

FollowHim Podcast

Episode 9 Part II

- John Bytheway: 00:00:03 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:07 Scott, it's my understanding that the Quorum of the Twelve are going to need the Melchizedek Priesthood to operate as the Lord wants them to. I've heard you say before that members of the church should view the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood as a kind of more a process than an event, like the Aaronic Priesthood. Could you elaborate and help us on that a little bit?
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:00:32 Near the end of his life, actually in Section 128, so he's got a few years left, but in Section 128 as Joseph is reviewing the restoration, in Verse 21 of Section 128, he's talking about Priesthood restoration and he uses the phrase we've already mentioned today. He says, "It happened line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." He mentioned a few events. He mentions, Peter, James, and John coming. Right after Peter, James, and John, he mentions the voice of God in the chamber of Father Whitmer.
- He then mentions other angels that we actually don't have any stories about. It would be fascinating to learn more about Raphael and others who brought keys, he said, but we do know of ... I would put it down to six events. A lot of times other people say, "Peter, James, and John restored the Melchizedek Priesthood." Boom, done. I would say that's not inaccurate, but it's incomplete. Can we say it like that? That was the beginning of the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, but there are five other events to go.
- If you look at their words, Section 127 will say they restored the apostleship, the keys of the kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel. That's what they say. They never mention Melchizedek Priesthood. Then when they go to Father Whitmer's chamber, which we've talked about, God now authorizes them to confer the Holy Ghost and ordain elders. He said, "Don't do it yet. Don't do it until the church is organized, but you're not authorized to do that at that time," so that's another step.
- Then we're going to get in June 1831, Isaac Morley's farm. They're going to have a Priesthood meeting there and that's

where what Joseph calls, the High Priesthood is restored. If you pin down Joseph Smith, which would be hard to do, but if you could pin him down and say, "When was the Melchizedek Priesthood restored? Tell me, Joseph. Just tell me." He would say, "1st of June." Or, "From the 1st to the 3rd of June 1831." That's what his history says, is that many elders were ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Then the next three happened in rapid succession. On the 3rd of April 1836, we now have three angels that come to confer keys, Moses, Elias, and Elijah. By the time Elijah is done, the Priesthood has been restored. This is what Section 2 is talking about when the Lord said, "Before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, Elijah will come and reveal the Priesthood." Elijah's got to be involved in this Priesthood restoration, otherwise, what was Moroni talking about? If we go from Peter, James, and John until the 3rd of April 1836 with Elijah, now we can say that's the process of restoring the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Hank Smith: 00:03:13 That's a much different paradigm than maybe the one we were taught earlier, when I was a kid. That you had the Aaronic Priesthood on this day. Somewhere there you had the Melchizedek Priesthood brought back. Where you're saying, "No, this is a long process and Joseph is learning along the way." Sometimes, we like to take our 2021 mindset and put it on Joseph in 1829. He's going, "Well, I've got to have Melchizedek Priesthood soon, because how are we going to have Elders Quorum?" Where, he's learning this as he goes.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:03:44 That's right. They don't even call it Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood until 1833 I believe, 1834 perhaps. They're calling it lesser and higher. This is line upon line, as Joseph is saying. "Here a little, there a little." Again, section 128, Verse 21. Joseph, it came line upon line for him. The keys that were brought by Moses, Elias, and Elijah all pertain to temple. They built a temple to get temple keys so they could now go and build the Nauvoo Temple, so that the Kirtland Temple would be a preparatory temple to get the kind of keys they need to build the full fledged Melchizedek Priesthood Temple to help God's kingdom purposes reach their climax in Nauvoo.

Hank Smith: 00:04:29 See, this to me is just an important idea of competency when it comes to the church. One of my favorite quotes, if you're ever in my class you'll hear it, "It is good to be faithful. It is better to be faithful and competent." To me, this is a matter of competency saying, "Yes, the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored, but it was restored over a period of ..." I think you gave us seven years right there, where they learned a little bit

as they went, instead of just throwing out, "Hey, May of 1829, Melchizedek Priesthood's in. It's restored, it's over." Because then you're going to run into problems later when Joseph says, "Oh, yeah. I was ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood in 1831." You're like, "Wait. What?" You won't run into those problems if you are competent in what actually happened.

- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:05:15 It's about establishing the kingdom of God on Earth and the temple is the capstone of that process, so all Priesthood eventually arcs toward the temple, and the temple is where we're made kingdom people to the core, prepared for Christ's reign, so Priesthood is always about preparing us for Christ.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:32 Yeah. It seems that Section 18 fits that, doesn't it? Apostles are about others. This Priesthood is about others. The worth of souls is great in the sight of God. An apostleship is about others. It's about crying repentance for others, so I think that fits really well.
- John Bytheway: 00:05:51 In Verse 42, it mentions children who have arrived at the years of accountability, and they don't really know much about that yet, or do they, Scott?
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:06:02 No. That's another drop. He's just dropping stuff in there, a line of pun line here. Yeah, that will be later that Joseph will get that. Once he starts his Bible translation, in Genesis, it will talk more about that. He'll get that through revelation, about the eight years thing. Right here, the Lord's just dropping little pieces along this way. This will eventually be gathered together with other verses, which will help solidify the eight year, beginning to be accountable. We're beginning to be accountable at age eight.
- John Bytheway: 00:06:38 Which one? I see Section 68 is footnoted there, but which came before, the JST, is that in Genesis, late Genesis?
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:06:46 Yeah. Genesis would come before 68, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:06:50 Then 68 came later. That's just interesting to me. It's one of those things that just makes so much sense to me, that repentance and baptism come at the time of accountability. It just is one of those, "Well, of course," so I love that.
- Hank Smith: 00:07:08 I like how you're describing the Lord here, Scott. He's just dropping little things here. He's like, "I'm going to give him a little bit of that, because they're going to be thrown for that. They're probably going to be talking to each other for a couple

of months." What do you think he meant by that? Just, "I'm going to give you a little bit so you could be thinking about it." It's almost like he's saying, "I'm going to give you these little ... The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, age of accountability. We're just going to let that percolate for a little while."

- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:07:36 They would have just translated a few weeks earlier, Moroni ... Or sorry. Mormon ripping on infant baptism. Right?
- Hank Smith: 00:07:42 Yes, yeah.
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:07:44 This would have been mere weeks earlier, and so for the Lord to say, "Children who have arrived at the years of accountability will need to be baptized as well."
- John Bytheway: 00:07:52 Which is another Book of Mormon thing coming out in this section, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:00 I just love how methodical the Lord is about the restoration. Slow, patient, deliberate. There's a method to this. We have to go nice and slow, so you're going to get all this. I think that goes against my natural inclination to just dump. Just dump out information on people. I'm going to give my 16-year-old, and, "Let's lay down the law. You're going to have to know this when you're 50. You might as well be taught now. Here we go." Slow down a little bit. Be methodical about your teaching.
- John Bytheway: 00:08:34 Okay. This has been wonderful. I am so excited to move into Section 19. If you were to pin me down today and say, "What's your favorite section of the Doctrine and Covenants?" I reserve the right to change my mind tomorrow, but I would have said 19. There are so many things in here that I love. Let's see. What do we know? We've talked a lot about Martin and the stolen manuscript in 1828. What's going on in Martin's life about this time? What has been going on in the past few months?
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:09:09 Yeah, yeah. That's a great question. I think to really get the full impact of Section 19, you just need to just understand where Martin's been coming from the last few months, the last year and a half or so, as I think about it. There's a big moment in Martin's life that I think is relevant here, and that is when he first finds out from Joseph about the plates. Now we're talking back in the fall of 1827. He made it a matter of prayer and he said, I got the quote here. He said, "I retired to my bedroom and prayed God to show me concerning these things, and I covenanted." 1827. "I covenanted that if it was his work, I would put forth my best ability to bring it before the world. He

then showed me that it was his work," Martin says. "By the still small voice spoken to the soul. Then I was satisfied that it was the Lord's work, and I was under a covenant to bring it forth."

This explains, I think, a lot of Martin Harris' actions. That he feels bound by covenant to help this work come forth, and his efforts to keep that covenant have included, he slipped Joseph \$50, which at that time, was a lot of money, in perspective. Joseph will buy a 14-acre farm already ... It's got a home on it. It's already cultivated, for \$200, which is going to take him a long to pay off, and so 50 bucks Martin slipped him, on his way, as he's leaving Palmyra to come to Harmony. He said, "I give this to you to do the Lord's work."

Then he makes the 140 mile plus journey from Palmyra down to Harmony in February 1828, just to check on things. Then he tells Joseph, "I feel inspired to take some of the hieroglyphs here back East and see if we can get some scholars to verify this. He does that. He comes back more convinced than ever that Joseph actually had an ancient record here. Then he immediately starts to scribe for Joseph, all in an effort to keep this covenant. He scribes the Book of Lehi, and then we know the painful story about him trying to convince others. Taking the manuscript, or having it stolen, and so that ends their relationship for eight months. Joseph and Martin don't talk for eight months.

Martin breaks the silence. Martin visits Joseph again, eight months later, due to a highly distressing situation back home, where opposition is mounting in Palmyra against Joseph and the work led by none other than Martin Harris' own wife. Lucy's number one concern is that Joseph is pretending to have plates, "So that he can swindle my husband out of his money." This plays into the important backstory of Section 19.

Martin comes knocking on Joseph's door, asking desperately, this is back in March, to see the plates. He said, "I got to see the plates because not only is my wife going to take you to jail, or she's going to try, but I will be implicated as well as an accomplice here, so I need to see the plates." To which, the Lord responds, "I will let you see the plates if you will ..." Then he gives the conditions. "Repent of your sins, keep my commandments, and exercise faith in me. You got some preparing to do if you want to be one of my witnesses, Martin," and so he goes back home, not having seen the plates, but more determined than ever to repent, get his life in order so he can.

Now we come, in late June 1929, a few events have happened in rapid succession. Translation of the Book of Mormon is complete, and Martin has been allowed to be one of the three witnesses. The morning of the witness experience, Joseph approaches Martin, and Lucy Mack Smith says in her account of this, she says, "He spoke in a voice that thrilled my soul." He said, "Martin you have got to repent if you want to be one of the witnesses. It is the Lord's will that we do this, but you've got to be ready," so Martin tries. They go out into the woods, they kneel down to pray and nothing happens. Martin finally is like, "Sorry. It's me. I am so sorry," and he was right, it turns out. When he leaves to go repent, boom, the angel appears and everything happens as with David, Oliver and Joseph.

Martin is just repenting his soul out, and Joseph goes to find him later, after the other two had their experience with Joseph and the angel, and Martin joins with Joseph. He has an experience where he sees the angel and hears the voice of God. Joseph's own account of this, he says that, "Martin Harris cried out," he said, "In ecstasy of joy, 'Tis enough, mine eyes have beheld,' and then he shouted, 'Hosanna,' blessing God and otherwise rejoicing exceedingly." He comes into the home, to the Fayette home there, to the Whitmer home, and Joseph's mother said that Martin was ecstatic.

She said, "He seemed almost overcome with an excessive joy. He testified what he'd seen and heard. The angel, the voice of God. He's seen the record." Suffice it to say, in June, Martin Harris is on fire. He is on fire. He is like, "Yes, finally." He's repented sufficiently, he's on fire. He's now a special witness of the Book of Mormon, the promise of the Lord in Section 5, that it would be declared unto him from heaven, with power, has been fulfilled. He's invigorated by this experience. That translates now into his efforts to try to get this thing published.

He realizes that he will be the one who will finance this. He's realized that ever since his first prayer in 1827 when he prayed and covenanted with God that he would help to bring forth this work. With a skip in his step, Martin led out in negotiations over the next few weeks with Joseph, going out to see printers to publish the Book of Mormon and they finally ... Well, so they start at a Palmyra print shop with a guy named Egbert B. Grandin. To put it mildly, Grandin was skeptical of the project.

In fact, at the end of June, as late as the end of June, he published an article where he called Joseph Smith's work, quote, "A pretended discovery through superhuman means of an ancient record, which you can only read if interpreted by one

who has a special gift." He then said, quote, "Most people entertain an idea that the whole matter is the result of a gross imposition and a grosser superstition." Now, that's not what you say if you want people to buy the book. He's trying to persuade people. When Martin comes and says, "Hey, we want to publish this with you," he says, "No, no. Not now, not ever." He says, "Martin, you're a fool. You're going to waste your money," so he refuses, "I'm not going to print this book."

They go to another printer, Jonathan Hadley, a younger printer, 20 years old, who also refuses to do the work but refers them to his mentor, named Thurlow Weed. Weed, an old, seasoned guy, he says, "Listen, Martin, don't do this." Martin says, "I'll pay for the whole thing." He says, "You're going to lose your money. Don't do this." Undeterred, they then go to the final, a guy named Elihu Marshall, who says, "I'll do it." This is a guy in Rochester, which is 25 miles away from Palmyra. Now, with a guy who has agreed to do it, they're going to use that as a negotiating chip.

They come back to Grandin and say, "Someone's going to do it anyway. We'd just rather do it with you because you're local." He says, "Fine. \$3,000." I don't know if he's greedy at this point, or if he's just trying to persuade Martin to not do it, but so just to put this perspective, remember, 200 bucks for Joseph's 14-acre farm.

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| John Bytheway:      | <u>00:17:01</u> | For a farm.   |
| Dr. Scott Woodw...: | <u>00:17:02</u> | The going rate, at the time, for printing, was for a printer to make about 12% on the project, net. This would put Grandin as making \$1,000 on this project, net, which would be about 33%. He's jacking up the price, probably trying to dissuade Martin Harris, but undeterred and desperate, Martin and Joseph are like, "Let's do it. Let's do it." Now here's the catch. Grandin, he wouldn't even buy the type or begin the job until Martin had promised to insure the payment for the printing. This is very uncharacteristic, unlikely to happen to an average person trying to print a book, because he was convinced it wouldn't sell. He didn't want to lose a penny. "I want the full cost, upfront. Full cost, upfront." |
| Hank Smith:         | <u>00:17:53</u> | Yeah. From what I've read, no way. No one's ever been asked to do that in printing.   |
| Dr. Scott Woodw...: | <u>00:17:58</u> | Right. Normally, a printer would just recoup the cost as the books sell, and that's how you get your expense upfront, you get that back, and then whatever margins on top of that. That's   |

how you make your money, but for Martin, he says, "This is not going to sell, so how about the full cost upfront, right now?" Well, \$3,000 would be about 151 acres of Martin's farm worth, which is almost the entire farm. 151 acres he would need to put up as collateral for the Book of Mormon printing.

Hank Smith: 00:18:29 "Give me the deed to your house and all your land."

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:18:33 Yeah, yeah. "Deed me your property." He has 18 months to repay the debt of \$3,000, hopefully, from the sales of the Book of Mormon, or else Grandin can now sell his land to recoup the costs. For Grandin, he's like, "I'm going to win either way, but you brother, you could lose big." In fact, he's already warned him he would lose big, and Thurlow Weed has also said that, so he's had two printers now that are in the business looking at this project saying, "This is not going to work. You're going to lose everything." Then his wife is still trying to organize opposition in Palmyra, at this time. This starts to wear Martin down a little bit.

Hank Smith: 00:19:10 You think?

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:19:13 You remember the skip in his step? Well, that's, he's starting to drag. The way that another person put it, he said, "Martin became staggered in his confidence. He became staggered in his confidence." That's the background here to Section 19 is Martin is starting to slip in his confidence, he's being staggered. He's had amazing experiences. He knows the Book of Mormons is true, but even if the Book of Mormons is true, and nobody buys it, he's probably going to lose everything.

Hank Smith: 00:19:45 One thing that I have found over the course of doing this podcast, John, I think you feel the same way, is I love Martin Harris. That guy's soul is so ... He's just so good and he's asked to do so much. Every time it seems like he gets something good happen, it just comes after him again. I think maybe it's because I identify with him. I've had glorious experiences myself, and I still get worn down over time.

You know what's funny? Shouldn't say funny. What's ironic to me is we, in the church, think of E.B. Grandin like, "Oh, E.B. Grandin. Wow. Really helped us get that Book of Mormon printed when no one else would, and oh, Martin Harris. Oh, isn't he the one that lost the pages?" When it should be the exact opposite. Martin Harris, it should be called the Martin Harris Printing Building. It should be called the Martin Harris Book of Mormon.

John Bytheway: 00:20:45 Published by Martin Harris, yeah. Financed. That's why I just, ever since that talk of Dallin H. Oaks, President Dallin H. Oaks, perhaps he was Elder Oaks at the time, about, "Hey, my middle name is Harris, and the reason why ..." What was the phrase? We quoted it before. "We need to let Martin come out from under the shadow of that incident." Remember that? Yeah, I feel like somebody said in an earlier podcast, "I love Jesus. I relate to Peter," or something, and I'm thinking, "I love Jesus. I relate to Martin."

He's got worries, he's got, "My whole farm. I'm trying to keep my marriage together." You could feel that, okay, so the whole farm, and I never knew until today, I'm embarrassed to admit, that 3,000 was over the top, over the top amount, right? Scott, 33% did you say he's going to net on this?

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:21:44 33%, yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:21:45 I mean, E.B. Grandin is seeing, not only is he probably warning Harris, but he's also seeing an opportunity to take his entire life from him.

John Bytheway: 00:21:59 What does that do to your marriage if you give your whole farm and what, means of future support? Doesn't it say in the proclamation of the family, which Martin never read, that you're supposed to provide for your family?

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:22:13 This is the very thing that Martin's wife was worried about. "Joseph is going to swindle my husband out of his money," and now here's Martin saying, "I'm going to put up the whole farm," almost the whole farm.

Hank Smith: 00:22:27 I don't know why this ... Maybe I'm showing my selfishness here, you guys, but I work really hard to pay this house and to build the kingdom of Smith, and then to have the Lord say, "Hand it over," I would need a Section 19. Is that what's going to be Section 19, Scott? Is this the Lord coming to Martin saying-

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:22:27 That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:22:50 ... "You can trust me"?

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:22:51 Section 19 is such a gem. John, I'm with you. This is, it's got to be at least in my top five, sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. The personableness, the intimacy of Section 19 is so touching to me. I almost picture it as Jesus and Martin, kind of a, "Come now and let us reason together, brother." Almost

Jesus' arm around Martin, but he's stern, but he's tender, he's understanding, he's empathetic. In fact, this is the only section ... This is the only time in all of scripture, ever, that Jesus talks about his own atoning sacrifice, first person.

John Bytheway: 00:23:31

First person. That's right.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:23:33

What on earth? Would could possibly draw that out of Jesus? This is the ultimate trump card in any situation. You can't say, "I'm going through something hard" when Jesus is in the room, as far as the atoning sacrifice goes. He never brings it up, ever. He never compares crosses with people. Jesus isn't like that. He's gentle, he's tender. He never says, "I've been through worse." Maybe at Liberty Jail, he says, "The son of man has descended below them all," so there may have been one moment there, but here, he's going to give an insight into his own sacrifice.

John Bytheway: 00:23:33

Oh, man. Yeah.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:24:13

What brought that out? What was on the line here?

Hank Smith: 00:24:16

Yeah. It's got to be Martin saying, "This is too much. You're asking just too much of me. I want to be part of it." Then, all of a sudden, you connect that. The Garden of Gethsemane, where the Savior was very similar, saying, "This is a lot. You're asking a lot."

John Bytheway: 00:24:33

To me, the thing that's kind of just, "Whoa, where do that come from?" is this incredible, unprecedented mystery revealed about what endless punishment really means. Whoa, what? Book of Mormon prophets didn't know that. That doesn't sound like it to me. They talk about endless and eternal punishment, but look at this insight. Did that come from something from Martin, maybe only the Lord knew or what? That's amazing stuff, at first.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:25:02

The phrase eternal punishment or endless torment, these phrases don't come up in the Bible. They come up seven times in the Book of Mormon, and the Lord ... Now, Martin has had a past where he's checked out a lot of different versions of Christianity. One that he has resonated with recently, in the recent past, has been Universalism. Martin has this feeling that, "Boy, I don't know if I can think of a loving God, who wouldn't eventually save everybody. Yet, the Book of Mormon keeps talking about eternal punishment, eternal damnation, endless

torment. "I don't know about that," and so the Lord is going to say, now ... Martin has had a kind of a guilty past here.

The Lord has called him a wicked man for what he's done, in terms of losing the manuscript, his carelessness there. We've seen, we've talked about that he's had trouble sincerely repenting of his sins. I wonder if there is some lingering feeling, a guilt complex that Martin has that the Lord is addressing here that, "Yes, those phrases come up in the Book of Mormon, but let me explain to you the mystery, Martin. Let me soothe your soul a little on that, and then I'm going to call you to repentance like no other section."

- Hank Smith: 00:26:29 What does the Lord tell him about those phrases, eternal damnation and endless torment? Because, to me, when I read those in scripture, I think of, "That sounds bad. That sounds really bad." Eternal damnation and endless torment. No thanks. Don't sign me up.
- John Bytheway: 00:26:44 Whatever that is, I don't want any.
- Hank Smith: 00:26:46 Yeah. The Lord says, "Wait, wait, wait."
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:26:49 Yeah, Verse 7. He says, again ... Well, it starts in 6. "Nevertheless, it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written endless torment." I could see how you could confuse that, as you mean it goes forever. Then the Lord says in Verse 7, "Again, it's written eternal damnation, wherefore it's more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory." This is intended to motivate you to repentance. "Wherefore, I'll explain the mystery," he says.
- Now, here's the thing, Verse 10. "The mystery of godliness, how great is it? For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment because ..." Here it is, "Endless is my name, so any punishment I give is endless punishment because I am endless. It doesn't mean it doesn't end, it just means it comes from me." Martin, think about that. This is going to be.
- Hank Smith: 00:27:47 It's the capital E. He's like, "Put a capital on that. It's a possessive pronoun. It's my punishment."
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:27:54 Yeah, will ... It's interesting. Do Mormons, do members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, do we believe in an eternal hell that goes on forever and ever? The Lord says, "I

never said that. Torment will end. It's meant to be redemptive. It's meant to work together for my glory, for my name's glory." We'll find out later. Joseph doesn't know this yet but in Section 76, the Lord says, "People will be turned over to the devil for 1,000 years. If they don't repent, they will suffer, even as I did," which is, they're turned over to the power of the devil for 1,000 years.

Then he says, "Then I will redeem them from that, and then they will inherit a kingdom of glory called the terrestrial kingdom." Even the lowest of the kingdoms of glory that Joseph will learn about later is for those who have endured a 1,000-year period of the kind of suffering Jesus is about to describe, but then it ends, then it ends, and hell is emptied, and they inherit a kingdom of glory, which surpasses our understanding, that section says.

- John Bytheway: 00:28:59 This is huge, I think. I think maybe it means a lot to me because for a time, when I was just a kid, I can't even tell you how old I was, just the concept of forever, I couldn't wrap my head around it. Then I thought about people being punished forever, and I couldn't wrap my head around that. This is what Elder Maxwell might call a wonderful flood of light right here. I think too, let's relate it to eternal life, also. Because Moses 139 is immortality and eternal life. "Well, what's the difference? I'm going to live forever either way." No. Eternal life is because his name is eternal is the kind of life that God lives, the most, the greatest kind of life. Is that right?
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:29:47 Right. Amen.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:49 To me, this is such a, "You can breathe, Martin." Like ...
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:29:54 "There's hope for you."
- Hank Smith: 00:29:55 Yeah. "There's hope for you."
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:29:56 "I know you've done some really dumb stuff, but there is hope for people who do dumb stuff," which is, hallelujah, hosanna forever. Maybe, could I just-
- Hank Smith: 00:30:08 Please.
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:30:09 ... do a little walk through of how I like to read this with my own students. I just do a little walk through as if the Lord is just putting his arm around Martin and explaining some things. Could I just do that here for a few minutes?

Hank Smith: 00:30:25 Absolutely.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:30:25 Stop me, let's talk. To me, beginning at the very first verse, Martin needs encouragement, he needs help, and he's starting to buckle under the pressure, his wife, two printers who are saying this is going to fail, he's going to lose everything. There's a bitter cup that Martin is being asked to drink. "Martin, I am alpha and omega, Christ the Lord. Yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the redeemer of the world."

First thing he wants Martin to know about himself. "I, having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father concerning me, having done this that I might subdue all things unto myself. First thing I want you to know, I know the end from the beginning, and I do the will of the Father. I retain now all power. Because of what I have done, I have all power, even to the destroying of Satan, and his works at the end of the world. The last great day of judgment, which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof."

Now this is where Martin might start thinking about Judgment Day. He might start thinking about his own, like, "Oh, shoot. Yeah, that's right." Because the Lord says, "I will judge every man according to his works and the deeds which he has done, and surely every man must repent or suffer." That might be the tagline of Section 19. "You must repent or you will suffer for I, God, am endless and I do not, I revoke not the judgements which I shall pass, Martin. What I judge, it will happen. I don't revoke my judgements at Judgment Day, but woe shall go forth, and weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Yea to those who are found on my left hand."

I laugh because that's what Martin was afraid of. "I've done so much dumb stuff that this is going to be me, he's describing me." Then the Lord explains, "Ah, let me tell you what I mean by that. I say eternal, I say endless to work upon your heart, Martin. I'm letting you into an apostolic secret," he says in Verse 8. "I'll explain to you what I tell my apostles, that I am endless, that this is my punishment. That's all I'm saying. It will come to an end." There is hope for even those who do not repent, actually, to some degree here but now, "You don't want that," so Verse 13. "Martin, wherefore, I command you to repent so you don't suffer. I command you to repent and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant, Joseph Smith, Junior, in my name."

Those commandments would have, well, consistently been since Section 5, "Repent, come humble yourself before the

Lord." Now, at this point, right now, we're talking about the publication of the Book of Mormon. He says, Verse 14, "And it's by almighty power you've received them." Then I imagine him pulling Martin in a little closer, almost forehead to forehead here, and just saying, "Martin, I command you to repent. Repent lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore, how sore you know not. How exquisite you know not, yea how hard to bear, you have no idea, for behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent."

You have to stop here and say, "What was Martin's sin? What is bringing this out?" As we understand the context, we understand here that Martin is struggling in keeping his covenant, his covenant to help this work come forth. He's the only guy who can do it. The way that one of the printer's assistants talked about it, he said, "Martin Harris was the only spoke in the wheel. He was the only one that could make this happen," and here's Jesus saying, "I know how hard it is to do the will of God, Martin. Trust me. If you don't repent of your desires to pull back from doing God's will, it's not going to end well."

"I've suffered for all who will repent, and if they don't repent, they must suffer as I," 17. Then Verse 18, here's this gem of an insight into Christ's soul. "This suffering, which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer, both body and spirit." This was a physical suffering and a spiritual suffering. "And I would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink, Martin, I know what it's like to not want to do the will of God. I didn't want to drink it."

Let that just sink into Martin's soul for a second. Then Verse 19, "Nevertheless, the glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations under the children of men." From Gethsemane to the cross, he partook of the cup, and then he looks back at Martin in the eyes saying, "Wherefore, I command you, again, to repent. There's no excuses, lest I humble you with my almighty power and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken. The punishments that come to those who break their covenants. The punishments that come to those who do not repent of their selfishness."

Then he says, "Lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest degree, yea even in the least degree, you have tasted at the time I withdrew my spirit." I

can't imagine he's talking about any other time than the moment Martin thought he lost his soul because he let the manuscript go. "Do you remember how you felt? Do you remember when there was a complete withdrawal of the spirit of God, and you felt like there was no hope for you? Do you remember that? That's the least bit of what I'm talking about, Martin."

Hank Smith: 00:36:06

"You put your big toe, you just put your tiny toe in the Garden of Gethsemane. You got a tiny taste of that."

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:36:13

I find this so fascinating, that I hear the Lord saying this, "Martin, the salvation of other people is worth sacrificing for." It's so interesting that the Lord is drawing a parallel here between his own atoning sacrifice and Martin's potential sacrifice. It's only a potential sacrifice, at this point, of his farm. Now, if wasn't Jesus making this comparison, we might feel like this a little inappropriate to compare Martin's little human sacrifice with Jesus' incomparable atoning sacrifice, but Jesus is the one making the comparison here, saying, well, I hear the Lord saying, "Our sacrifices are massively different on scale and scope, yes, but they are not different in kind. They are not different in kind." That's important here. "Both of our sacrifices are made so that other people can receive salvation."

Look in Verse 26 he says, again, "I command thee, thou shalt not covet thine own property," speaking of his farm, "But impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God." Why? What's so important about the Book of Mormon? He says in Verse 27, "Which is my word to the gentile and that it soon may also go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites are a remnant. That they may believe the gospel and look not for a Messiah to come, who's already come. They need the Book of Mormon. They need the salvation that will come as they accept Christ from this text. If you don't do this, Martin, if you don't drink your bitter cup, the salvation of other people is on the line here."

This is what draws out in Jesus Christ, this is what draws out his first-hand, his only first-hand account of his atoning sacrifice. The only thing that could get him to pull out this trump card is the Book of Mormon and the salvation of other people that was on the line here. I find that so remarkable. I think maybe then, perhaps it's not inappropriate for us to make the same comparison with other people who sacrifice for the salvation of others. Think of missionaries. Elder Holland's given a great talk about missionaries and the atonement saying, "Sacrificing for the salvation of other people is not always easy."

Think about moms and dads who sacrifice so much to try to help their kids make the right choices, to receive Christ. Is it about them? Is that kind of atonement-like? Absolutely, on its own scale. Think about those who serve in church callings, those who serve in the temple. Are they sacrificing for the salvation of others, time, and talents, and energy? Yes, yes. Anything you do to sacrifice for the salvation of others is a type and shadow of the atonement of Jesus Christ. I might have thought that was an inappropriate comparison to make, but then Jesus makes it here when a farm was on the line, and he says, "I know what's that like."

Hank Smith: [00:39:09](#) Man, Scott. That was just powerful. It really was. When the Lord says, in Verse 15, "Lest I smite you by my wrath, my anger, and your sufferings be sore," I wanted to read something from Elder Maxwell. Sometimes, we read that word "anger" and we think of it as human anger. The way that someone offends me and I flip. I get upset, and I get angry. Here's what Elder Maxwell said. He said, "We do this simply because we are so often angry at a wrong done to us, we assume that this is how it works in God's anger. We assume the same about God's anger."

He says, "No. God's love for us is perfect, and his desire for our happiness is so deep, that his anger is kindled." This signals much more than we realize. God's anger is not kindled because we have harmed him, but because we have harmed ourselves. "Martin, I'm angry because if you don't go through with this, it's going to hurt you, and that makes me angry. The pain you are going to suffer is"-

Dr. Scott Woodw...: [00:40:20](#) That's going to hurt a lot of people who are not going to get the Book of Mormon.

Hank Smith: [00:40:23](#) Right. After reading Elder Maxwell's quote, when I see "anger," I think, "Oh, the Lord's mad at someone for hurting themselves." He's not mad that they hurt him. He's saying, "Oh, I don't want you to hurt yourself." I love the way you took this into a mentor type relationship, because I picture myself with my own children, putting an arm around them, "Let's talk about decisions here for a minute. Let's talk about choices here for a minute." This section comes out of love, a sheer love for Martin Harris, and the Lord coming to his level and saying, "I get it. I understand you." I like how you said, forehead to forehead. "Listen to me."

John Bytheway: [00:41:07](#) I have always loved Verse 16, for lots of reasons but, "For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all," and look at the motive, the reason, "That they might not suffer." That's just

what you're talking about is this all came out of love and care. The option was, "They suffer or I suffer. I suffered these things that they might not suffer if they would repent." He preferred suffering himself than to see us suffer.

Another thing that, I don't know, when you've had a spiritual insight or experience, if you're like me, you can tell people where you were. I was in the Marriott Center in October 29th of 1989, and Elder Henry B. Eyring came and gave a talk called Come Unto Christ. He talked about being on a ship, I think, with Elder Tuttle, Theodore Tuttle, and being taught by him, and going through Section 19, and there's just something that I could ... I bet, even today, I could get you within a couple of rows of where I was sitting because I remember it so well when now President Eyring said that, "Somehow, I'd gotten into my mind that the choice was between repenting or not repenting, and the choice here was repent or suffer."

I don't remember much of the rest of the talk that had such an impression on me. It's in his book now, I just looked it up again, To Draw Closer to God. The talk was called Come Unto Christ, but that idea of postponing repentance, suddenly, he talks about became don't ever do that. It's the choice is not repent or not, it's repent or suffer, and then the kind of suffering the Savior described. That's more of an application for all of us, perhaps, than for Martin, but I will never forget that talk. It's one of the reasons why this section is one of my favorites. Then also, Scott, in Verse 18, we only have a few places in scriptures, as I understand it, where we have the idea of Jesus bleeding at every pore. It's here, it's in Luke, and King Benjamin mentions it too, and isn't that, that's it.

- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:43:34 That's right, that's right. Yeah. Some wonder if Luke 22 is being metaphorical and then here he says, "Not metaphorical."
- John Bytheway: 00:43:43 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:45 Yeah. Thank you for this whole mode of love and care behind this, I think, makes us read it in a more beautiful, tender way.
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:43:54 Isn't it interesting, if we connect that back with Section 18 when he said, "If you want to call people to repentance, you got to have faith, hope, and charity." Boy, do you see Jesus doing that, modeling that here in Section 19.
- Hank Smith: 00:44:05 Oh, yeah.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:44:06 He's not pulling back on the call to repentance at all, but boy, is it just layered with love, and compassion, and empathy.

Hank Smith: 00:44:14 Beautiful. All of this reminds me of Alma 42, where Corianton ... Alma is calling Corianton to repentance, and he's teaching him about the punishment of the sinner. If you guys remember, I'm going to hurry and go there. Corianton, Alma says, "I perceive there is somewhat more which doth worry your mind, which you cannot understand, which is concerning the justice of God in the punishment of the sinner." He goes on to explain the plan of salvation. Very similar to Section 19, Verse 17, where the Lord says, "If they would not repent, they must suffer even as I."

I can see one of my teenagers saying, "Well, that sounds harsh. That sounds terrible," what Alma says about Corianton, "You're concerned about the justice of God in the punishment of the sinner." What we have to remember, I think, is we signed-up for this. We signed-up for a two-option plan. The Lord's not saying, "You must suffer because I want you to." He's saying, "That's the only other option. Either you repent or you take door number two. Those are your two options, and I want you to choose door number one, Martin, and everybody else. I want you to choose repentance so you don't have to suffer. I don't want you to suffer."

Where you might read Verse 17 and go, "Wow. The Lord's really upset." He's not. This is a, "I don't want you to suffer." This comes out of pure love. "You don't want to go down that path. I promise, you don't want to go down that path. Take this path, take this path."

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:45:54 There's an important, I think, theological point to make here, and that is that God is not the one that's going to actually do the punishing. The punishment, if you read carefully, Book of Mormon, here in Section 19 where he says that the punishment, "Remember when you tasted it when I withdrew? Remember when I withdrew my spirit?" The Book of Mormon is very, very big about this. Alma 42's a good spot, Mosiah 16, Abinadi hits this, Lehi hits this, Jacob hits this, is that when you are living in a fallen realm, that the devil has claim on you.

The devil has claim on you, and if God does nothing, then your default position is to be in the power of the devil forever, but God came, Alma 42, he says that, "I came into the world," God himself would come to the world to get us out of that situation. The justice of God in punishing a sinner is totally backward. There's no justice of God in punishing the sinner. Justice is going to play out if God does nothing. If God does nothing, then Satan

will claim us, but if God does something, which is what he's describing here in Verse 16, "I came to the world. I suffered the satanic subjection. I suffered the curse of the law so that you would have a way to escape the satanic subjection, and you'd be able to come into the kingdom of God. I am the way."

We've mentioned, in Section 76, later on, the Lord's going to say, "Those who don't repent will need to be in Satan's power. They will be in his power until the end of the 1,000 year millennium. Then I will still redeem them from that. They will have paid their sins. They will have become clean, having paid for their own sins, and they will inherit the terrestrial kingdom." We got to make sure we don't get that backwards, that, "God, he's making a list, he's checking it twice, and if we don't measure up, boy, he's going to get us." It's the exact opposite.

We are in a pickle, thanks to the fall. We are in a situation where Satan has just claim upon our souls and Jesus has intervened, mercifully, on our behalf. If we will repent, then we can access the grace of what he has done, and be a part of his kingdom, take upon ourselves his name, so that we are now no longer in Satan's power, he no longer has a just claim upon our souls. This is a merciful act. This is not threatening.

- John Bytheway: [00:48:23](#) Just a couple of days ago, my kids were talking about a meme somebody sent them or something, just mocking religion, "Why would Jesus create us so that if we don't follow him, he can punish us?" What you just said here is, that's not how it works at all. He withdrew his spirit, and then we're left to the influence of the adversary.
- Hank Smith: [00:48:46](#) If you read Second Nephi 9, Jacob says, "You want to know what would happen if Jesus never came? You want to know?" You can get in Second Nephi 9. I'll tell you what happens if never comes. He says, "If the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell before the presence of the eternal God and became the devil to rise no more. Our spirits must become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, shut out from the presence of God forever." That's what we signed-up for without ... We signed-up for a fall without an atonement. You can see how much we trusted the Lord in coming here.
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: [00:49:26](#) That's awesome, Hank. That's maybe the most clear description of the Book of Mormon. "This is bad. If Jesus doesn't come, this is bad." Then think about, in the context of that, back to Section 19, Verse 3, as a result of Jesus doing the will of the Father, going through with his atoning sacrifice, look what he says. He

says, "Now I retain all power, even to the destroying of Satan and his works." Through his atoning sacrifice, he has gained the power to destroy Satan's kingdom and to bring the kingdom of God here. This is where this whole plan is going, is to bring the kingdom of God to Earth and kick Satan out, and to release us from his power. This is the whole context of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

- Hank Smith: 00:50:09 I loved section 19 before, but I love it even-
- Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:50:13 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:50:14 I'll never forget, Scott, the image of Jesus with his arm around Martin, forehead to forehead, "Listen to me, brother. Listen to me," and the way he starts the section, says, "I'm serious. This is me talking to you. This isn't Joseph. This is me talking to you, and you've really got to hear me." It's almost like Joseph steps aside and lets Martin and the Lord have a private conversation, the Lord could have with any one of us.
- John Bytheway: 00:50:41 I look at Verse 23, which was actually a youth theme a couple of years ago. For those of you who are listening and not watching, have you ever seen anybody do the kind of gesture of taking two fingers and pointing at their eyes, and then pointing at your eyes? The, "I've got my eyes on you gesture." Then the opposite, and this never happens to Hank, but it happens to me, when my students aren't paying attention, I can point at them and do the opposite, "Hey, you. Look at me." I feel like Verse 23 is a, "Hey, look at me. Look at the me, my, my, me, in there. Learn of me. Listen to my words." Think of all the words Martin's been hearing from everybody else. "Learn of me. Listen to my words. Walk in the meekness of my spirit, and you shall have peace in me."
- When I think of Martin and the decisions he had to make about mortgaging his farm, wanting to take the characters to Charles Anthon, all these things. To me, this kind of comes, the Lord saying, "Martin, one more time, I'm going to tell you. Keep it right here. Look at me. This is where you will find peace," which is another reason I love Section 19, that verse right there.
- Hank Smith: 00:52:03 I feel so blessed to be here because now I've got not just Scott's image with the Lord with his, forehead to forehead with Martin Harris, but now he's got the gestures of, "Martin," because Martin's got Lucy Harris over here yelling at him. He's got the printers yelling at him over here, and he's looking left and right, and the Lord's like, "Martin, right here, right here, right here. Just with me. Focus here, brother. Focus here."

Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:52:26</u>	That is so good. To follow that up, Verse 24, right, John? "The very first thing I want you to learn of me, in case you missed it, I came by the will of the Father and I do his will. Lesson number one, from beginning to end, I do God's will." That's so good.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:52:45</u>	It is. It's so good, and it's like first thing out of his mouth when he appeared in the New World, to the righteous, not just the late Nephites because Lamanites were there, but when he appeared to the righteous, first thing out of his mouth. Elder Holland talked about it, "I'm the light, I'm Jesus Christ. When the prophets testify, it'll come into the world, I'm the light and life of the world, and I have done the will of the Father from the beginning." Elder Holland says, "What's the thing he wants to tell us about himself?" The one thing he wants to tell us is, "I've done the will of the Father from the beginning."
Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:53:16</u>	That might be Jesus' motto, if that's okay to say.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:53:16</u>	Yeah, yeah.
Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:53:19</u>	I think, "Not my will" but "Thy will be done," and that's what he's inviting Martin to do here. "I know your will, Martin. Do God's will. Sell the farm, buddy."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:53:32</u>	Doesn't that remind you of that Lord of the Rings moment where Frodo says to Gandalf, "I wish this had never happened to me. I wish the ring had never come to me," and he said, "So do all who live to see such times." You almost see Martin going, "I just want to be a normal farmer with a normal situation," and the Lord saying, "Don't covet that. Don't covet that."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:53:58</u>	Well, think of Joseph Smith too. "All I wanted to know was what church to join. That's what I ..." Look at the domino effect, and the persecution, and months in jail, and everything else. That's only one side of it, of course, but-
Hank Smith:	<u>00:54:16</u>	I love the way, the excitement with the Lord, how he finishes this section. He's like, "Isn't this wonderful, Martin? Isn't this wonderful?" I still got his arm around him, in my head. "Can you hear this without rejoicing and lifting up your heart with gladness? Isn't this wonderful?"
John Bytheway:	<u>00:54:36</u>	This is, I think, the number one reason why this section is so important to me, personally. I think, probably, the first time, as a teenager, that I felt the spirit reading the scriptures and knew that I did was those last four verses of Section 19.

Hank Smith: 00:54:55 "Pray always and I will pour out my spirit upon you."

John Bytheway: 00:54:59 "I'll pour out my spirit upon you. Great shall be your blessing, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth and corruptableness to the extent thereof." Then, as you said, Hank, look at this. "Can you even read this without rejoicing? You just got the key, the greatest key. Can you even read this without rejoicing and lifting up your heart for gladness?" I remember reading that, I think I was 16, and having a really whoa moment with these verses. That's why I come back to Section 19 again and again, because there's so many good things in here.

Hank Smith: 00:55:36 Yeah, Scott. Maybe you're doing this, I take this image too far but I almost picture at the end, the Lord's rubbing his shoulders, "You ready? You ready? You feeling it? All right. Here we go, good brother. All right?"

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:55:48 Verse 37, right. "Speak freely to all, yea, preach, exhort, declare the truth, even with a loud voice, with a sound of rejoicing, saying, 'Hosanna, hosanna, blessed be the name of the Lord, God.' I just want you to be this force for good, Martin. You have so much to offer, so much to give. Yes, your money. Yes, there's no way Joseph could do this without your money, but I need your voice too. I need your life, I need your commitment. You need to pray to have the spirit, and I want you just to show people the joy, declaring the truth with the sound of rejoicing. They need to hear that in your voice. You are a witness of the Book of Mormon. There are few people like you on the planet, Martin." Well, two others that could be.

John Bytheway: 00:55:48 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:56:30 Yeah.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:56:30 Right? And so, "We need your voice, and that voice should always arc toward repentance."

John Bytheway: 00:56:39 When I think about the property, again, "Pray always. I'll pour out my spirit upon you. That will be better than all of the treasures of the earth, if that's been on your mind. I'll pour out my spirit upon you, and you just got the key to rejoicing and gladness. It's not your property, it's my spirit being poured out on you."

Hank Smith: 00:57:02 Man, this is just good. Yeah, it's just good. I almost think like Peter here, it is good for me to be here.

Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:57:08</u>	Some listeners might be interested in Verse 35. It may be a technicality but he says, "Pay the debt which thou hast contracted with the printer and release thyself from bondage." This actually helps us date this section, that it seems that Martin had already agreed to the terms, but he had not yet arranged for the payment, so he's kind of right in-between. He's right on the edge, "Should I really go through with this? I am suffering." The Lord said, just gives him this little push. Section 19's a little push to Martin, saying, "Yes." Like, "Commit, arrange the payment."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:57:42</u>	The payment is meaning, "You need to sell your farm."
Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:57:46</u>	Yep. "Hand over the deed." That's right. "Hand over the deed." To his amazing credit, on the 25th of August 1829, Martin mortgages his farm and gives Grandin the deed to his farm as payment for the publication, at which point, Grandin says, "Let's do this," and that's when the Book of Mormon starts to roll. It'll be seven months in the making after this, but Martin drinks the bitter cup, to his everlasting credit. Let's no longer know him as the wicked man of Sections 3 and 10, but as the single greatest benefactor to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon for the salvation of mankind. That's Martin Harris, by the end of Section 19.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:58:33</u>	Think of how many souls have been blessed by the Book of Mormon. I'm sure we'll all, every one of us who have will want to thank him, personally.
Dr. Scott Woodw...:	<u>00:58:45</u>	"Cants thou read this without rejoicing?"
John Bytheway:	<u>00:58:48</u>	Yeah, and, "Lifting up thy heart for gladness." This is great stuff. Yeah. One of my favorites, my single favorite right now. Reserve the right ... I mean, by the end of this Follow Him pod, I may have dozens but I come back to this one because of experiences I had with it personally, but boy, some great stuff-
Hank Smith:	<u>00:59:08</u>	Well, yeah. I loved it before but now I love it even more. I'm never going to forget Scott's image of Martin and the Lord having a private conversation.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:59:08</u>	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:59:16</u>	I love how you walked us through that. Dr. Woodward, my friend, Scott. You have been studying the history of this church for, I don't know how old you are. You look young, but at least two decades.

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 00:59:30 Right.

Hank Smith: 00:59:30 There is a myth with some in the church that, "Man, if you learn a lot about church history, you'll probably be packing your bags. You'll be on your way out," and yet, here you are. You know as much as any critic of Joseph Smith, I dare say you know way more than any critic of Joseph Smith. You've studied him. I had a friend just shoot me a message the other day saying, "There's some people I know and love, they leave the church. I'm scared." What does Joseph Smith, the restoration, what does this mean to you, personally? Yes, as a scholar, but also just personally?

Dr. Scott Woodw...: 01:00:07 Yeah. I've had students who have expressed that as we've been starting to learn church history. I had a student, I remember, it was actually at BYU. He waited after class one day. He said, "Can I talk with you?" I said, "Sure." We were talking about something. I think we were talking about the Kirtland Apostasy, and I was just going into the details of the apostles, and why some of them had struggled. He said, "I stopped taking notes about halfway through the class, and I was just mesmerized," and he said, "By the history." He said, "My grandpa left the church because he started studying the history of the church, and here I am caught between two places. I want to learn the history, but I know people who've left the church because they study it." He said, "What advice would you have for me?" We had a great conversation.

In the midst of that conversation, I remember bringing up Richard Turley. He's a historian of the church. He said, "The problem with people in learning church history is not that they know too much church history. It's that they don't know enough. They don't know enough. They get a little taste, they get a little scared. They get a fact out of context, and then they start to struggle and they feel like, 'Oh, I've been lied to. Oh my goodness. I don't know. What else haven't ...'" The cure for that kind of feeling, I have found, is to study deeper. Go deeper. Get more into the history, get more into the context. Learn more about these people's lives.

At the end of the day, for my own study, my own experience, I can't speak for everybody, but my own experience has been that Joseph and the restoration, they come out just fine. They come out great, actually. As I've studied church history, it has been confirmed again and again that there is plenty of both human and divine elements at play. There's an interesting mixture, and so I would say to allow for that. For me, speaking as Scott Woodward, I love two quotations that have helped me

with my own testimony, the way I think about my testimony. I'm not a big feeling guy, all right? I have feelings, but I don't base my testimony on my feelings completely.

I felt great comfort when I read, I came across Elder Orson Pratt. He said, "True faith is founded on true evidence. The greater the evidence, the greater will be the faith resulting from that evidence," so good. Then Elder Talmage, he said, "From trustworthy evidence, rightly interpreted, true faith will spring. The foundation of faith in God is a sincere belief in him, as sustained by evidence." Elder Hafen, he brings up three types of evidence. As I think about my own testimony, boy, all three of these matter to me. He said, one of them is your personal feelings. One of them is logic and reason. One of them is personal experience. Three sides of a testimony triangle.

As I think about the evidence that I've come across in my own study and efforts to live the gospel, imperfectly, thank god for repentance, but as I've gone through my own experience, Hank, I think about that. Have I had feelings that confirm the truthfulness? Have I felt peace? I could tell you with 100% confidence, I love the man that I am when I live the teachings of Jesus Christ as they've come through Joseph Smith, as I keep the covenants that I've made that have come through Joseph Smith's efforts. The fruit is so good, my personal experience with living the gospel is good, it is beautiful, it is peace-filled.

As far as logic and reason, I think about Joseph Smith and I think, the more I get to know him, the more I agree with the Lord. Can I share my favorite scripture about Joseph Smith? Section 124, Verse 1. This comes as something of maybe a backhanded compliment to Joseph Smith. The Lord says this about Joseph. He said, quote, D&C 124 Verse 1, "Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant, Joseph Smith. I am well pleased with your offering and acknowledgments which you have made; for unto this end have I raised you up, that I might show forth my wisdom through the weak things of the earth. Joseph, you are my object lesson of what I can do through weak people."

The more I learn about Joseph, the more I'm like, "That is so true." There's plenty of human there, but there's plenty of divine elements at play. You're going to see both the human and the divine with Joseph. The Book of Mormon is probably the greatest miracle Joseph Smith ever performed, that God was able, through that weak servant, to bring forth that book. I am amazed, the deeper I go into the Book of Mormon, then add to that the Doctrine and Covenants. Then add to that the

Ordinances of the Temple and the complexity and the beauty of scripture, of my covenants, and the way that all of that collectively then draws me to Christ.

I think logic and reason, there's plenty of that. Personal feelings, definitely. Personal experiences, living the gospel of Jesus Christ, absolutely. I love Joseph Smith. I believe he's a bonafide prophet of God. A marvelous mix of the human and the divine, happening in him. I'm grateful for what he's done for me in terms of helping me find hope and peace in Christ. That has been Joseph Smith's greatest contribution in my life.

Hank Smith:

01:05:42

Amen. It reminds me of Brigham Young. What does he say? "I want to shout, 'Hosanna,' to think that I knew [crosstalk 01:05:50] Joseph Smith, the prophet." It's got to be because of what you said, because he showed me the Savior. He taught me ... Man, Scott. Today has just been ... Every time I finish one, I think, "Ah, man. Can we do that again? Can we do that again? I don't know if I can feel the excitement again from this interview," and then I end up with the exact same feeling every time. The excitement of now I'm going, "Okay, well, Section ... With Dr. Griffiths, Section 14 through 17, those are the greatest sections. Wait, forget that. Section 18 is now the greatest. No, Section 19 is the greatest section." I mean, I think Verse 39 of Section 19, can you not go through all this study without rejoicing and lifting up your heart for gladness? I put a big exclamation point, no. I cannot. I cannot.

Dr. Woodward, thank you for your time. We want to thank you, our listeners, for joining us today. We want to give a special thanks to our producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and of course, we couldn't do any of this without our amazing production crew, David Perry and Lisa Spice. Join us next time on Follow Him, as we jump into the next sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. See you soon.