful tension, like you said, Kerry.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	31:25	And I love the way the Lord ends it on a positive note as well in this revelation. We've got verse 14, "Thou shalt assist to settle all these things according to the covenants of the church." This goes back to this idea help the church do things the right way. That's before, "Thou shalt take thy journey among the Laman." This is this precursor to this really important journey that's going to end up, yes, it takes the gospel to the Lamanites, which is part of what's the promise in the covenant and especially the covenant made to the Nephites, but it's also going to end up in the starting of Kirtland. But I love verse 15 and 16. "And it shall be given thee from time to time. Thou shalt go until time that thou shalt return and what thou shalt do." So, he's saying sometimes I'm going to tell you to go out and do things and then I'm going to tell you when to come back. You're going to be given callings. You're going to be given assignments. You're going to be given missions and so on.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	32:15	Verse 16, "And thou must open thy mouth at all times declaring my gospel with the sound of rejoicing. Amen." That's the positive encouragement. Yeah, Hiram, you got deceived here. Oliver, you got deceived here, but you know what, I've still got some good things for you to do. And if you're willing to follow, you are still going to receive revelation, it just won't be fore the whole church, but you are going to receive revelation from me. I'm still going to talk to you. You follow that revelation and great things will happen and you'll teach my gospel and you'll do it with rejoicing. That's a great message.
Hank Smith:	32:49	Yeah. It's a very positive idea and we come back to this idea of a little church, but I think of when I was a young dad and trying to give those little kids some encouragement. Yes, do some correcting, but don't... What did you use, the don't quash their excitement for what they're doing because this seems to me to

be the result of maybe some excitement of this unfolding of revelation. John anything else?

- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 33:15 ... has to keep going.
- Hank Smith: 33:17 Yeah. We don't want to stop that. I don't want to. This is really, actually, has been a good parenting lesson for me to be careful in my correction. I think I remember President Faust saying, "Your correction may be worse than the behavior you're trying to correct."
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 33:37 I've been guilty of that any number of times.
- John Bytheway: 33:40 I just think this is a great point that right now, not only are we getting an emphasis from President Nelson about letting God prevail and being Covenant Israel and fathering Israel, this great work of Covenant Israel, but also of how do you hear him. And everyone can learn to hear him and receive personal revelation. And I like that you brought that up, Kerry, that this was great. Did want to quash that, but things are done in wisdom and order and who has the keys and who has the stewardship. That had to be figured out and it sounds like it was figured out fairly early in this, what did you call it, Hank, a toddler church.
- Hank Smith: 34:24 Yeah. I like that. I like that the Lord is still, every section he seems, Kerry, you were exactly right. He says, "Okay, let me answer this question. Oh, by the way, we're going to go on a little trip to the borders of the Lamanites. Let me drop that at you a little bit. We'll talk about that later." Everyone's got to be thinking, "Wait, what? Huh? We're going somewhere?" That's fantastic stuff.
- Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 34:45 We've talked about President Nelson with the covenant and President Nelson with hear him. Don't you just have such a feeling of gratitude that we have a prophet like Joseph Smith or like Moses that is receiving revelation. And that's revelation for the entire church. During COVID, but the period leading up to COVID and so on, I just keep getting overwhelmed again and again with how inspired President Nelson is in giving us exactly what the Lord would have us have and exactly what we need. I'm so grateful for that.
- Hank Smith: 35:21 When he said the next conference we attend, this was a while ago, then next conference we attend will be unlike any you have ever attended, I'm going, "Wow. Are we going to have a new video?"

Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	35:33	And we did.
Hank Smith:	35:34	Yeah, we did have a new video, and wow, was it different than any other conference we have ever attended. Wow. You're exactly right, Kerry. How blessed we are. I feel like Brigham Young saying, "Every time I think I knew the prophet Joseph I was to shout Hallelujah." I think that same thing about President Nelson.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	35:56	In the end, that's really the message of Section 28. Be grateful you have that prophet.
John Bytheway:	36:02	And that maybe a step, what's the very last word? Well, the last word of the Section 28 is Amen, but the one before that is rejoicing. And as we're looking at that I thought about say nothing but repentance. Well, that's a joyful message. That's a fresh view about God about one's self and here, the gospel ought to be a sound of rejoicing. That's a good way to tie things up.
Hank Smith:	36:26	Oftentimes when we have conflict like this, we either avoid the conversation all together because we don't like the awkwardness of the conversation, or we come at it too hard and we create a negative... We think we basically have two choices. Either I can continue to have a good relationship with this person or I can ruin the relationship by telling them the truth. And I think Section 28 is an example of you can both be open and build the relationship. It's a little bit more difficult to do. I think it's called Have Those Crucial Conversations. I don't know if you've ever read that book, but it seems the Lord is saying you can have conflict. You can resolve it and be better off and everybody's rejoicing. Everybody's happy. I don't know about you two, but I sometimes avoid difficult conversations.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	37:21	Oh, yeah.
Hank Smith:	37:23	Because it just seems like, "Oh, I don't want to upset them, " where the Lord's saying, "No. it's okay. It's okay. Go, take him between you two and go have this talk. It's okay. It's going to work. Trust me." It's okay for us to talk about you here for a second, I think.
Dr. Kerry Muhle...:	37:38	Are you going to swear or what?
Hank Smith:	37:41	You're one of the most brilliant minds in the church. You've spent, I don't know how old you are, Kerry. You look like you're 25, but you've spent decades studying and teaching from the

scriptures. Can you walk us through the life of Dr. Kerry Muhlestein, the Egyptologist, and tell us what the Restoration has done for you and what it means to you personally in the life of prophet Joseph Smith. And tell us a little, maybe, a little bit about your life as a scholar and a believing Latter-Day Saint.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 38:16

I did not want to be a teacher because I felt like they didn't get paid well, which turns out to be true, but I felt led to first of all to be a teacher. I wanted to be a seminary teacher to begin with and then I can remember sitting in a class one day in the same building I'm sitting in now, the Joseph Smith at BYU. And we had a guest teacher who was just finishing a degree from the University of Chicago in Biblical studies and they were interested in hiring her, so she came and taught our class. When I saw what she could do with the scriptures because of the training she had received, I realized I don't want to spend the rest of my life wishing I could be better at what I do, but not having paid the price.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 39:06

So, I decided, and I'm not saying that's what everyone should do. I think that was a direct prompting for me that I needed to pay a price to learn about these things in a different way. We each have our own role that we play and it became clear to me that was the role that I needed to play. I started studying. That's why when you introduced me, I was already a Psychology major, but I started studying Hebrew. That's how I got the Hebrew minor because I started studying the ancient world and I just got hooked, and I also realized that as much as I enjoyed teaching, I enjoyed researching. I liked both, and I liked writing. In fact, my original, I was a Communications major as a freshman. My original desire was to be a writer and maybe a newspaper writer or maybe fiction, both and so on. I liked writing.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 39:56

So, when I found that I could research and teach and write about things that I cared about more than newspaper articles or fiction, then I realized that there was only one job that I could do all of those really well. So, I set my sights on teaching at one of the BYUs. I had some experiences that I won't get into that led me to Egyptology and led me specifically to UCLA where I had some fantastic advisors. One of them loved to talk about the church. He was one of the top Egyptologists in the history of Egyptology. Just fantastic. He left UCLA to direct an Egyptological program in Switzerland and then was made the president of that university and then the president of a consortium of universities. Just a really intelligent guy, but he loved to talk about the church and about the Book of Abraham and so on. And in fact, later in he went to the University of

Basel, which also has a great theology department and he used to go to their theology debates to represent the Mormon point of view. I was blessed to have a fantastic couple of teachers that taught me.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 41:11 My first job was at BYU Hawaii teaching in both the religion and the history department, which allowed me to do both elements of what I love. I would say just things keep getting dropped in my lap. I did not intend to direct an excavation. That got dropped in my lap. In fact, when it was offered to me, I said no and then made the mistake of praying about it. That's got me any number of times. I have to say that there is a thrill... I'll say this, as you said in the little bio, I taught history at UCLA. I taught history at Cal Poly Pomona. It was Egyptian history at UCLA. It was the history of the ancient [inaudible 00:41:56] and the Iron Age at Cal Poly Pomona. So, that's the age that we get the biblical stories in. I loved those experiences, but as I did it, I found myself constantly frustrated that at the state schools I couldn't talk about the things that meant the most to me. We're talking about Assyria or Babylon, doing things with Israel and students would ask me, it was clear some of those students were Christian and they were asking questions about that and I could not answer them the way I would have liked to have answered them.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 42:27 And it is so thrilling to be at a place where I can say what I think, where I can say what I believe. And conversations like what we've had today, and we have these same kind of conversations with students, that's just exciting. Literally 10 minutes before I was on with you guys I was teaching the plagues in the Exodus story with my Old Testament students and I'd bring it in Egyptian religion and Israel symbolism and some Hebrew and all of it to try and make sense of this picture. And it is just so fun to have a wide arsenal to use to say, "Let's see what we can make sense of but in the end the lesson we're taking away from this is God can deliver you." And if that was the only thing I was able to teach I would have been happy with that. I was glad to teach Egyptian religion and about Ma'at, but it's great to be able to have the more important thing at the end, which to say God will deliver you.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 43:30 In fact, part of that lesson about the Egyptian symbolism was a paper that wrote as a graduate student that I won an award for then, but I couldn't put that ending in. And it's so thrilling to be able to put that ending in and to have comfort when things are tough. So, this is a great thing about doing things because you feel like the Lord has asked you to do them.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 43:57 I won't get into a long detailed story but there was one time, as I said, I'm only involved in this exhibition, I love it. I love everything about it. I publish on this. It's just fantastic, but I wouldn't have done it if hadn't felt inspired to do it. There was a time where some things went fairly wrong. Some crazy things happened. It was some false reports in the media that caused some crazy things to happen and I had a couple of weeks that were really felt dark because it seemed like I had, not through something I had done wrong, but just the way things had happened that I was causing some problems for the University and all sorts of things and I didn't like that. But the thing that got me through was that I could, at each night as I was going to be bed and I was thinking about this, I could say, well, I am doing this because I felt inspired to do it. I've only ever been trying to follow inspiration and do my best. I'm sure I've made mistakes, but I trust that when I'm doing my best to follow inspiration that the Lord has a plan and he'll take care of it. So, right now I can't see how this particular thing's going to work out, but I know it will because I'm just trying to do the Lord's will.

Dr. Kerry Muhle...: 45:05 And sure enough, it worked out and there were all sorts of times where something happens and you're like, "Oh, man. What a mess. What am I going to do about that?" And each time you can say, "Well, I'm doing my best, so I'll just leave the rest up to the Lord and he always comes through." Again, to go back to the covenant, that's a blessing I can count on because I've made and I'm doing my best to keep convenance, and I'm part of that Abraham covenant. I can count on that the Lord has my back and that's a good way to get good rest when you know that the Lord has your back.

Hank Smith: 45:38 Thank you, Kerry, for being here. And thank you, John, of course for being here again. Like I said, you're my favorite co-host I've ever had and I hope you take that the way it's meant to be taken. We're grateful for you, our listeners, for your support. Thank you so much to our producers, Steve and Shannon Sorenson. Thank you to our production crew, David Perry, Amy Nielsen and Lisa Spice, and we hope we'll see you on our next episode of FollowHIM.