



*“The Fall of Adam and Eve”*

## Show Notes & Transcripts

### Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Sunday.

### Podcast Episode Descriptions:

#### Part 1:

How did Joseph Smith mend the rift between the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament? Dr. Shon Hopkin discusses how the biblical themes of a fortunate Fall, covenants, and sacrifice prepare us to understand the time of Jesus Christ and our own.

#### Part 2:

Dr. Hopkin returns to discuss the heroism of both Eve and Adam, the love story that is apparent in the Garden of Eden, new insights into our personal Fall, and new applications in the Cain and Abel story.

### Timecodes:

## Part 1

- 00:01 Welcome to Part I
- 02:11 Introduction to Dr. Shon Hopkin
- 03:59 Background to this week's lesson material
- 07:52 Ancient worldview and the example of casting lots
- 10:00 The Ancient Near Middle Eastern people believed under the earth was watery chaos
- 11:42 The differences between Genesis and the Pearl of Great Price
- 14:56 We are nerdy at followHIM (Documentary Hypothesis)
- 17:25 Adam and Eve are real people and their lives were symbolically important and literal vs. figurative
- 24:29 Does the Christian world use the Hebrew Bible (and call it OT or Hebrew Bible)?
- 31:15 The Law and the Prophets are books in the Hebrew Bible
- 34:48 Help meet is discussed
- 38:51 Early dating and marriage and mirroring one another vs. later in a relationship
- 42:25 The Serpent is introduced and the ambivalence of the symbolism of the serpent
- 44:36 Dr. Hopkins personal story about his wife and snakes in Texas
- 47:27 Dr. Hopkin defines multivalency
- 50:05 The number of words Lucifer uses vs. Jehovah
- 53:42 Eve as the perfect hero or as the progressive hero
- 1:01:10 Complimentary opposites
- 1:02:09 Adam models ownership
- 1:06:17 The Fall is a disaster without the Savior and the Atonement
- 1:12:41 End of Part I

## Part 2:

- 00:03 Welcome to Part II
- 00:07 The value of the Book of Mormon
- 01:16 Genesis 3 and Eve possibly knowing they weren't intended to always stay in the Garden of Eden
- 03:59 Adam and Eve make final decision together
- 06:32 God re-leaves Adam and Eve together
- 09:48 Satan didn't understand the mind of God
- 15:27 The first rule of mortality: we will have to work
- 17:00 Satan convinces us we can sin and get what we want
- 23:41 Coats of skins
- 33:25 Moses has much more information than Genesis about Eve, Adam, and their children
- 36:02 Men are becoming carnal and devilish
- 37:03 Cain wants Abel's flocks without work
- 39:58 God warns Cain that sin "lieth at the door"
- 43:21 Religion and God never intend to control or coerce

- 46:05 First person POV to Third Person POV
- 46:53 Creation, Fall, and Redemption through Covenants is a pattern in the scriptures and our lives
- 50:20 Dr. Shon Hopkin shares his experiences as a scholar and as a person of faith
- 56:04 End of Part II

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## Biographical Information:



Born in Denton, Texas, as the son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin, Shon Hopkin attended Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Texas and graduated from Orem High School. He received a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Brigham Young University in Near Eastern Studies with a focus on Hebrew Bible. He received a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew studies with a focus on medieval Hebrew, Arabic, and Spanish literature. Before coming to Brigham Young University, he taught in Seminaries and Institutes for four years at Timpview High School (1997–2001), four years at Provo High School (2001–5), and six years at the Austin Institute of Religion (2006–11). At BYU he has served as Chair of the Book of Mormon Academy and Chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council. He is one of the principal organizers of the ongoing Jewish & Latter-day Saint Academic Interfaith Dialogue project. He has authored, co-authored, and edited numerous books and articles on Isaiah, the Hebrew Bible, Latter-day Saint beliefs, and medieval literature, including *Opening Isaiah: A Harmony* (with Ann Madsen); *Abinadi: He Came Among them in Disguise* (edited, Book of Mormon Academy); *Mormonism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (with Robert Millet, as part of Bloomberg Press' Guide for the Perplexed series); and the forthcoming *Understanding Your Neighbor: Judaism* (with Rabbi Mark Diamond, as part of the Widtsoe Foundation's series). He and his wife have four children and one grandchild.

Classes taught: Book of Mormon, Old Testament, New Testament, Isaiah, Pearl of Great Price, Book of Mormon for Non-Members

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Languages: Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Welcome to followHim. A weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:00:11	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:00:15	As together, we FollowHIM.
Hank Smith:	00:00:20	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHim. My name is Hank Smith, I'm your host. I'm here with my zazzy co-host John Bytheway. Welcome John.
John Bytheway:	00:00:29	Please define zazzy.
Hank Smith:	00:00:32	I'm glad that you asked that because Sarah who is 13-years-old from Las Vegas, Nevada wrote to me through our followhim.co website and she said, I think you should call John zazzy because it's a basic cross between zany, pizzaz and snazzy to create an adjective, listen to this, "Suggesting that something is too great to be confined to one word." I thought that was just a beautiful description.
John Bytheway:	00:01:00	My goodness. I think I need to stop and write in my journal for a second.
Hank Smith:	00:01:04	Sarah from Las Vegas called you zazzy.
John Bytheway:	00:01:07	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:01:07	Great.

John Bytheway: 00:01:08 And Hank, I'm going to call you Hank Cousin Smith today. I got an email from Jared Bytheway, who said, Hi John. Hank's first cousin, Lance Smith has a daughter, Rachel, who married my son, Brendan. I'm your second cousin. So Brendan is your second cousin, once removed. I'll leave it to you to come up with a clever way to say how you are related to Hank. So we are now related.

Hank Smith: 00:01:37 Through a second cousin's marriage. That's fantastic, John this is great.

John Bytheway: 00:01:42 Good to see you, Cuz.

Hank Smith: 00:01:42 Since you are family, do you think you could loan me 50 bucks, right? John, I've been excited for today for a long time. Our guest knows that I've been hinting at having him on, talking to him about having on and it's finally here. It feels like a Disneyland day to me. Tell us who's with us.

John Bytheway: 00:02:03 Hank, we have Shon Hopkin with us today and he is our boss.

Hank Smith: 00:02:09 He is.

John Bytheway: 00:02:11 So I'm going to sit up really straight today and let me share with our listeners who Shon is. He was born in Denton, Texas. The son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin. Shon Hopkin attended Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Texas and graduated from Orem High School. So Shon received a bachelor's degree and Master's degree from Brigham Young University in Near Eastern studies with a focus on the Hebrew Bible. He received a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew Studies with a focus on Medieval Hebrew, Arabic and Spanish literature. Wow.

John Bytheway: 00:02:48 Before coming to BYU, he taught in the Seminaries and Institutes for four years at Timpview High School, four years at Provo High School and six years at the Austin Institute of Religion. At BYU, he has served as the Chair of the Book of Mormon Academy and the Chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council. He's one of the principal organizers of the ongoing Jewish & Latter-day Saint Academic Dialogue Project. He has authored, co-authored and edited numerous books and articles on Isaiah, the Hebrew Bible, Latter-day Saint beliefs in medieval literature. And Shon, what is your current assignment? What's the official title?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:03:26 I'm serving as Department Chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture right now. A joyous responsibility.

Hank Smith: 00:03:32 Yeah. So Shon, the lesson this week is both in Genesis and the Book of Moses. John and I want to turn this over to you. You're the expert. I do have a question for you to start. Since we're just starting the year out, how do you suggest to your students at BYU? How do you approach ancient text like the Book of Genesis? I don't know, is your approach different than you say with the Doctrine and Covenants that we studied last year?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:03:59 Well, I think so. So with Restoration texts you have a prophet giving them to us in the latter days. We receive them as they're provided of course primarily by Joseph Smith. And so we get them in English language that isn't exactly a translation in the way that we would normally think of it. It's revealed text. And with the Hebrew Bible, with the Old Testament, you get this really ancient text that is then translated into English. There's a variety of really good translations. Of course, we primarily use the King James Version but there are other really excellent translations that can help as well. And I think a little bit if we feel that we are on foreign territory.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:04:46 In one sense, people have always been people so these are sort of the same humans that we are. In another sense, there are some real differences in worldview and in approach that we sort of think, "Oh, well they're going to interpret things exactly the same as I would." And that's just not true. They live in a different part of the world, they live in a different time. We are sort of post-Enlightenment thinkers and it changes a lot as we come at these texts the way that we view the world around us. So keeping that in mind we don't impose too much. We want things to always look exactly the same and we want to project ourselves onto them but there are just differences.

Hank Smith: 00:05:29 They just live in a different world. When I teach a little bit of Genesis in Religion 250, I frequently try to at least dabble in the idea of just the way they experience the sun, the sky, the planets is totally different than the way you and I experience those things. They come from Egypt and Babylon which are influencing the way they see the world around them, right?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:05:54 That's absolutely true. A big one as you're studying the Old Testament this year is a very significant difference in worldview because of our modern thinking. We are less comfortable describing God as doing everything that happens that is out of our control. We sort of look for other explanations but in the ancient world, if a people's destroyed well, God destroyed that

people. If something big happens, well God did it. God caused it and we are much less comfortable if you listen to modern prophets. We just don't talk that way as much. So there's a difference in worldview and we might assume that our worldview is the best worldview. It's the correct worldview or that because it's in the Bible, their worldview... I don't know which worldview is better.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:06:43 They both have strengths. God is all powerful and so you can actually speak. If God allows something to happen, then you could say that he caused it to happen because he could have prevented it. Or so we sort of have this modernist bias. Our worldview is better but then sometimes we have this biblical... Well, because it's in the Bible then that worldview is better. And the tension there is something to keep in mind. It'll help you navigate some places where you think, wow, would God do this? Does he act this way? I don't think God does these kinds of things. That's a worldview issue. God is God, God doesn't change. And so the God we believe in is the same God of the Hebrew Bible or of the Old Testament but it can be tricky as we're reading words written by someone who lived in a very different time, a very different place.
- John Bytheway: 00:07:30 That's very helpful when we read about things like casting lots. It seems to us like a game of chance but to them, it was this is how we can discover what God's will is. And that's really helpful to say, "Yeah that worldview was everything that happens. God did that outcome." I'm glad you said that.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:07:52 Let me just say a quick word about that, John. Yeah. That's absolutely right. The casting of lots is a good one. We want to think, oh, they're casting lots. Well, that means they're doing a sustaining vote, exactly the same way we do today. And they might be. That's not impossible but probably not. They sort of saw what's the best way for God to give me an answer that my own feelings aren't influencing that answer. Well you cast lots and then God can control that. When I'm involved in the decision-making process, maybe it's my decision. And of course we are involved. We're trying to learn how to feel the Spirit, how to receive revelation and how to be involved in that process. But you could understand the value of saying, "No, I want God to tell me. And so how am I going to do that? Well, I'm going to pick a stone out of a bag and then God will help me pick the correct one." So to speak, right?
- John Bytheway: 00:08:45 Yeah. Coming into this is letting them speak from their worldview. And Hank, you shared the opening line from a British novelist who said, "The past is like a foreign country, they

do things differently there." And we were using that to look at the world of 1830 and 1840. Imagine going back to a few 1000 BC, that's a really foreign country. That's like another planet. So this is a worldview that is even more different than the one we've discussed in Doctrine and Covenants.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:09:19 That is so true. It comes through in every sentence. And we get a little confused because it's translated into English and so it just sounds like it's... Well, the King James Version doesn't so much sound like it's our next-door neighbor unless you have a really archaic next door neighbor. But every sentence there's some truth to that. That there's a sort of a difference... They walk out the door and in one sense it's the same world and in one sense it's a different world. Let me just add one more that may be helpful because I'm here today so I'll take my shot at it. That is the idea of Sheol or the World of the ... Spirits World. Part spirits, what we would think of as the Spirit World.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:10:00 To them was in the earth, was under the earth and it was watery. It was sort of a watery space because they've got rivers that spring up out of the earth and they could sort of see a lot of evidence that the underworld was a watery place. And so you get this sense of sort of chaos, of death but then things that can then spring forth to make life. And watery areas like seas were a realm of chaos that humans don't really control. So when God creates the earth, then he brings up order out of that chaos. So the chaos isn't all bad but it's like a watery birth.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:10:45 Just like a baby is born out of water then you get life that comes out of the chaos. It's uncontrollable. So God is going to make order out of all that. He brings life out of death, he brings life out of chaos. And then you see Moses parting the waters, having power over the waters. Then you see Jesus walking on the water in the New Testament, having power over the waters. Jonah descends into the waters and then he comes up out of the waters. You start seeing it everywhere and it's pretty helpful to have some guidance through that ancient world.
- Hank Smith: 00:11:21 I see. This is why we have people like Shon here, John.
- John Bytheway: 00:11:24 Yeah, this is great.
- Hank Smith: 00:11:26 Is there anything else you might say to our listeners to say, "Hey, when you're reading this, this year keep this in mind." You feel like you've-

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:11:32 I don't know that you want me to go any longer than that. If people are listening to this while they drive, we want them to stay awake.

John Bytheway: 00:11:39 Keep your hands at 10 and 2.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:11:40 ... make the destination. Yes.

Hank Smith: 00:11:42 So Shon, with all this in mind this is perfect. Let's jump into our lesson. Genesis 3-4, Moses 4-5. Where would you suggest we start? What's the difference between these two? By the way, as I approach them they're going to sound a lot alike. Genesis 3-4, Moses 4 and 5.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:11:56 They are very similar. One of the main differences that you get in the Pearl of Great Price that we will probably dig into before we're all done here is you get a little bit more when Satan shows up. And so it digs into the nature of the Serpent and you get a little bit more of a pre-mortal sense of who the Serpent is which is really nice I think. So a good place to start is in the transition from the Creation account into what we often think of as the account of the Fall because there is some crossover, there's some transitioning that happens there. Hank, you asked if there's anything else worldview wise about the Bible. So let me say something about the Creation account that may be helpful. A couple of things about the Creation account, we are talking about a different worldview.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:13:00 So the way the Creation account sort of developed in both traditional Christian and the Jewish understanding is that God is creating out of nothing. Creating *ex nihilo*. He's speaking and things all of a sudden just pop into existence because God is all powerful and he controls all things and that also means that he brings them out of nothingness, into somethingness. And the biblical authors don't seem to be describing that. They seem to instead be describing, organizing something and this is very similar to the way Joseph Smith would teach this. It's really cool actually for Latter-day Saints because the way Joseph Smith talks about cCreation, that it is instead an organization. The way the Book of Abraham talks about it is actually what's there in the biblical text that he's working with things that may already be existent to organize them. Almost like you build a table, you create a table.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:13:59 Well, but it's got wood that... Or you create a company. So you give it meaning and order, you define its roles. Here's what it's going to do. You place it in the right place and this is the act of creating or organizing. The Hebrew word *bara*, if you look up a

Hebrew lexicon, you'll see to cut something out of something else. To shape, to form. And so you get this sense of things being set up. And then it starts from there. So we've just come out of this. I'm giving things order and purpose and almost immediately things start to behave a little bit differently. Choice starts to come into play. The other thing that I would say that's important is if you are... If I can just talk sort of nerdy Bible study stuff for just a second, if you-

- Hank Smith: 00:14:56 We like nerdy here at followHIM.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:14:59 If you are a Bible study scholar who is pretty highly focused on what would be called the Documentary Hypothesis, then you actually believe that there are a bunch of different manuscripts around that then are spliced together by a later editor and that you have someone tying those things together. So they would sort of see, you've got two creation accounts going on here. And then I think for some latter-day saints, they would say, "No. What we see, what many latter-day saints see is sort of a general creation account and then a very specific creation account focused on Adam and Eve." And then it's that Adam and Eve story that transitions into the fall.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:15:46 So you sort of get in Genesis 1, I'm creating man and woman. And then all of a sudden, by the end of Genesis 2, it's almost like you're recreating. Wait, there's no woman there yet. He created the male and female, "Created he them." And then you get halfway through Genesis 2 and he's creating the woman again. You get two different accounts. And one way of reading that is, well it really is two different accounts that were spliced together. And then I think for many Latter-day Saints, "No, he's just repeating what he's doing. He's telling it from a different angle." And then I would add there's some multi valency.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:16:23 So we are going to give some interpretations of what's going on here in the Fall but I hope it's just... This is just one reading or two readings, the power of the Creation story. So much of which is likely figurative teaching us lessons. Adam and Eve were real people. That's very important for us as Latter-day Saints. Joseph Smith was very clear on that. Adam is someone who actually shows up and talks to you. He's a real human being, a real child of God. The head of the human family, Eve and Adam are. But the idea is that the story is told in a way that it gives you different things if you come at it from different angles. So there's a variety of readings. And if somebody says, "Ah, I don't like this reading that they're giving." Then there are other ways to read this. And so I think we should continue to keep this as a living and alive story for us throughout our lives

and it'll produce different things at different times in very powerful ways, very positive ways.

- John Bytheway: 00:17:25 I like that you're emphasizing that for us, for our theology. Adam and Eve's not a fable. The people, Adam and Eve, we're real people.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:17:35 We've got this sense that the Bible's an ancient document and that there have been fingers tinkering with it but that it's also divinely inspired. And so we're maybe a little bit more open to understanding the Bible and less strictly every word is exactly what it's supposed to be as some might view it. And yet the Bible figures, Adam and Eve are real people who show up in vision to prophets in the latter-days. And so it's not fable in the sense that this is just a nice story. And yet at the same time, it is a powerful story. In our rush to focus in on, no they're real people. We don't want to lose sight of the fact that there are lessons that can be learned, metaphorical meanings.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:18:26 So just a couple of examples along those lines, Elder McConkie said, "Well, I don't know if there was actually a fruit. The fruit's probably figurative." Then you think, whoa, what is the fruit? I don't know and maybe there was a fruit but the fruit isn't necessarily the point. What's the message that's there? President Kimball talked about the rib. That Eve is created out of a rib. I often ask my students, "Do men have one less rib than women?" And I'll get a third of them to be like, "Yeah, they do." And of course they don't. We've got the same number of ribs and that's a figurative story. And we'll talk about that in just a moment but what is figurative and what's literal. Then you say, "Tell me, which is which?" And I don't know. What's important is Adam and Eve were real and there is a Fall.
- John Bytheway: 00:19:25 Yeah. I remember when I was on my mission, it was a pretty exciting day when the end sign came, when I was on my mission in the Philippines. And I think I can remember it was June of 82, "Christ and the Creation" by Elder McConkie And I think that's where he talked about it. And he said, "They partook of the fruit or at least complied with whatever laws were necessary to bring about a change in their bodies." Or something. And I was like, "Whoa." So I liked the way you said that. Adam and Eve, real people. The story, I don't know. We're being taught a lot of things in the story but what were... Our anchor, Adam and Eve were real people. And then we discovered from the Book of Mormon and there was a Tower of Babel and there was a Noah. And these other people that were real and aren't just stories.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:20:11 Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. I think that's really important.

Hank Smith: 00:20:14 Maybe it would be safe to say that these accounts are not how God does things but why he does things.

John Bytheway: 00:20:22 Well, I've heard Robert Millet say that, "The Bible tells us what happened. Book of Mormon," like 2nd Nephi 2, "tells us why it happened." Another way to look at that.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:20:33 Often when I'm teaching Hebrew Bible and teaching Old Testament, students will say, "Is Jonah... Was he really swallowed by a whale?" Et cetera, et cetera. "Did this really happen to Job?" And my sort of standard maybe wishy washy response is, "Well, I actually do take them as literal." And then if I'm up in heaven and there's no... Jonah's like, "No. The whale thing? That was just figurative." Then I'm like, "Okay, thanks for letting me know, Jonah." But I don't get hung up too much on whether it was or not. What I really care about is what's the message that's being portrayed? So I sort of start with this. Yeah, there are miracles, there are things I don't understand. There are things that I don't want to say, "Well, I'm smart enough to know exactly what's literal and exactly what's figurative."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:21:21 So, I sort of start with, well I take Jonah and his story as a real person, a real story. And there's people who are listening who are like, "Well, you idiot. Obviously he was swallowed by a whale or obviously he wasn't swallowed by a whale." Okay, fine. What I do want to do is make sure I get to the why. I get to what's going on? What's being communicated? Because ancient cultures did communicate things differently than we do. We take a very, again, a very Enlightenment approach to our storytelling where there's got to be what we would view as an accuracy of the details. And ancient people often, it would be more important the accuracy is in the message that's being conveyed. That's what really matters. Who cares about the little details, is the message true?

John Bytheway: 00:22:14 Sometimes I'll for my students make a continuum of an architect and an artist. And an architect, super specific. Everything has to be exact and pre-planned out. And architects can be artists, I don't want to offend any architects out there. But sometimes the scripture writers are so beautiful and are doing it artistically. And there's combining a little bit. When Matthew is, "There were 14 generations from Adam to David." He's really into the number 14 trying to teach us Jesus was the son of David. So it's being a little bit of an artist there to make his genealogies fit to give us the message, Jesus is the son of David. So architect or artist or maybe somewhere in between there, sometimes.

Hank Smith: 00:23:01 I've told my students who say, "Well, I don't think Jonah being swallowed by a whale is scientifically possible. I don't think it's scientifically possible for the earth to be flooded." Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus? And they say, "Well, yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:23:12 Yeah, you want a big one?

Hank Smith: 00:23:14 Guess what? We've stepped outside the realm of what science can tell us once we believe in that. So I think you're right, Shon. Whether it's literal or figurative, doesn't really matter. Could God do it? Could God put Jonah in a whale? Of course he could. Could he flood the earth? Of course he could, he's God. But let's get the message.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:23:33 Yeah. Well and back to John's point, there can be this sort of slippery scale where what we don't want is to end up where it's just... The Bible's just a nice story. That's not how Latter-day Saints tends to view this. That's certainly not how Joseph Smith who is seeing ancient prophets. And you get to the point where it's all just a nice story and all of a sudden it loses potentially a lot of its... Not everybody in the world views it that way. No, the Bible can be very powerful and just be a story but for Latter-day Saints. Yeah, some of it's figurative, some of it's literal but these are real people and they had real lives, so.

Hank Smith: 00:24:16 Awesome.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:24:16 Good.

Hank Smith: 00:24:17 John, I have one more question for you before you jump in. I hint to this in my class and I don't know if it's true. So I better check with somebody.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:24:27 I've never done that.

Hank Smith: 00:24:29 Yeah. Has most of the Christian world given up on the Old Testament? Because I've heard that. And so I say, "Well, a lot of people just don't read it anymore in the Christian world." Is that true?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:24:42 I would really think it just really depends. There are of course so many varieties and these terms get really tricky. But if you want to use Liberal Protestantism, that sort of really has come to just these nice allegories but the story starts with Jesus. I sat in an interfaith experience where another Christian preacher... We were talking about the tabernacle and he basically said, "None of this matters. Why do we even care? The power starts with

Jesus, that's where the strength is and anything before Jesus is passe. It's old, it's done away with, it's subsumed in Christ."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:25:27 And I thought, well, there's part of that, that really resonates with me and part of that really does not resonate for me as a Latter-day Saint. Joseph Smith, it was so important to him to view and to show the overarching unified pattern of the plan of God. That God is always God and so you get latter-day prophets and you get early-day and you get middle, Meridian-day prophets. And so that's a big deal for Latter-day Saints. It is a bigger deal for us than for many I would say. But there's certainly Christians who care deeply about the Hebrew Bible, about the Old Testament and who continue to focus there and know at least as well as we do. Of course, that's a very generalized statement so yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:26:13 So you're telling our audience don't skip this year? Don't just say—
- John Bytheway: 00:26:17 Yeah.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:26:19 Listen. Yeah, you got me. I'll just soapbox but I won't take too long to do it. To understand the Book of Mormon and then what happens in what we call the New Testament or the New Covenant and Doctrine and Covenants, I teach Isaiah often. And there's so much of Isaiah's words that the Lord uses in doctrine and covenants and that just have meaning and richness. If you want to understand how Nephi got to be Nephi then the Old Testament is where you see it. So you've got this so much of what we care about and talk about and live out as Latter-day Saints is connected to the ancient world of the Hebrew Bible of the Old Testament.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:27:08 Prophets, patriarchs, temples, scattering of Israel and gathering of Israel in the last days, covenants and covenant theology, covenant making. Just over and over and over again. You say, "Well, why do Latter-day Saints care about these? I don't see these as being terribly important in the New Testament." But it's this unified program of God that spans both Old Testament, New Testament. Phil Barlow did a really nice article. He's a Latter-day Saint thinker where he said, "Joseph's prophetic project was to heal a broken fractured reality. That includes the fracture between the Old Testament and New Testament that had occurred in Christianity, the fractures in families, the fractures in the Old World and the New World. The East and West and to bring it into harmony and unity to bind it all together and to bring it to life through God's power." So this is a big deal for us as Latter-day Saints. It's part of what makes us

who we are. And let me just make sure that I emphasize this idea of the Scattering of Israel and the Gathering of Israel.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:28:16 This is emphasized over and over by Old Testament prophets that this is going to be a reality and that then these latter-day Israelites will spring up almost out of the dust of the ground and will multiply. And this is where this imagery and Isaiah comes from. You have to broaden your tents, you need to move your stakes and strengthen those down. Lengthen out the cords. I'm gathering Israel in the last days. And of course, President Nelson cared a little bit about this. He's emphasized this in ways that I think a lot of times our students think, "Eh, why are we talking about this?" We're so oriented to our personal salvation story in the last... It's just that we're very individualistic in our modern society.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:29:02 But this prophetic view of what God is doing with the peoples of the world and how he is pulling... He cares about communities and he cares about individuals and it is so satisfying for an Old Testament scholar like me to hear President Nelson emphasizing these biblical themes and making sure they stay present with us. That they don't disappear from our thinking, from our theology, from the way that we view the world. These are biblical themes that can be ignored and our modern-day prophet is making sure we don't ignore those powerful themes.

Hank Smith: 00:29:41 That's one thing I've learned as a New Testament teacher. If you want to understand the New Testament, understand the Old. Because so much of what happens in Jesus' life relates to the Old Testament. Oh, I was going to ask you a quick question Shon. You've used the term Hebrew Bible. Maybe all of our listeners might not know what you're saying when you just say that word, that term Hebrew Bible.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:30:03 So one of the reasons I am sensitive to that difference in language is that as Latter-day Saints, we tend to use Old Testament as sort of the Christian way of speaking about the two books of the Bible. Because I'm engaged so heavily in that with my Jewish friends, I recognize that what some Christians mean when they say Old Testament is it's a pejorative, it's almost an insult like, well that's the stuff that doesn't matter. New Testament is the new and living stuff. So that old, it means, eh. Passe or done away with or unimportant. And of course they don't have... Well, they've got our New Testament but they don't use it as their scriptural text, as their sacred text. And so Hebrew Bible, when I say Hebrew Bible I'm not trying to talk about the Hebrew of the Bible. It's the language they use when we say the Old Testament. And I'm just a little bit oddly

sensitive to that. I'm a Hebrew studies guy in my PhD work as well which is probably-

- Hank Smith: 00:31:05 Which is fantastic. So when you say Hebrew Bible, it means in our language it would be the Old Testament but hey, let's use the term Hebrew Bible since it's the Jews' sacred scripture.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:31:15 That's sort of why you hear me saying both so that I... And I probably just... Pick one, Shon and it'll be fine. But yeah, so the Hebrew Bible is basically synonymous with the Old Testament. *Tanakh* is sort of a technical word that Jewish readers would often use. The Hebrew word that actually is *Torah* which is the first five books also known as the Pentateuch. *Nevi'im* that's the TA, *Torah*. NA, *Nevi'im* and KA is *Ketuvim* or the writings. And so *Tanakh* is the *Torah*, the *Nevi'im* and the writings and that's basically the same as our Old Testament.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:03 Could you maybe connect that to when Jesus talks about the Law and the Prophets? So which one of those would be each one? Because I know our listeners probably heard that and have wondered what that means.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:32:15 Yeah. So the Law of course is the first five books. That's the way they would understand the *Torah* or the Pentateuch as Christians often call it. Those first five books that are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and that's what he's talking about. And that's where you get the description of the Mosaic Covenant or the Mosaic Law, the Law of Moses. And then the *Nevi'im* or the Prophets, he's actually talking about a division in the Bible is what you're signifying John and you're absolutely right. The Law and the Prophets. These are two different segments of the Hebrew Bible. Interestingly enough, we divided a little bit differently as Christians, the King James Version at least does where you've got the Pentateuch and then you've got historical writings. 1 Kings, II Kings, 1 Samuel, II Samuel. Those are included in the Prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible. And then you get the Writings. That's Psalms and we call those the Wisdom books. Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs. Yeah, exactly. Just a little bit of a different way of thinking about the way those books are organized and what they mean.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:26 Yeah. I think it's been really helpful when for example Jesus is asked, "What's the great commandment in the law? Love God, love your neighbor. On these two hang all the law and the prophets. For them to see, oh, he's talking about books, he's talking about their scriptures, the Law and not the Prophets like, oh that's what Isaiah said. But the Prophets were a set of books

and that... The light goes on when they see that I think. He's talking about books there, especially when there's verse in the New Testament that says the Law and the Prophets were until John. Sounding like God doesn't have any more prophets. Well, no he is talking about a set of books there. Am I getting that right?

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:34:05 You're getting that absolutely right. In fact, sometimes the point is made when it says the end of the prophets, sometimes as Christians and as latter-day Saints we sort of, "Oh, well they're saying there are no more prophets." But they're just saying, "This is the end of the section of the books that are written by prophets." Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:21 That's what I wanted, yeah.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:34:22 Awesome. Good. That's really helpful.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:24 I think we've had a great intro to the Old Testament. Little lesson here.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:34:28 A very lengthy intro.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:29 No, no, no but it's awesome because here we are starting a new year and you're giving us a skill set for our listeners to come in and to use in future lessons, not just this one.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:40 So Shon, this has just been wonderful. Where would you like to jump in and take us into the text?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:34:48 We're going to go back into Genesis 2 and take a running head start to get into Genesis 3 because there's some crossover that I think helps set up the account of the Fall right at the end of Genesis 2. So go all the way back to verse 18 where we get the description of Eve. "The Lord God said: It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make and help meet for him." Now I want to just take a moment on this beautiful language, this idea of an *ezer kenegdo*. Help as, KA as, *neged* opposite and O his. As his opposite. *Neged* is used in discussions in modern Hebrew. So if you've got a *neged*, you've got a dialogue partner.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:35:45 Someone who you're looking at them face to face is the implication and your equals. You're speaking as equals. And so if you think almost like a mirror image. Eve is his mirror image and a mirror image is similar to you but it's opposite of you. So there's this complementary nature. And *ezer* is a very powerful word. Don Parry from BYU has done some really nice work on

*ezer* often being associated with the kinds of help that God gives. *Ezer* means help and then meet. One who meets him. And if we're going to be more liberal now with the idea and it includes some Latter-day Saint thinking in this. "One who does that which he does not or cannot. One who completes." They complete each other is the idea as equals. So it's a help, a divine help who is his complementary opposite.

- Hank Smith: 00:36:43 Complementary opposite. I'm going to use that with my wife. That sounds romantic.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:36:48 It's sort of a love story. It can be read as a love story. This moment where Adam looks at Eve, sees Eve and there's even this really beautiful... For Latter-day Saints who understand the concept of Heavenly Father and then a Heavenly Mother. And then we can hear these echoes when God says, "It is not good that man should be alone." For me I think of my marriage and I think of my understanding of Heavenly Father. Is he pondering? He knows this deeply from his own reality. Is he thinking of Heavenly Mother there? And by the way, we should add that President Kimball has said this. There's some symbolic stuff going on here that we like to literalize probably a little bit too much in the creation of Eve. If indeed the symbol of her being pulled from Adam is that they were the same being.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:37:52 So the idea isn't, oh you've just got Adam, the guy. Now let's make Eve the woman. Symbolically speaking, it's more like there's this composite going on. There's this composite figure... And this isn't literal, this is figurative. But it's sort of like Adam, Eve or as President Kimball put it, "Mr. And Mrs. Adam." And then God's like, "No. That's not what we're looking for." Their power is in two, fully formed individuals and then the symbolism of the rib, I have cleaved you apart but you belong together. And it even says, "When he closed up the flesh, that you can't see it." So you look at it and you're like, "No, I'm fine." And then God is saying, "No, you need each other." So relationships, marriage, family relationships are all implied here. This text is setting all of that up.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:38:51 When I was dating my wife, we probably all do this. We sort of mirror each other almost like I'm the same person. So my wife, I thought she liked camping for the first five years of our marriage. And then all of a sudden I'm like our campouts are never working out. And finally she's like, "Yeah, I sabotage those. I hate camping. I never want to go camping. I feel like that was misrepresented when we were dating." And then I can remember very clearly going to see the movie *Little Women*. This is the earlier version of *Little Women* when we were dating.

And my wife said, "Did you like that?" And I said, "Oh, that was so good. I loved it." And I think what I meant was, "I loved being with you watching that movie."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:39:33 I actually like the current *Little Women* a little bit better but anyway shortly into our marriage, I came home one day and she said, "I bought *Little Women*." And it dawned on me, I don't like that movie at all. I think I said, "I never want to watch that again." You love each other so you mirror each other. But then the power is two different people who make a decision to come together and unite as one and that's what God seems to be setting up here. And I know this is Creation stuff but I'm sort of setting up our discussion of the Fall.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:08 My In-laws, Rod and Marlene Savage. They've been married 40 years. And I was there the moment someone said, "Hey, why do you put the bananas in the jello?" And Marlene said, "Oh, Rod loves it." And Rod looked at her and said, "I only eat it because you make it." 40 years. He was eating it because he thought she liked making it. She was making it because she thought he loved it. And we laughed so hard. 40 years of eating green jello with bananas.
- John Bytheway: 00:40:38 Bananas and jello.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:41 Green jello and it was just the two of them trying to make each other happy.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:40:46 Well, it's so funny. That probably started early on when he was so enamored with her that anything she made was automatically delicious. And 40 years later, that was still true but there's a little more honesty to say, "Oh, but I've got my own opinions and you've got your opinions." And that's actually as we know the great challenge and the great power of relationship. Not when you just mirror each other, we just... Whatever. I think my wife automatically agrees with me. That's sort of what everybody I think deep down sort of wants. Oh, I'm going to say something, you're just going to tell me how brilliant I am. But the power is that you do things a little bit differently and then you get to triangulate and bring that together.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:28 Awesome. His complementary opposite. I wrote that in my scriptures.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:41:33 Yes. Good, good. And again, very liberal with this but the one who does that which he cannot or does not. And that's going to

set up something that's about a very Latter-day Saint reading of the Fall here.

- Hank Smith: 00:41:48 Say that one more time. "One who can do what he cannot"
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:41:50 "Who does that which he cannot or does not." So that we complete each other. It doesn't work to just have one person in this story. You need two people in this story for this story to work. And then God is the Creator of it. The God who sets this all up. And so verse 23, "This is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman." In Hebrew this *isha* because she was taken out of man, *ish*. It works out in English as well actually but the English is sort of mirroring something that happens in the Hebrew.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:42:25 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave. ..." So notice he cleaved them apart. And then you've learned the lesson here is, "He shall cleave on his wife and they shall be one flesh." So that's an important setup for then what all of a sudden, sort of out of nowhere Chapter 3 starts and the image has shifted, the picture has changed and Adam is nowhere to be found. All of a sudden you get this Serpent and this is where the Pearl of Great Price is important because you get some really nice discussion about who the Serpent is, who Satan is. And by the way, this question of what's going on here? Is Satan possessing a serpent? Does Satan act serpentlike? I think there's a lot of different ways of understanding this. And I certainly don't want to say I know the one correct way to get this. I do find it intriguing that the Serpent in the Ancient Near East is a more ambivalent symbol. So it's a figure of great power.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:43:35 You can actually see this in Mesoamerica as well, the idea of a quetzalcoatl this sort of flying serpent. And then you get it in Moses, he's lifting the Serpent. So the serpent has parity of death but then the Serpent's venom also acts as an antidote for death and gives life. And so almost a god-like power that the Serpent has. And then it's intriguing that in... And let me give you the right verse in 2nd Nephi 9:9 it says, "Satan beguiled our first parents who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light." So that may imply that Satan is showing up in a way that it looks like he can be trusted. So the Serpent is tricky. Later in the Law of Moses, the Serpent is going to be an unclean creature. And so there's a little bit of pointing both directions which is the Serpent an unclean sort of bad image as my wife would think.
- Hank Smith: 00:44:34 She doesn't like snakes.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:44:36 Oh man. When we moved to Texas, I grew up in Texas. She said, "Shon, I don't want to move there. There's snakes down there." And I'm like, "Well, there's snakes everywhere." We actually lived behind a field and they were doing construction. And so multiple times we found snakes in our house. Two different times, four-and-a-half-foot long snakes. And one of them curled up in the toilet tank and we had a friend in the ward who sort of raised snakes and he came to search for it and we couldn't find it. We saw it on the bathroom floor and then we sort of closed. My wife's hyperventilating on the bed. And then we opened the bathroom door, it's not there. And he's like, "Oh, I bet it's in your walls. They're probably breeding in there."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:45:20 My wife just hyperventilated. We're moving for sure. And then he's going around, "If I was a snake, where would I be?" Great guy and a good friend. Finally, we pulled off the lid to the toilet tank and the snake was coiled up in there. He took it home and the snake laid eggs just a few days later. And I've got this image of all these little... Imagine that. So that's how many people feel about snakes. But it's sort of interesting that you get this sort of complex image that had some power to it and this idea in the Book of Mormon, "Who transformeth himself, nigh into an angel of light." But then we do have this sense that snakes are... Many people think that snakes are sort of creepy. Sort of interesting.

Hank Smith: 00:46:07 That is very interesting. So if I was going to pin you down on the snake being literal, Satan is really a snake or it's figurative you're just going to say, let's learn the lesson.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:46:18 I honestly have nothing there. I really don't. I don't know if Satan is possessing a snake, if Satan just acts serpentlike-

Hank Smith: 00:46:27 I like that. I like ambiguity. We don't know, let's look for the lesson.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:46:33 Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. Thanks for not making me pick one. I often tell my students, "This is where we vote." Now I'll write that down. I'll send it up to the First Presidency so that they know the correct answer from our classroom vote on this. For some people, it is so helpful to have the correct answer but I worry about that here in these biblical accounts because we want to dot the eye and cross the T and then we don't have to think about it anymore, we got the right answer. And I think keeping it open so that it continues to be productive for us in the future. So that we don't just come to, oh, it's the snake. I know this is really this. I don't have to think about this anymore. No, it's alive and we're still thinking about it because then it

produces different insights as we go along. The multivalency is what we'd call that of the scriptural accounts. I think we want to keep that more open rather than shut it all down and close it all up and put a bow on it.

- Hank Smith: 00:47:27 If you were going to define multivalency, how would you just define that for someone who wants to use the term but doesn't know how?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:47:33 Yeah. So, "It's the ability for something to be seen or interpreted in different ways and from different angles." It can mean different things if it's multivalent.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:44 And so you want to leave it that way?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:47:47 I think there's some power to it. And you don't just want to say, "Oh, well let's not even think about it." But the other danger is, well let's think about it so we get the one right answer. Now I'm going to pour cement on that thing. I like to sometimes say to my students, "We live in the center of the tree." If we're living on a tree. I don't know that anybody does that but we live in the center of the tree. That's where power is. That's where the strength is but the tree has branches and we don't want to pretend those don't exist. That's what gives the tree it's beauty, it's vitality, it's life.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:48:17 But what we want to do is go explore on those branches and then pour cement out there and live out there. That's not where the power is. The power's in the middle of the tree but we can explore. We just don't want all of a sudden to explore and say, "Ah, now I'm the person who has the one right answer and everybody needs to listen to me." I probably do that too. I hear so much of that. Oh, this has been revealed to me or I read this great book and now I have the one correct answer here. And okay but a little bit of humility for all of us. President Nelson probably gets to be a little more definitive than I do when I'm exploring those branches.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:58 Awesome. All right. So you've set us up for the Fall here, right?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:49:03 Yes. Except I keep taking us a 1000 different directions. So this is important. On this little aside here that the Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4 actually helps us understand that Satan really is an important figure here and that he desires to destroy agency and that agency this story can and should be read with agency in mind. And then of course, when we go to the Book of Mormon to 2 Nephi 2, Lehi's going to very much care about and read this

story in the terms of, “Okay, what does this say for choice, for the ability to choose, for options that Adam and Eve might have? What is this story trying to set up and tell us?”

- Hank Smith: 00:49:51 Okay. I did notice that the first four verses of Moses 4 are not in Genesis 3. So that's what you're saying. Joseph Smith is giving this additional knowledge about agency in Satan that we don't have in Genesis.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:50:05 Yeah. And we could maybe say one more thing about this before we move away from those really great verses that talk about the premortal reality of Satan who was cast down. Lucifer as he comes to be understood, being cast down from heaven. You get this all here in these first four verses. Now a really fun exercise that families could do as they're studying this, count the number of words that Satan uses. So you get a quote from Satan. How rare is that? Count the number of words he uses and then count the number of words that Jesus uses in verse three as we're talking about this premortal battle there in the Council in Heaven. This is embarrassing to me as a teacher, as a verbose teacher, Satan uses lots more words than Jesus. Jesus is succinct and it's... He doesn't seem to use eloquence... At least he's not oriented to doing that, to try to persuade. He's just, this is the reality. The other fun thing you can do in that little exercise is look at the pronouns when Satan speaks. If we just glance at it right now-
- Hank Smith: 00:51:20 So we're looking at verse 1 and verse 2, right? Verse 1 and verse 1 of Moses 4.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:51:23 It's verse 1 and verse... Oh yeah. Thank you. I said verse 3. Verse 1 and verse 2. So right after the dash, that's where you get the quotation from Satan in verse one and then in verse 2, you get it from Jesus. And look at those pronouns in verse 1, it just jumps off the page as soon as you notice it.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:42 “Here am I. Send me. I will be thy son. I will redeem all mankind. Not one soul shall be lost. I will do it, give me thine honor.” And then you want us to look at verse 2, the end of verse 2, the Savior. “Father thy will be done and the glory be thine forever.” Definitely two different statements.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:51:59 Isn't that beautiful?
- Hank Smith: 00:52:00 Yeah.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:52:00 So here's a fun little aside. John Hilton, who is a colleague of ours at BYU and Jennifer Lane. There's a few of us that worked on this. We did a word study with the Book of Mormon where we created a database so that we could sort of evaluate in English what different speakers are doing. And one of the ways we separate it out is anytime Jesus is identified as Jesus because a lot of times in the Book of Mormon, it's the Lord. But when he is identified as Jesus Christ, Jesus or Christ or Jesus Christ, we pulled all those words and we put them in a word bucket so to speak and we made a word cloud out of them.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:52:37 And word clouds are where it sort of shows which word show<sup>3</sup> up the most frequently because they're larger. They're more prominent in this sort of word cloud, this word arrangement. And it's so beautiful. Jesus' word cloud is thee, thy and father. You don't really even see me or my in there, you have to look really carefully. It's so small. And I just think, wow, Joseph Smith was pretty clever when back in 1829 he wrote the Book of Mormon in a way that when you made a word, some random humans 200 years later made a word cloud Jesus, his nature of thee and thine is what shows up. That's really beautiful. It's really powerful.

Hank Smith: 00:53:25 Yeah. I like these two statements. One is very selfish, one is very selfless.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:53:31 Good. So then Satan shows up and then if we go back to Genesis. We're now at the beginning of Genesis 3.

Hank Smith: 00:53:40 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:53:42 And the weird thing about this image is as I mentioned, Adam's nowhere to be found. You have Eve and you have the Serpent. And that's why it's important to go back to Chapter 2 because it wasn't what we just read, you're going to cleave together and then they're apart. And I'm not saying that husband and wife need to always be in the same room. I don't think that's the lesson here but it is interesting to note. And we struggle with this as Latter-day Saints. Eve, does she understand everything? And she's a perfect hero that gets it all. I think if we just look at sort of mortality, there is this reality that women tend to mature in general a little bit faster than men, physically and emotionally.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:54:26 And that Eve seems to get it maybe a little bit better than Adam. But then if we're going to read just Genesis, just the biblical account, we see some things here as Latter-day Saints because of the Book of Mormon and because of Pearl of Great

Price and because of other sacred spaces where we're thinking about this story that aren't necessarily clearly there in the Old Testament account. And so we're going to see Eve in much more positive ways. And by the way, I would add Jewish readers tend to be closer to Latter-day Saint readers than they are to what we might call Pauline readers. So Paul is going to read and understand this story and emphasize the Fall and in traditional Christianity for many Christians, this becomes this idea of Original Sin. They say, "Ah, you can see Original Sin in the biblical account."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:55:25 Well, not really. It's not quite that sinister in the storyline. So there's a decision set up, don't eat the fruit and multiply and replenish the earth. And I think as Latter-day Saints, we're pretty oriented to come at this and say, "Wow, there's tension in that decision." And I don't want to throw Adam under the bus. If I ever get to go to Heaven, Adam will be like, "Hey. Why are you talking about me like that? I was trying really hard here." But if we're going to approach it negatively, the honorable Adam that we would wish to be like. And some of my Evangelical friends are like, "No, when we see Adam, we want to gut punch him." You're like, "How could you do this to us?" And you Latter-day Saints are like, "No, Adam. You're the man."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:56:08 And I'm definitely oriented to Adam... But you might say, "Why is Eve alone with the Serpent?" Well, is that Eve's fault or is it Adam's fault or is it both of their errors that sort of puts her in this position where they cannot make this decision together? You'd say they're complicit in that. But Adam, the way I like to picture it is, he's on the couch with the remote. He's like, "Man, I love this garden. This is awesome." I had somebody in my ward say once... Come to me when I was serving his Bishop and say, "Oh, Bishop. My wife really wants to start having children, start a family and I am terrified. I love just having her to myself. I don't think this is going to work out very well." And I said, "I think you're probably out of... It's time to follow Eve out of the garden. I think you have to follow your wife's lead on this."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:57:03 Well, he ended up buying his wife a puppy and that was his solution. So that worked out for him for a while. So you've got Adam, whatever he is doing. Maybe he's working really hard, maybe he's off building something. I don't know. Or he is playing with the lions. He's like, "Man, this is great. I love this garden thing. I can just get any food I want any time. Let's turn it to ESPN. Here we go."

Hank Smith: 00:57:27 "This is a good time."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:57:28 Yeah. And Eve as a latter-day saint reader, I personally... This is what I'm saying about multivalency. If those of you who are listening think, that's not the way I read the story. This is a multivalent story. There's different lessons because you can also read the story to sort of show how this serpent set Eve up. But I'm oriented to see reading Eve as there's, this tension in her where she says, "Well, yes. We're not supposed to eat the fruit but what about having children? What about a family? There's more to this."

Hank Smith: 00:58:03 I don't know about your marriages but that definitely was my marriage where my wife was thinking about maybe we should have children. I'm going, "Yeah. Maybe, maybe."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:58:13 And it's hard to know whether these gender differences are inherent in us or if they're sort of created by the way our society... I don't know how to understand all those things but I do think there's some general truths that tend to show up. In fact, back to the Pearl of Great Price account for just a moment. If we were to skip forward, if you jump forward to Chapter 5, Moses Chapter 5:10 and 11, this is when you get Adam and Eve after the Garden and they're commenting on what in the world just happened? How do we understand all of this? And Adam is very linear and it's very progress. And, "Hey, because I have Fallen, I can do this and I can return to live with God is sort of the personal salvation road."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:59:05 And it's a valuable sort of approach. It's a valid way of understanding that okay. Boy, this terrible thing happened and yet there's positives that'll come out of it because we've got a Savior. Eve, beautifully so, it's more about our transgression. We couldn't have known this in verse 11. Let's just read it. "Eve, his wife heard all these things saying: Were it not for our transgression," And if you go the verse up, where it's Adam talking, "My transgression, my eyes are opened." And for Eve it's "our transgression" and "We shouldn't have ever known good and evil if it weren't for our... And the joy of our redemption and the eternal life." So his is more, "Well, I can return into God's presence." Hers is more, "No, we can live these God-like lives." Immortality and eternal life as Moses 1:39 might put it. And so you get this sense that Eve is a little further along at least as far as seeing this as a group effort here.

John Bytheway: 01:00:08 I use that in a marriage conference to talk about Eve as always thinking about the family and the relationship and Adam is, "Because of my transition, my eyes are open in this life. I shall have joy in the flesh. I shall see God." Eve heard this and said, "Were it not for our transgression. We never should have had

seed. Never should have known good and evil and joy of our redemption." It reminds me of something President then Elder Oaks said in October 1983, he said, "Note the different perspective and special wisdom of Eve who focused on the purpose and effect of the great plan of happiness." And then quoted Moses 5:11. So yeah, they're looking at different things. And maybe that's another example of... What did we call it before? I keep thinking of the Elder Maxwell phrase, "Compensating competencies."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:01:04 Oh, that's the best phrase all day long. And that's because Elder Maxwell produced it, right?

John Bytheway: 01:01:10 Yeah, of course. But what did I write down? Complementary opposites. Yeah. Elder Maxwell, "Compensating competencies." Adam sees it one way, Eve sees it another way but there are not one's right, one's wrong. They are together. All of it together is a good way to-

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:01:29 And I want to acknowledge again that some of my friends, particularly those that aren't members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints say, "Oh, are you reading too much into the text here, I read this text differently." And I'm not embarrassed to say, "Yes, I do think you can get all of that inherently out of Genesis 1 through 3?" There are some moments where Genesis 3 is probably in the Old Testament version of it is pointing a little bit. It's emphasizing some different things but this is very important for us in our understanding as Latter-day Saints. And I would say, it's true, it's helpful. And then I would add... John, I think you'll agree on this. So what you just read and what you just said, you're seeing the story a little bit the same way I am that sort of well, they're seeing different things and it's both positive.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:02:19 There is a nicer way you can read what Adam is saying here when he says, "My transgression." What about this sort of sweet approach where Eve is the one who first took the fruit but Adam is owning it as his own transgression. "But I chose, you didn't force me, you didn't manipulate me. It's my transgression." Because we do this badly in marriage at times. And you could come at it from a different angle and say, "Adam's modeling some ownership there that's really positive." I'm more oriented to reading it the way you just did John and the way I've been reading. But I do want to point out lest we bump into Adam someday and he is like, "There was a little more going on there." Yeah.

John Bytheway: 01:03:03 In one Creation story account, it's interesting that when Satan shows up Eve always says about relationships and the community says, "Who are you?" Adam says, "I will not partake. I don't even know who you are. I don't know why you're here but I will not partake." And he approaches Eve and she says, "Who are you? Welcome." How interesting it's for her, it's all relationships and, "Oh, who are you?" But I love that difference there. It's all about the relationships where Adam, "No, I got the rule here. No."

Hank Smith: 01:03:40 John, that's totally you and Kim. That's totally you and Kim. When you meet people John's like, "No, thanks. Have a good day." Kim's like, "Well come in, sit down. What can I help you with?"

John Bytheway: 01:03:51 Shon you said... And I loved this, a Pauline meaning looking at it from Paul's writings. Because when I teach the Fall, I love to ask my class... Well, when I teach doctrines in Teachings of the Book of Mormon, that's class specifically. What if the only information we had about the Fall came from the Bible? What if it only came from Paul? And we read about Eve and it's like, whoa. And that's why I love to show the 2 Nephi 2 account which softens it so much and even says, "No, this is a good thing. This was a fortunate Fall." As we sometimes think.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:04:31 I think that's really helpful. I might just give a little side nod to the possibility that pretty strong and good Bible studies work with the text where Paul is most potentially negative about Eve may not have been Paul. That may have been added in later. So that's at least of interest to note. Although I think there's ways you can read what is there and if Paul wrote it, we can understand it. And it's helpful to have the Book of Mormon helping us with this with Eve. And let me go on to say, I love the Book of Mormon because I was saying Jewish readers don't sort of have this sort of the benefit and if you want to put it this way, the challenge of understanding Paul's teachings about just how significant the effects of the Fall have been.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:05:23 But we have both the Genesis account and Paul's readings and Paul is an Apostle for us. And it's fascinating to me as I read the Book of Mormon that to me anyway, as I read the Book of Mormon, the Book of Mormon actually carves a middle path here, you just said it John, of a fortunate Fall. Lehi of course makes this famous statement because it's short and easy to remember. "Adam fell that men might be. Men are that they might have joy." Humankind, I think is what is referring to there. Humankind is that it might have joy and yet it's way more complicated than that in the Book of Mormon. If you read

Jacob... 2 Nephi 9, if the only reason the Fall is a positive thing is because there's a Redeemer. There's a way prepared to turn potential disasters into actual triumphs.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:06:17 And the Savior then in the Meridian of Time is going to model that. But the Fall's a disaster if there is no Savior. And because there's a Savior, then Lehi can say what he says. And so I love that the Book of Mormon sort of does say, "Hey, it's not all bad. Because of the Fall, look at all of these things." And we get this Adam and Eve commenting on that as well. This isn't all bad, good can come out of this. Good can come out of it. And Jacob says, "Hey, if there was no redemption we would all be devils. Angels to a devil for all eternity." But because there's a redemption that's been made, look at the good. So then the question that remains is how much did Eve understand when she took that fruit?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:07:04 And this is an answer I don't have. And I think some of us are oriented to wanting Eve to be this perfect hero. She gets it all, she's got it all figured out. And they're sort of tired of women being thrown under the bus as often happened in the history of the world and has happened historically often in traditional Christianity and Judaism. The seductress, the one who ruins it all. They don't want that. Eve's the hero. And others sort of take that. No, Eve messed it all up and instead there was this sort of, well, Eve's sort of like us. She has feelings, she's got wisdom, she's got inspiration, she also is human. Although at this point she hasn't fallen yet so how we describe that I don't know. But Eve is complex and I like complex a little bit better when I'm thinking of Mother Eve. I like that she's not just univalent but what she's modeling there is helpful to me in a variety of different ways in my life.

John Bytheway: 01:08:09 There's just a line that we studied several weeks ago when Doctrine and Covenants was our *Come, Follow Me* curriculum that I just thought, wow, "Will you find that anywhere else in traditional Christianity?" When Joseph F Smith said, "I saw our glorious Mother Eve and many of her faithful daughters." And I think, "Wow, just please read that and realize how differently that is than much of traditional Christianity that they messed everything up."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:08:39 Yeah. In fact, let me just read for a moment if I could a statement by Dallin H. Oaks, by President Oaks. "It was Eve who first transgressed the limits of Eden in order to initiate the conditions of mortality. Her act, whatever it's nature was formally a transgression but eternally a glorious necessity to open the doorway toward eternal life. Adam showed his

wisdom by doing the same.” The way I like to say this to my students is Adam is following Eve's lead. “Adam showed his wisdom by doing the same and thus Eve and Adam fell that men might be. Some Christians condemn Eve for her act and I think it's appropriate to say some Christians. This is not just one storyline in traditional Christianity. Some have done that. Concluding that she and her daughters are somehow flawed by it. Not the Latter-day Saints. Informed by revelation, we celebrate Eve's act and honor her wisdom and courage in the great episode called the Fall.” He said that back in 1993 in General Conference.

John Bytheway: 01:09:43 Can I add something that our friend and colleague Brad Wilcox said in his book, *Because of The Messiah In a Manger*, he said, "Latter-day Saints are unique among Christians because we understand that God did not create the world with the goal for all of us to live forever in the Garden of Eden. Mortality was Plan A, not Plan B. The Atonement of Christ was not a last ditch attempt to salvage the wreckage Adam and Eve made of the world. It was planned from the beginning. See Mosiah 4:6 where King Benjamin says the Atonement, which was from the foundation of the world. It was always the plan. Repentance was not provided as a safety net for those weak souls who could not be perfectly obedient, it was designed as an essential part of the perfecting process for each one of us." I love that idea. Sending the Savior wasn't to clean up the problems Adam and Eve caused, the Fall was plan A and the Atonement was Plan A from the beginning.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:10:42 Before we move back away from Adam and Eve's statement. And again, this is going to make me sound way too traditional. I'm sure there are men who are much better than I am and more progressive than I am in their relationships and the way they interact in their families. But it's sort of funny to think this holds true in my life. I think, no, I don't rely on my wife to feed me. She often does a lot of the cooking in our family. She's really good at it and she does a lot of that.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:11:14 But if I'm hungry and there's something else going on, I make myself a meal. The fact that I would be proud of that is the first embarrassment. But then the second thing is to note... And this says more about me than anything else but it is so true that I think, oh, well I'll make myself a meal. Well, when my wife gets hungry she's like, wait a minute. If I'm hungry then I've got a family and they're hungry and she prepares for the family. And I think, oh I got this. I can take care of myself. And again that's embarrassing to confess but it is interesting to see that play out maybe a little bit in Adam the way he's talking here.

Hank Smith:

01:11:54

Please join us for Part II of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:03 Welcome to Part II of this week's podcast.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 I think for me personally, I have seen, as I've learned more and more about this, the value of the Book of Mormon is just increasing in my eyes. 2 Nephi 2, 2 Nephi 9, Alma 12. I've started reading Alma 12 the other day, and I'm like, "Wow, we know so much about this story because of the Book of Mormon." I just wanted to make sure I mentioned that the book of Mormon sheds... It like opens up the window here to what is really happening.
- John Bytheway: 00:37 And Hank, can I make a connection because who is 2 Nephi 2. It is Lehi talking to Jacob, who later on writes 2 Nephi 9. And I love the whole backstory. Jacob, let me explain, you were born in the wilderness, you've seen family contention. Let me explain the Fall. Let me explain opposition in all things. Let me explain why. And then later Jacob explains it with even more detail in 2 Nephi 9. So it's fun to see that, "Oh, that's the same guy, Jacob, who's learned a lot about the Fall, and fallen man."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:16 That's really great. So if we go back to Genesis 3 now for a little bit, then you get this moment then when Eve, and as I like to think about it, Eve, feeling this tension, and Adam would probably pretty just easily say, "No, I understand how this works. If the fruit is offered to you, you say no." That might be what Adam might do there. "I know the rules and I'm obedient. I'm going to follow those rules." Eve maybe feels this tension a little bit greater. And there are biblical readers who would say it was always intended... This is a maturation story, and they're supposed to eat the fruit at some point. There comes a time when you don't stay in the garden, you leave the garden.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 02:04 And that's more, again, not so much Christian or Pauline readers, as we might say it, but Jewish readers are a little bit more... They just come at that text without having the New Testament and say, "No, the idea is at some point she's going to eat the fruit and they're going to leave the garden. They're

going to eat the fruit and they're going to leave the garden." Well, so she's got this growing tension in her, and then Satan offers her this fruit. It's not a good image when you take the fruit out of Satan's hand. That there's some almost ritual ordinance, almost sacrament imagery there that we should not miss in our rush to just say everything is perfect here. I'm not sure that we want to say everything is perfect here. An analogy I like to use is if I buy... At least in our family, if I buy a car and I don't tell my wife and I come home with it, that's not a good thing. There's other families where that might work really well, but not in my house.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:00 When you do those things... If you're going to have children, I mean, just functionally it's a decision two people have to make. But here Eve makes a decision that has a very permanent effect on her relationship with Adam, and she does it without Adam being present. So there's a break here that's caused, and then the way that I like to read it, and that I see it is that then Satan, Lucifer is trying to enhance that break when he sends her to confront Adam and try to get him to partake. But this is where the love story is enhanced. And I think in our marriage, there are these times when we've done something that might be hurtful to our partner, and then Eve very powerfully, vulnerably stands in front of Adam naked, as it were: honest, open, vulnerable.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:59 "I've eaten this fruit." And Adam, I love this moment, this woman that he had first looked at and loved when God says, "It's not good for man to be alone." And here's Adam and Eve, and now they've been apart and they come back together and Eve is being honest with him saying, "I've taken this fruit and I've got to leave the garden." And Adam looks at her and there's this potential betrayal, you might say, but it's really this powerful decision that moves the story forward. I suspect if it's me in the garden, I'm still playing with the lions. I'm never going to leave. But Eve moves, it's this bold, courageous act Eve makes. But then it works because Adam loves her and is willing to follow her leadership and says, "I'm coming with you. We're doing this together."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 04:50 And then God shows up. And to me, what he sets up is to restore the breach that was created there when Satan was introduced into the story. And he says, "Okay, now..." And this is just my reading of the text. "Now, Eve, you need to listen. You need to be part of this. You're not just doing your own thing here. I know you're highly capable and you're linked to this man who may not always seem highly capable." I had a woman in my ward who said to me once, "There was a time my husband had

done some dumb things and this went on for a number of years where I realized I've been just treating him like another child in our household. I haven't been allowing him to be an equal with me. I'd relegated him to unequal status because he had done some things that had been hurtful to the family, and there was a time I needed to change that in our marriage and now we're equals again."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 05:45 And to me, that's what God is saying to Eve. "You've got to be linked with Adam, listen to him, follow his leadership, as he has followed your leadership." And I love Eve's powerful leadership and that Adam's willing to follow her out of the garden. And then God links them back together and says, "Adam, you gotta work hard here. You got to take a leadership role here. You got to be involved. You've got to be engaged." And I don't want to generalize that too much. I don't know that that works in all of our situations, but there's certainly some powerful potential messages there for what Eve does, how beautiful and powerful it is in this moment when she stands in front of Adam, and she's saying what needs to happen, and Adam doesn't "No, you're bad and you're wrong, and I reject you."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 06:32 Instead, he says... He's humble enough to say, "Oh, okay. I'm coming out of the garden with you. We're together. I'm with you." And it's beautiful. It's redemptive. And then God reunites them, re-cleaves them back together by saying, "You got to rely on each other. This is marriage. It's husband and wife, wife and husband." So I think there's some beauty that can come out of that. If I could maybe introduce another question that I think Latter-day Saints often ask, and that is what about these conflicting commands? And let me just add, part of that I find helpful, part of what we were just discussing, was there anything wrong? Well, there was certainly something risky. We will at least put it that way, when Eve makes that decision that maybe could have been made unitedly together.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 07:26 She's feeling that tension, and we don't know how this story played out, so I'm just suggesting possibilities. But if she had discussed that with Adam and they had gone to the Lord in prayer, how might that have looked different? I don't know. But one of the things I'm doing is connecting this idea that Eve was the one in transgression that we get in the New Testament with this idea that it was a glorious decision. And I think we can have it both ways, honestly. She makes that first decision and it's powerful, but it's risky. It's really risky. It's bold, but it's risky.
- Hank Smith: 08:08 Shon, would it be fair to say that... Because I've had students say before, doesn't Satan have to do this in order for this to

happen? And I like what you said there, that this could be a maturity thing, that eventually they are going to partake of the fruit and the Lord plans on them doing that, but Satan came in and rushed the process or stepped in where he had no place to step in, to... I don't know, I related it to one day I'm going to talk to my kids about the birds and the bees when they get old enough, but then somebody else comes in and decides to talk to him about that before that. Is that wrong? No, it was going to happen, but it was not your place. Is there anything to that, or am I way off?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 08:52 Well, I actually really like that as a potential reading here, that Satan... And it's clear in Moses, if we look, let's go back to Moses for a second to connect with what you're saying here. Moses Chapter 4, verse 6. "Satan put it into the heart of the serpent, (for he had drawn away many after him,) and he sought also to beguile Eve, for he knew not the mind of God." And then how do I understand that? Is he dumb? Does he not get how this is supposed to work? I feel like Satan would've known more. And the way I read, "He knew not the mind of God," is he doesn't understand the concepts of redemption, of love, of sacrifice. It's not that he intellectually doesn't get it, but he thinks he can break this apart by inserting himself. I like what you said there, Hank, prematurely into this discussion, and trying to short circuit the whole process. And he thinks this is going to work.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 09:48 And at least I like to imagine him when Eve, he's like, "Go talk to Adam. This is all going to implode. This is going to be great." And then Eve stands in front of Adam and is so powerful and loving and good, and Adam is so open to Eve that it actually turns the other direction. And yes, they leave the garden, but God inserts himself now in the story, because there was a plan, there was a preordained plan, there's a Redeemer here. So let's make sure we understand that. I love that. "Satan knew not the mind of God." And I like that understanding that as Satan knew not the soul of God, what it means to love, what it means to be willing to give oneself up for another.

Hank Smith: 10:37 Doesn't understand sacrifice. He doesn't understand love.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 10:40 So he's like, "No, this isn't going to work." Envy is going to win out. Jealousy is going to win out. Pride's going to win out in Satan's mind. Because those are the principles that he understands. And by the way, there's a lot of evidence that he got it right, that he understood humans pretty well. But then there's the redemptive evidence that points the other direction. And this is the battle, of course, of good versus evil. Okay, so

let's go back to what I was about to introduce, this idea of conflicting commandments, and is that fair? Would God ever do that? Students like to-

- Hank Smith: 11:13 It's a common question.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:13 Say, "No, the way that we've set this up, I don't think that works." And my take is that this now is a higher level agency that they're learning. Lehi in 2 Nephi 2, he sets up that they're given all of the things to begin to learn about agency. I like to see it as a seven-year-old. Do they have agency? Well, God has created a space where they're protected, because they don't fully get it, but they're starting to get it. They've got opposites that they can choose between. They've got choices, and God has placed consequences with those choices. So they've got the setup there, but what they don't have is the experience yet. So now this is a higher level between two goods. This is like one of your children has had an accident where they burned themselves and you haven't had family prayer yet. Do you rush your child to the hospital or do you stop and have family prayer? Well, I think you rush your child to the hospital is the right decision. "Oh no, we didn't pray as a family. Now we've transgressed that law."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 12:20 Or you go to the hospital and you run a red light. You're actually liable for running that red light. And if you get in an accident, then you'll get ticketed for running that red light. But most policemen are not going to give you that ticket if they don't have to because they get you're following a higher law. You're transgressing one law. This is like Nephi not wanting to kill Laban, and God says, "You got to do this," and he transgressed the law, you might say. And because of the transgression of that law, that's one of the reasons Laman and Lemuel are so ticked off. We can't go back to... We're out of the Holy City now because you did this, but he was following a higher law.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 12:58 To me, these are decisions we have to make every day of our lives. You can't do all of the professions that you think would be awesome. You can't experience everything you want to experience. You can't marry all... I like to tell BYU students you can't marry all the people, you have to pick a person. You're going to marry one person. And we have to make these kinds of decisions. You can't write all of the missionaries in the world and write in your journal and cook all of the loaves of bread for everyone. We have to choose, and that's okay. And there's inherent... But there are consequences.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 13:33 So let's set up this weird situation where the question is, am I going to smoke a cigarette or am I going to kill someone, and I choose to smoke a cigarette over... This is silly maybe, but I choose to smoke the cigarette. Well, God isn't going to hold me accountable as a sin if that was the right decision, but I'll still get tar in my lungs. I still have to leave the garden. There are consequences to transgressing a law, even if we're not accountable. And the Pearl of Great Price, Book of Moses later on says, "I have atoned for your transgression in the Garden of Eden. It's done. You were figuring it out. You made a choice. And now we're moving forward. I have atoned for that." Would God do that? Well I think, yeah, that's what mortality is. I mean, we deal with this every day of our lives
- John Bytheway: 14:20 I think it's a Mary/Martha thing too. They're both good things. What do you do? And Sister Bonnie Parkin talked about that story and said, "It's not like choosing whether to go visiting teaching or rob a bank. They were two good things." Hank will laugh of where I'm going for my source, but there's an old episode of the Andy Griffith Show where Andy's trying to bend the rules to help somebody. And he says to Opie, "There's a boy in a pond who was drowning, and the sign clearly said no swimming." "Well, did you save the boy?" And Opie says he couldn't let him drown, and he says... He has to save him. In those cases we don't break the rules, we just bend them a little bit and to help buddy. And I thought that was a really good way to put it for a kid that there's some competing goods there that the boys shouldn't be swimming, it says no swimming, but you don't just let him drown. You go in there and you swim so that you can save him. I thought it was pretty good.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 15:27 Let's now begin to move Adam and Eve out of the garden. And if we look now towards the end of Chapter 3, there's a couple of things that I want to point out here. One is this idea that Adam is called what I want to call the first truth of mortality in the sweat of thy face. So this is Genesis 3 verse 19, and we could look at it in the Pearl of Great Price if we wanted to. I think they're exactly the same. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." So the first, what I like to think of as the first truth of mortality is you are going to need to work. It's what we call the law of the harvest. Work then will be how you're going to live and survive in mortality. It's going to be a little different than in the garden, whereas it's just spontaneously there. The law of mortality is you exert effort, and then that effort is rewarded.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 16:27 Now mortality isn't perfect. Sometimes you exert effort and it isn't perfectly rewarded, but that's the general rule. But if we go over to the Pearl of Great Price account, and the Cain and Abel

story, there's this really interesting moment where Cain, it's pretty clear that he wants his brother's flocks, that he really wants them. That he's jealous of his brother, and that functions in a lot of different ways-

John Bytheway: 16:58

It's Chapter 5.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 17:00

Yeah, we're now in Moses Chapter 5 or Genesis Chapter 4, so I've jumped forward for a moment. And there's this moment then in Moses 5, verse 33, "And Cain gloried in that which he had done, saying: I am free; surely the flocks of my brother falleth into my hands." So I've committed a sin to get what I want. And notice if you back up now to verse 31, you get what leads up to that. Cain said he was taught this by Satan. Satan came to him and taught him what I call the first great secret or lie of mortality that Satan teaches, "Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain." So you have right here at the beginning of the account set up, I would say, in opposition to each other, God tells Adam, "You're going to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, and Satan shows up and says, "No, Cain. You can sin to get what you want."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 18:06

And I like pausing here and just having them think about this a little bit. And I say, pick a sin, any sin... Not the one you do, because that'd be awkward, but think about any sin and how it's actually motivated somewhere lower in the motivation, as we build towards that sin, I want to get something for nothing. And you could think of gossip that I want to use... Instead of building a relationship through love and sacrifice, I'm going to tell a secret that puts me in this position of trust with you. You could think of lying and how I want to shortcut the system or cheating to get something for nothing. You could think of breaking the law of chastity, of pornography, as this effort to click a button and I can get my brain... If you look at the brain, it looks the same way as physical sexual intimacy and marriage. Typically, though, you court someone, you get married, you do dishes, you go on dates, you raise children together. Or I can get something for nothing.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 19:14

And I have had people in my ward, I had one person say, "I don't want the real thing. I want the fake thing. That's way more persuasive for me. I want to click the button and just be automatically loved." All of us do this, by the way, being seduced by this getting something for nothing where we're looking for the shortcuts. But this idea that we want the easy path of getting something for nothing, and it weakens us as humans. We are light and truth at our very core, and when we

go to sin to get what we want, it warps who we are, and then we need the redemption that comes through the Atonement of Christ and re-accepting truth, that first great truth of mortality, "I'm going to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow."

- John Bytheway: 20:07 Fantastic insight. Can I expand that a little bit, because I love the idea that those who are seeking signs in Jesus' day, and he would say, "It is a wicked and an adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign." And then Joseph Smith said something that at first I was like, "Whoa, what?" If you see a man seeking a sign? You may set it down that he is an adulterous man. And I remember Robert L. Millet connecting those for me once and saying, "Look, one of them is saying I want all of the evidence. I want the testimony. I don't want to do any work. I don't want to do any commitment to finding out. That's the sign seeker. Show me the proof. I don't want to do any work. The adulterer says, I want all the benefits of marriage. I don't want any of the commitments of marriage."
- John Bytheway: 20:57 And it was the same something for nothing kind of mentality, and I had never connected that with Cain before. You can murder and get at gain. And when I've taught that to my classes, I've said how many TV shows... And I had a percentage somewhere, a *USA Today* article that talked about crimes committed, the number of times a violent crime or some kind of crime is committed, and in the movie, they get away with it. "I can murder and get gain," I can do stuff and get away with it. And that lesson continues to be taught today.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 21:32 This becomes, by the way, if you're going to go to the Book of Mormon, this becomes the foundational belief of secret combinations that we're going to murder to get what we want. If you just look modern day at the tobacco industry and a group of people who were willing to hide the reality that they were killing people because they were getting gain. So they were willing to hide that, you'd say, a group of people, and I don't know any of those people, so I don't mean to point the finger too strongly there, but just more at the general choice that was made there somewhere. Yeah, we know this is killing, but we're going to keep marketing to children because we make more money that way. This is a seductive concept, and the Book of Mormon says.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 22:15 This is the kind of concept that led to the downfall of the entire Nephite society, and I would suggest this desire to get something for nothing, you could say, it's at the center of some of our most serious societal problems today. It will destroy a society when too many of us decide, "I want to get something

for nothing." A society cannot bear up under the weight of that burden. This is not just a minor thing. The fact that it stands here at the entrance to the biblical story and to our story of mortality, I think is a big deal that it's here. And by the way, I gotta add, I first learned this and I expanded on it from a seminary teacher whose name's Jack Rose. I've never told him that this has been an important concept for me. I wrote a paper where I included this idea and I put his name in a footnote, but got to give a shout out to him for first introducing this idea to me.

Hank Smith: 23:14 Shon, this is fantastic stuff. I automatically thought of Jesus, the temptations of Jesus, Matthew Chapter 34. Take the shortcut. Jesus, take the shortcut. And he refuses every single time. He will not take the shortcut. And we have that chance every day. Don't take the shortcut. Be disciplined like Jesus. Be a disciple of Jesus means being as disciplined as Jesus.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 23:41 The other thing though that I wanted to grab from this storyline before we leave the garden entirely is this moment in... Let's just stay in the Book of Moses, Moses Chapter 4, verse 27. "Unto Adam, and also unto his wife, did I, the Lord God, make coats of skins and clothed them." Now there's really interesting stuff going on. Some of it probably literal, but a lot of it probably figurative with clothing and covering. Many know that the Hebrew word that is translated as Atonement is *kuffar* and it has connections of covering. It's both the kind of covering that happens when you smear blood, like atoning sacrifice kind of covering, but also potentially the covering that happens when we're naked, we're vulnerable, and then God puts a clothing that covers our nakedness, covers our flaws, covers us and gives us authority to stand in his presence again.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 24:41 So Adam and Eve do this interesting thing where they go... It's almost like they're dressing up like the Tree of Life. And I like it. They put the leaves on, they get these fig leaves. And that works okay. Fig leaves aren't terribly successful. I mean, the fig leaves are okay, but they're not very permanent. They're not maybe perfectly effective as a covering, but they do add some color to the story. Our efforts, when honestly done, are important. They matter. It adds some variety. It adds some color to the storyline. But what we really want is God's covering. And God is going to truly cover them in ways that will protect them, as they're now going out into a challenging world. And what you get here is most likely it would appear to be the first death that Adam and Eve have ever encountered, as these are coats of skins, these are animal skins that cover them.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 25:42 And we might, even, as Christians, have in the Pearl of Great Price, in the Book of Moses later on, Adam and Eve know how to do sacrifice. They've been taught about sacrifice in the Garden of Eden before they leave, but they haven't been taught all of the implications of what it represents. They learn that as they're moving forward out of the garden. But they know how to do it, because Adam's, he's offering sacrifice out of the Garden of Eden. What does this mean? He says, "I don't know. I was just told I was supposed to do this." So this could be the place where God first teaches them the law of how to sacrifice and that they need to sacrifice. Now think of the beauty of the sacrificial animal then providing the skins, the garments that are going to cover them as they leave the garden.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 26:28 So that sacrificial offering then, the lamb or the animal that's sacrificed there, covers them, Christ covers them. So they're dressing up as the tree of life. That's nice. They put leaves on. God puts the image of Christ upon them, the image of the atoning one to remind them who they are, to say, "This is who you're supposed to become. I'm going to put the image of God on you. I'm going to dress you with power and authority and protection as you leave the garden now." And then that serves as a reminder to them of their relationship with God and that they want to return back into the presence of God. Just a few possible thoughts there.
- John Bytheway: 27:12 So beautiful. The idea that before he ever cast them out of the garden, they were covered by Christ is so intensely Christian. The idea of... I remember Joseph McConkie was saying, and he was always really definite about everything, but he said, "So they were covered by the lamb," and I raised my hand, "How do we know it was a lamb? How do we know?" And he said, "It just has to be." That was his answer. But as you said that, Shon, you're the Hebrew expert, so I remember looking up the lexicon on coats, because when we think of coats, we think of an outer garment. But when I looked up coats, I think the word was *kethoneth*, that's it. And it was an inner garment worn next to the skin. I mean, I read the definition and just went, "Wow, an inner garment worn next to the skin that goes down to the knees, rarely to the ankles, also worn by women." And I thought, "Wow, look at that." They were covered by this before they were cast out of the garden.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 28:23 Yeah. It's that word, *kethoneth*. That's really, really nice. And skins is fascinating here. Ahava is the word for skin and it is more or less homonym with the word [Hebrew 00:28:42]. One starts with an [Hebrew 00:28:43], that's skin, and [Hebrew 00:28:47] starts with an aleph is light. And the biblical authors

love doing that with the Hebrew, playing with that Hebrew language. And this idea that he's covering them with garments of light. So they've done the leaves. Great. But these are garments of light. And there are other implications of... Okay, is it bad to be naked? When did they start... Should they feel ashamed for their innocent nakedness? No, it's maybe the world or Satan that makes them feel ashamed of that. But once they then have transgressed and have moved out, are beginning to move out of God's presence then, then they really do need that covering to help them move forward. So there's all kinds of fun things we could stick on here for another couple hours.

- John Bytheway: 29:29 How did you pronounce it? [Hebrew 00:29:31]
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 29:31 [Hebrew 00:29:31] is the verb, to cover, [Hebrew 00:29:35] is the past participle that is often translated as atonement, covering.
- John Bytheway: 29:43 See, because I thought... It's so interesting they tried to cover themselves. And then I read in the Book of Mormon, that if we are not... Without the Atonement, we are exposed to the demands of the law. And I think, "Oh, look at that. We could be covered by Christ or we'd be exposed." I think I'm in Alma 34 when I say that, to the demands of the law. And I can see where the idea of being dressed is protected as being covered by Christ, otherwise we're exposed.
- Hank Smith: 30:17 I also see in Moses 4:16, when the Lord says, "Where are you?" And Adam says, "I was afraid. I hid myself." This idea of shame and fear have been introduced into Adam's life, and the Lord is saying, "There's no need to hide from me. You don't need to be ashamed of yourself." So I like that idea of the Lord's like, "Don't hide from me. It's okay. Who told you that you should be ashamed. Who told you that you should hide from me?"
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 30:47 This is really interesting. We could play the what if game all day long, and we were just guessing. But if Adam and Eve had prayed about, "How are we going to follow the second commandment," if this had gone a little different without Satan, the serpent introducing himself into the story, how would this have looked different if that relationship had moved forward, that they had understood, "Now we take the fruit, and it's part of their communication with God as Latter Day Saints would understand this, what has to happen. And by the way, many other Christians are going to say, "What are you even talking about? The fruit? You're reading that very differently than we do." And we will just say that we are. But what might this have looked like? And yet there is a Redeemer that turns this story

back into gold, back into what it needs to be as each of us come to him.

- Hank Smith: 31:42 I can't tell you how many of my students would, in their life, do something wrong and decide to hide from God, rather than just go... Yeah, instead of going to talk about it, it's like, "Well, I'll just stop going to Church. I'll stop going to the temple. I'll just hide from God for a while." And I can hear the Lord saying, "Why are you hiding from me? You don't have to be ashamed of yourself. Come talk to me." I just think it's a beautiful idea to think that the Lord loves you despite the things you've done wrong. Come talk to him. It's okay. Come talk to me.
- Hank Smith: 32:20 I remember Boyd K. Packer telling a story once where his son had done something pretty wrong. He had stolen the family car and gotten it in a car accident. And the police officer said, "Do you want to make a phone call?" And he said, "Yeah, I want to call my dad." That he trusted that I'd made a big mistake and I need to talk to my dad about it." That's an automatic. "I'm not going to hide from him. He's the one who can help me through my mistake." So anybody listening who's made mistakes, we've all made mistakes. Go to the Lord with your mistakes. Don't hide from him.
- John Bytheway: 32:55 Brother Wilcox's talk in General Conference about, "I'm a hypocrite." Well, you would be if you're trying to lie about it or hide from it or say it didn't really happen or the Church is wrong for having high standards. But if you're owning it, you're talking to your bishop, you're trying to fix it. That's not a hypocrite. That's a disciple. I mean, that was a great moment in brother Wilcox's talk. You're trying to come back, so don't be afraid of the bishop either. Go talk.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 33:25 And this emphasizes the point of just how fruitful, and I use that pun, that play on it, how fruitful this story is, and of the whatever, 5 or 10 insights that we've discussed here today, there are thousands more. This story will reward those who spend time pondering it. All right, well let's just spend a few more minutes teasing out some things with the Cain and Abel story. We've spent a lot of time in the story of the Fall, and we've done some jumping into the Cain and Abel story, but there's some fascinating things of the Pearl of Great Price that Moses Chapter 5 provides as we come out of the garden. One of the things that it adds to our understanding is that Cain and Abel are not the first children born to Adam and Eve. You don't get that in the biblical account.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 34:21 So you've got verse two, you've got sons and daughters and they're beginning to multiply and replenish the Earth, and Cain and Abel haven't shown up yet. You get that they're being taught the gospel from the beginning, and then they are teaching their children and their children are either accepting it or rejecting it. But one of the really fascinating things that you get right out of the gate, you get the consequences of the Fall, and that it introduces... When this turns wrong, when people reject the Lord and move away from the Lord, this gets ugly fast. We've got the first murder, we've got lies, we've got deception, we've got envy and covetousness. I mean, you got the Ten Commandments are showing up in a very negative way. The breaking of those commandments, you got it playing out here very quickly in Adam and Eve's own family.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 35:18 And by the way, I suspect Adam and Eve are pretty good parents. There is a reality of agency that I think all of us have to acknowledge. We don't want to acknowledge it. And if we're going to take the blame for all of the sins of our children, then we get all the credit for all the good they do, and it just doesn't work that way. We have to teach the best we can and then honor agency. And you see God-
- Hank Smith: 35:44 It's interesting, Shon, the way you're setting this up. It's awesome. They've fallen. It's great. They're moving forward. And then we take a very dark turn. It introduces, with Satan, in Moses 5:13, Satan came among them.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 36:02 Yeah, and if we keep going in that verse... So he's saying, "Don't believe what your parents are teaching." And they actually love... They're more interested in what Satan has to say than in what God has to say as their parents are teaching it. And this is interesting. "Men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish." So there is, again, this carving of a middle way out where the consequences of the Fall are significant. And certainly we have these fallen bodies that crave satisfaction and were drawn that way, but it's when we actually listen to Satan, and we'd say as, as we're moving out of those beautiful Garden of Eden, first eight years, and then we begin to love Satan more than God. That's then the shift to carnal, sensual, and devilish. That's in an interesting teaching that is found here in Moses 5.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 37:03 So then let's come into the Cain and Abel story again and do a little bit more there. I think many of us feel sympathetic with Cain that he's bringing the best he has, and that Abel is bringing the best he has, and maybe we think, "Well Abel just got lucky." He's a sheep herder, a shepherd, so he brings of his stuff and God takes it. But Cain doesn't. He brings of the fruit of the

ground. And Joseph Smith has made a point here where he says... Let me just read this statement from him. "Cain offering of the fruit of the ground and was not accepted. The sacrifice of animals was instituted as a type by which mankind was to discern the Great Sacrifice which God had prepared. To offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of Atonement instituted after that order. Consequently Cain could have no faith, and whatsoever is not a faith of sin."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 38:09 So there's an important point here that Cain who, by the way, has been taught what it means to sacrifice, and there is a rebellion here where he says, "I want to do it my way. God, you have to take me on my terms and what I say, my personal sensitivities here, are going to rule the day," as opposed to, "Oh, you've said we're going to do it this way. Yeah. But I till the ground, I'm bringing my stuff." And it's like he has purposely said, "I reject that. I'm going to break that ordinance, the way that God has instituted for it to be done, because what I want to do trumps what God has asked me to do."

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 38:54 And then it's not quite so sympathetic a view that we get of Cain here, where Cain is really willful, he's really self-vaunting. He really does want what he wants as opposed to listening to God. And then that story continues to play out, that pride and self exertion of will then leads him into a competitive relationship with his brother where this is not about their obedience to God, but it's about being better than the person next to him. He wants what Abel has. Like the story of David and Bathsheba and Uriah, it goes from sin to sin. In fact, there's this really fascinating moment, verse 23 of Moses 5. "If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted." The verse before. "Why art thou wrath? Why hast thy countenance fallen?" His sacrifice hasn't been accepted.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 39:58 And by the way, it's Satan who tells him to sacrifice like this, so Satan is setting this up. He's like, "Hey, you should do this. Yeah, you should do it this way. And if God really loves you..." I'm introducing some things into Satan's language there. It's back in verse 18 where you get that Satan commands him. And then verse 23, his sacrifice hasn't been accepted, and God says to him, "If you do well, you shall be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. Satan desireth to have thee." So God is actually being really good with Cain. He's like, "Whoa, it's okay, but don't be angry now. This decision you've made will lead you in... Sin is at the door, so come back onto my side. I'm not angry so much as that you just need to do this the right way."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 40:53 But what happens is we choose our own direction. We want it to be validated. And when it's not validated, then we run down that road. Sin lies at the door. And how often has one decision in a day led to another bad decision, another bad decision, and all of a sudden you wake up late and you don't say your prayers. And by the end of the day, you've robbed a bank. Or maybe not that extreme, but there is a modeling of how this happens, how we can descend in sin-
- Hank Smith: 41:26 And the Lord stops, "Hey, just be humble. It's okay. It's okay. Just be humble. Let's turn this around right now and it will be okay." But he just will not... He won't be... "Be thou humble and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand." And he just refuses to turn this initial decision around.
- John Bytheway: 41:46 I just wondered if you could comment on something. It's so kind of interesting, kind of strange. Satan commands Cain in verse 18, "Make an offering unto the Lord." It doesn't say make an offering unto me, but he says, "Make an offering unto the Lord." But the thing that I find really strange in verse 29, I'd love to hear your comments, when he sets up this oath, "Swear unto me by thy throat. If thou tell it, thou shall die. Swear unto thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God that they tell it not." It was strange that Satan would involve the name of God in an oath to do something bad, to do something totally against the commandments of God. Any comments on that?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 42:30 Well, I think that's a great thing that you're pointing to. That's really helpful, John. And what you are seeing is the mixing and the turning upside down. It goes from identifying good as good, and evil as evil to all of a sudden it's intermixed. And by the way, if we're... This story is set up as a foil of the Garden of Eden story, where Satan, you can see what he's going for. "Eve, go talk to Adam." And yet Adam and Eve then love each other, and God, it allows God to be part of the storyline. And now we get the opposite of that storyline. "Go make an offering to the Lord and swear... You're going to do this for him. But now swear by me, but use the name of God so that we can give it this veneer of righteousness," but it's actually wicked in intent.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 43:21 And we have to acknowledge just how often religion can be used for evil intent to control, to coerce. And that that is never what God's intent is. God's intent is to enhance agency and to encourage healthy choices that will allow people to move forward in a proper relationship with him and with each other. And you can see how Satan is just doing really clever things to twist that up and weave it all together so that it's so hard to pull it apart and bring it back into our right relationship.

- Hank Smith: 43:59 It seems to be that Satan loves to get people to mix up their friends and their enemies. That this idea, "Abel is your brother. He is your friend. He's your teammate. No, he's your competition. He's your enemy."
- John Bytheway: 44:12 Do you want to comment, too, on this ironic statement that Cain makes. Says, "Now I am free," which I guess is what Satan wants you to think when you are getting in bondage to him that you are free?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 44:25 Well I do think there's some... If we go back to what we were discussing before with this idea of the great secret is I can get what I want for nothing. And I think we want to be careful about what adrenaline rushes mean. I think someone who is addicted to shoplifting, who loves shoplifting, I think that's how they feel every time. They want it and they're going to get it, and then when they get it successfully, then they have that same kind of reaction. "I'm free." But the problem of course, the irony that you're pointing out is then it just closes things down as opposed to broadening the spectrum of... So I'm free, in other words, I got what I wanted, but now I'm less and less able, not to use Able's name there, I'm less and less able to make choices that will allow that to continue in healthy ways.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 45:28 And by the way, this is all Book of Moses, this is Pearl of Great Price, and just a nod to the revelatory strength of what we get here, this is profound scriptural text, revealed text, and this is deep thinking, so to speak. This comes from God, because it reveals human to nature in very powerful ways. And it continues to reward us as we go back to it and dig deeper and deeper. And Joseph Smith was a prophet.
- John Bytheway: 46:00 What was he, 24 when he's writing this?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 46:05 I got to point out another one just for... We've already gone past this, but you don't even notice what's happening. If you go back to the beginning of Moses Chapter 5, verse 1, "And it came to pass that after I, the Lord God, had driven them out," and later on, "He's going to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow as I, the Lord, had commanded him." And then there's this shift by the time you get to verse four, "Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord from first person to third person, as they come out of the Garden of Eden now into a fallen..." And something has changed. And it's so subtle that you miss just how nuanced and profound this text is. There's so much going on in this text that it'll reward us if we dig into it.
- John Bytheway: 46:48 Most 24-year-olds write like this, don't they Shon?

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 46:53 Exactly. This is so good. This is so good. Maybe the last thing that we want to talk about here is this idea that is set up here, both in the Pearl of Great Price and in Genesis, of the need for redemption. And we started off talking about the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament. Well, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is one covenant that weaves itself through. So this theme that elder McConkie has talked about and that we want to reemphasize here is Creation, Fall, and Atonement. And another way of putting that is Creation, Fall, and then Redemption through covenants, and the power of those covenants is in the Atonement of Jesus Christ. And we walk this path in a daily kind of way, a week-by-week way. As a Latter-day Saint I'm saying I take the sacrament on Sunday and I'm renewed, I'm ready to go, and then by Monday morning, I've experienced the Fall again, and then I'm moving forward to be redeemed.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 48:05 And this is how we move forward in life. We have a new job, a new day, a new relationship, that creation stage. And then there comes a moment when we are like, "Oh, it's not perfect," and there's a fall. And then God is there to carry the story forward. We are not held captive by former mistakes. God, and this is the way the biblical storyline's going to play out, but there's covenants that are offered and he's going to pull Noah, and then Abraham, and of course we know before that it's Enoch and others, into this covenant relationship.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 48:41 So one last little thing I'll say about this, I like to say in class. I don't need to worry about my past because of the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I don't need to worry about my future because of the power of covenants. I know that God will be there for me because he has promised he would be there for me. And Christ is the great symbol and sign of that. I don't need to worry about what choices I'm going to make because I've covenanted where I'm going to be. Repentance takes care of my past, covenants take care of my future. And through the Atonement of Christ in this covenantal relationship, we can return back into the Garden of Eden, but at a better level, at a higher level, return back into the presence of God, and he's calling us there, he's drawing us there.
- Hank Smith: 49:31 Wow. That idea of Creation, Fall, Atonement happening over and over in our life, that is... Creation, Fall, Redemption, Creation, Fall, Redemption. I mean, look at marriage. Creation, it's amazing, it's perfect, it's wonderful. Oh, wow. It's not as perfect as I thought. Redemption. I'm missing out. The same with having a child. Look at this beautiful creation, and then it's, "Oh, this is a lot harder than I thought it would be."

Redemption. I can fix this relationship. It just happens over and over. Shon, Dr. Hopkin, this has been fantastic. I have learned so much. I think our listeners would love to hear just a little bit of your personal story when it comes to your research, your scholarship, your education, and your faith. Tell us just a little bit about your story.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 50:20 So I always wanted to do something where I could serve others. So the idea was I was either going to be a medical doctor or a teacher. And then as often happens, as missionaries are returning from the mission field, think, "Oh, I want to teach the gospel." And that doesn't always work out, but in my storyline, it did, I ended up being a Seminary and Institute teacher. But I always had, I was an Ancient Near Eastern Studies major, and I wanted to understand the scriptures in ways that could then help them come to life for me and for others. And Joseph Smith studied Hebrew, and I thought, "Well, I love Joseph Smith and who he was." So the example of him as a seeker after God, and one who gave me confidence that I could seek after the Lord, and then that the Lord would be willing to reveal himself to me and his own way and in his own time motivated my academic studies.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 51:18 And I would just say over the years, digging deeper and deeper into the academic study and the study of the Bible, that it has only enhanced my understanding of the richness of what we are provided in the restoration of the gospel. The Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible's such a beautiful place to see that. Who else, where else are we living out these ancient stories and they are alive and powerful and real today. We are making covenants. We're emphasizing covenants. We are listening to prophets. As Moses said, "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets." And here we are in a situation where in the latter days, God is calling all of us to know what it means to communicate directly with God, so we follow prophets and we learn the prophetic gift. We gain the prophetic gift ourselves.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 52:17 And there's there's temple. There's priesthood. There's strong female leaders. There's strong male leaders. And my study of the Hebrew Bible only serves to strengthen my confidence in the message of the restoration. I am so grateful. As I sometimes tell my students at BYU, I've learned about the nature of God, the most about the nature of God from Isaiah and from Joseph Smith. They've given me confidence that God is willing to reveal himself to me and that their mortality's still got a while to go for me, I hope. But that quest has been rewarded. I feel that I've come to know God better as I've been guided towards him, and my confidence increased through the Restoration. And

honestly, through the teachings of the Old Testament, as strange as that may sound to some listeners, this has helped me be a better man. And there's a long way to go on that journey, but it's only enhanced me in my relationships with others and my relationships with the Lord.

- Hank Smith: 53:32 Fantastic. Fantastic. John, I think you'd agree, we're better men, I think all of our listeners are better men and women because of what we've been taught today.
- John Bytheway: 53:41 Absolutely. I've made so many notes and I've always... I mean, I feel embarrassed now. I had never seen what a love story this Adam and Eve, the episode of the fall was. I always thought, "Oh, that's the Fall." But look at the love story in there.
- Hank Smith: 53:57 And the love allowed God to become part of the story. Again, just so wonderful.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 54:02 Well, I just wanted to say how fun it's been to be with you. And it is fun to study the scripture together. There's so much there. And there's more always to be discovered, and not just interesting tidbits that are academically or intellectually interesting, as good as that stuff is, but things that'll change us, that'll have power to change who we are. It's so satisfying to study the scriptures together. And with two people who I have loved and admired for quite some time, it's really fun to be with both of you.
- Hank Smith: 54:35 You are very kind. Honestly, I tell my students, this is what I do for fun. I read scriptures for fun. And they kind of look at me like, "You need to raise the bar for fun." But this is fun for us. This is our version of a good time. We want to thank you, Dr. Shon Hopkin, for being with us. We want to thank all of you for listening, grateful for your support. We couldn't do it without you. We have some people we need to thank. Our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen. Our sponsors this year for followHIM, David and Verla Sorensen. And of course our amazing production crew, David Perry, Jamie Nielson, Lisa Spice, Kyle Nelson, Will Stoughton, and Scott Houston. We love you, our team, and we hope all of you will join us next week for another episode of followHIM.
- Hank Smith: 55:29 Hey, we want to remind everybody that you can find us on social media. Come find us on Facebook and Instagram. We would love it if you would subscribe to, rate, and review the podcast, share it with your friends. That would be awesome. Go to [followhim.co](http://followhim.co), [followhim.co](http://followhim.co) for any show notes, transcripts, any references you want. You can watch the podcast on

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