



“The Lord Called His People Zion ”

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:

What will spur the Saints to build Zion? Dr. Avram Shannon joins the podcast and discusses the commandment to build Zion and how it parallels the City of Enoch and is an antitype to Cain’s city. The Savior’s return to Zion, the end of contention, and who will build and reside in Zion are all discussed in this compelling episode.

Part 2:

Dr. Avram Shannon continues to discuss the creation of a Zion people, a God that weeps, and man’s redemption through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Welcome to Part I
- 01:17 Introduction to Dr. Avram Shannon
- 05:07 Enoch's importance to Joseph Smith
- 07:30 Rabbinic source that views Enoch differently, including his "death"
- 12:26 Apocryphal books of Enoch
- 18:01 Joseph Smith taps into ancient connections
- 20:19 The Book of Mormon are Josephites
- 23:19 Enoch is the bridge between Adam and Noah
- 25:13 Canaan in Moses 7 is no the same as later Canaan in Bible
- 28:11 First Principles in Moses 7 and necessary to establish Zion
- 35:03 The Lord comes to Zion, who are one heart and because they chose it
- 36:40 Two cities of Enoch
- 41:38 Zion is Zion because it takes everybody
- 46:56 Dr. Avram shares a personal experience being a financial clerk
- 51:41 The Mission of the Church has expanded
- 54:47 We build Zion one brick at a time
- 59:00 Our relationship to God and others is key to building Zion
- 1:01:48 Hank relates story from the *Deseret News* about a bishop who disguised himself as a homeless man
- 1:06:20 End of Part I

Part 2:

- 00:00 Welcome to Part II
- 00:15 Enoch's great success story
- 01:07 The God that weeps
- 05:09 Enoch asks how God can weep and God's nature
- 09:32 God weeps and is angry when we hurt one another
- 11:18 What do we do with our emotions?
- 14:26 God loves His children enough to be vulnerable
- 19:04 Noah means rest (Enoch asks when the world will rest)
- 23:03 The answer to Enoch's sadness is the Atonement of Jesus Christ
- 27:28 Local or worldwide flood is discussed
- 32:59 The Gathering of Israel and building Zion are the same thing
- 35:21 Ancient Israelite beliefs about where thought and feelings resided
- 39:21 Joseph Smith expands a few verses in Genesis for our day—to build Zion
- 42:31 Dr. Avram Shannon shares his journey as a believing Latter-day Saint and scholar
- 49:00 End of Part II

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Biographical Information:



Dr. Shannon was born in Quantico, Virginia, and spent most of his young life in Virginia. He served a mission first in the Oregon Portland Mission and then in the Washington Kennewick Mission after the Oregon Portland Mission was split. Dr. Shannon earned a BA in ancient Near Eastern studies from Brigham Young University (2007), a master of studies in Jewish studies from the University of Oxford (2008), and a PhD in Near Eastern languages and cultures with a graduate interdisciplinary specialization in religions of the ancient Mediterranean from The Ohio State University (2015).

He and his wife, Thora, have seven children.

Courses Taught: Book of Mormon, Gospels, Pearl of Great Price, Jesus Christ and the Everlasting Gospel

Areas of Expertise: Rabbinic Judaism, Ancient Mediterranean Religions, Jewish Studies, Ancient Biblical Interpretation

Areas of Research: Idolatry and Image Worship, Jewish/non-Jewish Interactions, Tribal and Affinity Groups, Kingship and Priesthood in the Ancient World

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Hank Smith: 00:00:01 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. I'm your host, Hank Smith. And I'm here with my almost-translated co-host, John Bytheway. John, to me, you are almost translated.

John Bytheway: 00:00:35 Almost translate that.

Hank Smith: 00:00:43 That's not what I meant. We're talking about Enoch today. I was like, "What's he doing?"

John Bytheway: 00:00:49 And have they been translated correctly?

Hank Smith: 00:00:51 Yeah. Hey. Welcome, everybody, to followHIM. John, we get to spend our entire day in one chapter. And so, I had to find someone who could teach us all. I mean, how many verses here? 60-

John Bytheway: 00:01:10 69-

Hank Smith: 00:01:12 69 verses of Moses Chapter 7. Tell us who's with us here.

John Bytheway: 00:01:17 Yes, I'm very excited today. We have Dr. Avram Shannon with us. He was born in Quantico, Virginia. Spent most of his young life in Virginia. He served his mission in the Oregon Portland Mission and then Washington Kennewick Mission after the

mission was split. Dr. Shannon earned a bachelor's degree in Near Eastern Studies from Brigham Young University, a master of studies in Jewish Studies from the University of Oxford, and a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures with a graduate interdisciplinary specialization in Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean from the Ohio State University. And he and his wife, Thora, have seven children.

- Hank Smith: 00:01:58 Ohio State. When I tell my students... When they have questions about Judaism, I say, "If I don't know, I know who I can ask. It's Dr. Avram Shannon." So, give us a little bit of that. I'm sure it might come up through our discussion today, but your mom grew up Jewish, right?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:02:17 So the whole story is my great-great-grandmother, so her great-grandmother was Jewish. Okay? And came to the United States and then it's hard to be Jewish in America. And so, they Christianized after about a generation. And then, my mother converted back to Judaism as an adult. And she was actually pretty orthodox. She went to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. So not Ohio State, but Ohio University down in Athens. And after she finished her degree, she either was going to go to New York and join the Hasidim, the ultra-orthodox Jews in New York, or she was going to go to Seattle to go to the University of Washington for a graduate program.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:03:06 She chose to go to Seattle rather than go to New York. She moved into an apartment. There were, I think, seven girls in the apartment. Six of them were Latter-day Saints, and she was number seven. Actually, for a while there, she was going to *shul* on Saturdays. And then, she'd attend church with Latter-day Saints on Sundays. They gave her a calling because she could direct music, so she was directing the music before she converted, should I say for about two years.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:35 So, she converts. And then, Avram's a very Jewish name, I assume.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:03:41 Yes, Avram's a very Jewish name. And so, it's funny because all my kids... I was talking to my kids this morning about this actually. All of my siblings have scriptural names. So there's Joshua, there's me, Samuel, Luke. And then, Sariah from the Book of Mormon there is my sister. Avram being... It's the Hebrew form of Abraham. Steven Ricks, the Hebrew teacher here over at BYU, calls me his Judeo-Celtic friend because of my names.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:09 Judeo-Celtic.

John Bytheway: 00:04:11 That's so great.

Hank Smith: 00:04:14 Avram, this week is our first *Come, Follow Me* lesson in which we're just in one single chapter, Moses 7. So, how do you want to take us through this? We'll hand the reins over to you.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:04:26 Okay. Thanks. So, Moses 7's really interesting. The Book of Moses is JST, Genesis. It's an extract of Joseph Smith's JST, which is important to us because it's not really a standalone book, right? Something as we treat the Book of Moses, like it's... But it's just pulled out of Genesis. But Moses 7 is intriguing because it's one of those few portions in the Book of Moses that doesn't have a strong background in Genesis. You read Moses 2, Moses 3, those are our Creation accounts and stuff, which we talked about previously. Most of it is just, I mean, Genesis with a few changes here and there.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:05:07 But again, Moses 6 and 7 here, which I think is part of why the *Come, Follow Me* focuses on this is because you have the You have Genesis here. You have Genesis and Moses together. Here, really you've got the Book of Moses, which is important for us. Because as Latter-day Saints, Enoch's kind of a big deal for us Latter-day Saints. I mean, he was extremely important in the early Restoration. He's extremely important to Joseph Smith's self-understanding as a prophet. We don't have enough comments anymore. But back in the day, in the early sections, when they had sort of the code names that they would do for the various figures in there. One of Joseph's was Enoch. Joseph identified through revelation as Enoch.

Hank Smith: 00:05:59 A couple of verses in Genesis are the Genesis for Moses 6 and 7. Is that right?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:06:07 That is right. So, it's Genesis 5:21-24. And it's part of this larger part where you have a description of so and so lived so many years begat so and so, and lived the ... after that and then died. It's this genealogical table. And again, in Genesis, the primary purpose is to get between sort of Seth and Noah. But in the middle there, there's this weird little bit. This is Genesis 5:21, "And Enoch lived sixty and five years and begat Methuselah." Okay? So far exactly what we expect. "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years and begat sons and daughters." Okay? There's that walk with God. That's a little bit different. "All the days of Enoch were 365 years, and Enoch walked with God, and was not; for God took him."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:06:55 One of the things as Latter-day Saints, we're kind of spoiled sometimes because Mormon holds our hand a lot. Mormon

kind of walks through, explains what he's doing, explains what his sources are, explains why he is doing it. Mormon kind of walks us through things. The Biblical authors and editors don't do that. They presume that we're kind of already insiders as we read this stuff. There's no explanation about what it means to walk with God in Genesis. As Latter-day Saints, we're predisposed to read it positively because we have the Book of Moses.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:07:30 There's actually a Rabbinic source about Enoch. Enoch has kind of an intriguing, mixed tradition in Judaism. Some parts of Judaism that really like Enoch. There's other parts of Judaism that's like... Basically, they say you've got two kids. And one kid is always obedient. He stays next to you, does everything you ask. And one kid runs everywhere around the store and is always touching things, and pushing things, and you can never find them. And basically, they ask, "Which of these two kids are you going to make hold your hand?"
- Hank Smith: 00:08:04 Yeah. Okay. So, Enoch-
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:08:07 It's the one that-
- Hank Smith: 00:08:07 So, Enoch walked with God because he was all over the place.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:08:10 That's how they understand it. Exactly.
- John Bytheway: 00:08:12 Oh, interesting.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:14 Mormon and the Biblical authors reminds me of a tour guide. You got Mormon, the tour guide, who's explaining every little detail. And then, you've got this biblical tour guide who's like, "Oh, that was Enoch. Yeah. He walked with God. All right. Let's keep going."
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:08:28 Let's keep going.
- John Bytheway: 00:08:28 Wait. What?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:08:29 No. It's true.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:31 So, Joseph Smith gets to these four verses and then something happens?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:08:35 Like with Moses 1, he has this visionary revelatory expansion to Genesis. Again, the equivalent there, you start there in 6. Again,

you're going straight on through, Moses 6:17, Seth, Enos, Cain, Mahalalel, Jared, and then Enoch.

- Hank Smith: 00:08:57 Yeah. Right in verse 25, "Enoch lives 65 years in begat Methuselah. ..." Yeah, that's verse 21 of Genesis.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:09:05 Exactly. It's directly in Genesis.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:07 Yeah. Then it changes.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:09:10 It ...] narrative and Enoch lived 65 years and begat you know. And journey in the land among the people and as he journeyed you have this call narrative right in the middle there. And so, what Joseph does through revelation as the JST here, is he basically expands the Enoch story and explains, "So, what does it mean for Enoch to walk with God? Why was Enoch walking? What does it mean that God took him? What does it mean when God took him? What does it mean for these things?"
- Hank Smith: 00:09:36 So, yeah. Four verses becomes... I can't even count them all here.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:09:42 Kind of 100 verses of material. Maybe a little more than that.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:46 Yeah. I'm going to write that down. Four verses becomes 100 plus.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:09:49 Yeah. The JST, it tends to be expansive *vis-a-vis* Genesis, of course. But this is one of the places where you really see that expansion happening extensively. It's very clear from Genesis that Enoch doesn't die because everybody else does. I mean, the formula is, and so and so lived so many years and begat many sons and daughters and died. Seth, Cain, and Jared. So it's very clear whatever's happening in Genesis, Enoch isn't dying. It breaks the formula there. So, there is something weird there, which by the way Enoch becomes in certain parts of ancient literature, he becomes kind of this-
- Hank Smith: 00:10:28 Because he's the one in the list that didn't die.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:10:32 Right. Biblical interpreters then and now are heavily attuned to weird things in scripture. I call them sort of the knobs and the text. When you're reading along, you kind of hit something and you're like, "I got to figure out what's going on here." Those become places where you're going to get the most sort of interpretive explanation and exploration. And that's true JST,

too. The Lord gives the most sort of revelation on the knobbiest places in the text.

- Hank Smith: 00:11:05 The knobbiest.
- John Bytheway: 00:11:06 Avram, is that the only mention of Enoch in the Bible? These four verses in Genesis?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:11:11 No, he's mentioned twice in the New Testament. So, he's mentioned once in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and he's mentioned once in the Epistle of Jude. In the Epistle of Hebrews, you note there in Chapter 11 in, again, the great table of faith, "By faith that did all these things." He's there by faith. He was not.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:11:32 So again, Hebrews actually understands what's going on there in Genesis. It's very similar to Latter-day Saints. There's nothing there. That's kind of weird for us. There's no city. We'll get to the city in a second. The city's distinctive to the Book of Moses. So, kind of our most important part of the Enoch narrative because it feeds so much into our own tradition is distinctive to Restoration scripture.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:11:54 The Jude one is interesting because there Enoch's not important except insofar as Jude quotes an apocryphal Book of Enoch. So as part of this intro I was talking about in Enoch as a figure, you find actually there's a whole subcategory of Enoch literature. There's a whole subcategory of ancient stuff that's about and from, and sort of through Enoch.
- Hank Smith: 00:12:29 These books, when are these found? Where do they come from? Are they called the Book of Enoch?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:12:35 So, one of them is. Okay? Scholars kind of called them 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, 3 Enoch. But that's just because they're trying to work through them in terms of our... Again, they're not ancient designations. Date of composition is probably... Sorry. This really flourishes between about 100 BC rather. So, about the 1st Century BC and about the 4th Century AD is kind of the flourishing of this sort of Enoch literature.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:13:07 The biggest, most famous is probably 1 Enoch. That's the one that Jude quotes there in the New Testament. "The Lord comes with 10,000 of his Saints." That 10,000 of his Saints that comes from Jude coming from 1 Enoch. And that's our earliest one. So, the Book of Enoch, or the 1 Enoch here and actually all the Enoch stuff, is part of this kind of one of the things we think as

we think about the process of our scriptures coming together. It's worth noting that in the ancient world, especially originally ancient world, we didn't have books. The Bible wasn't a book. It was a... Ancient notes were primarily a scroll technology. And so, you had scrolls.

- Hank Smith: 00:13:59 Hey, Bytheway, we've come back to scrolling.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:01 We have actually. We scrolled down now.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:14:04 And it's funny because the book is a superior piece of technology. You can put your finger in, you can find things easier, but we've we took a step backwards when we-
- Hank Smith: 00:14:14 Back to scrolling.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:14:15 Back to scrolling.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:16 Okay, sorry. Sorry. I cut you off.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:14:18 That's a valid point. That's why we went to books. And so, the funny thing is that when you have books, the question is different with scrolls. We actually had these archeological and scrolls used to have scroll cases. And so it wasn't... So, you had a copy of Isaiah, and it was in a scroll. And you had a copy of the five Books of Moses or whatever you had your Pentateuch, your Torah, and it was a scroll. And you had your Book of Enoch, and it was a scroll. And so you had these vari-
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:14:50 And so, there was not as much need to determine what books that you're going to read because you just collected them, and they were just part of a sort of divine library. But the move to a codex technology, the move to books, suddenly the question becomes, "What do you put between the covers? What gets to be there and what doesn't?" And so, there's all this stuff that's circulated in the ancient world, scriptural, quasi-scriptural, whatever that didn't make the cuts.
- Hank Smith: 00:15:25 So, along the way to the creation of the Bible as we know it, books got pushed off by some group or another. And the 1, 2, 3 Enoch, these books got left behind.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:15:40 Again, Enoch's really intriguing because again, it was not included because there were questions about authenticity, there were questions about... Again, there's another class of sort of apocryphal type literature called pseudepigrapha, which is writings that we're not sure who the author is or writings that

we know are later that seem to be attributed to an earlier author.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:15:59 And again, if you go out and read the Enoch and say, "Oh, this is a straight Enoch material." There are, by the way, connections between the apocryphal Enoch material and between our Enoch material in the Book of Moses. There are connections. We find the weeping God. We find Enoch has visions. Nephi thought that was a big deal. We find some names. There's a Mahijah figure who we connected to the Mahijaj in our apocryphal Enoch stuff. But there are lots of places where it's very, very, very different.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:16:36 The way they treat angels. Totally different. There is a notion, humans, angels, and gods are the same kind of spiritual ideas. No where do you find angels are a separate class of created being. There's no city. So, their connections say, "Oh, this is neat." The other places where you say, "This is totally different. This is not a Latter-day Saint scripture."
- John Bytheway: 00:17:02 Okay, well, so this is why this is wonderful because we feel this is reliable. Are Moses Chapter 6 and 7 about Enoch for us? Is no, this is scripture. We can count on this.
- Hank Smith: 00:17:19 Avram, let me ask you a question. Josh Sears talked about this when we had him on, when he says, "Listen, the JST sometimes gives us back ancient text that was once written and sometimes it's just new revelation." Maybe it's impossible to say what Moses 6 and 7 is?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:17:43 So again, the question always is, and your point it's possible to say. The question always is, what's your criteria? How would you tell? How would you know? Without access to an actual ancient text.
- Hank Smith: 00:18:00 You couldn't know.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:18:01 You literally cannot tell. You cannot say, "Yes, this is definitely ancient" because we don't have anything to check it against. Now with the Enoch material, we do have ancient texts and there are some connections. I already mentioned these, the weeping God and things like that. If I had my tie thrown over my shoulder, that's how I let my students know that I'm kind of just spinning my wheels here for a second. But we can definitely say 100%, Joseph Smith seems to tap into an Enoch tradition that has continuity with other ancient traditions from the ancient world. Whether that was originally in Genesis or not, we cannot

say. But it's very clear that Joseph Smith taps into something that has ancient connections. And for me at that point, again, there's nothing that proves Joseph's prophetic but the Holy Ghost. But for me, that makes Joseph making it up no longer the easiest answer. It provides space for Restoration. So I do think that there's... Again, I think there's an authentic Enoch and there is space here for Joseph tapping into something that's very ancient.

- Hank Smith: 00:19:19 Yeah. I think our listeners are going to be interested in that. I think they would say, "Does this mean that Joseph without having the materials that later scholars have got it, wow, really close to right in a lot of places?" Is that kind of what you're saying?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:19:38 If Joseph is guessing, he's guessing exactly right. It's kind of the-
- Hank Smith: 00:19:44 The World's Greatest Guesser: Joseph Smith.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:19:48 It's the same thing with Book of Abraham stuff. There's place in the Book of Abraham that are very much, especially, Abraham 1 that only fit in kind of Second Millennium BC material there. And again, if Joseph's guessing, he's guessing exactly right with that.
- Hank Smith: 00:20:03 Wow.
- John Bytheway: 00:20:04 Well, it kind of makes you wonder what other back stories are there that we don't have. If from four verses in Genesis, we can get all of this. I wonder who else they went by kind of quickly in Genesis that has more that we'll get someday.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:20:19 Yeah, I know. And it's actually a really key thing because, of course, one of the things that's intriguing, just generally in reading scripture, is learning that their issues are not our issues. When you realize that the authors and editors of most of the Old Testament were Judahite priests and scribes, suddenly, you understand why the emphasis on priests and temples and Judahite kings. And their perspective feeds into... It's part of, I suspect, why we get more Josephite material in, say, the Book of Mormon. I was just reading the other day, Moroni and the tradition of... As this cloth is torn, the whole Joseph thing. We've got these extra Joseph traditions in the Book of Mormon, which makes sense, because the Book of Mormon authors are Josephites.
- John Bytheway: 00:21:07 Are Josephites. Wow. That's great.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:21:10 That's why they're-

Hank Smith: 00:21:11 You mean like Joseph of Egypt-ite?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:21:13 Yeah, Joseph of Egypt. Yeah. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:21:14 Yeah. Like Lehi comes from. Yeah.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:21:17 They're descendants from Joseph. Lehi comes from Joseph, he learns. And then we learn from Alma, that he comes through Manasseh. And so, we would expect traditions about Joseph in a text like the Book of Mormon that we wouldn't expect from the Biblical text. The Biblical text is written by Judahites from a Judahite perspective and from a Levitical priesthood perspective.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:21:39 I think John's point's really good there, being aware of that then helps us understand what is in and what's not. And of course, Joseph in the Latter-days is coming here. And one of the things that JST definitely does, the JST is a Bible for Latter-day Saints. It's a Bible for the Restoration. The JST takes the Bible and says, "Look. This book still matters. And this book still matters for you guys right now." And so, the Enoch material especially puts emphasis on the building of Zion. It's going to be something the Church needs right now.

John Bytheway: 00:22:15 A very Latter-day theme that we talk about a lot. Yeah.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:22:19 Right. And something that mattered deeply to Joseph.

Hank Smith: 00:22:22 I was going to say, in the Doctrine and Covenants last year, almost you have the Church organized, and then they start talking about Zion, the cause of Zion. And was this coming from his work in the JST at least some of them?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:22:34 Yeah, absolutely. It's worth noting that these Genesis chapters, he's transiting these in June and July of 1830. This is immediately after the Restoration and the establishment of the Church in these Latter-days. So, this is directly feeding into what he's doing, what he's thinking about in his prophetic mission and his prophetic self-understanding. So, 7 of course builds right off of 6. One of the things to remember, of course, as you read scripture, is that chapter and verse divisions are artificial. They are, almost all of them, not original to the texts. If you go back to the Joseph Smith's original translation manuscripts, there are no chapter or verse divisions in the Book of Moses. Those are put in by the Talmage in 1902, 1902 version of this.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:23:26 So, Moses 7 begins with a continuation of Moses 6. Moses 6 is all framed in terms of teachings to Adam. That's one of the key things. And that's really important as we think about what's going on then in Moses 7, because the Enoch material's actually, it's almost a bridge between... In the same way, again, remember that chapter Genesis 5 is trying to get from Seth to Noah. Noah's still a huge, important deal. And so Moses 7, even with the Enoch material, it's Enoch bridging us between Seth and Noah or between Adam and Noah, and Enoch providing this covenantal bridge between our first parents and between... Again, because one of the things that Genesis is going to do, and actually Moses 7 is set up for this, Genesis understands the flood as a new creation. The world is newly created. You get a new covenant and so and so. It's pushing us there in this attempt of bringing us through that.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:24:32 So, I had said he says, first one, right, "Behold, our father, Adam taught these things, and many believed and become the sons of God, and maybe believed not." By the way, this is a major theme, major theme in the Book of Moses is this notion of the two ways. This idea that they're sort of two ways, such as dominion. Two ways to pick, you've got the devil's way, you've got the Lord's way. Cain versus Abel. Those who believe, those who followed sons of God, daughters. And again, it's always framing this in these dichotomies, which is-
- Hank Smith: 00:25:10 You can choose one or the other.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:25:13 Right. There are two ways to do this. Okay. And then Enoch, again, he begins to prophesy. And so we have sort of two prophecies in the Enoch and it's worth noting here, especially as we're here in Moses 7. We'll go 3 through about 9. You've got all these place names, right? Shum and Canaan and Heni and Omner and Shem and Haner and Hannannah. We, of course, have no idea where these are. And we can't know where these are. They're not attachable to place names. And this is important because of that verse about Canaan there in verses 6-8.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:26:03 One of the things, of course, that people in Church, but especially people who oppose the Church have done with the Pearl of Great Price is they've used to justify their racist readings and things, or to confuse Latter-day Saints of being racist. And of course, there's some discussion about blackness and things here, but it's worth noting, these are not the Canaanites from later in the Bible, first of all. Okay. So, these are not the Canaanites in the land. Again, when Abraham comes

to the Land of Canaan, when we get to it in a couple chapters in Genesis, these are different people.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:26:39 Again, because of historical things and whatever there was, even in the Church it's not unique to Latter-day Saints but the connection says, "Oh, well, a person of African descent couldn't have priests who descended from Cain." And the point of verses like this here with that. But of course, Cain is not Canaan. And so, this is not talking about the descendants of Cain. I get sort of a period, full stop. There's actually no discussion of Cain and priesthood anywhere in the scriptures. Not here. Not in the Book of Abraham. There is nowhere in scripture where Cain is discussed in connection to priesthood. Which is part of why the Church now, again, disavows any explanation that described dark skin as a sign of God's disfavor.
- Hank Smith: 00:27:33 Okay. So, this is Enoch, he's prophesying, and the Lord says prophesy to the people of Canaan but this is pre-Flood. So, we shouldn't connect these to the Canaanites that we're going to hear from in a few weeks.
- John Bytheway: 00:27:48 When we get into Genesis 11. Yeah.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:27:50 Right. And neither should we connect them to Cain. Both sides, just separate them out. Since we don't know any of these things, we actually don't know what they're doing. Like I said, the ancient texts... These all the time. They're always talking about things that make sense to them. That doesn't matter to us. But I do think and this feeds into what's going on there as we go to 10 and 11 that's I think where the real meat of this chapter begins.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:28:11 In 10, 11, again, the Lord says, "Go to these people and say to them—Repent, lest they come out and smite them. ..." We'll talk about that for a second. "And he gave me a commandment that I should baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, which with the grace and truth, and of the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son." And this is particularly important. This is probably where I would break it probably here at 10 because this is what begins at the beginning. We have sort of three things going on in 7. And the first of those is the establishment of Zion. And this, of course, is part of why this has as a resonance for Latter-day Saints.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:53 Okay. So, this is the message that the Lord says, "This is Enoch. This is the message I want you to give."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:28:59 Exactly. And what I find so compelling about this is this tells us of principles on which Zion is established. Sometimes as Latter-day Saints, as we talk, we get this notion that there's some kind of special dispensation of doctrine or something that the Lord has to give us before we can establish Zion. The principles on which Zion was established by Enoch are repentance, faith, baptism. It's nothing particularly special. There's no particular change that we need to have in order to establish Zion.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:29:35 And this is something I find very important because we sometimes use that as an excuse not to try and establish Zion. Elder Christofferson gave a great talk called "Come to Zion." But one of the things he points out is that we have a responsibility as Latter-day Saints to build Zion. That's part of what we are supposed to be doing. And the reason I love this here in Moses 10 and 11 is it reminds us that we're not waiting for something special to build Zion. We have the tools right now that we need to build Zion.

Hank Smith: 00:30:17 Yeah. I'm seeing all First Principles here. Aren't you, John? Verse 10 repent-

John Bytheway: 00:30:23 Yeah. Repent, baptized in 11, Holy Ghost in 11.

Hank Smith: 00:30:27 13.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:30:28 Got faith in 13.

Hank Smith: 00:30:28 "And so great was the faith of Enoch." Yeah. Enoch's going to... He's going to start the message of how we're going to build Zion and it's going to be the same things you and I hear today.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:30:37 That's right. Building Zion is not some kind of special extra thing that the Lord's people get on top of it. It's God's work, period. I mean, it's the principle of the gospel. It's fundamental Again, Doctrine and Covenants, this last year. Doctrine and Covenants frames consecration, frames Zion in terms of the laws of the Celestial Kingdom. I mean, this is what God wants us to do. He wants his people to be one.

Hank Smith: 00:31:02 And the foundation here is... I mean, yeah. If you just read 10 through 13, you'd have 75, 31 and 35, Chapter 11 and all these. If you really want to be part of my work here is what you want to do. Repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, repent again in verse 12. Verse 13, have great faith.

John Bytheway: 00:31:29 I'd love the prevalence of First Principles in all of the scriptures. If they really are the First Principles, then they really are the First Principles. And we should expect to see them and we do. Can I, Avram, just ask you one more time. I think it was a really interesting point you made. So I put in my margin, did I write this right? A pre-flood Canaan not related to the post-flood Canaan?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:31:53 That's right.

John Bytheway: 00:31:56 So, they just decided to name it that post-flood, but we have no idea why or...

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:32:01 Part of the problem, of course, is that we don't have the underlying language for any of... So, we don't know what this looks like. Is this the same? Is it Canaan again, like you have in Genesis? Maybe. Maybe not. There's two or three letters that can have an AA vowel on them. There's a couple of Ks you got to KA and a KO or CU sounds in Hebrew. I would not even be comfortable saying this is even the same name. It might be, but then it certainly might not be.

John Bytheway: 00:32:36 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:32:37 Yeah, and Latter-day Saints would maybe have a tendency to read this and go, "Oh. This is obviously the people of Canaan. And this is the same Canaan where Abraham goes. And look, here's the blackness that came upon the children of Canaan." And all of a sudden we're making connections that the scriptures don't make.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:32:53 That's right. We always need to be very, very, very, very, very careful about systemizing scripture. One of the things we do as Latter-day Saints is we're trying to circumscribe all truth, new, and great whole. That's what we're trying to do. But sometimes we forget when we do that, that scripture is definitionally, it's ad hoc revelation. It comes to certain people at certain times, and you can make connections.

John Bytheway: 00:33:20 It might not even be the same word, even though to us, it looks like exactly the same word. That's interesting.

Hank Smith: 00:33:30 So, Enoch wants to build a people. This sounds a lot like Joseph Smith even our day. He wants to build a people who centered their life on God and give themselves to God. So, what's the rest of his message? What are we going to do next?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:33:44 Yeah. I mean, and the beauty of this and the beauty of Moses 7 is, of course, Joseph Smith wanted to build a people who followed God and were one heart. President Nelson wants to build a people who followed God or in one heart. Enoch did it. And so really the great beauty of, or rather God did it through Enoch even, the great beauty of Moses 7 is we have a Zion success story. And those unfortunately are few and far between in scripture. But here we have a success story. And again, you have to step with the lands and things like that. But really that brings us into 7:18. This is our Zion verse, right? "And the Lord called his people Zion, because they're of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness, and there was no poor among them."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:34:36 And again, in that great talk of Elder Christofferson, Elder Christofferson suggests, first of all, he points out, and I think this is really important, the Lord doesn't make his people Zion. He doesn't make them one heart, one mind. He doesn't drive out the poor among them. He doesn't make it own righteousness. After they have become one heart, mind, after they have eliminated poverty, after they have done these things, then the Lord says, "And now, you're Zion."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:35:03 Zion is something that we do. It's not something the Lord does to us. The Lord called his people Zion because they were already one heart and one mind. They were already dwelling in righteousness. There were already no poor among them. And I think that's so key.

Hank Smith: 00:35:20 Yeah. That word, the Lord called his people. The Lord didn't make his people Zion. The Lord called his people Zion because they chose it.

John Bytheway: 00:35:29 And we might say they applied the principles of Zion. They became of one heart of one mind. They worked on being united and repenting and all of them applying the gospel together.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:35:42 I mean, there's still obviously grace in this. I mean, obviously, you can't repent without Jesus' grace. I mean, absolutely.

John Bytheway: 00:35:48 Can you recall the reference to Elder Christofferson? I want to put it in my margin. That was-

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:35:53 The talk's called "Come to Zion," and Elder Christofferson gave it in the October General Conference of 2008. It's one of the great talks on Zion. It's just powerful stuff from Elder Christofferson there.

Hank Smith: 00:36:03 One thing I learned last year by studying the Doctrine and Covenants, I don't think I'd ever really seen before, is the Lord says, "Here's Missouri, go build Zion." And they're so worried about the place and their enemies. And he doesn't seem overly concerned about the place or the enemies. It's always about the people he said, "I can take care of your enemies and the place is ready for you. It's about your hearts." That's the difficult part for the Lord, because I'm not going to on you because the moment I force it on you, it's not Zion.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:36:40 Yes. And it's kind of actually funny there in Doctrine and Covenants. Not funny. And it's funny in a sad way. I mean, the Lord makes it very clear like, "This is your fault, guys. Missouri was all your fault." The Lord does not let us off the hook for that one. He's like, "You could have done this but you didn't," which is a little hard. And actually, one thing, in terms of two ways, one of things I love about Enoch City is there are actually two Cities of Enoch in the Book of Moses.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:37:04 If you remember all the way back in Moses 5 and it's also there in Genesis. Remember Cain. Cain's a farmer. Cain's cursed. And this is very clear once again. By the way, the curse on Cain is that he can't farm anymore. That's very explicit from scripture. Cain's curse is he can't farm anymore. But what does he do? He goes, and he builds a city. And he calls the name of that city, this is Moses 5:42. "And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch." So, Cain also has a son named Enoch. And he also begat sons and his daughters. And he built a city, and he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. And it's a place of industry and secret combinations. So like every other city basically.

Hank Smith: 00:37:57 So, you have these two cities built up. These two cities of Enoch.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:38:01 That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:38:01 How fascinating.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:38:02 And the Book of Moses does a comparison. Instead of saying, "Oh, cities are all bad." Which again, you can make an argument for that in terms of what's going on there in Moses 5. Instead, what Moses does in Moses 7 and says, "But look what you can do with cities, if you do them God's way. Look what a redeemed city looks like."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:38:26 So, the City of Enoch is the city the way God wants cities to be, one heart, one mind, no poverty. Cain's City of Enoch is the way

that every other in the world ever looked like. People try... It's core doctrine. I mean, secret combinations are fundamentally fruited in this notion of everyone prospers according to their genius, and you don't need anybody else. And again, fundamentally Cain kills Abel because Cain sees Abel as an object, not as a person. And so, you have, again, this comparison the Book of Moses making between, we have a City of Enoch here. This is the wrong way to do it. We've seen a gift here. City of holy is Zion. This is the right way to do it.

Hank Smith: 00:39:09 I mean, I guess this is such a big question, but how'd they do it? I mean, we want to do it. Here's Zion's success story. I think many of, obviously, the people listening to our podcast are going, "Hey. I want to live in Zion." I have a quote from Elder Christofferson here, "We will become of one heart and one mind as we individually place the Savior at the center of our lives." I've noticed for me, personally, Avram, that I'm like, "Yeah. I'm ready for Zion as soon as everyone else is ready for Zion."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:39:46 I always tell my students, I always say, "Zion is super easy to build if we're just me." But of course the key point... And this is actually the real struggle with it is there is no Zion without everybody else. Zion is definitionally a community of faith. And again, we saw this amply in our Doctrine and Covenants this last year. But sometimes we say things like, "Oh, I know the Church is true, but not the people in it."

Hank Smith: 00:40:12 Right.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:40:12 But one of the things that Zion reminds us is there is no Church without the people in it. There's not some kind of super, special, magical church out in heaven that we're kind of sending to. It's just us. And it's the same thing with Zion. And Zion's just us fundamental. One, Elder Christofferson, suggests that we need all three of these things to build Zion. Any one of these is a great thing. Any one of these is hugely part of what God wants us to do.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:40:43 But to be a Zion people, we need to keep the commandments. To dwell in righteousness. We need to have that kind of unity that the Lord wants us to have. We need to have it so that there are no poor us. We have to eliminate poverty. And, again, Elder Christofferson, he says, "The Lord has measured individuals and societies by how well they take care of the poor and needy among them." Every time I read that quote, I'm like, "How am I doing?"

John Bytheway: 00:41:13 This reminds me of thinking about how to answer that question:4 Nephi.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:41:19 Yes.

John Bytheway: 00:41:20 "There was no contention." It says four different times, "Because the love of God which dwelt in the hearts of the people." And it mentions there were no poor. So 4 Nephi 1 is kind of another, we did it. We created a Zion because of the love of God, which dwelt in the hearts of the people, it says.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:41:38 Yes. We divide the world into categories, right? Male, female, Black, white, Latter-day Saints, non-Latter-day Saints, gay, straight. All these various categories, these various identities. And it's not that these are somehow wrong. One of the things that I love about Zion is that Zion takes everybody.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:41:58 I mean, you think about how the Lord's created this world and you just go outside and you look at people, right? You go to whatever, you go to your classes, your wards, and you see how many different kinds of people the Lord has created. How many people are there in this world? And I love it. It's clear to me, the Lord loves all of us. But what we do is we take these categories, and then we treat people like objects.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:42:23 Again, this is back to 2 Nephi 2. Lehi reminds us that the Lord created things to act and things to be acted upon. And fundamentally, cohort doctrine, fundamentally, secret combinations is treating people like things to be acted upon rather as things to act. Honestly, Facebook's the anti-Zion. They said that we don't agree with or whatever. And suddenly, they're an object. They're no longer a person. And then we act on them and rather than saying, "Oh, wait, no. You're a thing to act, not a thing to act upon."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:43:08 Fundamentally, Cain killing Abel was Cain deciding that Abel was something to be acted upon rather than something to act. And for me, as I think about building Zion, fundamentally, it's about learning to treat people the way God treats them, which is like people.

Hank Smith: 00:43:24 Yeah. When I use a hammer, I don't think about how it feels. I don't think about if it's going to be sad. I'm going to use it until it's worn out. I'm going to get a new one. But that's not people.

John Bytheway: 00:43:35 I was just looking for it. But this reminds me. Because I use a verse when I teach the Book of Mormon about, "Look, they're

treating people like things and things like people." It's Mormon 8:39 where this is Moroni taking over his father's record. But he says, "Why do you adorn yourselves with that which have no life, and yet suffer the hungry, the needy, the naked, and the sick," and I want to add, who have life to pass by you and notice them not. You're treating things like people and people like things." Sounds to me like Mormon 8:39.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:44:08 And we'll see this later on. The one thing that makes God really, really mad is his children hurting each other, his children mistreating each other. Again, back to Hank's question there about how we do this. Sometimes, you look at it and say, "Man, this is hard." And we just stop trying. And part of it, we disagree, right? There's no contention in the land back here, our 4 Nephi example. But of course, no contention does not mean no disagreement. Everybody doesn't think the same in Zion, but the secret is learning how to get there. How do you learn to disagree in God's way?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:44:52 And this is another key thing about this, about consecration, about the cause, about each and every one of us. I have different gifts than my wife, my children, my students, than my Bishop, and my stake presidents. I have different gifts, the consecrated Avram Shannon is not the same as the consecrated Hank Smith or John Bytheway.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:45:17 As Latter-day Saints, we get this notion that we have to give up our individuality if we build Zion. To be one means we have to give up what makes us think of to be us and one thing I think is very clear and very important is in Zion, you are the most like you you will ever be, because remember, God has always known you, and he loves you for it. It's you he wants. And so, the consecrated you is still going to be... And it's going to be the most like you, you could possibly be.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:51 This is the object. What did Joseph Smith call the object of that we should all be looking?
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:45:56 The cause of design is the most important thing he says.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:59 Yeah. And we should be thinking about this all day, all night. And this is going to be a problem if I'm ready to build Zion, but when I look around me I'm like, "Well, no one else looks like is ready to build Zion." So, I'm going to go ahead and just wait. I'll hold my efforts off until everybody else is ready to build Zion." When it takes people who are ready to build Zion and it just gets started for other people to say, "I'm going to do it too."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:46:34 Fundamentally, because we don't understand this, I think to your point, Hank, because we don't know what everybody's potential are, we don't know what everybody's bringing to the table. That person that we're looking at and saying, "Oh, well they're not building Zion so I won't either." Maybe they are at this point. Maybe that's what they have to give. And it's not our job to say, "Yes, you're not doing it or I'm not doing it." We say, "Okay, this is what you're giving. Here's what I can give. Let's do this all together," because the whole point of Zion, in some ways, is that there are lots of things that I can't give 100% in. There are things that I'm really good at, the things that I'm not really good at. There was one time I was a ward clerk. I had to do the Friends of Scouting.

John Bytheway: 00:47:22 Friends of Scouting.

Hank Smith: 00:47:22 Friends of Scouting. Yeah.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:47:24 And I collected the money. I was the clerk. But nobody had trained me on how to deposit the money. So, I sat on it for a year until we got audited, and they found the envelope with all of the money and pledged it. And the Bishop said, "What is this Brother Shannon?" And I said, "I didn't know what to do." It was fine. We got all the pledges. It was fine. They got out. Everything turned out okay in the end.

Hank Smith: 00:47:50 Are you ever going to cash that check? Right?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:47:54 And somebody could look at that and say, "Well, he's not building Zion." But of course what I needed was somebody to come and say, "Let me help you." And fundamentally, I think for me, the real question about building Zion is to ask, "How can I help? Let me help."

Hank Smith: 00:48:15 Wow. And so, it's the idea of, "I'm not going to worry if so and so, if Shannon or if Peter is building Zion. I'm going to worry if I am building Zion, and I'm going to give my full efforts and assume the best in others."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:48:33 It's this notion of getting what you deserve. Right? None of the good we deserve, right? It's not so bad as all that. But we're so concerned sometimes with fairness. And one of the beautiful things about the gospel of Jesus Christ is it's fundamentally unfair. If it were fair, we'd all go to hell.

John Bytheway: 00:48:54 So many of the parables, especially the Laborers in the Vineyard, the Prodigal Son is looking sideways instead of, "Oh,

look, I was paid. It was... Hey, wait a minute." It's looking sideways and comparing. And isn't that what CS Lewis said, "It's the pride isn't pleasure in having something, but having more of it than the next man."

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:49:17 Yep. Exactly.
- Hank Smith: 00:49:19 Interesting. People will ask me, "When do you think the Second Coming is going to be?" And over the years, my mind has become, "I think the Lord's waiting on us." He's like, "I'm ready when you're ready. You want to build Zion. As soon as it's there, I'll be there." And so we're waiting for him. He's waiting for us. So, what would you say if someone listening said, "Okay, I'm in. I want to build Zion. What do I do?" I think what Elder Christofferson says is, "Okay. Start with you, your family, your word, and your stake. Start with your circle of influence."
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:49:56 And look for ways to help. The secret to building Zion is just to go and build Zion. We talk ourselves out of it. We say, "Oh, we can't do it. Oh, we can't whatever." And say, "No, no, no, no. We can do it." If nothing else from this experience of us talking together comes to any of your listeners. My firm testimony that we can build Zion right now. We have all the tools and all the ability. We can do it. And I would say the real secret is just to do it. Repent of your sins, help other people, look for people who need your help. Again, find a way. However you want to do it. This is not about politics. But we have to eliminate poverty. Find a way. However you think is the best way to do that. That's fine.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:50:46 I have my opinions about how I think I would do it. But honestly, this notion of we cannot say, "Oh, well, they're just poor, whatever." We have to find a way to eliminate poverty. So, find ways to help people who are less fortunate than us, or if you're the poor find ways to be helped.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:02 As we've been talking about Zion, scriptures keep coming to mind. I mean, it's just over and over, right? Jacob 2, "It's the pride in your hearts and your sins, your sexual sins that are keeping you from God." Then King Benjamin, "You're turning away the poor. You're not keeping the commandments." So, we can build Zion. Repent of our sins. Find ways to help those who are suffering.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:51:32 Yeah. That's it. Again, obviously that's not it because we'd have done it yet, but that's it.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:38 Right.

John Bytheway: 00:51:41 The Church has kind of articulated the mission of the Church. Do you remember the days of President Kimball? It was: to proclaim the gospel, perfect the saints, redeem the dead. And then, President Monson added: to take care of the poor and needy. And now, the newest Handbook has: to live the gospel, care for those in need. I like that it just says in... Sometimes, somebody that is wealthy by some measure is in need. So, it's to live the gospel, care for those in need. Let's see. Live, care, invite all to come into Christ, and unite families for eternity. And that could be one way to answer how we create Zion. Live the gospel, care for those in need, invite all to come to Christ, unite families for eternity.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:52:32 Back to Joseph Smith and the idea that the cause of Zion is the object. This is what the Church is organized for. This is what the Restoration is for. It's to build Zion. And so, if you want to know how to build Zion, live the gospel, do the things you're asked to do, help each other.

Hank Smith: 00:52:53 And, Avram, I like what you said earlier. This isn't about money. It's about hearts. Because you could say, "Oh, if we just had enough money, we'd make everybody equal." But that wouldn't change anybody's heart.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:53:05 Yes.

Hank Smith: 00:53:06 They were of one heart and one mind. Because of their hearts, there was no poor. It wasn't, "There was no poor. So, that changed their hearts."

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:53:13 Yes. Would the Lord be pleased if our hearts were changing? No poor among us. I think he would. I absolutely think the Lord would be absolutely happy if we could eliminate poverty without changing our hearts. But that wouldn't be Zion. Elder Christofferson says to build Zion, you've got to have all three.

Hank Smith: 00:53:28 Yeah. This is great stuff. And it has to be by choice. Right? Because I could say, "Well, let's force everyone to be of one heart and one mind, and take care of the poor." But is that Zion?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:53:44 Well, again, back to 2 Nephi 2 for a second and things to act and things to be acted upon. What makes our doctrine work is the fact that we are agents. I mean, 2 Nephi 2 is what? It's about the Atonement. But it's no mistake. When Lehi started laying out the Atonement, he lays out first this notion of choice and

having choices and being able to choose. Agency is fundamental and foundational to Latter-day Saints doctrine.

John Bytheway: 00:54:14 So, we're choosing Zion in a way.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:54:16 We have to choose Zion.

John Bytheway: 00:54:17 We have to choose to become Zion-ish.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:54:22 Yes.

Hank Smith: 00:54:23 Yeah. You have to. It has to be chosen because why doesn't the Lord just make us then, if he wants Zion so bad. Make us. Well, if he made us, it's not Zion. Righteousness is only righteousness if it's freely chosen.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:54:38 Yeah. Freely given, freely received that's Paul's phrase for it.

Hank Smith: 00:54:44 So, we all just kind of sit and stare at verse 18 for a while.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:54:47 My dissertation advisor once told me, as we talk about, writing dissertations and he is like, "You know how you're going to write Avram? One bite at a time. You know how you build Zion? One heart at a time."

Hank Smith: 00:54:59 One brick at a time.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:00 One brick at a time. You just do it. And I really think, for me, that's the real secret is we just got to do it.

Hank Smith: 00:55:08 Yeah. I'll get started in my way. And I'll hope people choose to do it their way or join me in my way, help me out.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:17 Or even I'll presume that they're doing it in their way.

Hank Smith: 00:55:20 Oh, I like that.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:21 I'll presume that they are. I'll presume that we're doing this together.

Hank Smith: 00:55:24 And I'll move forward.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:25 And I'll move forward.

Hank Smith: 00:55:27 Mother Teresa.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:28 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:55:29 Right.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:30 Exactly.

Hank Smith: 00:55:30 In my sphere of influence, I will do good.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:55:33 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:55:33 I don't have a reference for this. It's just one of those I've heard that Mother Teresa had said, "We're not called to be successful in all things. We're called to be faithful in all things." And we're all faithfully trying to build Zion. I like that idea.

Hank Smith: 00:55:51 I wanted to mention one more thing that I had written in my scriptures. I have no idea where it came from. I just wrote it down years ago. But under where it said, "And there was no poor among them." We've been talking about poverty. I also put that everyone is valued. I don't see someone as less valuable to Zion because of fill in the blank, the way they look, how much money they have, anything at all, any characteristic of them. I don't see them as less valuable. There is no poor among them, meaning everyone is valued. I have no idea why I wrote that in or who told me to do it but...

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:56:28 And I think it feeds on what we talked about a little earlier. The problem is the comparison. Definitionally, no poor among them means no rich among them. But we're not talking about monetary amounts here. We're talking about everybody having what they want and need.

John Bytheway: 00:56:47 Sufficient for their needs.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:56:48 Sufficient for their needs. And again, part of this, this is why it's so hard. I mean, there's so much we want. I was doing the Ten Commandments in Hebrew once just working through it, and there's that great bit about, "Thou shall not covet." And of course, we're like, "Covet." What's covet mean? The verb there means thou shall not want. Oh, that's much harder suddenly, God. That's much harder.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:57:14 My house currently, I would love a larger kitchen. My kitchen is currently terrible to cook in. Every day I'm cooking and I'm like, "Why did I think this was a good idea to move here?" I love to cook or whatever. But I don't know that I need very many more bedrooms than I already have. Even what I want differs from person to person. And so, having no poor among us is not saying there's one standard for what that means, but it means

that nobody feels the want. Nobody feels like they don't have enough, both economically, spiritually, physically, whatever. Nobody feels like they are outside of the community. And they're outside of what it is.

Hank Smith: 00:58:02 This is such a fantastic discussion. So, Avram, we looked at one heart, we looked at one mind, dwelt in righteousness, right? What does that phrase mean to you?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:58:12 Well, of course, dwelt there means to live or to stay or to sit. It's this notion that there's something that are specific to building Zion. Again, being one heart, mind, united special kingdom, eliminating poverty, making sure that everybody feels wanted. But of course the god Jesus Christ is fundamentally relational. And that's just the fact of it's no mistake, that the two great commandments are love God and love your neighbor. They're fundamentally relational in that sense. And fundamentally, building Zion then is about those relationships. And one heart and one mind, no poor among us is about our horizontal relationships. Dwelling in righteousness is about our vertical relationship.

Hank Smith: 00:58:59 Our relationship with God.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:59:00 Our relationship with God. And so, fundamentally, I think that this key notion of both loving God and loving each other is how you build Zion. And you've got to have all of it to build Zion.

Hank Smith: 00:59:12 Elder Christofferson, "Zion is Zion because of the character, attributes, and faithfulness of her citizens. If we would establish Zion in our homes, branches, words, and stakes, we must rise to this standard." There's no other way to do it. We must rise to this standard. It will be necessary. And here's the three you were talking about. It will be necessary. One, to become unified in one heart, one mind. Two, to become individually and collectively a holy people. Three, to care for the poor and needy with such effectiveness that we eliminate poverty among us. We cannot wait until Zion comes for these things to happen. Zion will come only as they happen, as we choose them.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 00:59:58 It's very daunting. It's very powerful, but again, Elder Christofferson, more than anything else, he says but it's something that we can do.

Hank Smith: 01:00:06 Yeah. When I hear about President Monson giving up his vacation days to visit the 90 widows in his ward or when I hear about George Albert Smith-

John Bytheway: 01:00:15 He made them all Turkey dinners. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:00:16 ... Yeah. George Albert Smith, who took his brand new coat off at the Humanitarian Aid Center and set it on the donation table. And we have so many stories of amazing men and women who are doing this, who have dedicated their life to the Lord. And they've overcome selfishness. John, do you remember the quote that was shared with us from Edward Partridge? Do you remember? Edward Partridge, who basically was in charge of Zion for a long time said, "I have torn myself from the affection of this world's goods."

John Bytheway: 01:00:51 Of this world. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:00:53 "I have torn myself from the affection of this world's goods." Man, I wish I had it right in front of me. I remember writing it down in my Doctrine and Covenants and just thinking about that. How do you tear yourself? But I mean, we have example after example, after example, don't we, Avram?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:01:11 We do.

Hank Smith: 01:01:11 ... Of people who have decided that they're going to do it.

Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:01:15 Just to my ward last week, there was a brother who was giving a talk and told about an experience as a teenager where his dad had bought a pair of new shoes, and they were walking downtown somewhere. And there was a guy there who had no shoes and this brother took off his shoes. As a teenage boy, took off his shoes and gave them to this man. And they went and they bought a much less nice pair of shoes for that. I mean, literally there were stories of Saints giving the shoes off their feet. It's powerful.

Hank Smith: 01:01:48 All right. Let me tell you a story. This was on NPR. So, not the *Deseret News*, this was National Public Radio. And this is back when you could say Mormon. "A Mormon Bishop in Taylorsville, Utah went to great lengths last Sunday to teach his congregation a lesson. David Musselman disguised himself as a homeless person and walked around outside the church before the service. He said, 'The majority of the people of my ward just ignored me and went to great lengths to not make eye contact.' Some stopped and gave him an apple, crackers, or \$20. 'I was most impressed with the children. The children were very eager. They wanted to reach out and help me in some way.'" He was also told by several members of his ward to leave the property. I

had some people that went out of their way to let me know this was not a place to ask for charity. And I was not welcome. Sorry.

- Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:02:51 We're still trying here.
- Hank Smith: 01:02:53 "Bishop Musselman told only his Second Counselor that he would be disguised as the homeless man. He purposely walked into the front of the chapel and sat in the front row at the beginning of sacrament meeting. After his counselor's talk, the Bishop had the counselor lean forward across the stand and whisper he wanted to say a few words. The Second Counselor informed the congregation, 'Brothers and sisters, this homeless man would like to say of few words.'" Sorry. I just describing him that way. This homeless man.
- John Bytheway: 01:03:26 This homeless man.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:27 Not this man. "After receiving a few wary looks, Bishop Musselman walked to the stand behind the pulpit and began thanking the people for the kindness they showed. He talked about some of the money he had received and said he wanted to give a portion of it back as a token of appreciation. He asked where the Bishop was, so he could give the money to him. When no one spoke, Bishop Musselman took off his wig and glasses to show that he was, in fact, the ward's bishop."
- Hank Smith: 01:03:56 Listen to this. "It had a shock value I did not anticipate. I really did not have any idea that the members of my ward would gasp as big as they did. Some started crying. Others said nothing. Many came forward to apologize for their indifference to the bishop at the end of the service and announced they wanted to do something to atone for their actions. Musselman said, 'I feel felt horrible that they felt so horrible,' but he said, 'I believe the experiment was more potent than any sermon I could have given on the subject. It did have the effect I'd hoped it would have.' Then he said this, 'I learned something that I was not expecting. We don't always have to give money or food, but if we really believe what we say we believe, shouldn't we smile and make eye contact and allow everyone a little bit of human dignity.'"
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:04:52 We need to treat them like people.
- Hank Smith: 01:04:54 Like people.
- Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:04:54 And not like objects. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:04:56 And the other part of the children isn't that interesting. What did the Saviors say, "Except you become as this little child, you will in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven so..." Can you imagine telling the bishop to leave the property? And then, afterwards he's the bishop and you're like, "Hey, remember what I said to you about?" Yeah. I mean, you're going to be-

John Bytheway: 01:05:22 People would start crying. They just felt so indicted at that point. Wow.

Hank Smith: 01:05:27 Yeah. King Benjamin, "When you're in the service of your fellow beings, you are in the service of your God." Avram, we've spent a lot of time on one verse. I would maybe say every family who's listening, spend some time in Moses 7:18. Talk about it with your kids, what does it mean?

Dr. Avram Shann...: 01:05:45 Talk about what you can do to build Zion right now because you can do it right now. Just sit down and say, "What can I do?" Just anything to build Zion. Absolutely.

Hank Smith: 01:06:00 Please join us for Part II of this podcast.



John Bytheway:	00:02	Welcome to Part II of this week's podcast. I'm excited to get into this vision of Enoch, because I think it's so fascinating, especially the idea of God weeping.
Dr. Avram Shannon:	00:15	Enoch's done it. He's built Zion. The one heart, one mind. This is a great success story in verse 20. And he came to pass that Enoch, talked with the Lord. And he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion should dwell in safety forever." Like, "We've done it. We've made it." But the Lord said it to Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed." This notion that the Enoch has this confidence statement, "We've done it. We've made it." And the Lord says, "We're not done yet. There's more to happen." It actually, a lot of what we're going to see in the vision of Enoch is, Enoch trying to figure out when we are finally done.
Hank Smith:	00:54	Can you translate that for me? The end, "Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed." Meaning, I don't think the Lord's saying, "I'm cursing them," it's, "Yes, you chose Zion, but there's still a lot of people who haven't." Is that right?
Dr. Avram Shannon:	01:07	That's exactly what he's saying. And we'll see that later on... Again, this notion of agency, verse 33, he says, " They want them to choose me," but they chose not. Zion's taken up to the bosom of the Father and the Son of man; and behold, the power of Satan was on all the face of the earth."
Hank Smith:	01:24	That's verse 24.
Dr. Avram Shannon:	01:25	That's 24... 26. "And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he," that is Satan, "Looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced." This is a really, really bleak picture that this vision is painting for Enoch, but then 28, and this is so key. "And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people, and he wept."

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 01:56 And of course this notion of the God weeping. "And Enoch bore record of it saying: How is it the heavens weep, and shed for their tears as rain upon the mountains?" As we think about God weeping, one thing that's very intriguing about this is it's framed in Moses 7 as rain. God weeping, Enoch is seeing it as rain. It's worth noting perhaps that as Genesis, and therefore probably Moses frames it. It doesn't rain until the flood. Remember in the Creation story, it says a mist came up and watered the earth because the Lord had not yet caused it to rain upon the earth. So it's not just God weeping that's distinctive to Enoch here, but it's also the notion of rain itself that is distinctive. Really interesting things with this notion of rain, and things like that. But noting that God weeps and Enoch sees it as rain. How is the heavens weep? Why is the sky crying?
- Hank Smith: 02:54 Am I going to connect this to the flood? The sadness of God, the weeping of God becomes the flood of Noah?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 03:01 Yes. As Moses 7 frames it, the flood happens because God is crying over his children. Yes.
- Hank Smith: 03:07 Interesting.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 03:09 It's beautiful.
- John Bytheway: 03:10 Yes. I just think that is poetry, shed forth their tears as rain upon the mountains. I want to ask you, because I don't know how else you would interpret the idea of a chain except for slavery, bondage, or something. If he holds a chain in his hand and he's got it wrapped around the world, it sounds like symbol there of he's got control, slavery, bondage, whatever. But I love that in the imagery that it sounds like Satan is looking up, it says, "He looked up." So he was below it, but God, if the rain is falling, I'm thinking God is above and looking down, and the rain is falling on the mountains. And it's a frightening imagery, but I like the idea of him looking up and God looking down. Also, when I've taught this, I talk about Satan laughing, I can't find the Savior laughing. I can find him in 3 Nephi smiling, "His countenance smiled upon them," but it's Satan that seems to laugh and it's probably a sound that Enoch probably never forgot.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 04:23 Doctrine and Covenants 88, "Without much laughter for this is sin." There's this notion that there's a kind of laughter... I mean obviously joy and whatever, there's a kind of laughter that the Lord disapproves of.

John Bytheway: 04:37 And then in 3 Nephi, what is it, 9? "The devil laughed and his angels rejoice." We have references to Satan laughing, but it's a I-got-you kind of a laugh. It's a I've-got-you-in-chains type of a laugh

Hank Smith: 04:51 Laughing at those who are addicted, laughing at those who are in bondage to sin.

John Bytheway: 04:57 But, I love that... I mean, we're reading it, well, I see why God's weeping, but Enoch just, I don't.... What?

Dr. Avram Shannon: 05:04 Yes, I know. Exactly. And Terryl Givens and Fiona Givens of course they written the book [*The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life*]

John Bytheway: 05:08 Yes, they wrote that book.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 05:09 It's great, the book on the weeping God. And they point out this notion that Enoch's question is not, "Why are you crying?" But, "How, how can you cry?" Enoch said the Lord, "How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?" This is very reminiscent of what we saw in Moses 1. And, "Were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, count up all the atoms of this earth and lots like it, it would not even be a beginning of your creation. And curtains are stretched out here. We're here. You're picking Zion up. Everything's great. "There's naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne." This is verse 31. "And mercy shall go before thy face and have no end." How, how can you cry?" And this is very, very important. One, because it tells us a little bit of something about the nature of God.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 06:06 But also, it tells us a little something about ourselves and about what it means for us to be like God. Because sometimes we get this notion almost that, being more like God means suppressing our emotions. It means that the people most like God don't... You don't get sad. It's almost this Latter-day Saints notion of we have to be happy all the time.

Hank Smith: 06:33 And smile.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 06:34 And smile. And the gospel just Christ brings this joy. There's no question about that, but what this shows us here... And there are other places where worshippers do this. This shows us that as Latter-day Saints, we do not believe in a God who does not feel emotions. I mean, our scripture is very clear. The Lord gets

mad. And so part of this is recognizing that as we learn to be more like God, it's not about learning to suppress our emotions.

- John Bytheway: 07:02 I think it's helpful when we're teaching the story of Lazarus and John that Jesus wept, and it's always a fun question. Well, he knew. He was about to raise him from the dead. But in Mosiah, what does it mean to become a Saint? We mourn with those that mourn. And I like that idea, perhaps Jesus was mourning with those that mourn, he felt what they were feeling. And even though he knew he was about to raise Lazarus. And it goes with "Should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer." He's he's got the the people divided into... This is an odd dichotomy, but it's like Zion and the residue, yes. Zion and the rest of all y'all. Zion and residue, but he's so concerned about the residue, it's cool.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 07:53 Yes, exactly.
- Hank Smith: 07:55 That is interesting, John, because Enoch's like, "We did it, we built Zion."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 07:58 And God's like, "That's not the whole story."
- Hank Smith: 08:01 "I care about everyone, actually, Enoch"
- John Bytheway: 08:02 Let's talk about the residue of the people and weep about them.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 08:07 Yes., that that's great stuff.
- Hank Smith: 08:09 "All the people that aren't in your city, have you thought about them?" "Oh, are there others?"
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 08:14 Enoch is very focused on his people, things succeed, and the Lord says, "Let me broaden your vision here."
- John Bytheway: 08:19 Yes. And I, most days, feel more like residue than Zion anyway.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 08:24 Surely.
- Hank Smith: 08:26 So what do I do with this weeping God here and his explanation in verse 32?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 08:35 And it's important. He says, "Look, behold these thy brethren." And by the way, Joshua Sears, you also had on your show, wrote a very, very good article, *Covenant of Compassion for Old Testament*, the Sperry Symposium. He's got one on "Behold These Thy Brethren," about Enoch and Enoch's response to

God, and how that can help us. Okay. So, he says, "Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency." And by the way, Joseph changes that later in when he revises instead of making the publication, but when he revises JST, he changes it to, "And man had agency in the garden of Eden." Rather than "I gave them agency in the garden of Eden." Which is again.

Hank Smith: 09:17

Oh, interesting.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 09:19

I suspect that Joseph's ongoing knowledge about our eternal nature with that, but that's, I think, one of the most significant changes that Joseph makes to OT 2 that didn't make it into our Book of Moses.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 09:32

Okay. But then he goes here, "And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood; And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them; and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them, for my fierce anger is kindled against them." With really good reason, we struggle sometimes with the anger of God. But sometimes, Latter-day Saints saying, we get so much on Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as separate beings, so we can turn Heavenly Father into the mean God and Jesus is a nice God. And the Book of Mormon does some of that work. It doesn't quite get there, but of course it's not like Heavenly Father is the just God and Jesus Christ is the merciful God.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 10:19

Jesus Christ's merciful, definitely Father is and everything. Father is, everybody is just as Jesus is. I mean, they're one the same. But with this, I had maybe a story that helps this, as I think about, again, we have both God's sadness, but also God's wrath in the same section here. God not suppressing his emotions. I had a friend of mine who was teaching for us. And he was teaching Jesus Christ cleansing the temple and had a student raise his hand and say, "This doesn't seem very Christ-like to me." Jacob says, "Well, Jesus was doing it, so by definition, this is Christ-like behavior." And then he said, and I think this is so powerful, he said, "But what I think I hear you say is, 'I'm not sure that I could be Christlike and do that.'"

Dr. Avram Shannon: 11:19

We think about emotions, we think about anger, we think about even sadness. There is no shame, there is no sorry in having emotions. Being angry is not wrong, it cannot be wrong, God's

angry. The question is, what do you do with it? What do you do with your emotions? God is angry with his people, but again, I think it's key. He's angry with them because they're hurting each other. And he says, "Then I'll send out my floods against them." We talk about the flood and we talk about why was the flood sent? We say, "Oh, it was wickedness." The scriptures are very, very specific about what that wickedness is.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 12:01

If you go to, this is outside of our block for today, but if you go to Moses, Chapter 8, verse 28, just turn the page, a couple pages there, "And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." The reason according to the scripture is that the Lord sends the flood is violence. He says, "Look, I said, they should love each other. They should choose me, but they hate each other. They hate people they should love. They hate their own blood. And I can't take it anymore." The thing the Lord hate more than anything else is his children hurting each other

John Bytheway: 12:41

In verse 33, next to it, I wrote the two great commandments and I wasn't keeping track exactly, but I felt like in our October 2021 General Conference, we heard that those two, "Love God" and "Love your neighbor," half a dozen times maybe from different speakers preparing their talks independently. But I think they're both in there, "Love one another and choose me, their Father." Both of the two great commandments being violated there.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 13:14

If you were to boil the gospel of Jesus Christ down, that's what I boil it down to, love God and love your neighbor. And, of course, when Jesus says that in the scriptures, he's quoting the Law of Moses. "Love God" comes out of Deuteronomy and "Love your neighbor" comes out of Leviticus.

John Bytheway: 13:30

So what is the great commandment in the law they mean in the Torah.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 13:34

Yes. And so, it's worth noting, this is not something that Jesus invented. This has been the Lord's standard forever. The Lord's compassion doesn't mean he's not going to send the flood, but that's what making him cry. 37, "But behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?." There are a couple things I think that are powerful about this. One, I mean, you probably know this instinctively. The people who are closest to you are the people who can hurt you the most. Some

stranger says some random comment on the internet, you're like water off my back. But your brother, your sister, your wife, your children, your friends, that's really what hurts.

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 14:36 One of the things I think Moses 7 teaches so strongly is that God loves his children enough to be vulnerable. He loves his children enough that he lets himself cry. And for me, oh, just the thought that I'm loved enough, that when I hurt again, you look at this, and you see again, I like your point there earlier, John. You see all these people doing bad things and Satan looks up and says, "This is the best thing ever." He loves it. He laughs. And you see the Lord look down and you see they hurting each other and it makes him cry. And then it makes him cry even the more that he has to cause more because he's got to stop this. He cannot, again, I said this word, but I'll say it again, the one thing God hates more than anything else is his children hurting each other. I think what Jesus says about what happens, his opinion about people who abuse children.
- John Bytheway: 15:41 Yes. Better than a millstone be... Yes.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 15:45 He says tie a giant rock around their neck and throw them in the ocean. And again, this is the nice God guy. I loved your point out, morning with those that mourn, earlier. One of the things I love about Moses 7 is this recognition that when you cry, you've never cried alone. It's a lone and dreary world out there. It's a terrible place. There's a lot to cry about. But I love remembering, again, the God who weeps recognizes that... Again, you've never cried alone and there's real power in that.
- John Bytheway: 16:21 I think... You've got my mind racing. I love how the story of Job starts when the friends come and just sit with them. As soon as they open their mouth, everything goes south. But when they just come and mourn with him that is mourning, what a comfort it must have been to Job, "My friends are here." Coming to mind is Hebrews 4:15, that's speaking about Jesus but it says, "We have not an high priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He's not a God that is watching from a distance. Wow, look at that. But he feels it with us. He's mourning with us when we mourn and seeing the wickedness, it touches him and he weeps.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 17:08 Basically the answer to the question is Enoch's, "How can you cry?" And God says, "How can I not?" This directly ties to the flood, verse 40, "Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep, yea, and all the workmanship of mine hands."

- John Bytheway: 17:24 I never... Oh, gosh, never connected this to the flood. This is so good.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 17:31 Moses 7 understands the flood is God weeping and it's beautiful. "And it came to pass that the Lord..." This is Joshua's point in the article I suggested. "And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men; wherefore Enoch knew, and looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook." Enoch looks and he says, part of the whole thing about this vision is the Lord says, "Let me show you the way I see things, just for a moment." He's already built Zion, but Enoch has this problem where he's saying, "But everything's great." And the Lord says, "Yes, everything's great. But everything's not great." And I think that's a key thing. Again, it's a direct connection.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 18:19 "Enoch also saw Noah." And all the stewardship of Noah. This is verse 42. "Enoch also saw Noah, and his family; that the posterity of all the sons of Noah should be saved with a temporal salvation." And, "Wherefore Enoch saw that Noah built an ark; and that the Lord smiled upon it." Again, you got that nice connection there between the floods and the weeping, but the Lord's smiling. And of course, I mean, there may be rainbow connections there. There's this fun stuff with that. But Enoch's not convinced. Verse 44, "Enoch saw this, he had bitterness of soul, and wept ... and said ...I will refuse to be comforted." Now, this is really intriguing here because the first thing he says to the good Lord, he says, "Okay, whatever. How can you cry?" And God says, "How can I not cry?" Enoch says, "You're right. I cannot be comforted ever."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 19:09 But the Lord said to Enoch, "Lift up your heart and look." And so, it's really intriguing here because the Lord says, "We're going to cry and it's worth crying about. There's no shame in your tears, Enoch. There's no shame in my tears. It's worth crying, but that's not the end of the story here." "And it came to pass that Enoch looked; and from Noah, all the families." he said, "Okay, when's this going to be over? When can we have all of this?" Now, we'll come back to this, but I want to... One of his questions because he asked his questions again and again, "When is this going to be... When are the righteous to come? Will they have compassion? When are we going to rest?"
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 19:50 And that's the key thing I want to talk about this. In verse 58. We'll come back. We're going to go ahead for a second. We'll come back. "And again, Enoch wept and cried into the Lord,

saying: When shall the earth rest?" Okay. What I want to do here for a second is just play a little logical game here. Okay. Noah and Hebrew was Noah, and Noah means rest. Later on Moses 8 and Genesis is going to understand it in terms of compassion, and things like that. But the word that Noah, *Nuah*, *Nuah* means rest. And so, when eating starts asked this question about when will the earth rest, it's a play on Noah even. And this idea that Noah's sent there for rest, but it's not there yet.

- John Bytheway: 20:41 Okay. This is one of those that I just heard and, oh, I thought, "I have Got to ask Avram this when he comes on." Because I don't think it's scriptural, I think it's a Jewish legend or something, which you might know about. But I have heard that when the waters of the Red Sea swallowed up the Egyptians that the Hebrews on the other side started to sing and the Lord said, "How can you sing when so many of my children are drowning in the sea?" And they shortened their hallels, their praise to half hallels. Does that ring any bells?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 21:24 Yes. There are traditions about that and some of the Rabbinic traditions. Yes. I don't have a source off the top of my head. I can find it.
- John Bytheway: 21:33 Okay. I've loved the story because I want it to be true. Just tell me it's true. I want it to be true.
- Hank Smith: 21:41 -If it's true.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 21:42 It's surely Rabbinic whether it's true or not. I am all in favor, more people reading Rabbis..
- John Bytheway: 21:50 I love the idea that it was like this. It's seeing "These shall suffer," the end of verse 37, that he had to swallow the Egyptians. He didn't enjoy it. And you shouldn't either. You shouldn't be singing over there because I just had to wipe out these Egyptians. And the first place I heard that was in a talk from Elder Marion D. Hanks and I think he just mentions it as a legend or a tradition. "How can you celebrate when my children are drowning in the sea?" So they shorten their songs of praise in half, to half hallels or something like that.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 22:26 Now it's really intriguing in terms of how the Lord wants us to interact even when things are bad.
- John Bytheway: 22:36 I'm intrigued that we start with this vision with God weeping and now we've got Enoch just weeping as he comes to know the

mind of God more and starts to see the same. I mean, all of this coming after, "Yes. We got Zion. Zion will dwell safely forever."

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 22:54 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 22:54 We're good. Aren't you happy, God? Aren't you happy?
- John Bytheway: 22:59 And the Lord shows him all this and now he's like, "I refuse to be comforted."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 23:04 But again, the beauty of it is that... And again, I love that Enoch's persuaded, but I also love the way the Lord continues to comfort him. He continues to say, "There's a way out. It's okay." What's going to happen? 46, "It shall be in the meridian of times."
- Hank Smith: 23:24 This plays like a really good movie. You've got happiness and it turns really dark, and then what's going to happen at the end? What .. what's going to be the conclusion?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 23:34 And he says, "Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man." He rejoices But again, and of course, this is the Christian term, the Christian term. "The Righteous is lifted up, and the Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world." Again, only Christians are excited when somebody dies. As long as it's Jesus, we're like, "He's dead now, guys."
- Hank Smith: 23:59 Well, I mean, Avram, I see beauty here in Enoch. "I refuse to be comforted." The Lord saying, "Weep not. I have your answer." And who does he see? He sees the Savior. "Yes. I have your answer."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 24:13 Yes. And again, this terms of types in Christ, of course, this makes Jesus into the great Noah. He's the one who actually say... "I saw..." They are saved with a temporal salvation in 42. But of course, Jesus says that both temporal salvation, and eternal salvation, and Enoch, he's going to go with this. See's the earth crying, in 49, Enoch says, "Can you have compassion on the earth, please help it." But then Enoch knows how this works, 50, "I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods." He's got this general, "Please have mercy." And he's like, "I ask you in the name of Jesus, no more floods." In 51, the Lord says, "Yes, that's the covenant we'll make."
- John Bytheway: 25:07 Do you know what I love about verse 47, if I can go back?

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 25:10 Yes, please do.
- John Bytheway: 25:11 It's a strange, linear time thing. "The Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world." I mean, the Lamb was slain in the meridian of time, but he's talking about, the lamb is slain, sounding like in the pre-earth life, the Premortal Existence, and just that idea. That was always the plan, that the Son of God would come and die. And from the foundation of the world, and I'm thinking of our friend, Brad Wilcox, who said the Atonement was Plan A, it wasn't Plan B, because Adam and Eve made a mess of things. It was from the foundation of the world that this was going to happen this way. So what do you do with that interesting phrase, "The Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world," am I looking at that right?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 25:56 Yes, that's what it says. Because you find the similar language in Revelation right, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." And there's, "Before the foundation of the world," even, it says there. And part of it I think is, one, it's a good way for us to rejigger our notion of what it means to be the Lamb of God. We talk about the Lamb of God somehow like Jesus the Lamb of God because he's fuzzy and cuddly, like lambs are soft and sweet and innocent.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 26:23 That's not the imagery that's being used here. The picture here is a lamb with its throat cut. We're the lamb that was slain. And so, this idea of the Lamb of God, it's sacrificial image, whether this is what Enoch's seeing or not in Moses 7, as John sees in Revelation, he sees the dead lamb, that's the Lamb he sees there, and this is Jesus. And I think that it feeds into this is one of the great, distinctive things about being a Christian, is our belief that fundamentally our origin's bound around the fact that our God was willing to die for us. And as you point out there, this is the way it's always been, this is the plan, this is the way, this is the goal.
- Hank Smith: 27:08 There's an interesting parallel there, you're bringing up Revelation, Chapter 5, where John is weeping, right? He's weeping because there's nobody who can save the earth. There's nobody. And then, one of the Elders says, "Weep not." Just like the Lord said to Enoch, "Weep not. Look, here's the answer." The Lamb is the answer.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 27:28 There's an answer to this. 52 was intriguing because 52 was one of those places that suggests that the flood could have been understood as a local flood rather than a worldwide flood, 52. "And he sent forth an unalterable decree, that a remnant of his seed should always be found among all nations, while the earth

should stand." If Noah is the progenitor of the entire earth, then a promise that a remnant seed is found around the earth is not a meaningful promise, because all of the earth is a remnant of his seed. There is evidence in scripture, the same thing. It says in Genesis, the whole earth will be flooded. But of course the Hebrew there is going to be *'erets*, and *'erets* means "land". And so, you could translate that the whole land will be flooded. I'm not saying that the flood was not worldwide. That's above my pay grade to make that claim. But there are places in scripture, including here in Restoration Scripture, that are suggestive that it may not have been.

- John Bytheway: 28:32 Well, it's like the Book of Mormon, says, "The face of the whole earth was changed." Well, I don't know how they knew that from their... Well, from what we can see on top of this here, pyramid, I mean, I don't know what if they really mean earth.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 28:49 53, "And the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come; for he saith—I am Messiah, the King of Zion," and that's distinctive, but that's really actually fun, anciently also, because most places in the Old Testament, Zion means Jerusalem, which of course is where the ancient Messiah would be king in, his capital would be at Jerusalem. And so, this has nice broad references for us in Moses 7, but it also could just as easily be talking about any Messiah would be the King of Zion. And so, there's fun that's with that. "Whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me shall never fall; wherefore, blessed are they of whom I have spoken, for they shall come forth with songs of everlasting joy." And you got, again, this emotional rollercoaster almost here in this vision in Moses 7, but then Enoch adds that question, "When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh?"
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 29:42 Let's pin this down, when's this going to be? And then, this Noah's imagery, "When will the earth rest? Please show me." And what he sees is the crucifixion. "Look, and he looked and beheld," this 55, "The Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men."
- Hank Smith: 29:58 That's when the earth gets to rest.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 29:59 Except that, and this is where it gets even fun, 56, "And he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent." Which is why in 58, Enoch is like, "This is rest?" He sees earthquakes ...the earthquake of the crucifixions, he's like, "This is rest? When will the earth rest?" 59, "And

Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again ... ?"

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 30:31 He sees the Lord before the foundation of the world. This has always been the plan. But he sees the earth mourn and says, "What's going on here? Show me when the Lord comes." And they see the Lord comes and the Lord is crucified and there's earthquakes. And he says, "When's the earth going to rest? When are you coming back? Will you please come again?" And this is a key thing, by the way, as we talk about covenants in the Old Testament, Moses 7 understands the covenant that God makes with Noah, with Abraham at Mount Sinai, and therefore the Gospel covenant as being in continuity with the covenant he makes here with Enoch. It's part of this promise he makes to Enoch. "Wilt thou not come again? Forasmuch as thou art God, and I know thee, and thou hast sworn unto me, and commanded me that I should ask in the name of thine Only Begotten; thou hast made me, and given unto me a right to thy throne, and not of myself."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 31:31 He says, "Look, there's..."
- Hank Smith: 31:33 "I didn't do this, you did."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 31:34 "I didn't do this. but through thine own grace; wherefore, I ask thee if thou wilt not come again on the earth." And the Lord says, "Yes." Part of why this chapter is so important for the Restoration is this notion of the cause of Zion. But the other reason is because this is fundamentally, the purpose of building Zion is to prepare the earth for the coming Jesus Christ. You've got there in 62, Righteous will come down. Truth. I was sent forth out of the earth. "Righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 32:31 And there are two things I love about this. One, of course, this is, this is the Restoration here. But two, I love this because Hank already pointed us to previously, this idea that Joseph Smith says, the cause of Zion is the grand object, the thing that everybody's looking forward to. And President Nelson has said, "The most important thing you can be doing right now is the Gathering of Israel." What 62 reminds us is these are the same thing.

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 32:58 Fundamentally, the work to gather Israel and the work of building Zion are the same thing. And this idea of coming together and being a holy people and building a holy city. I love the way that the Lord frames this. And then for us, as we follow the current prophetic council to gather Israel, we're also building Zion. It's all the same thing. It's all God's work. This is what the Church of Jesus Christ is for. But then, it's so beautiful. We talked to the new Jerusalem and the old Zion. "And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city shall meet them there, and we shall receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 33:46 I just love the fact that as we talk about Enoch, we talk about the Restoration, it's easier for us sometimes to, I don't know, get caught up in our dispensational whatever, but I love that Moses 7 says, "One, it's all the same work and, two, we're going to know and recognize each other. And it's going to be great." I love it.
- Hank Smith: 34:08 Yes. It's a beautiful, I mean, this is a beautiful chapter of, "Are you going to come again?" "Yes, I will. I'm going to send a Restoration, a building of Zion. And then I will be there."
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 34:23 With revelation again, which of course is also about Christ's final victory, where the Lord and Revelation says, "And I'm going to wipe away all tears." 64 verse, "There shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest." There's your promise, Enoch, there's your rest. "And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness." I love it because of course it frames this whole plan of salvation here. He begins back to 6, 6 is all about Adam, and the Fall, and Redemption. And then this is all about Jesus Christ and salvation. It's just beautiful stuff.
- Hank Smith: 35:05 Yes. It's interesting. It starts with a city that Enoch built and the vision ends with the city that we built.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 35:14 That we built and these two things are going to come together. It's no mistake, we call ours Zion also. They're the same city.
- John Bytheway: 35:21 So caught up in the, and then I'm thinking there's certain phrases here that I'm just, "Oh, Joseph Smith made that up." "His heart swelled wide as eternity; his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook." Wow.

- Dr. Avram Shannon: 35:37 Your bowels yearn, this reflects ancient notions of feelings. It's your kidneys. "Where we think with our head and few with our hearts, the ancient rights thought with their hearts and they felt with their kidneys." The kidneys were the seat of emotion in ancient Israel. So, again, in 3 Nephi, Jesus says the same thing, "My bowels are pained within me." Or Jeremiah, he's talking about your feelings in your kidneys. Which he says, "And the thoughts of their hearts were far from me. It's because you think with your heart." We didn't know if you thought with your brain, there's a reason ancient Egyptians threw it away.
- Hank Smith: 36:10 Yes. What's that thing for?
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 36:12 The Greek medical texts talk about cooling the blood. Maybe it cooled the blood. We actually weren't sure what the brain was for. And you see bowels yearning or bowels feeling or whatever that reflects antique notions of emotion and thought that reflects ancient Israel.
- Hank Smith: 36:27 Hey, Avram, do you think Moses 7, verse 62, "This is how I'm going to bring the earth to rest. Righteousness I'll send down out of heaven." You could say Revelation coming from heaven. "Truth out of the earth to bear testimony more than begotten," to me, a reference to the Book of Mormon.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 36:45 Almost ever in Restoration scripture. I mean, obviously they're riffing on Isaiah who probably has something else in mind here. But as we read this in the Restoration is Joseph's Restoration, as the Lord gives revelation to Joseph in the Restoration, that's what he means. "Truth out of the earth. Righteous out of heaven" is Moroni. "Truth out of the earth" is the Book of Mormon. Almost always, this is framed in the same way that almost always in Doctrine and Covenants, the marvelous we're going to wonder he is talking about is the Book of Mormon. So, yes, that's absolutely a way to read that. Because again, this is how we understand. And especially in verse 62, which is all about the work of the Restored Church of Jesus Christ.
- Hank Smith: 37:28 This chapter, Moses 7, reminds me a little bit of Jacob 5 in that we come to a moment of, "Oh, no. It's all awful. What are we going to do?" And then this moment of redemption right at the very end. Book of Revelations's the same way. Look how terrible, terrible, terrible... Redemption. And then you have Moses 7, following that same track.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 37:49 This kind of literature, this kind of scripture. I mean, because there's lots of reasons for prophecy. There's lots of reasons in Scripture for prophecy, but this particular prophecy like

revelation, like this end times, end of the world type stuff is fundamentally designed to give believers hope. That's the fundamental purpose behind it. And we tend to turn to these kinds of things when things are bad.

- Hank Smith: 38:19 Because it even puts the bad times in the prophecy. Satan had a great chain in his hand.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 38:24 Oh, right now, right here, I see this. When things are pretty good, there are other Scriptures that we focus on. But when things are bad, we say, "Let's talk about Jesus Christ coming back at the end of the world." In the Church in the 19th century, very much about Zion coming. In the 20th century, when things were pretty good for the Church, we spent less time talking about those things. But I think as things have turned bad for us again a little bit, I think, we're seeing more of this in our discourse and more of this in our teachings.
- Hank Smith: 38:53 What a great insight.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 38:55 The only thing is that, of course, at the end there... This answers the question, what does it mean that Enoch was naught and God took him, well, it means translation. Even take him into heaven. Moses 7 answers that question of what happened. Well, he went up to live with God forever, and then he'll come down again when God comes again. Moses 7, solves the knob and explains what's going on with it.
- Hank Smith: 39:16 Joseph Smith took a small space between four verses and stretched.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 39:21 And stretched it out.
- John Bytheway: 39:22 As wide as eternity.
- Dr. Avram Shannon: 39:24 This is one of the places where, as I read JST and Genesis, in some places, I'm like, "Okay, Joseph, I see what you're doing there, but I see what Genesis is doing there." And I'm with both of them. One of the things I think is very key when we read JST to Genesis is read both of them, read Genesis and JST to Genesis. Don't do just the one because both of them teach you something. One of the things I love about the Pearl of Great Price, and I especially love about Moses 7 here, you also saw Moses 1, God delights to teach us. Enoch has these questions. How can you weep? When will the earth rest? And the Lord doesn't say, "I don't..." Lord says, "Let me show you. Let me tell you. Let me teach you."

Dr. Avram Shannon: 40:09 Joseph Smith in the same way. He had this question. He said, "Where can I find salvation for my sins? Where can I find the church that will show me Jesus?" Continue to answer those questions. What about this whole Bible thing? What can I do with it? And continues to respond and reveal. It's beautiful. Because we have all of this all together. I just love it about Moses 7. The part we just read there was so important because of building Zion. Gathering Israel, building Zion, this is the work of the Restoration. It may be that for the Saints or the followers of Jehovah, in ancient days, in the days of Genesis, they didn't need to know that out of Enoch because it was not as useful to them.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 40:52 Obviously, they're concerned with their own things, but for you and I today, this is what we're here for. We're here to build Zion. We're here to prepare the earth for Jesus to come again, so we'll rest again. And I'm so grateful for this, just the power that we have from Joseph Smith, laying it out at the beginning of the Restoration here and says, "This is your job." And now our job is to go out and do it.

Hank Smith: 41:14 Wow. The little break between verses in Genesis reminds me of a Abinadi where they ask him a question, "Who is it that publishes peace?" And then five chapters later, he is like, "And that's who publishes peace." Like he takes a small thing and expands it. Joseph Smith took these little tiny verses in Genesis and through another a hundred verses between them. Joseph Smith's a prophet.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 41:39 And part of why it's so important with Abinadi there is that he's making an argument. The whole thing is the super structure to his point about, "And this is why we're publishing peace, guys." Everything in 53, everything with all of that Ten Commandment, all of that, he's answering their question.

Hank Smith: 41:52 This is really awesome. You talked about us as a people choosing this and part of Moses 7 is the Lord saying, "They will choose this, they will."

Dr. Avram Shannon: 42:01 It'll come. Don't worry.

Hank Smith: 42:03 The faith he has in Latter-day Saints, that they will do this. Watch them, Enoch.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 42:08 God trusts us. And that's powerful.

Hank Smith: 42:12 But he believes we can build this place.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 42:14 Yes. He trusts us. And sometimes he trusts us more than perhaps I trust us. I'm a firm believer in three-hour church. So I really struggled. I think we need more church, not less church, God, but it turns out that God trusts His Church more than I do.

Hank Smith: 42:31 Avram, Dr. Shannon, you're so great. This has just been so much fun. I think our listeners would be interested in your story. A mother who's Jewish who converts to becoming a Latter-day Saint, then you studied Judaism as a career, and here you are believing Latter-day Saint. Can you tell us just a little bit of that journey?

Dr. Avram Shannon: 42:54 Sure. First of all, I always knew I wanted to be an academic. I discovered what a PhD was when I was eight years old. And I said, "I want one of those." I transferred here and I was looking for language classes and there was a modern Hebrew class, which was the only one there, because I was shot in the middle of semester and whatever. So I started with modern Hebrew. Again, I blame my mother who named me Avram. If she named me Fred, I'd end up in like Chinese studies or something else. But she named me Avram, so I do Jewish studies. But there's always been a question, a long conversations with my wife. Did I really want to make my religion, my job, to not have that division. And honestly, it's Moses 7 and consecration that said, "Well, yes."

Dr. Avram Shannon: 43:47 And I think this is a key thing about academic study of scripture whatever, what consecration says is, is that everything can be made holy and everything needs to be made, made, made holy. Even without that, according to Moses, my job is to my religion, no matter what I do. If I went into physics, if I went into anything. To get this notion that as we understand, as we work through, as we try it, this idea that the world's made up of facts. Facts are great. I love facts. I love learning things. I love Scripture. I love languages. It's just, the more I learn, the more I realize how little there is I know. But of course the world is made of relationships. And facts or relationships are absolutely meaningless.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 44:42 And so, when I think about what I've learned, what I do, how I do it, how I got here. Again, from my first Hebrew classes at BYU, from my Hebrew classes and my Jewish studies classes at Oxford, from my work at Ohio State, are there things I learned that I said, "That's a little weird. Yes. Yes, there are. The world's a weird place." Are there things I've studied where I say, "I don't know what to do with that. Yes. Yes, there are." Sometimes as Latter-day Saints, and I had to go through this, we have so many good answers to so many things. We really struggle when we

have to say, "I don't know." And for me, the most powerful thing that learning what I've learned, getting a PhD, getting a master's degree, studying all this stuff, is "Man, there's lots I just don't know." But with this, for me, this is why the cause of Zion is so important.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 45:53

Because fundamentally, it's not about what I know. Zion isn't built by me knowing lots of the Hebrew verbs. I love Hebrew verbs. Zion is not done by knowledge of this Scripture, or that Scripture, or this, whatever. Zion is built by the Lord's Saints working together. And fundamentally, the reason I do what I do is because I want to build Zion. And so, as I think about my journey and things I've learned and things I haven't learned, one is just recognizing that there's so much I don't know. And sometimes I'll stop to say, "I don't know that." But what I do know is that the Lord, one, he loves me. I've never wept alone. I had a lot of cause. This has been a terrible year. I had a lot of reason to cry this year, a lot of reason. And I did, but I found solace and recognition in the fact that I didn't cry alone and that I've never cried alone.

Dr. Avram Shannon: 46:58

I mean, honestly, fundamentally, I'm part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, because I need Jesus Christ. I can't do this by myself. And anything I've read, the cool stuff, the hard stuff, the great stuff always reminds me that in my own life, like with Enoch, when am I going to find rest? The only rest that really comes for me is through Jesus. There's nothing else I've got. I just need Jesus.

Hank Smith: 47:27

So good. So, so good. We want to thank Dr. Avram Shannon for being with us today. Wow, Avram, that was just fantastic. And thank you to everyone who joined us listening. We love you, grateful for your support. We have Executive Producers we want to thank, Shannon and Steve Sorensen. We want to thank our sponsors today, David and Verla Sorensen. Come join us on our next episode of followHim.

John Bytheway: 47:57

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Hank Smith: 00:00 Hello, everyone. Welcome to this week's followHIM favorites. We're doing a little something different this year, maybe you've seen it by now, where we pick a question that we've received from youth or even our own students and kind of bringing that up as part of this week's lesson. John, the question that I've received from students is this idea, and it comes up in different places, but in Moses 7, the Lord says, "There was no poor among them." It comes up in 4 Nephi. It comes up a little bit in the book of Acts, this idea of there's no poor among them. I've had students say before, "Am I supposed to be giving everything I have away? If I don't do that, am I a bad person if I see a homeless person on the street, and I don't go over and give them money or get them and take them to dinner? That's what Jesus would do. Where's the line between me living my life and moving forward and trying to reach this ideal?" Do you have any thoughts on that? What would you say?

John Bytheway: 01:06 Wow, that's a great one, and it comes up. I teach down at the BYU Salt Lake Center, and we're on 4th West, 3rd West. We see it just right where we are.

Hank Smith: 01:14 Right downtown Salt Lake, yeah.

John Bytheway: 01:16 Yeah, some of that. I think sometimes I like to look at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. "Take no thought for the morrow what you shall eat, what you shall wear, what you shall put on."

Hank Smith: 01:25 Right.

John Bytheway: 01:25 Literally? We're supposed to go to the park, and play hacky sack, and expect... We should just have others feed us? Then, the Book of Mormon makes it clear. He was speaking to the 12. "I'm going to take care of you," but we all we have to do that.

Hank Smith: 01:42 Right.

John Bytheway: 01:42 We have to provide for our families. We look at the Proclamation to the World on the family. I'm supposed to be a provider, but then I can also have a donation and pay my tithing and fast offerings, and that is one of the fun challenges of life.

What is the right balance here for me to take care of my family, my home, provide for my children, and also do what every Christian wants to do? That is help provide for-

Hank Smith: 02:07

Help people.

John Bytheway: 02:07

... the poor and fast offerings. I'm really grateful for fast offerings because I know that those are going to be distributed by people who are trying their best to be inspired and how the church helps with the natural disasters and stuff. It's not just throwing money at it. It's much more careful than that. That's a great question that's kind of hard to do on a followHIM favorite, but I think-

Hank Smith: 02:32

Yeah.

John Bytheway: 02:33

... it's good that you're thinking about. It's a good challenge to try to have, what's the right balance to prayerfully figure that out? What do you answer, Hank?

Hank Smith: 02:40

Right. Right. Well, I would say, obviously, the Lord wants you to get an education. He wants you-

John Bytheway: 02:44

Yeah.

Hank Smith: 02:45

... to get a career. He wants you to move forward. This is one of our many Christian imperatives that we're working towards. I would say that the Lord often says it is not requisite that a man or woman should run faster than they have strength. He doesn't expect us to all be Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa's exceptional, but that doesn't give us the idea of being like, "Well, then I don't have to worry about it at all." No, I don't think that's true, but I wouldn't start in my community, to be honest. I mean, if I can do some things there, obviously, you want to do some good there, but let's get Zion inside of you first, and then let's get Zion in your close relationships. Right? Then, let's build from there. Do you remember that old Ezra Taft Benson quote? "The Lord doesn't work from the outside in." Do you remember that one?

John Bytheway: 03:37

Yeah.

Hank Smith: 03:38

He works from the inside out.

John Bytheway: 03:40

Inside out.

Hank Smith: 03:41

He says-

John Bytheway: 03:41 He said... yeah, the Lord would... the world-

Hank Smith: 03:44 The world would take people out of the slums.

John Bytheway: 03:47 ... take people out of the slums, but Christ takes the slums out of the people-

Hank Smith: 03:50 Out of the people.

John Bytheway: 03:51 ... and then they take themselves out of the slums.

Hank Smith: 03:52 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 03:54 That's a great way to put it, Hank. As you start here, cleanse the inner vessel. That might even be the title of the talk-

Hank Smith: 03:59 Right.

John Bytheway: 03:59 ... where you start here. It's a circle of influence, a circle of concern type of a thing.

Hank Smith: 04:06 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 04:06 It's a good discussion to have and a great question. I'm not sure it's one we can answer quickly, but I'm just glad somebody's asking the question.

Hank Smith: 04:14 Yeah, and I-

John Bytheway: 04:15 There's-

Hank Smith: 04:15 I'll tell you, John. When I served as a financial clerk for a ward, that's not the calling I get very often. It only has happened once in my life, and I was so amazed. This was back when all the donations came through that office, right? Now, you can make your donations online.

John Bytheway: 04:34 Yeah, right.

Hank Smith: 04:34 But I was so amazed at the giving people gave. I don't know if that's a... I sound like I'm in the scriptures, "The giving of a giving."

John Bytheway: 04:45 You have giving a given.

Hank Smith: 04:46 Given a giving.

John Bytheway: 04:47 You have given a gifting.

Hank Smith: 04:49 I mean, there were people giving so much not just tithing but in fast offerings. In offerings, they were... and you never would've guessed. I never would've even known that this person is really pushing themselves in offerings. I thought that was such a... it's always stayed with me for years later to see people do that. But again, you don't want to get to the point where you're

Hank Smith: 05:17 ... hurting your family, your chances at an education, opportunity, but the Lord does require a lot of us. We don't want to say he's not.

John Bytheway: 05:30 Yeah. You mentioned the verse. "It's not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength." I think, right after that, it says, "But see that these things are done in wisdom and in order."

Hank Smith: 05:39 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 05:39 It's something you think about, that you grapple with, and you try to make the best judgment you can with some inspiration, but yeah, you still have roles that you have to fulfill. We do, Hank, as fathers, and husbands, and members of our ward, so we have to make a living, but we also want to say, "How can I, in my circles, bless the poor and needy that are around us?" It's a great, great question.

Hank Smith: 06:09 Yeah, and you've told me before this, too, is that it's not always about money. People can have great wealth and still be needy, right?

John Bytheway: 06:17 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 06:18 Need of a friend-

John Bytheway: 06:18 In fact-

Hank Smith: 06:19 ... need of-

John Bytheway: 06:21 Yes. They used to say the threefold mission of the church was proclaim the gospel, perfect the saints, redeem the dead. President Monson added care for the poor and needy. Now, it's been restated, "Live, care, invite, unite, live the gospel of Jesus Christ, care for those in need." That's the whole sentence. It might not be that they're poor, but they might have a need, an emotional need, a friendship need, a companionship need. Care

for those in need. Live the gospel. Care for those in need. Live, care, invite all to come into Christ, and unite families for eternity. Thanks for bringing that up.

- Hank Smith: 06:57 Yeah. I want to bring up one last story if that's okay. Jon Huntsman Sr.'s wife told a story. Now, John, if you don't know who that is, Jon Huntsman, Sr., he's a member of the church who didn't start out very wealthy, but he finished quite, quite wealthy. We're not talking hundreds of millions, even more. His business has thrived. Well, his wife said, "Long before we had any of that wealth, we had our little family budget, and we each got \$50 of our own spending money. We never asked..." Have you ever heard this story, John? He said she never-
- John Bytheway: 07:39 Mm-mm (negative).
- Hank Smith: 07:39 ... asked. They never asked each other, "What are you doing with your spending money?" because it was yours. It was your little budget item, \$50 of spending money. She said, "I never asked him what he did with it. He never seemed to get anything, but I never asked him." She said, "I bought myself things." She said, after a couple of years of this, a woman stood up in fast and testimony meeting and said, "I don't know who it is, but whoever has been giving me \$50 a month for the last few years, I love you. I thank you." Jon Huntsman Sr.'s wife said she glanced over at him, and he just looked straight ahead. She said, "But I knew it was him." She said, "He's always been that way, that he's a giver." I think that we can give ourselves. Let's give ourselves into prosperity like that. Maybe there's something to that. Anyway, John-
- John Bytheway: 08:50 Yeah, that's great.
- Hank Smith: 08:50 ... we probably just confused people more, but hopefully we-
- John Bytheway: 08:54 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 08:55 ... we helped-
- John Bytheway: 08:56 Good topic.
- Hank Smith: 08:56 ... a little bit with that.
- John Bytheway: 08:57 [crosstalk 00:08:57]. Yeah, go back and read King Benjamin's speech. He even says, "If you don't have anything, say, 'I would give if I had.'"

Hank Smith: 09:05 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 09:07 He's kind of talking about, where's your heart? That's kind of job one. Where's your heart? "I would give if I had," he says. Yeah, go read King Benjamin's speech again. It gets a little complicated, too, because he says, "Are we not all beggars?" and you should give to the beggar, but if you're downtown, there's a little sign that says-

Hank Smith: 09:26 Please don't.

John Bytheway: 09:26 ... "Don't give to the panhandlers."

Hank Smith: 09:28 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 09:28 Give to the welfare agencies that really know how to help people not just prolong their problem but to really help them, and that's a... yeah, it's a good discussion.

Hank Smith: 09:39 It is. It's a good discussion. I'm sure there's varied opinions. Hopefully, we added a little bit to that and-

John Bytheway: 09:46 Spring forward to new thoughts, yeah.

Hank Smith: 09:48 ... I would encourage... Yeah.

John Bytheway: 09:48 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 09:48 John, when you said, "Hey, all things should be done in wisdom in order," I like giving to the churches' organizations because I know that that money is going to reach the people that I'm hoping it will reach.

John Bytheway: 10:00 Yes.

Hank Smith: 10:00 Right? Humanitarian aid-

John Bytheway: 10:02 Somebody who's done the research and the work.

Hank Smith: 10:02 ... fast offerings

John Bytheway: 10:02 Right.

Hank Smith: 10:02 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 10:05 They know how to really help, not just throw money at it. Yeah.

Hank Smith:

10:08

Yeah. There's very, very low cost that's going to pay anybody along the way. I remember President Hinckley saying that. This human aid, every 100 cents of your dollar is going to get to those people. I like that confidence in that wisdom in order. Well, thank you for joining us today. Hopefully, we added a little bit to your thoughts on this, but you can write to us. You can send us a question that you have. We'll hopefully work it into a week of followHIM favorites, so join us next time. It might be your question.