



“To Be a Greater Follower of Righteousness”

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 Friday and Saturday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

How is a covenant not like a contract? Dr. Jennifer Lane instructs how covenants are familial arrangements about family and belonging. We discuss what it means in the ancient Near East to be a kinsman-redeemer, how covenants create familial bonds, and how the need for redemption applies to us today.

Part 2:

Dr. Jennifer Lane continues and relates how covenants with the Lord bless the entire human family through sacrifice. We also discuss “cutting a covenant,” the essential nature of the temple, and how our Kinsman-Redeemer will consecrate every loss for our benefit.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Welcome to Part I
- 00:52 Introduction to Dr. Jennifer Lane
- 03:00 How to help students understand ancient scripture
- 06:09 the Bible wasn't written with us as the audience in mind
- 08:20 Covenant is not like a business contract in the ancient Near East
- 11:24 Kinsman-redeemer in the scriptures and the ancient Near East
- 13:53 The New and Everlasting Covenant (the Abrahamic covenant) really begins to be discussed with Abraham
- 14:52 Abraham has to be delivered temporally and spiritually and God uses regular people to accomplish His purposes
- 17:33 Covenants are familial and a way to keep the Savior with us
- 23:05 Proper understanding of our heritage makes us want to be like the Savior and make covenants
- 28:12 The Abrahamic covenant is the New and Everlasting Covenant
- 30:14 There has to be more to life than social media and work and Abraham seeks more
- 35:12 Eternal life requires work and covenants
- 38:20 Abraham is seeking an endowment and the endowment is for men and women to fully take Christ's name upon them, as they began with their baptismal covenant
- 44:44 The Daughters of Ontiah as parallel to Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego
- 49:47 End of Part I

Part 2:

- 00:00 Welcome to Part III
- 00:33 The Endowment expands the baptismal covenants
- 04:14 The rest of the Lord means the presence of the Lord
- 07:17 In order to have peaceable relationships, we must compromise
- 08:58 Receiving ordinances is receiving Christ
- 10:44 Ancient practice of “cutting a covenant”
- 13:21 Abram and Sarai have name changes and promises of seed, land, etc.

- 21:07 President Nelson reiterates that the Restoration will continue until the Second Coming and we will gather Israel (part of the covenant to Abraham and Sarah)
- 23:01 the Restoration is a restoration of the Old Testament Church and the New and Everlasting Covenant
- 24:29 Sarah suggests Hagar as a wife, Abraham wonders if his steward should inherit
- 30:19 Trust in the Lord includes the Lord's timing and method
- 35:25 Jesus learned obedience through suffering
- 39:26 Lot is the opposite of Abraham, he turns his tent toward Sodom
- 42:09 Why is this life so hard?
- 45:17 We could call it the Abrahamic-Sarah Covenant
- 47:52 Judaism, Islam, and Christianity count Abraham as a prophet
- 52:33 Dr. Jennifer shares her testimony of Jesus Christ as well as her journey as scholar
- 01:03:48 End of Part II

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Biographical Information:



Jennifer C. Lane is Neal A. Maxwell Research Associate at the Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and professor emerita at Brigham Young University–Hawaii. She received her Ph.D. in religion with an emphasis in history of Christianity from Claremont Graduate University. She graduated with University Honors in history at Brigham Young University (BYU) and completed her M.A. at BYU with an emphasis in ancient Near Eastern studies. She served in the leadership of both the Society for Mormon Philosophy and Theology and the Latter-day Saints and the Bible section of the Society of Biblical Literature and is currently on the Board of the Religious Studies Center. She served as Dean of Religious Education and Associate Academic Vice President for Curriculum at BYU–Hawaii. She has published over twenty-five articles and book chapters on context and analysis of scripture, theology, and medieval studies. Her recent volume, *Finding Christ in the Covenant Path: Ancient Insights for Modern Life*, brings together decades of research from these different threads of study.

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their <i>Come, Follow Me</i> study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:11	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:11	We love to laugh. We want to learn and laugh with you as together we followHIM.
Hank Smith:	00:20	Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith and I'm here with my covenant-keeping cohost, John Bytheway. John, we're talking about Abraham today, and you're like Abraham. You're like Abraham to me. You're a covenant keeper.
John Bytheway:	00:38	I thought you're going to say something about my age, but that's great. Yeah, thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:42	No, no.
John Bytheway:	00:43	I'll take it.
Hank Smith:	00:43	We're talking about Abraham today, and I figured you two were friends.
John Bytheway:	00:46	No, no, we were roommates, actually.
Hank Smith:	00:49	Oh.
John Bytheway:	00:52	We are excited to have with us Dr. Jennifer Lane today, and she is a Neal A. Maxwell research associate at the Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and professor emerita at Brigham Young University-Hawaii. She received her PhD in religion with an emphasis in history of Christianity from Claremont Graduate University. She graduated with University Honors in history at Brigham Young University and completed her MA at BYU with

an emphasis in ancient Near Eastern studies. Hank, every week I'm just blown away by the breadth of scholarship. And she served in the leadership both of the Society for Mormon Philosophy and Theology and the Latter-Day Saints in the Bible section of the Society of Biblical Literature, and is currently on the Board of the Religious Study Center. She served as the Dean of Religious Education and Associate Academic Vice President for Curriculum at BYU-Hawaii.

- John Bytheway: 01:47 She has published over 25 articles and book chapters on context and analysis of scripture, theology, and medieval studies. And I want to make sure we talk about this recent volume, *Finding Christ in the Covenant Path: Ancient Insights for Modern Life*. I'm so thankful that there's people who know this stuff and who write about it so that we can go get it and read. And I think if my eyes don't deceive me, I see a copy of that behind you, Jennifer. Could you hold that up closer to the camera for us?
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 02:18 Sure.
- John Bytheway: 02:18 I want people to be able to see it on the podcast. Hank, don't we have some sources that we use, aren't there notes about that sometimes?
- Hank Smith: 02:27 Yeah, over on the website. Yeah, followhim.co, followhim.co, you can go over there and you'll be able to find it, a link to it.
- John Bytheway: 02:33 So that's a great title, *Finding Christ in the Covenant Path*. A phrase that President Nelson has made part of our everyday conversations. And we're so happy to have you, Dr. Lane. Thank you for joining us. You spent a lot of years in Hawaii and now you're in Provo?
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 02:48 Yes, and I loved being in Hawaii and now I'm delighted to be here. So it's just great to keep working and serving and learning. So it's great to be here with you all today. Thank you so much.
- Hank Smith: 03:00 Dr. Lane, I want to start out by just asking you as a teacher, how do you help your students approach ancient scripture like the Bible to make sure they're using it appropriately, in its context, and understanding its people? How do you help them approach it so they're not misapplying scripture?
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 03:22 It's a challenge for all of us as Latter-day Saints. I've been teaching for almost 25 years and I try to help students understand, we want to hear the voice of the Lord, but we need to learn to hear the voice of the Lord both in our own lives, but

we need to understand that when reading these scripture texts, he's speaking to them in their language, in their world. So we have to learn to hear the voice of the Lord in context. Unlike the Book of Mormon, which was written for our day, that prophets were inspired to know what we needed to hear, the Old Testament and the New Testament were not written for our day. And so we have to get back into the world. We always, at the beginning of any semester, spend time talking about, what is the context? What would people in this world have, how would they have understood things.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 04:09

And in some ways it's a little easier for the New Testament because we're looking at a short period of time, but the Old Testament, it's hundreds of years. It's varied. But I think there are some patterns and some general concepts. And one of the things that drove a lot of my research during my teaching years was, what can I do to help students understand better? And what I found are some concepts. I used word studies, so I did study Hebrew as a masters. I went on to do History of Christianity, so I left the biblical world and studied more. How is the Bible understood by Christians through time? But a lot of my early work, both my honors thesis, my master's thesis, was rooted in key word studies. So looking at concepts I think are going to help us a lot today as well, digging into, what did a covenant mean in the ancient world? How did a name work? What was the meaning of a name?

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 05:04

And then that's actually tied to redemption, which it comes up very lightly in the story of Abraham, but it's actually going to be the root of themes that run all throughout the Old Testament and actually throughout the Book of Mormon as well. So covenant, name, redemption, and even knowing, the idea of knowledge. What it means in the ancient world is different than in a modern sense. And I could talk about each of them in more depth, but just to give you an overview, those are some terms I try to introduce to students as we work through the material so that they can start to read and hear the voice of the Lord, hear the revelations as they were intended a little bit more, the people for whom they were given.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 05:46

So prophets speak for the Lord, but they speak to different audiences. And so the prophets need to use the language as the Lord communicates to them that is going to make sense to the people that they're speaking to. And so we just have to learn new vocabulary. We have to find new ways of thinking and not just assume that because we use a word this way, it's going to mean the same thing in their world.

Hank Smith: 06:09 I like that, don't assume that when you read a word that it means what you think it means. We have to see it the way they would have seen it. John Walton says the Bible is an ancient document. It's not a document that was written to us. It wasn't written in our language. It wasn't written with our culture in mind or our culture in view. We need to try to enter their world. I like that idea. I think that's what you said, right there, is we need to enter their world. Hear it as their audience would have heard it and as their author would have meant it and read it in those terms. I like that, Jennifer, because then we can be a little more careful in our application. Because if we don't come into it understanding their world, we could misapply what the Lord is saying, what they're saying, where we might read into it something that's really not there.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 07:00 Yeah, and this is absolutely something I feel strongly enough about that not only did it drive a lot of my research and writing, but it actually, what led me, I had a sabbatical back in 2018, and I'd been in administration for about 11 years. And so I hadn't had a lot of time for research and writing, but I had a little window of time. And that's what actually part of what led me to write the book I did, is to synthesize the work, to bring it together for a larger audience. And the first half of the book really is about these ancient words. And so each chapter takes a word and develops it. And by understanding the word in its ancient context, it actually helps us understand the gospel so much better, because these concepts of covenant, name, redemption, knowledge, worship, all of these are so deep and so rich.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 07:48 And they unlock, they're keys to understand both what the Old Testament's teaching, but also in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, all through the Book of Mormon. Because it's so deeply rooted in the Old Testament world that we can understand Old Testament covenants and concepts and terms better, we understand the gospel better, what's being taught. Because it's using that language, we need to learn that language.

Hank Smith: 08:14 Well, I'm ready. John, you feel like we're ... Let's do it then. Yeah, I'm ready to learn the language.

John Bytheway: 08:20 We've already used the word covenant so many times today. And I love that President Nelson has emphasized so much the gathering part of the covenant. And I just don't remember as a youth knowing how important Abraham was in that. And so I'm glad we're talking about this today and I'm glad that President Nelson has emphasized it so much.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 08:43

He's used this language for quite a long time, the idea of being children of the covenant. And this is a powerful concept. Again, it's very deeply rooted in biblical thinking. Covenant, a lot of times in modern times when we explain it we'd say it was like a contract. But in the ancient world it's not like a contract. It's not about business. It's not about a relationship that you can just walk away from, that you're really creating a new relationship. And that's part of why the image of marriage and the image of adoption both run throughout scriptures, because you have parties that didn't used to be related and that then create a new relationship. So when you're adopted and you take a child into your family, you create a new relationship. When two people come together and marry, they create a new relationship. Yeah, and that is really what covenant's talking about.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 09:28

So you'll see President Nelson using the language becoming children of the covenant, and that, it is absolutely biblically rooted. It is what's happening. And it also helps us understand, why do we see names? Why do we see new names? Because a name in the ancient world, it expresses a relationship. So part of it is you belong. So when someone's adopted, they'll take a new name. Sometimes when people marry, it's culturally dependent, of course, but often you'll have a shared family name. And so the name expresses the relationship. It expresses a sense of belonging. Elder Gong has used the idea of covenant belonging and that's a powerful image as well. And President Oaks has a beautiful book on this, but the idea of a name. In its deepest sense in the ancient world it talks about nature. So when you enter into a covenant you have a new relationship, but you also there's a potential for a new nature.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 10:23

And then we're going to see that with Abraham as well, covenant, name tied together. And this is where my own research started 30 years ago, going into the Old Testament and thinking about redemption. Why was the Lord the Redeemer of Israel? That term is used over and over again, the Redeemer of Israel. But the more I studied, I realized this is actually, again, it's culturally rooted, that in the ancient Near East people would become slaves or they'd be in bondage. You see that language a lot in scripture, right? But people could be bought out of bondage because you buy the payment of a price. And that's such a powerful gospel concept, that Christ pays a price for us to buy us out of bondage. But it also comes, again, it comes from a real world, that people either as prisoners of war could become slaves or put into bondage, or else people become so poor they would actually sell their children. So the debt bondage.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 11:24 And this is what's so beautiful about the Hebrew. There's a general Semitic verb, *padah*, which means to redeem. But in Hebrew there's a verb that's only in Hebrew, it's *ga'al*. And the noun form, the *go'el*, is the redeemer. It could also be translated as "kinsman redeemer." So the oldest male member of a family would have a family obligation to buy back people that had become enslaved. And the kinsman redeemer, the *go'el*, would be the one who, because of a family relationship, would bring people back. When the prophets talk about the Lord as the Redeemer of Israel, so Jehovah, who we know of course is Jesus Christ, the God of the Old Testament, that this is a key part of his identity, is that he, and this is again what President Nelson keeps pushing us to understand, as children of the covenant that we have this relationship with the Lord.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 12:23 And part of what we can have confidence in is that as our kinsman redeemer he will come to get us. He will buy us out of bondage. And all of us, we're in bondage in different ways. Usually it's to sin, some part of fallen nature, a way of being that isn't as godly as it should be. And so bringing us from bondage to the world and moving us into a more godly way of being ultimately into the presence of God, that's the image of redemption. So seeing how covenant and redemption tie together really helps scriptures come alive. And you see connections and you can understand, why is the Lord, why does he have this particular relationship to Israel? It's because of the covenants.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 13:02 Why does he have his particular relationship to Israel? It's because of the covenants that were made. And actually the covenants that go back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The covenants, the patriarchs, were ... And you see this in, in both Exodus, you see it in Deuteronomy and even in the 1 Nephi, the reason the Lord redeems Israel is because of the covenant to the patriarchs. He remembers that covenant. He knows this covenant relationship. And he's going to act to redeem.
- Hank Smith: 13:28 One thing that our previous guests have ... have told us, and I guess I didn't know before, that these stories that we've read so far, Adam and Eve, Noah, and the Tower, all of this is background. It's leading us up to these, these Fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It's, it's all background information to what they really want to talk about. Right? What the author really wants to talk about.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 13:53 I think it's absolutely right. As far as the way, the, the Old Testament's structured, that everything else is prelude. And when you get to Abraham and you get to the covenant, then everything starts. The story really starts.

Hank Smith: 14:06 Right. And for a Latter-day Saint reader, you might just go, oh, they're just telling us the entire story. They wanted to ... They start with Adam and Eve because they're the beginning. But it's like, well, here's the background you need in order to understand Abraham.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 14:19 I think it would be helpful to start with Abraham 1, and, and right before we start at the Abraham one, I'll actually throw in a quote from Isaiah, which is fascinating. This is in Isaiah 29, verse 22. And Isaiah refers to Jehovah, the God of Israel, as the Lord who redeemed Abraham. And so we, we think about redemption of the people that the children of Israel, but, but Isaiah has a sense that this is also on a personal level as well.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 14:52 And I think in the book of Abraham, we, we start to see how that's happening. One is on a personal level from the danger that he's in, he's being delivered. So there's a kind of redemption that's happening there. But the fact that he's leaving the world behind and moving to a holier place, a holier way of being, that that's redemption as well. And we definitely see that theme throughout the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 15:14 So to understand his story, I think it's realizing that we're seeing our story, that the Lord wants to establish covenants with each of his children. He wants us to be redeemed. Perhaps turn together to Abraham Chapter 1 and start to see.

Hank Smith: 15:31 One thing I think I've noticed in the Bible is that whenever there's a problem, a big problem, the Lord chooses kind of some—nobody, just this person, right? And says with you, I'm going to use you. And we're going to fix the world. See it with Abraham. I look at Samuel, he's just this kid. Mary, just this girl from Nazareth. I mean he uses a fisherman. He uses Joseph Smith. It's just to me, I'm like, wow, he, he doesn't go after ... He doesn't go find a king or a prince.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 16:06 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 16:06 He goes and finds one citizen and, and you're my person.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 16:09 Yes.

Hank Smith: 16:09 We're going to use you.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 16:11 No, I think that that is a really important pattern to pay attention to. And it's incredibly important for us to feel the truth of in our own lives. For me, that passage in Exodus 3, where Jehovah is talking with Moses and he's telling him the mission he has for him. And Moses says, "Who, who am I? Who am I to do this great work to bring ... "

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 16:31 And what ... But I think what is incredibly important is what the Lord says. Because Moses might be looking for a pat on the back. He might be looking for a thumbs up. You're great. You can do it. You're amazing. That's—but that's not what the Lord says. He says, "I will be with thee."

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 16:47 And I think when we can look for that answer and we can feel that answer, and that comes through covenant, it comes through making and keeping covenants. The Lord promises He'll be with us. And when we put our trust in Him and don't worry about ourselves, then we can have the confidence that we can do whatever He asked us to do, because it's not about us. It's not about our capacity. It's about his capacity and that's infinite. And so we don't need to be afraid. We can have the confidence to go forward if we put our trust in him.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 17:17 And that's why, of course, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel. It's not faith in ourselves. It's not self confidence. It's trusting the Lord that He will be with us when we are true to Him. We try to—when we make and keep covenants.

John Bytheway: 17:33 I love in 3 Nephi where they're all, can you please stay? And he says, my time is at hand. And then 3 Nephi 18 comes. Here's how you can always have my Spirit to be with you. And He institutes the ... the sacrament. I—I'm glad you said that. That's a good way to think of it. It's not something you can do. It's ... we can do it because I'm going to be with you.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 17:51 And that's precisely what covenant's for is that—so that we can have these covenant promises. Having the Holy Ghost with us if we're faithful to our covenants. That... that's how the Lord is with us. That, that ... And, and then likewise, when you move on from baptism to the endowment, and—but he says, he's going to be with us through his Spirit, through his power, his enabling, his grace. He's, he's going to be with us. And it's the covenant promises that give us that confidence that we're not alone, that he will be with us. The sacrament every week is a chance to, to remember precisely that. So great connection.

Hank Smith: 18:27 The world's gone a little bit wrong with the Tower. And so the Lord says, all right, Abraham, you're my guy. And I've noticed Abraham's not perfect.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 18:37 No, no, no one is-

Hank Smith: 18:37 Right, as you read through this, he makes some mistakes. And you would think the Lord might go. Now I'm gonna- you're not my guy anymore. I'm going to go find someone else. But He sticks with him. He sticks with him in his imperfections.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 18:49 He tells him to be perfect at the beginning of, of Genesis 17. But the word could better be translated as whole or complete. And I think it is sort of what happens to us once we repent. That—because it's a process of coming into Christ. And so we're not ... Making covenants and being on the covenant path doesn't mean we don't make mistakes. It means we keep repenting. We keep looking to Christ. We have confidence that He can forgive us. He can heal us. He can make us right. And, and we can, we can move ... We can keep moving forward.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 19:17 And so I think that's what, what Abraham had confidence that he could keep moving forward. And so that what—that brought him the wholeness and the completeness that he was with the Lord. If he slipped a little bit, he repented, he came back. And, and it's a, it's a daily pattern like President Nelson tells us. Repenting daily is the greatest privilege and blessing because of the Atonement. And Abraham, he lived that. And that's part of how he lived a whole life and a complete life.

Hank Smith: 19:42 Right. Yeah. I, I was very comforted by that. That the Lord said, "Here, Abraham, you're, here's my guy, you're my guy. And here's this land." And he goes to Egypt. Right? And the Lord's like, okay. And he could have, he could have given up on him, but he, he doesn't. I- the ... almost the message of Abraham to me, when I, as I was reading was, the Lord will keep his promise. He, He will- He's not going to give up on you.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 20:07 If we're looking for Him, He'll be there for us. And He, He respects our agency. He, He honors our agency. In fact, let's, let's look. Because I think Abraham Chapter 1 is such a powerful way of understanding how does this story start? And so, again, with the Pearl of Great Price, and I know you've had Kerry Muhlestein talked more about kind of how these fit together, we get some of the backstory. And it's ... I love the first couple verses of the Book of Abraham because what it tells me, again, it- to me, it's so relatable. It's so personal because you have somebody in a culture, in a context, where they realize this

world is not going to make me happy. This world doesn't offer what I need. There's something missing. And so there's sort of a seeking soul.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 20:57 And so if you look in verse 1, "The land of the Chaldeans, at the residents of my fathers, I, Abraham saw. ..." And this is his realization. This isn't good enough. There's something more. And this is the sort of what leads people towards Lehi's Vision towards the tree. What leads people to get on the path. That there's more, there's something else. "It was needful for me to obtain another place of residence. ..." I don't want to be ... This isn't the world I want to live in. This isn't the kind of life I want to live. And so everyone has ... To take the journey we have to recognize that we don't want to stay where we're at.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 21:33 And so if you look in verse 2, Abraham really gets into explaining this very deep, personal journey. He says, "Finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me. ..." There's something more. The world is not giving me what I'm looking for. "I sought it for the blessings of the fathers, and v the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself, a follower of righteousness. ..."
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 22:00 So this is, again, someone who- who's living up to all the light he has, or at least trying to, but not- recognizing he doesn't have everything. And so he's seeking for more. And I love what he says next. And this is always what it comes back to. You see that theme over and over again in the scripture, especially the Book of Mormon, what do we want? What we want is what we're going to do. So here he's desiring to be one who possessed greater knowledge, to be a greater follower of righteousness and to possess a greater knowledge.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 22:36 And here, this isn't knowledge in the sense, going back to this ancient concept, it's not knowledge in the sense of like he wanted to build a database. This is, this is knowledge in the sense of he wants to, to come to know God. He wants to take on the attributes and the qualities of God. So being a greater follower of righteousness. Greater knowledge is his wanting to be more like God. He feels that call. And that that is, is leading him onward.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 23:05 President Benson talked about this. And I love sharing this passage with students because sometimes people read it and say, oh, well, this is only for the men because it's about being ordained to a priesthood office. And, President Benson says, no. This is what President Benson says. He says, "I believe that a proper understanding or background will measurely help

prepare our youth for the temple and will foster within them a desire to seek their priesthood blessings just as Abraham sought his."

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 23:39 So what is Abraham looking for? He wants an endowment. He wants the priesthood blessings that come with making and keeping covenants. And so when we understand that Abraham seeking for his priesthood blessings, he's seeking for the blessing of the New and Everlasting Covenant, the blessings of the temple, then that puts everything in context.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 23:59 And this is, again, going back, we talked about President Nelson and he spoke about this over and over again. And this is just in the last General Conference, a powerful quote from him where he just recently taught, "In every age, the temple has underscored the precious truth that those who make covenants with God and keep them are the children of the covenants." And we just, we talked about that, right? So making covenants, keeping covenants allow us us to be children of the covenant.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 24:27 And then he says, "Thus, in the house of the Lord, we can make the same covenants with God that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob made. And we can receive the same blessings." So everything that Abraham's seeking for, on our best days, that's what we're seeking for as well. And the way we find that greater peace, the way we find the greater happiness and rest, the greater knowledge, the greater righteousness, is through our priesthood blessings. It's through the covenant and receiving the endowment.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:04 And then, of course, Abraham's not just that, but then also temple marriage and the blessings. But the- these priesthood blessings are temple blessings. And so this is universally applicable.
- John Bytheway: 25:16 Can I ask a question here? I remember in seminary, there's really nothing humorous about, on the previous page, the facsimile where Abraham is about to be-
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:25 Oh yeah.
- John Bytheway: 25:25 ... sacrificed.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:26 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 25:27 But I remember our teacher saying, you know, look, here's the wicked priest of Elkenah, however you say that. Abraham on

that altar. And then reading verse one with- which sounded like quite the understatement. Abraham says, "You know, it's needful for me to obtain another place of residency."

- Hank Smith: 25:44 (laughs).
- John Bytheway: 25:45 "And I need to move or ... "
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:46 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 25:47 ... 'cause he's about to be sacrificed-
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:48 This isn't working. Being sacrificed is not working for me. I need-
- John Bytheway: 25:50 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 25:50 (laughs)
- John Bytheway: 25:52 But the thing I wanted to ask a question about, which I find so interesting, is usually when we talk about the fathers, we're talking about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And there's Abraham himself in-
- John Bytheway: 26:03 ... Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And there's Abraham himself in verse two saying, "I sought for the blessings of the fathers." And it's like, "Wait a minute. You are the fathers. You and your son and your grandson." And so I've wondered. Okay, that's what? Adam, Seth.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 26:17 Yes. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 26:18 Enoch. Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 26:18 Exactly. And this is part of, again, insights we have because of the Restoration where we realize the New and Everlasting Covenant it's a synonym for the Abrahamic covenant, but it didn't start with Abraham. And so the way the Bible's structured, it all leads up to Abraham, because it starts with Abraham. But we know through the Restoration, and you get insights in the Book of Moses that Adam and Eve and all of the early fathers, they had that covenant relationship as well.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 26:49 The blessings of the New and Everlasting Covenant were there from the beginning. They were restored again in Abraham's time. These were the blessings we actually know from Section

84 of the Doctrine and Covenants that it was this New and Everlasting Covenant, these full priesthood, Melchizedek priesthood blessings at the temple that the Lord wanted to establish with the children of Israel, but they were afraid. Because of course, faith leads us to make covenants. If we're afraid, we're not going to make covenants. And that's what we learned. It's really sad and sobering. The Lord, they were willing to covenant, but it was a lesser covenant. It was the Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood covenant.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 27:27 So law of Moses, they start high, all through Adam and Eve and all of the ancient patriarchs up to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But then when you get to the Lord reestablishing his covenant with Moses and the children of Israel at that time, the people as a whole do not enter into the fullness of the New and Everlasting Covenant because they were afraid to do that.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 27:49 And as a part of just trusting the Lord enough to be willing to bind ourself to him and to be willing to live in his ways, to sanctify ourselves, it takes faith to leave the world behind, it takes faith to sanctify yourself. And that's what Section 84 suggests, is that they didn't have that faith so that they were willing to enter into this Levitical covenant, this the law of Moses.

John Bytheway: 28:12 So when we talk about the Abrahamic Covenant, it sounds like some before Abraham were given similar promises of posterity and of the blessings of the gospel and even bearing the ministry. And maybe we could say, but Abraham followed it so well. I'm kind of thinking of, "Well, we call it the Melchizedek Priesthood because he was such a great high priest." But actually the name is, and is this similar where we call the Abrahamic Covenant, but others before him were made similar promises or God made similar covenants with them.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 28:44 I think it's a good way of understanding it. I mean, again, as Latter-day Saints this isn't Restoration understanding. It wouldn't be true for most Christians reading. They're going to say, "Wait, it starts with Abraham." For us as Latter-day Saints, we say, "No, it's there earlier." But it is clear that Abraham is special and that the Lord tells him that it's going to be essentially after his name, that we'll get into some of those texts a little bit more.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 29:09 Most of the Old Testament is sort of under the law of Moses, but the covenant promises are still there. They're still the children of the covenant. They're still the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are available for them, just like they were

redeemed because of the covenant made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that the Lord remembers his people and they were still his people. But you have that passage in Jeremiah, where he's going to bring back this new covenant, he'll establish a new covenant in the hearts, that's what Christ is coming. He's coming to restore the New and Everlasting Covenant that had been there with Abraham, and had been there with the early Saints.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 29:45 But yeah, we definitely used the term Abrahamic covenant because Abraham is special, but it's essentially a synonym for the new and everlasting covenant. So it's new every time, it's restored, but it's everlasting because it's the way home, but it refers to all of the gospel and all of the covenants involved in the gospel.
- Hank Smith: 30:05 I like that. It's new and everlasting. It's new and old at the same time.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 30:10 Exactly. And so with new again with Abraham, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 30:14 Everybody comes to a Abraham Chapter 1, verse 1 and 2 moment I think in life where they realize, "There's got to be more than entertainment or money or ... " Do you remember that old video John, *Families Can Be Together Forever*? I can't remember. Anyway, they said ... They asked people, "What's the purpose of life?" And one guy said, "Well, I'm just living to retirement. I'm just working to retirement." And I think everybody comes to these moments. Every human being comes to these moments. I think I did. I remember being younger and the kind of laying down at night going, "There's got to be a purpose to all this. Right? There's got to be more than just entertainment. There's got to be more than just sports."
- John Bytheway: 31:00 Right.
- Hank Smith: 31:01 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 31:02 Whatever it is that we're putting first in our life. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 31:06 I hope all of us have Abraham Chapter 1, verse 2 moments where, "You know, I need to be a greater follower. I need to have a greater knowledge. I've been surrounded by this, but I want to do better. I want to have a greater knowledge. I want to have ... "

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 31:22 I think about this Chapter 1. And it's really easy to treat the worship of these other gods and idle worship and sacrifices, like to think this is unique to the ancient world. President Kimball's statement about whatever we put our trust in is our God is a very sobering statement. And I think, as we can make, sort of liken unto ourselves and we can make the experiences, even though our father's friends aren't necessarily going to be putting us on a literal altar, that we might be in family situations or with friends where we are spiritually at risk. And we may decide, I can't stay here, that this is not the world I want to be in anymore. Because whether it's family members or friends, what their worlds revolve around, what they're worshiping, we'd realize this is getting in the way of the kind of worship I want, the true worship.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 32:25 And this first from the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants Section 1 is the preface of the Doctrine and Covenants. This passage in verse 16 to me, really speaks to me. And so what is going on here with Abraham is the same it's going on with us and how we're being invited, as you said. Elder Uchtdorf used the phrase of, "A daily restoration," to come back to ourselves and to remember what's real. So in Section 1, verse 16, this is really an explanation of why is the Restoration here? Why are the covenants and priesthood blessings being restored? It's to help us reorient ourselves, because this is the problem with the world. It says they seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 33:11 So what makes Abraham different is he's seeking the Lord, and that's what makes us different. We start to seek the Lord. But the world isn't seeking the Lord. They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness. "But every man walketh in his own way, after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great shall fall."
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 33:43 So we have Babylon as the symbol of the world. We have Egypt as a symbol of the world. Whatever the symbol is, historical context we're in, we all have to choose to leave that. We have to want to say there's something better, something different, and to not try to hold onto it like Elder Maxwell warned us not to try it at the summer cottage in Babylon. We have to decide. I really, really, I want to be like Abraham. I'm willing to leave this behind. I'm trusting that there's something better for me.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 34:10 And I think making covenants and keeping covenants is trusting that what the kind of life that obedience and faithfulness and

worshiping God gives us is better than what the world can offer us. It's a deep level, the kind of holiness is happiness. It's believing that, trusting that. And then walking in the Lord's ways.

- Hank Smith: 34:33 There's been days where I thought to myself, "I don't want to be stuck on a screen anymore. I don't want to be staring at my phone anymore. I want something better than this. I want something better than watching people fight on social media. I want something better than this." And that is a form of idolatry, right? Putting all your confidence in your social media feed or putting all your confidence in what people or who's liking my picture.
- John Bytheway: 34:59 Well, gosh, President Nelson, I mean, he said that at the last [General] Conference. "If most of the information you get comes from social media, your ability to feel the Spirit will be diminished." I mean, it was really, wow, what a statement.
- John Bytheway: 35:12 And I wanted to mention something that it's in the *Come, Follow Me manual* because we're here. We're talking about our desires, what do we want. And you said that Jennifer beautifully. But the first paragraph in that lesson manual quotes President Dallin H. Oaks. He said, "As important as it is to lose every desire for sin, eternal life requires more. To achieve our eternal destiny, we will desire and work for the qualities required to become an eternal being. If this seems too difficult, and surely it is not easy for any of us, then we should begin with the desire for such qualities and call upon our loving Heavenly Father for help with our feelings."
- John Bytheway: 35:54 So I like this Abraham. And if some of us aren't desiring that, it sounds like President Oaks is saying pray for the desire to desire that and to have our desires refined by God.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 36:09 Which is, I think, the gospel message that's to Alma 32, "If you could no more than desire." But part of it's believe. But it's believe, but part of his believing that this is a way of being that's going to make you happy, that I think it might, but I'm going to give it a try.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 36:25 And so the experiment on the word is really having faith in Christ to live his way and to do things his way. And then to feel that influence, what's growing up and a swelling. That's the Holy Ghost working in us, helping to change our heart. The Lord won't change our heart without our permission because we're agents. But when we want that, when we're starting to seek it,

when we're starting to ask for it, then he can help us. He can change us.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 36:54 And I still love Abraham 1, so here Abraham has been delivered from the immediate threat of physical danger, and the Lord is speaking to him. And he introduces himself. And, "I've heard thy name. My name is Jehovah." So I've heard thee. "I've come down to deliver thee and to take thee away, to bring you to a new place." But you go to verse 18, and I love this, because again, this I think goes to help us understand covenant. When we want to be different, we have enough faith to make covenants. And whether it's being baptized or being willing to go to the temple, to receive our endowment, or having the faith to get married and to say, "Eternity with you, I don't know, but I'm going to give it a try because ... "Not because I trust you, but because I trust the Lord." And the Lord's going to help me become more celestial and the Lord's going to help you become more celestial. And that he's going to be with us. That the confidence is in him.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 37:51 And I love this in verse 18. He says, "I will ... " This is the Lord speaking to Abraham about this new life he's starting. "I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name. Even the Priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee." So to me, this is, he's talking about the temple blessings. He's talking about priesthood blessings, and that this is universal. It applies to men and women.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 38:20 Again, another quote from President Nelson, where he says, this is back in October of 2019. He's speaking to women, but he's just trying to make it clear that these ... having the name, Lord's name put upon us, this is what ... I mean, it starts at baptism, but we know it happens more fully in the temple, that he will be with us more fully because of the endowment. So this is President Nelson.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 38:45 "Because the Melchizedek priesthood has been restored, both covenant keeping women and men have access to all the spiritual blessings of the Church." Or we might say to all the spiritual treasures the Lord has for his children that he's going to be with us and give us his name as truly ...
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 39:03 That he's going to be with us and give us his name is surely among the greatest spiritual treasures we could ask for. He continues, "Every woman and every man who makes covenants with God and keeps those covenants and who participates

worthily impriested ordinances has direct access to the power of God." What is he saying here? My power shall be over thee.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 39:24 Then, President Nelson again. "Those who are endowed in the house of the Lord receive a gift of God's priesthood power by virtue of their covenant, along with a gift of knowledge to know how to draw upon that power." You look in [verse] 19, you can see... This is what we were talking about before. It didn't start with Abraham. "As it was with Noah, so shall it be with thee. ..." This is a pattern and the Lord wants to make the same covenant with us that he made with Abraham so we can have the same power in our lives that he was willing to give Abraham.
- John Bytheway: 40:02 I see. I love that because now we're talking... Because here's Abraham saying, "I sought for blessings of the fathers," and here's the Lord mentioning Noah, somebody that came before Abraham, and as it was with Noah, so shall it be with thee.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 40:18 Again, but we become his, so we serve him. Right? But through thy ministry, when we make covenants, we're then under obligation to serve and to bless others, that, "Through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God."
- John Bytheway: 40:34 In verse 18, "To put upon thee my name when we are baptized we take upon us the name of Christ." There's also a new name later. This is so interesting to me. I remember learning about King Tut and seeing that he had a pre nomen in a cartouche, and then when his name became Tutankhamun, however you say it, he got a new cartouche, and that the name of God is always in their name somewhere, and the hieroglyphics don't read in the order you might think because the name of God is always put on the top. Something I remember in that right. But I love how often the name of God is in the name of prophets in the Old Testament. Danielle, Ezekiel. There's the El, or Ya that Jehovah in putting God's name on them. I don't know if that's what this is talking about, but I think when we take upon us the name of Christ, "I will put upon thee my name."
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 41:35 Yeah. Actually there's a great passage in Section 109, dedicatory prayer to the Kirtland Temple. This helps us understand, again, what are temples for. Both President Oaks, then Elder Oaks and Elder Bedner have spoken about this, that the baptism is the start of receiving the name of the Lord. It's pointing ahead to a time where we're going to more fully take upon ourselves, and that's with the temple. And in Section 109 verse 22, part of the prayer is that, "The servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power and that thy name may be upon them."

Again, Abraham was seeking for his temple blessings and that's why the Lord wants temple blessings.

- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 42:23 It's so abundantly clear with the urgency that President Nelson's feeling to make sure that everyone has a chance to receive their endowment, to receive their temple blessings, to be able to be married in the temple, but also to attend as often as possible. Because as we remember what these blessings are, as we perform the work for others vicariously that we are able to receive additional power, that we can go forth from his house armed with his power. That's what the Lord wanted for Abraham, but he wants for every single one of us.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 42:58 I think Abraham, he's the beginning, but he also is a type of what does the Lord want to give each of us, and that's what the restoration's for, is to make that possible.
- Hank Smith: 43:10 I noticed also, Jennifer, it's I want to give you my name and then you have responsibilities to take this to the world. It's not just about you now. Verse 19, "Through thy ministry, my name now shall be known to the earth forever." So Abraham, we're going to use you and your family. We're going to bless everybody.
- John Bytheway: 43:32 I think about what you said. I remember President Oaks, you mentioned he talked about in the sacrament prayer. We say that we are willing to take upon us his name, but it becomes stronger in the temple. I can't remember exactly how he worded it, but I think about a literal way of... My daughter's on a mission in Tahiti right now where she has taken the name of Christ. It's on her name tag. We literally put it on us, and I think that's a fun application, an interesting application of that, to put his name on us and to show the world this is who I stand with, this is who I represent. I love that.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 44:09 That's a great privilege that missionaries have to do that. The rest of us, it's not as visible. We have to live in such a way people can see it, but it is certainly a privilege and it's a privilege that is part of being, to live up to that responsibility to live for him, and that this idea we belong to him, but that also we're becoming like him. As we try to live that out, we can and will be of service to minister, to bless in his name, to do what we do for him.
- John Bytheway: 44:44 There's something I don't want to miss because I think it's so interesting, and that is the Daughters of Onita in verse 11 and 12. I heard one of our previous scholars that we interviewed, Brother S. Michael Wilcox, once talked about the Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and kind of a parallel of their story

with these three females, these Daughters of Onita. Hank, you've said you know the names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the other names they had. I forgot what those were.

- Hank Smith: 45:21 Yeah. They were taken by Babylon and given new names. Maybe there's a symbol in that, too, Jennifer, the idea of Babylon will take us.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 45:30 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 45:30 And give us a new name.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 45:31 Because a name tells you who you are, your identity. Who you let name you does matter.
- Hank Smith: 45:41 Yeah. Babylon takes these three Jewish boys and names them Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but their names were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. I do think there's a parallel here, John, to that Abraham 1:11. These girls, these virgins, were offered up because of their virtue. They refused. They refused to worship other gods.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 46:04 This is powerful, that language right there. Again, it goes back to *hwh* and *abad* in Hebrew, two words get translated, worship, and one is to bow down and the other is to serve. It says here they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or stone. They were killed. This sort of I will worship Jehovah. The putting the Lord first, being true sometimes comes at a cost. The Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, they're rescued. Here, they're not.
- John Bytheway: 46:37 But these are not. Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 46:38 They're not.
- John Bytheway: 46:38 That's like Abinadi. Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego saved from the flames, Abinadi wasn't. These daughters were not. They're heroes for their virtue. Wow. That's a sobering story about those Daughters of Onita. Jennifer, I am so intrigued by this. We get worship from two Hebrew words, to bow down and to serve.
- Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 46:59 Right.
- John Bytheway: 47:00 Can you elaborate?

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 47:02 Absolutely. There's two verbs that are most often translated worship. We see worship when we're reading through, it's either going to be *hava* or *abad*. One of them means to bow down literally and the other is to serve. When we're bowing down, that's going to be service and that relationship we have with God, worshiping and being in the right relationship with him, and then to serve and to bless other people, and also temple work, church work is service, and service is worship. I think it helps us understand more fully.

John Bytheway: 47:40 It's really helpful, because I think when people think of worshiping, they think of doing the... We're not worthy or something, and just... But these are action words. I love that. How do I worship? I acknowledge God, I give reverence, but I go serve people. That's really helpful. Thank you.

Hank Smith: 48:02 Maybe what I give my discretionary time to is my God, because that's what I'm serving. Right? That's a scary thought.

John Bytheway: 48:12 It is.

Hank Smith: 48:12 It's a sobering thought.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 48:14 I think that's a prophetic invitation, and every age is to keep coming back, to turn our hearts, to remember the Lord our God, and to worship him and to put him first, and so it's a blessing.

Hank Smith: 48:26 Give him your time.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 48:27 Exactly.

Hank Smith: 48:27 Yeah. Give him your time.

Dr. Jennifer C. Lane: 48:29 The things we put first, why we pay tithing first, why we have the Sabbath, all the things that we can do to orient our lives to put the Lord first, help us stay and live in a condition and a state of worship, and that's a great blessing.

John Bytheway: 48:47 Please join us for Part II of this podcast.



John Bytheway:	00:00:03	Welcome to Part II of this week's podcast.
Hank Smith:	00:00:07	Okay, so we're going to switch books now to-
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	We're going to go to Genesis.
Dr. Jennifer Lane:	00:00:11	We have the biblical account of Abraham, and what we're going to see here is the articulation of the covenant is spread out over multiple chapters. You're going to see it in Chapter 12. You're going to see it in Chapter 13, Chapter 15 and 17. And of course, we know that these are texts that were compiled later, and so there's one dimension of why things are spread out.
Dr. Jennifer Lane:	00:00:33	But another thing I think can help us make sense is our own experience with the New and Everlasting Covenant, is we make this multiple times. It's extended over time. We have the covenant of baptism. Then we have the covenant of endowment. In fact, I got this great quote from President Harold B. Lee where he taught that the endowment expands the gospel path we started at baptism. He says, "The receiving of the endowment requires the assuming of obligations by covenants which are in reality but an embodiment or an unfolding of the covenants each person should have assumed at baptism."
Dr. Jennifer Lane:	00:01:12	It's a restatement of a covenant, but it's just slowed down and it's more precise. It's more articulated. I love that, that unfolding. It's an unfolding of all of the things we promised in baptism. We're promising again with the covenants we make in the endowment, but they're being expanded. The promise of exultation is even more explicit, of course, in temple marriage. But all of them are kind of implied. If we're faithful, we'll receive all the Father has.
Dr. Jennifer Lane:	00:01:42	One way to think about the statements and the experiences in Chapter 12, Chapter 13, chapter 15, chapter 17 are covenant renewal experiences. In fact, we have covenant renewal experiences every Sunday. Because when we take the sacrament, we're not doing it vicariously, we are covenanting. This is us promising again. And so the fact that the Lord is

restating his promises to Abraham at different points, I think might be part of it is it's different stages of receiving the blessings. Part of it is just a renewal, that it's okay to have a covenant renewal. I think it's helpful to have covenant renewal.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:02:19 So promises we're going to see is, of course, posterity. That's super famous. Right? The stars of the sea, the dust of the earth, countless posterity, a promised land. We're going to see blessings, a relationship. Almost this language of adoption, again, that he's going to take Him to be his God. And all of these blessings are going to have specific fulfillment in mortality, but really important for us is remembering they also point to the eternal blessings of exaltation. So the covenant blessings are the blessings of being able to inherit the Celestial Kingdom to receive exaltation, even though they may have immediate earthly fulfillment as well.

John Bytheway: 00:03:02 You talked about how all of these chapters are continually restating the Abrahamic covenant. I think we usually look at Genesis 12 verses 2 and 3 as here's the Abrahamic covenant. I love that because I think the Lord is into repetition, and we need it. We need repetition. And so we do things again and again, and I'm intrigued with what the Lord wants us to do again and again. But I just love verse 3, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It's about blessing all of the families of the earth.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:03:35 Yeah. So he's going to bless him, but he's going to bless others through him. And I think this is really key when we more fully come into Christ, take upon ourself, his name, means we're going to act the way he would act. We're going to do what he would do, and so we're going to live out that being a blessing to those around us. That it's a covenant obligation to live in the world to be a blessing to other people. And Abraham's doing that and these promises that through him and his posterity.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:04:04 Part of it is also pointing ahead to Christ, that Christ is going to come through his posterity. But also that this is what a covenant life looks like, is living to bless other people.

Hank Smith: 00:04:14 And it's interesting to me, Jennifer, back in Abraham 1, he said, "I want greater happiness, peace and rest." And the Lord gives him children and work and you're like, "Wait, I wanted-"

John Bytheway: 00:04:27 No, no, no, no. You didn't understand the question. That's not what I asked for.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:04:30 Right. And this is another ancient word. I actually have another chapter in my book on this, about the rest of the Lord. It means the presence of the Lord, and the presence of the Lord means having his spirit, and of course, ultimately literally being back in his presence. But-

John Bytheway: 00:04:44 So it doesn't mean napping.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:04:45 It doesn't mean not doing anything. The rest of the Lord is a condition of being busily engaged in blessing other people.

John Bytheway: 00:04:54 Yeah. Maybe we should call the Sabbath a day of rest with that definition. Because when I was a bishop, it was not a day of rest.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:05:01 Definitely, that kind of resting and the Lord is not sitting idle. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:05:07 It's interesting that it's kind of a paradox because the Lord preaches this in the New Testament all the time. If you want to find your life, lose it in service. And probably the two things that exhaust me the most are being a parent and being a Church member. We, "Waste and wear out our lives," as Joseph Smith taught in this. But that really is the source of greater happiness and peace. It really is. And it seems paradoxical, it really does.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:05:36 Yeah. That's what eternal life is. Right? The kind of life that God lives. He's living to bless us. He's living for us. We're just in an apprenticeship stage, where we're practicing serving. We're practicing blessing others and because ... And this is, I think, where the faith comes. This is truly the nature of happiness. Living to serve, living to bless, living holy lives is the right way, is the happy way. But it does take faith when it can be challenging.

Hank Smith: 00:06:06 Yeah. I mean, the natural man or natural woman in this would say, "Happiness is found in less work and less and being alone and not helping others."

John Bytheway: 00:06:20 Sounds exhausting. I remember hearing one time when I was younger about, was it Brigham Young who saw Joseph Smith in the Spirit World and he was super busy or running somewhere? And I thought, are you kidding? I thought, oh man. You mean we're still just busy all the time, even in the next life?

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:06:39 Yeah. And this is why I think it does take faith to make and keep covenants, is trusting that this is a kind of life that is the abundant life, this is the kind of life. And you sort of even a little hint right here in Chapter 5, where Abraham takes his family

and their substance. And then it also says, "He takes the souls that they had gotten in Haran." So he's already inviting people to come in verse 5. He's inviting people to come. He's sharing the good news and that this is a pattern. That's pretty powerful.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:07:17 So in Genesis 12, we get the blessings for Abraham and blessings through Abraham. And then in Genesis 13, if you flip over to 13, that's where we start to see just some other restatement. We see, again, that it is peaceable walk with the children of men that you see in Moroni 7. This is how you can tell you're on the right path off. And this is where Abraham lets Lot choose as they were going together. "Whatever you want. I'll take the other thing." And there's a beautiful quote by Elder Cook about that, about let's be like Abraham, let's not rile people up unnecessarily. Let's eliminate strife.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:07:57 To have peaceful relationships, we should be willing to compromise, eliminate strife with respect to matters that do not involve righteousness. So just let a lot of things go. And so Abraham's showing us how to live peaceably with people.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:10 Yeah. Pick your battles, right?
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:08:12 What really matters, and then to have peace. So we have restatements in 13, we see the life that he's living. He's trying to not have strife and try not to have contention. And then in 14 and 16, so in 14 we see again the promise of land. "So look around, this is the land that I'm giving you." And we also see the promise of posterity, "The dust you seed shall be as the dust of the earth." So we have this covenant renewal, this covenant restatement.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:08:39 Then we flip over to 15 and we're going to see this again. I love this beginning of Chapter 15, where He speaks to him and says, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield." I ... really, to me, this is underappreciated. "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:08:58 So what is it we get by serving the Lord? He's giving us himself. And when we go through the ordinances, we realize we're receiving Christ. We're receiving Christ in the sacrament. We're receiving Christ in baptism. We're receiving Christ. He's giving us himself. And that's part of why we have the courage to keep moving forward, is the closer we grow, the more of him that we receive and we partake of into our life.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:09:22 And then again Chapter 15, we have these restatements, his posterity's compared to the stars. So you can't number them. You're not going to really get number. I think we're getting to a point where he's realizing a chapter after 15 that, "Uh, maybe, I'm not sure if this is really going to happen." The Lord says, "Trust me, you have to trust me. I've given you this promise."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:09:44 And verse 6 I think is, again, is a verse that speaks through the ages and it shows up in multiple places in the New Testament. He believed in the Lord and He, and I think this is the Lord, counted it to Abraham for righteousness. That Abraham's willingness to trust the Lord and his covenant promises kept Abraham going. And there are many of us who have made promises and we don't see the fulfillment right away.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:10:09 My husband and I have never been able to have children. Now, we know that's a blessing, a covenant promise, but it's not going to happen in this life for us. But trusting the Lord and knowing that the covenants are real, even if they're not fulfilled in this immortality, that it's okay now.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:10:24 In Abraham's case, it had to be fulfilled in mortality, because that's where the covenant family was going to come out of. So he had to have confidence in that. But all of Chapter 15 is this really beautiful covenants being redone. Essentially, I think part of it may be just to buck up Abraham and to give him confidence that the Lord has him make this sacrifice.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:10:44 And then in 17 and 18, we see this. And this is, again, ritual action, very common in the ancient Near East, that the sacrifices we would put in half. And then the person who is making the covenant, and usually it's a lesser party making a covenant to a greater party, walks between them to commit themselves, it's sort of like. I think what's implied is, "If I break my covenant, may I be cut in half as these sacrifices have been cut in half."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:11:12 But what you see in verse 17 of Chapter 15 is that the sun goes down, it's dark, and then what do you see? You see these signs of the presence of the Lord, a smoking furnace, a burning lamp passed between the pieces. The Lord himself, Jehovah, is committing himself to Abraham, binding himself to Abraham, saying, "I will not abandon you. I remember the promise I made." And having that confidence that the Lord remembers his promises, it gave Abraham confidence to keep going. And again, you see in chapter, he renews the promise of, again, the land, the posterity.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:11:51 In Chapter 16, things start to get hard. He's like, "Well, let's have a second wife." And they have a baby. And this is a whole interesting, fascinating and complicated chapter where Hagar and Ishmael, but Ishmael's not the child of the covenant. The baby's going to come from Sarah. And so even though there are particular promises given to Ishmael and his descendants, he's not going to be the covenant line.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:12:19 So all that background, you get to Chapter 17. So he's been through years and years, decades of covenant faithfulness, and he's 99. Lord appears to him again, and look at verse 1. It's really interesting. He says, "I am the Almighty God." And then you get this language of covenant faithfulness, walking the path, the covenant path. "Walk before me." And we've talked about this earlier, "Be thou perfect." Better translated, so the footnote is integrity, wholeness. So if we make a mistake, we confess. If we forsake, we get back on the path to stay faithful.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:12:59 So that's the covenant expectation, which is the first time we've really seen this really articulated. I think it's implied all the way along. Again, we see the worship. So Abraham's falling on his face. So again, the bowing down, and he's talking with God. He renews the promise of posterity. "So I will multiply thee exceedingly."
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:13:21 And then He gives him more specifics in 4 and 5. He talks about many nations. In verse 6, he's going to talk about kings. And then, so it's the verse 5 where we do get the name change. So up to this point, we've calling him Abram, but he was Abram. And at this point now he's not going to be known as Abraham, he's going to ... The name change, again, kind of points to that new nature. So "Father of a multitude," it's like, "For real, for sure, you may not believe it. You're 99, but this is who you are. This is who you are, and you just have to believe me." So the Lord's telling you, "You have to believe me, this is who you are. You are the father of a multitude."
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:14:06 And it's also interesting where you see in verse 15 that Sarai has her name changed as well. So again, you're seeing ... And I don't know how the ordinances work exactly for them, but you have these promises that are being really explicit here and that her name is now from Sarai to Sarah, which means, "Princess."
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:14:29 So this posterity, you're seeing rural, relationship land. All of these covenant promises are coming out. And again, I think it's important to note, and this is where President Nelson's talked about, some things can change and other things don't change. The way that covenants are enacted in this ancient world was a

way ... And I know Kerry Muhlestein talked about this, that ritual action is a way of communicating and the Lord is communicating to them and asking them to communicate in a way that makes sense in their cultural world.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:15:02 So in Hebrew, you “Cut a covenant.” That's the verb. People in the ancient world would cut themselves. They might cut their face or their hand to indicate that they'd made this pledge or this covenant. And so here the circumcision enters in, as it's part of the covenant. He uses the term in verse 11. "It should be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." So that there's this external way of indicating, even though it's still private, it's still external.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:15:31 And it's going to be even more public when you get to the Hellenistic era and people are exercising in gymnasiums in the nude and becomes an issue for the Jews in the sort of leading up to the New Testament, but this is ... And it is actually going to stay, going to be part of the law of Moses as well, on the eighth day to circumcise all the little baby boys. And so this becomes, again, this external way of indicating this covenant relationship. So the name and these show up for the first time in 17. So, you have this pattern. Yeah-
- Hank Smith: 00:16:05 And this is part of entering their world, like we talked about earlier.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:16:08 Yeah. Exactly. This would've made perfect sense. This would've been a way that they communicate. Literally, you cut a covenant. That's what you do in the ancient world, and that's their language. The Lord's communicating with them and they're communicating with him in a way that makes sense for them in their cultural context.
- Hank Smith: 00:16:27 I love Sarah's line here, and Abraham's line, "We're going to have a child," and he's saying, "We're going to have a baby." She says, "I'm almost 100 years old. I don't know if changing my name is going to be the solution," but it happens.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:16:43 Yeah. Yeah. And that I think it's just an extraordinary thing. I love, in the New Testament, I don't have this open, but Hebrews 11:11, "Through faith, Sara herself ..." and so I think this is where covenant promises matter, because we can hold onto them. We can trust the Lord. He is true to His word. So, “Through faith, trusting the Lord's word, Sara herself received strength to conceive seed.” So, her trust in the Lord gave her power to do something that would've physically ... Menopause. She's what? She's so old.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:17:18 But she was delivered of a child when she was past age. Why? Because she judged him faithful who had promised. She trusted the Lord and the Lord's promise, and it was more powerful than nature. And nature had probably moved her well beyond, decades before childbearing years. But she had confidence that the Lord was more powerful. And that really, I think, helps us understand why we make covenants and how we keep covenants is we trust the Lord and that we keep moving forward.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:17:54 The Bible gives us and gave not just the Christian world, but all the Muslims, the sense of Abraham is the father of the faithful. The example of Abraham is just extraordinary. And we're just so blessed as Latter-day Saints to have additional scripture to help us appreciate even more power of the covenant, and then also just to have the covenant restored in our day. I don't think we begin to understand how important this is and what a privilege it is, and then, as we've discussed, that the obligations that come with that privilege.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:18:28 And actually, if we flip over to Abraham, go back to the Pearl of Great Price, and so in Abraham Chapter 2, we actually get some of the gospel dimension. So, you see the promises in the Bible; posterity, rule, have a relationship, land. But when you get to Abraham, you see that there's a gospel dimension for the children of Abraham to take the gospel to the world, but also, the flip side is that everyone who accepts the gospel becomes the children of Abraham.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:19:03 And it's hinted at in the New Testament. You get a sense of that with Paul, where he says, "Whoever is baptized into Christ is Abraham's seed and heirs," according to promises that people, you don't have to literally be a descendant Abraham to receive the covenant blessings, but it becomes even more clear with Abraham 2:9-10. Maybe we can look at those a bit together.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:19:30 So, we have the Lord appearing to Abraham, and again, he's introducing himself in verse 7, "I am the Lord thy God; I dwell in heaven; the earth is my footstool." So, he has power. We can trust in Him. He gives his name in 8. "My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning. ... My hand shall be over thee." Then, the promise is, if you look in verse, Abraham 2:9-10, that the promises have this additional gospel dimension, "I will make of thee a great nation." So, we have some of that in the Bible.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:20:00 "I will bless thee above measure." Again, we have that in the Bible. "I will make thy name great among all nations." So, still in

the Bible. So, it's reiterating, restating what the Bible promises are, but look how it goes on. "Thou shall be a blessing unto the seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and this Priesthood unto all nations. And I will bless them through thy name, for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name. ..."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:20:32 This is part of why we call it the Abrahamic covenant, and where we become the seed of Abraham, the heirs of Abraham. "And be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee as their father." As we become the children of Christ, we also become the children of Abraham, that we become heirs of all the blessings that Abraham was promised. And that happens as we invite other people to come into Christ and to make covenants, that everyone is invited to receive all these blessings, and that's what the Restoration's for—the gathering of Israel.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:21:07 Again, President Nelson, just this last [General] Conference, the gathering of Israel is really to fulfill the covenants made to Abraham, and to allow all of God's children to make the same covenants. He says, where it says, "Ponder these truths. The Restoration is a process, not an event, and will continue until the Lord comes again." And then two, "The ultimate objective of the gathering of Israel is to bring the blessings of the temple to God's faithful children."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:21:35 So, we're gathering Israel so that all of the seed of Abraham can receive the blessings of Abraham. But this is President Nelson. He said, "Everything we believe, and every promise God has made to his covenant people, come together in the temple. In every age, the temple has underscored the precious truth, that those who make the covenants with God and keep them are the children of the covenant in the House of the Lord."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:22:02 Again, as we mentioned before, we can make the same covenants with God that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob made, we can receive the same blessings. Then, he emphasizes this is about Christ. It focuses on Christ. "The temple lies at the center of strengthening our faith and spiritual fortitude, because the Savior and his doctrine are the very heart of the temple. Everything taught in the temple, through instruction and through the Spirit, increases our understanding of Jesus Christ. His essential ordinances bind us to him through sacred priesthood covenants. Then, as we keep our covenants, He endows us with His healing, strengthening power."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:22:46 And oh, how we will need His power in the days ahead. The Lord wants to give us help to do what he isn't going to ask us to do. He's not asking us to do it himself. He's telling us, "I will be with thee," and that it's through making, keeping covenants that we allow him to be with us.

Hank Smith: 00:23:01 I remember, as a missionary, we would talk often about the restoration being a Restoration of the New Testament church. The more I learned the more I realized the restoration is New Testament, yes, but it's a restoring of Old Testament covenants.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:23:17 The New and Everlasting.

John Bytheway: 00:23:20 Isn't it fun how often we have quoted President Nelson in taking us back to this covenant consciousness. I heard Robert Millet call it, "We have a lack of covenant consciousness". And I think President Nelson, and since Robert Millet said that many years ago, has really helped us have a covenant consciousness of what that is and what it means.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:23:40 And it's so deeply rooted. The more we have that, the more we're going to get out of all of the Old Testament, all the New Testament, Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, because this is the Lord's way. This is how he works with us, this is how he connects to us, how he brings us home. This is the plan, this is the gospel.

John Bytheway: 00:23:57 Yeah. So, the prophet, Joseph Smith said, "What was the object of gathering the people of God in any age of the world? The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby he could reveal unto his people the ordinances of his house, and the glorious of his kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation." So, the idea of, why do we gather, well, ultimately to bless all the families of the earth. The best thing we can offer the families of the earth, what the Lord offers is, be sealed together in the temple.

Hank Smith: 00:24:29 Jennifer, I wanted to ask you something that you mentioned earlier, and when you talked about here's Sarah and Hagar and Ishmael, and you said things get real and difficult. So, I think that's got to be part of this story is, okay, covenant, you're going to be with God, and all these wonderful blessings are going to be part of this, but even with the originals, Abraham and Sarah, things got difficult and messy and human.

Hank Smith: 00:24:59 How might our listeners ... I don't know if this is helpful or not. It might be, "Well, I already knew this, Hank. I already knew things

were difficult," but we shouldn't expect, with our covenants, easy, right? I think that's got to be part of what I'm learning as I read through Genesis 12-17, there's all these great blessings, but it was this whole situation with Hagar and Ishmael, this is difficult stuff.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:25:24 And it's going to get even harder later on where Ishmael and Hagar are essentially banished. So, I think there's a couple of dimensions that may be part of it is that we're on a path to becoming Godly, but we're human, and so we have fears and jealousies and resentments and anxiety and all of these things that make life together harder. I just imagine, because we're looking at plural marriage situation here with Chapter 16, and I had ancestors that were willing to do that, but that it had to have been difficult to share your spouse.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:26:10 Then, here you have it built into that, the sense of, there's a covenant promise and a covenant line. Because Sarah's the one who proposes it, right? She, back in 16 verse 2, she says, "I haven't been able to have children. Let's try this. So, let's have you and Hagar have children." And Abraham listens to Sarah. And I think there's going to be a wellspring of complicated emotions that are involved in-

Hank Smith: 00:26:39 Well put.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:26:41 ... Just can't even imagine what's going on inside of all of them trying to do the right thing. And even if you go back to Chapter 15 where Abraham's, "Well, I know I'm supposed to have posterity, but maybe my steward's going to be my heir." And the Lord's, "No. Nope, that's not it." Then, they're, "Well, maybe Hagar's child's going to be ..." and the Lord's, "No, no, that's not it," and, "Now, try this. No, we're gonna try that. No."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:27:06 And I think the fact there's a trial and error dimension, okay, the third time, this is the right one, you two, you are the ones who are going to literally bear, in your old age, this covenant child. You're going to be Isaac's parents. And that's a promise in 17, 18, "Sarah, my wife shall bear thee a son indeed. And thou shall call his name, Isaac. And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant seed with him."

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:27:34 But by the time they get to this, it'd gone through decades of complication and anxiety, trial and error of different ways of getting to the result. And the Lord finally says, "No, this is how it's going to happen." But I think it's clear from 15 and 16 that they're trying to figure out, well, how is this going to happen, that in the process of just the human dynamics of how does it

feel to think your steward's going to be your heir, but then no, he's not going to be your heir, and then you take another wife and have a child, but no, that's not going to be ...

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:28:09 Just a lot of complicated, sad, and sometimes, perhaps, even disturbing ... Then, I think where faith comes in is just trusting the Lord, even though we go through maybe years, maybe decades of not understanding the faith to keep going and the faith to trust that His promises are assured, but we don't necessarily know when they're going to be fulfilled or how they're going to be fulfilled. And we don't have to know that because we know Him. We know He loves us, and that that can bring us comfort and peace even when we don't have answers.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:46 Yeah. Because as we look back on Abraham's life, we can see the whole picture, where in the middle of it, they couldn't see it.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:28:52 He had to go through his life, like we go through our lives. And he didn't have the answers. He just kept going. And that's what I think what the Lord expects of us is just to keep going.
- John Bytheway: 00:29:02 Just the irony of, hey, you're going to be the father of many nations. Okay, take your son and go ... What? Talk about a test of trusting.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:13 I think that I like that a lot, Jennifer. I just think those listening are going to say, "This sounds so perfect. I'm gonna take my covenants and I'm gonna have all these blessings and I'm gonna bless the earth and the Lord's gonna be my reward," but that comes in time.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:29:29 Yeah. It didn't take away from Abraham and Sarah, and it doesn't take away from us years and decades of just keeping going and, I think, holding on, and trying to be faithful to the covenants we've made even though we may not have the answers or may not see the blessings that faith and the trust that keeps us going knowing the Lord loves us. And you just have to, during the darkest moments, to go back and say, "You promised you'd be there for me, and I need to know that." And that personal relationship with the Lord is going to be the answer when he's not necessarily in a position to give us other answers other than to say, "I'm with thee."
- Hank Smith: 00:30:19 Yeah. And like Genesis 15:6, "And Abraham believed." And the Lord saw that, right? The Lord counted that to him for righteousness. He's, "I will remember that." I remember President Monson telling a story once about a man who gives

up a career to go on a mission, a long time ago. And the man wrote in his journal, "The greatest decision I ever made in my life was to give up something I loved to the God I loved even more. He has never forgotten me for it." And that's this idea of, the Lord's not going to take away life, but when we keep believing, the Lord remembers that.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:31:01 He does, he does. And that's part of it, the covenant that gives us the confidence to trust Him because we have this real relationship, because we have become the children of the covenant. So, we know our Heavenly Father loves us, but also, we've created this covenant relationship with our Savior, so that he's our spiritual father as well. And we know that he's bound to us, and if we look to him, he will deliver us. And the way that deliverance is going to look is, it's individual, it's personal, but that he has promised that he ... That's what it means to be a Kinsman-Redeemer. And that's who he is to us individually because of the covenants we've made.
- John Bytheway: 00:31:48 Thank you for bringing that full circle, Kinsman-Redeemer, how we started. I want to read more about that. Do you have more about the Kinsman-Redeemer?
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:31:58 I've got multiple articles, but the volume has a summary for a general audience.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:32:03 The volume has a summary for a general audience. But religious studies, if you want in-depth articles, lots of things online.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:08 Yes.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:32:08 A lot of available-
- John Bytheway: 00:32:11 It just helps to know the redeemer was an idea that they already knew about being bought back from slavery and so forth. That's really interesting.
- Hank Smith: 00:32:20 I can hear a listener at home saying, "Okay, I get it." Why does it have to be so hard? Right? Why does it have to be so hard? For Abraham, even for the originals here that we're talking about, the Lord is going to constantly say, "Look to your fathers. Look to your fathers." And when we look at our fathers, it was hard for them.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:32:38 Right, and this is outside of our reading and I know you touched on the sacrifice that Abraham was asked to make. You'll get to it with a different podcast, but I think this idea of having to decide

actually came twice for Abraham because he had to give up Ishmael and then he had to be willing to give up Isaac. Going back to the idea of worship and what we love the most. If the Lord put all his trust in the existence of Abraham, then he would never have been willing. That wasn't the source of his confidence. The source of his confidence was in the Lord's promise. Again, there's this beautiful discussion in Hebrews where it talks about what gave Abraham the courage to do that. This is Hebrews 11:17. "By faith..." Again, he's trusting the Lord's promise. "By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac. He that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son of whom it was said, in Isaac, shall I see be called." He knew, if he gave up Isaac, it's all off. He's not going to have his promise. But he knew the promise was sure.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:33:48 Verse 19, "Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead. ..." His confidence in the Lord's promise and the Lord's power was so strong he was willing to be obedient because he knew that the Lord had promised, in Isaac, thy seed shall be called, and so he's like, "Well, the Lord's not going to back down. He's not going to take Isaac away permanently." I think this is a little insight in the Book of Hebrews, is how deep the faith was of Abraham, that he was willing to obey. I think the Lord, when he asks us to obey, he wants to see if we trust him. That always goes back to faith.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:30 Yeah, my faith isn't in an outcome. My faith is in the Lord.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:34:36 We talk about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego that said, "Nevertheless, maybe we're not going to be saved." Right?
- Hank Smith: 00:34:43 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:34:45 They were willing to do what they needed to do.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:47 Yeah. What is it? Our Lord is able to save us, *but if not*, we will still not, yeah, worship the idols.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:55 There has to be something, and both of you can speak to this. There has to be something about the difficulty of human life that prepares us. Right? I don't think the Lord just says, "Well, I'm going to let you suffer for a little while just because." All of this figuring out, all of this... What did you call it? You said this wellspring of emotion.
- Hank Smith: 00:35:17 Complicated emotions.

John Bytheway: 00:35:20 Yeah. Wellspring of complicated emotions. That has to be good for us in the long run, right?

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:35:25 It's part of a learning process we know Christ himself went through where he talked about him learning obedience by the things he suffered. Christ is learning to be obedient to the father, and if we want to become like him, we have to be willing to be obedient. Obedience takes faith, and so Christ was so faithful he was willing to be obedient to the Father even to the point of where he gets the point where he's like, "Maybe I don't want to do what you want me to do." But then he says, "No, no. I do. I do. I really do and I'm willing to- "

Hank Smith: 00:36:00 I do. Yeah.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:36:02 That's the kind of... If Abraham, again, is pointing us to Christ, and so to be becoming like Abraham, to be willing to be obedient like Abraham, is trying to become obedient like Christ and have the faith in Christ like Christ had faith in the Father. This, for me, I think is one of my favorite passages in the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 26. Because how do we know, how can we trust God? This is Nephi where he says the witness he had, and I felt this witness in hard times as well, "I say unto the Lord God, worketh not in darkness." Verse 23, 24, "He doth not do anything, save it be for the benefit of the world." Now, it doesn't mean that he causes things to happen. Sometimes we get confused and we think, "Bad things happen, God hates me." Well, he's not causing things to happen. There's this beautiful talk by President Kimball where President Kimball essentially says, "We don't know why bad things happen." We're not promised that God's controlling everything that's happening, but he promises that he can consecrate things for our gain. He can have things work together for our gain. He doesn't mean he's making the bad things happen to him.

Hank Smith: 00:37:17 Is it the one "Death, Tragedy, or Destiny?"

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:37:21 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:37:21 President Kimball's talk... Yeah. Keep going.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:37:24 No, but it is, it's... We get confused and think that God's making everything happen. But part is interesting that 2 Nephi 2, where Lehi's promising Jacob, he says, "All things will work together for good. They'd be consecrated for thy good." The Lord can help things be consecrated for good doesn't mean he necessarily makes them happen. But part of it is trusting enough

to know that when he does ask us to do something, even if it seems counterintuitive or it seems hard or says, "Well, I don't think that's what's going to make me happy. I think I should live this way and that's going to make me happy." And the Lord says, "No. These are my commandments. These are the laws and expectations of holiness." To trust that holiness is happiness, to trust that following the Lord's way is the path of happiness can take a lot of faith. I think understanding his nature, that's why everything... I think why Abraham was able to do what Abraham did, because Abraham had come through... We talk about, "Why does it have to be so hard?" It's the survivors of the Martin Handcart Company, when they said, "In our extremities we've come to know him."

- John Bytheway: 00:38:41 Yeah. We became acquainted with God in our... Yeah. Yeah, President Hinkley loved to tell that story about the Church meeting somewhere in Southern Utah where there was some criticism letting the Saints leave so late. A man stood up in the back and said, "I was there, I was in that company, and the price we paid was worth it because we became acquainted with God in our extremities." Andrew Olsen wrote a book called *The Price We Paid*. It's one of the most gratitude-inducing, I'll never complain again type books I've ever read. You said it over and over again today, Dr. Lane, about trusting the Lord and then trusting his timing.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:39:26 Abraham shows us that. He definitely does.
- Hank Smith: 00:39:29 I see the opposite in Lot, who faces his tent towards Sodom.
- John Bytheway: 00:39:35 Right.
- Hank Smith: 00:39:35 Right? He's not too interested in the Lord. Genesis 13:12, Lot says, "Oh, I'll go over here." Then I noticed in the next chapter, so that's chapter 13, verse 12, he's facing Sodom, and then in chapter 14, verse 12, Lot lives in Sodom. It didn't take too long. It didn't take too long from facing Sodom to go and just move on in. That makes me nervous, that if I-
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:39:59 It should. All of us.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:01 Yeah. That I face my tent away from the Lord I might end up just packing and moving into the world.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:40:06 I think this is part of why... We've heard this certainly with President Hunter and then President Nelson's reiterated it, to worship in the temple as often as circumstances allow, that it

actually... It's the flip side of what happens when you're facing your tent towards Sodom, you become more comfortable, and you want to go there. The more time we spend worshipping the Lord, the more time we spend facing in our daily lives as well with reading the Book of Mormon every day, praying morning and night, doing whatever we can to be faithful to our covenant so we face towards the Lord, we're bowing down, we're serving, that we want to move there. We want to go there.

- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:40:52 Whatever we spend time with is going to change us. These are sobering. They should be. I think their stories are supposed to be sobering and they're there for a reason because we can easily switch. Any of us can get off track. It's important just on these daily practices and the regular temple attends, regular scripture study are there because they orient us to what's real. They keep us connected to God.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:22 Yeah, and if your faith is in outcomes and you don't get your outcome-
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:41:25 You just walk. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:28 Yeah. I'll go somewhere else for my happiness, where the Lord... Abraham. What did you say? He has faith in the Lord. Not necessarily in Isaac or in any of the efforts he's tried to make. I like this story because it's so human. It's so complicated. I'm going to remember that forever. A wellspring of complicated emotions.
- John Bytheway: 00:41:54 A wellspring of complicated emotions.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:58 That's got to be... That's a great just a title for people. How are you doing today? It's a wellspring of complicated emotions. Right?
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:42:07 A lot of mortality. Yeah. Yep.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:09 Yeah. When people say, "Why does it have to be so hard?" I don't know. I don't know why it has to be so hard, but there is something about the process that changes you.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:42:22 For me, Abraham just gives me a vision for the kind of life that I want to live, to keep seeking for what's real and to stay oriented to the Lord because alternate visions of mortality that are presented are so abundant that the covenant path is a source of stability and peace. It doesn't mean complications aren't real. It just means that we know we're going to some place, that

there's a meaning to the journey and that we actually can get there through Christ with his help. He's there to reach out and to lead us along. He's promised that, that he will lead us along. When we stay close to him and we try to take his hand and walk with him, then we can have the help we need to get through those hard years and maybe sometimes hard decades.

- Hank Smith: 00:43:20 Yeah. What did he say to Joseph Smith? "The Son of Man has descended below them all." I'm doing this, too. What did Isaiah call him? "A man of sorrows, well acquainted with grief."
- John Bytheway: 00:43:31 "We hid our faces from him." Imagine what that feels like. "He was despised, rejected..." Yeah. I think a simple answer, maybe too simple, sometimes that we give to our kids is, "Hey, you always learn more from your hard times than from your easy times." Maybe the Lord loves you too much to let your life be easy, but I also think that when I've learned so much more and been blessed so much more by people that I know that have had hard times who have blessed me with their faith than somebody, "I've never really been through anything hard." But when I know somebody who's been through a lot, a little bit of "Same Boat Therapy," that, wow, we went through that. We went through that. Let me tell you what we did and how we did that, and we can say this is how we survived that, and then we become a blessing to each other and that's worshipping because we're serving each other.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:44:27 We all need each other now when we're doing... That's why the Lord has a church, that we're here together. We're journeying together. Even in an endowment ceremony we go through as a company, we need each other to make the journey, that the Lord is going to be there with us, he'll lead us along boat, but I think we can... Our faith, we can strengthen each other, and that's a blessing. There's a privilege. When we do see somebody who's gone through so much and yet has faith, it's a privilege to hear their witness.
- John Bytheway: 00:45:00 Yeah. The Lord, I think, puts them in our way sometimes. In our path, I mean, so that-
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:45:05 Definitely.
- John Bytheway: 00:45:06 ... they can bless us. When you meet somebody who's never had a trial in their life, they're not going to help you much.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:45:10 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:45:12 No, everything's been easy. Never had a trial. Oh, okay, well I'd like to visit with someone else who can help me through this problem.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:45:17 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:45:17 Yeah. I want to make sure that any listening doesn't feel like Sarah is like a side character to Abraham. Couldn't you call this the Abrahamic-Sarah covenant? She's going through all of this as well.

John Bytheway: 00:45:34 I love that you pointed out she has her name changed. This is something that happened to them together as a couple that they went through together. I love that.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:45:43 I think that's partly why I think it's helpful to actually use the word... There's nothing wrong with Abrahamic covenant. It's amazing. But the New and Everlasting Covenant is really what it is, and this is why I'm so grateful for President Nelson and the clarity that we have today that this isn't something that's, well, Abraham was the one who had priesthood office, and so this is all about him. No, the both of them had this covenant promise together and the Lord wants to make covenants with his sons and his daughters. Seeing them and their covenant and their faithfulness to their covenant, and again, that Hebrews passage is she had that confidence, she had the faith that allowed the Lord to work in her life and to do something that she could not have done. That capacity that we need to get power, and that's precisely what the Restoration is for.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:46:42 Again, President Nelson, every woman and every man who makes covenant with God and keeps those covenants, who participates worthily in priesthood ordinances has direct access to the power of God. I think as we increasingly, as President Nelson's taught us to do, put our emphasis on the blessings of the priesthood in the endowment, that we're just beginning to understand the gift that we're being given. We know we're baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and we know we go through the temple and we receive the endowment, but I think we're just beginning to understand what the Lord wants to give us.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:47:16 Abraham and his story and Sarah and her story, that the two of them and their willingness to start a new life together points us to the kind of new life that we're receiving through Christ. He wants to give us a better life. He wants to give us his kind of life, and that is... It's absolutely universal, and that it's for women and for men, so to not feel as though there's something

different or special about Abraham when this is something that the Lord wants to do for each and every one of us.

- Hank Smith: 00:47:49 Excellent. Absolutely excellent.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:52 Dr. Lane, can you talk about people that identify with Abraham, because many religious traditions do?
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:47:59 Absolutely. Yes. Abraham is known as the father of the faithful, and so...
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:48:03 Yes. Abraham is known as the father of the faithful. And so we look at Judaism and then of course, Christianity and Islam. So all of the faith traditions that look back to the Bible, look back to the prophets revere Abraham. He is an example of faithfulness. As a term, the Abrahamic faith traditions, that those coming out of... That is going to be so important in the Western tradition, of course there are other wonderful religious traditions throughout the world. And we know from the First Presidency statement that they were also religious leaders that were inspired of God.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:48:40 But, the influence that Abraham has had on... Really, is a founding figure. For the Muslims, of course they see the covenant going in a different direction. They look at Ishmael, but they still look back to Abraham and they see the example. And Abraham has seen... The term Islam actually means to bow. Again, bow down, to submit. And so Abraham is seen as the model for true worship.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:49:08 I think as we can look at Abraham and say, "He is a model of true worship, of true obedience, and true faithfulness," that so many millions and millions of our brothers and sisters in Islam look to Abraham. And they... In fact, part of the worship is tied to following the example of Muhammad, who's also understood as a follower of God, but they go back to Abraham who is seen as an archetype of a human being, and walking in the way of the Lord.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:49:39 And so I think this idea of following God, walking in his way, isn't unique to Christianity, that within Judaism and Islam, Abraham really has set a model for how to walk away from the world, how to walk towards God. And I think that that resonates with people of faith throughout the world, even those who aren't in Islamic faith, traditions. The idea that there's a right way to walk, there's a right way to be in the world, and so the discipleship is choosing to walk the way Abraham walked,

choosing to bow down to serve, to worship God, people who feel something calling to them, that Abraham exemplifies that, and he models it for us.

- John Bytheway: 00:50:25 Yeah. So, the three Abrahamic faiths would be Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:50:31 Yes, absolutely.
- John Bytheway: 00:50:32 Amazing, which is so much of the planet.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:50:36 Amazing heritage that the blessings, that people would remember his name, that happened.
- John Bytheway: 00:50:44 That's part of the covenant. Yeah. And it happened.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:50:46 Yes. And bless the earth. Exactly, that so many people live better lives because of following this example.
- John Bytheway: 00:50:55 Yeah. Wow. I don't know, Hank, I'm kind of having a wellspring of complicated emotions.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:01 Yes. I will be using that for a long time.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:51:04 I'm glad to try and articulate what we all deal with from time to time.
- John Bytheway: 00:51:12 I want to see an illustration of that, just blah, this fountain of... Oh.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:18 The other thing that made me laugh is that he says, "I want greater happiness, peace, and rest. And the Lord is like, "Okay, so here's a bunch of problems."
- John Bytheway: 00:51:25 Yeah. That's great, Hank. That's a great insight. Wait, wait, wait. That's not what I asked for.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:30 That's not what I wanted.
- John Bytheway: 00:51:31 It was like Joseph Smith, "All I wanted to know was what church to join." I said, "Hurry, I'm in Liberty jail."
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:51:38 Did I sign up for this? Right.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:40 Yeah. That reminds me of... John, we have our friend, Meg Johnson, who's in a wheelchair. And she was in an accident when she was in her early twenties and is in a wheelchair. And

she said in a dream, she kind of saw herself in the premortal life. And they were explaining how difficult it was going to be. And her spirit, she said, "Oh, okay. Oh, okay. All right. All right." And then, her now saying, "You naive little spirit." I signed up for this? Did I really sign up for this?

- John Bytheway: 00:52:13 Yeah. Well, it's like Elder Maxwell talked about, in the Book of Job, it says, "When the sons of God shouted for joy," and he said, "Now that we're here, we're wondering what all the shouting was about."
- Hank Smith: 00:52:24 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:52:27 Definitely the long term view to-
- John Bytheway: 00:52:29 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:52:30 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:52:30 Yeah. That's it.
- Hank Smith: 00:52:33 Dr. Lane, this has been fantastic. Really. I've learned so much. And I thought I knew a lot. But coming, now I feel like, wow, I'm looking at these chapters differently than I ever have. I think our listeners would be interested in your journey personally and professionally. Here you are a biblical scholar and a faithful Latter-day Saint. I think our listeners would say, "Yeah, Hank, ask her about that journey." What's that been like?
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:53:06 Sure. Well, actually I started out a little bit with it because of my own studies. So, I got back from my mission and I was studying history. And I honestly was thinking of going in and being a history professor, because I love the human experience and trying to understand it. But I kept drawing, being drawn more and more towards scripture study. But what's been fascinating for me is that the more educated I become, the more in depth I research, that the better I understand the gospel, so in the process, again, I graduated with University Honors, which meant I had to write an Honors Thesis. Well, it's in the process of writing the Honors Thesis that I made the connections between redemption and covenant, and that scholarship continued my Master's thesis, looking at the relationship between covenant and redemption in the writings of Paul.
- Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:54:05 And then as I went on to get a PhD, my field is history of Christianity, I guess kind of moving more and more towards the early Christian era. And what was the meaning of Baptism?

What was the meaning of the ordinances for the early Christians that are growing out of my Master's thesis? And it was interesting, the work I did with the history of Christianity, a lot of people do get nervous. They say, "Oh, you're going on for a PhD." I even got the question when I was working on my PhD, isn't that shaking your testimony? I say, "No, I appreciate the Restoration even more," because being a student of the history of Christianity, I know that there are people of faith in many religious traditions, and throughout Christian history, amazing people.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:54:49 But the clarity and the answers that came to Joseph Smith, the additional light and knowledge we have with the Restoration, I just appreciate what the covenant is, the Restoration of the covenant, Restoration of priesthood blessings, because I can see what it looks like to be taking the Bible and trying to make sense of it yourself. And all these different traditions and people are so... They're good people. Even in the early period where they're just trying to figure things out. But just the difference between having prophets and apostles who are authorized representatives of the Lord, and the kind of clarity that comes, I think sometimes people think that because we have revelation, we should have all the answers. And that's not the way the Lord works. He wants us to use our mind. We learn by study and by faith.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:55:40 Elder Maxwell wrote some wonderful things about this, that the vast majority of things we learn, we learn through our own study, and the faith is just to keep studying to find answers. But the things that matter the most, the things that have to do with Jesus Christ, the Plan of Redemption, those are the things that only the Lord can reveal to us. And so seeing how the Lord sends prophets and the Lord sends apostles, and then when there are prophets and apostles, the Lord sends angels. And so looking for revelation and seeing how revelation comes, and then what do you do with that revelation? That's what matters.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:56:19 But again, in my own studies, I just appreciate and I'm so grateful. I had not a sense of competition at all. I love people of faith in so many religious traditions and I'm so grateful for them, that they're living up to the light they have, is extraordinary. And that's going to take them back, because people are faithful, the light they have, they're going to be willing to receive more and more light. The question is, what am I doing with the light I have? Because of the Restoration, I know that what I've been given isn't just more truth. But that, again, we've been talking about covenant, and covenant is power.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:56:52 And that's something I came to know for myself even before I went on a mission. The way I've come to understand analysis and close reading of the scriptures, even before my mission, I began to understand that taking upon oneself, the name of Christ through Baptism, just by reading it over and over again, 2 Nephi 31, trying to memorize some of those passages, that just the clarity of what the baptismal covenant is, that learning, true learning, I think brings close reading. It brings good thinking.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:57:29 And so when you understand, okay, any assumptions you start with, you're going to logically follow out from that and come to conclusions. And so it really matters what assumptions you start with. What are the premises you're working from? And nobody can give that to you. You have to know for yourself. So having lived experience that there is a God, that he loves me, he loves all his children, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he's the Savior of the world, nobody can give you that, that those as a witness, you have to come to yourself. But when you know that, then what follows from that, it follows, that God loves us, that Jesus Christ suffered and died for us, that God called his servant, Joseph Smith to restore priesthood covenants and blessings again on the earth. And that brought forth his word through the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:58:25 And when you know that through personal experience, each of those things are true, then it doesn't mean you have answers to everything. But for me, I found that I know what matters, which is getting on the path, staying on the path, keeping the relationship with the Lord. And so anything that I learn about things that are complicated, things are complicated. It's mortality, and it's okay. I don't have the answers, that's okay, because I know the Lord loves me. And I know that his promises are sure. And so I don't have to... The prophets don't have to have done everything right, or said everything right, because they're human beings. My confidence isn't in them. My confidence is in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:59:06 And he's working with them. He's working with me. We're going to be fine. As long as we just are true to him and the covenants we've made, he'll get us there. That's what I've come to know, and everything I study deepens my conviction, that that's real, and deepens my appreciation for the privilege of being part of his work in our day.

Hank Smith: 00:59:31 I don't have a wellspring of complicated emotions right now. I'm just grateful I was here. That's all that's coming right now, is just grateful I was here, and able to learn from you.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 00:59:41 Oh, we're all learning it. And that's the great thing. Everything I study and then dig deeper, it's like more insight, more understanding. The gospel is so deep and so rich. The scriptures are just never ending because we can just keep coming to know the Lord and how to walk in his ways, and appreciating, how do we do that amidst all the other things we may not understand? And we've got a lot of people in the scriptures that have walked that path.

Hank Smith: 01:00:16 I love it. I absolutely love it.

John Bytheway: 01:00:18 Me too. I've got it. So if I go to the Religious Study Center and I search for Kinsman-Redeemer....

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 01:00:28 Yeah. You can actually, if you Google Jennifer C. Lane, there's a list of all my publications with the Religious Study Center.

John Bytheway: 01:00:34 And you've got one with that title? Okay.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 01:00:36 Yeah. There's Adoptive Redemption. Yeah. There's many. There's several articles that are on that theme.

John Bytheway: 01:00:46 In one of my Book of Mormon classes, I talk about, what's your favorite name for the plan of salvation, and everybody, "Oh, plan of happiness." They all love that and everything. But when we look at the Book of Mormon, the one that is, I think it's 15 times, is the plan of redemption. It's much more common than the plan of salvation in the Book of Mormon. And when we look at who used the term, it was Alma, the sons of Mosiah who knew they needed to be redeemed. I just love that insight into the... And so I like to call it the plan of redemption, because that's what the Book of Mormon calls it. And I recognize a need. I need a Redeemer. And so you talking about that was just a blessing to me today. I thought, oh, this is so good. I've got to research this some more.

Dr. Jennifer Lane: 01:01:32 It's powerful. And again, the more we understand the Bible, the more we're going to understand all of scripture, because redemption, the theme of redemption, understanding that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, the price he paid for us, that pattern of buying out of bondage, and why he does it, because of his covenant relationship with us, we were the children of the covenant, and he's our Kinsman-Redeemer, that, it goes throughout scripture. And the more we understand, the more confidence we have in him and his relationship to us.

John Bytheway:	01:02:02	We had a sister in our ward who gave an entire Sacrament meeting talk on two words of Abinadi: "Redemption cometh." This great talk on just that redemption cometh. It was so good. Thank you.
Dr. Jennifer Lane:	01:02:18	It's so deep. You can go deep because there's so much depth, there's so much depth.
Hank Smith:	01:02:26	Awesome. Awesome. We want to thank Dr. Jennifer Lane for being here today. We want to thank all of you for listening. We need to thank Steve and Shannon Sorensen, our executive producers, our sponsors, David, and Verla Sorensen. We love you. And we hope all of you will join us on our next episode of followHIM.
Hank Smith:	01:02:48	Hey, we want to remind everybody that you can find us on social media. Come find us on Facebook and Instagram. We would love it if you would subscribe to, rate, and review the podcast, share it with your friends. That would be awesome. Go to followhim.co , followhim.co for any show notes, transcripts, any references you want. If you are feeling up to it, you can read the transcript in French, Portuguese, and Spanish. So all of that is available to you absolutely free. Go to followHIM.co to find all of that.