



“Remember This Day, in Which Ye Came Out from Egypt”

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:

What is pericope, and why is Exodus 7-13 referred to as such? Dr. Andrew Skinner instructs how the Exodus from Egypt reverberates throughout all of scripture. He relates how Jehovah has the power to bring about his miracles, his purposes, and deliver his people.

Part 2:

Dr. Skinner returns to discuss the plagues that afflict Egypt, their purposes and symbolic nature, and how they remind the Israelites about God's love for his children.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Genesis 37-41– Part 1–Dr. Anthony Skinner
- 01:03 Introduction of Dr. Andrew Skinner
- 04:08 Exodus as pericope
- 06:09 The Passover is performed by Jesus Christ
- 07:39 Exodus 12 points towards the Atonement of Jesus Christ
- 09:12 The Sacrament provides a springboard for weekly devotions
- 10:53 Exodus 5 for background information
- 13:23 Look for Jesus Christ in these stories
- 17:29 The Lord remembers his covenant and will return them to their land
- 19:15 Genesis is a family history and the Passover requires Jews to consider themselves part of the Israelites who came out of Egyptian bondage
- 22:22 Four aspects of redemption that are commemorated during the Passover
- 26:00 Moses and “uncircumcised lips”
- 31:34 John shares the story of a convert who couldn't read
- 35:52 Dr. Skinner shares story of his family being in Israel without him
- 39:16 Why Moses was chosen by the Lord–Moses' parents listed
- 43:38 The Lord being with us is what gives us strength
- 44:56 The rod of Moses and Aaron
- 48:31 The importance of serpents in the ancient Near East
- 54:22 The ten plagues and Pharaoh hardens his own heart
- 57:25 Anubis and scene of judgment
- 1:02:12 End of Part I

Part 2

- 00:00 Genesis 37-41-- Part II–Dr. Anthony Skinner
- 00:27 Lord gives Pharaoh choice
- 1:31 The first nine plagues can be broken down into three groups
- 04:07 Power over the Nile is power over life and death
- 07:18 Why the frogs?
- 10:13 Magicians can't replicate the plague of lice (beetles)
- 15:48 Fifth plague centers on the sacred bull

- 19:40 The plague of hail demonstrates Jehovah's power over life
- 20:30 Locusts and grasshoppers and the meaning of the East Wind
- 23:56 The final plague
- 26:42 Firstborn sons are saved by covenant
- 30:41 The Passover and redemption
- 32:54 New theology established around the Lamb of God
- 37:25 Jesus Christ requires a broken heart and a contrite spirit
- 40:04 Blood on the doorposts represents the Atonement
- 44:00 Doctrine and Covenants 69 teaches to remember
- 47:39 Phylacteries exist to remember the Exodus
- 51:33 We may want to return to Egypt
- 56:18 The Hebrew Bible is the first testimony of Jesus Christ
- 58:18 Dr. Andrew Skinner shares his testimony of Jesus Christ
- 1:04:54 End of Part II

References:

2022. *Abn. Church of Jesus Christ. Org.* <https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-of-presidents-of-the-church-howard-w-hunter/chapter-15-the-sacrament-of-the-lords-supper?lang=eng>.
2022. *Abn. Church of Jesus Christ. Org.* <https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/come-follow-me-for-individuals-and-families-old-testament-2022/15?lang=eng>.
2022. *Abn. Church of Jesus Christ. Org.* https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1990/02/the-exodus-seeing-it-as-a-test-a-testimony-and-a-type?lang=eng&adobe_mc_ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchofjesuschrist.org%2Fstudy%2Fensign%2F1990%2F02%2Fthe-exodus-seeing-it-as-a-test-a-testimony-and-a-type%3Flang%3Deng&adobe_mc_sdId=SDID%3D556787746CE6CFEB-727AEF9A23B17FAF%7CMCORGID%3D66C5485451E56AAE0A490D45%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1648170058.

2022. *Outofthedust.Org*. <http://www.outofthedust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/exodus-to-kadesh-barnea-scaled.bmp>.
- Harrison, R. K. 2022. *Amazon.Com*. https://www.amazon.com/New-Ungers-Bible-Dictionary/dp/0802490662/ref=sr_1_2?qid=1648228266&refinements=p_55%3AR.K.+Harrison&s=books&sr=1-2.
- Holland, Jeffrey R. 2022. *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*. https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1995/10/this-do-in-remembrance-of-me?lang=eng&adobe_mc_ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.churchofjesuschrist.org%2Fstudy%2Fgeneral-conference%2F1995%2F10%2Fthis-do-in-remembrance-of-me%3Flang%3Deng&adobe_mc_sdid=SDID%3D0319767350B35879-3AE3F20DD3FF961E%7CMCORGID%3D66C5485451E56AAE0A490D45%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1648171310.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. *Outofthedust.Org*. <http://www.outofthedust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/exodus.pdf>.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. *Outofthedust.Org*. <http://www.outofthedust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/exodus.pdf>.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. *Outofthedust.Org*. <http://www.outofthedust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/moses.pdf>.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. *Outofthedust.Org*. <http://www.outofthedust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/passover.pdf>.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. "Recognizing The Everlasting Covenant In The Scriptures". *BYU Scholarsarchive*. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/4487/>.
- Muhlestein, Kerry. 2022. "Symbolic Action: A Key To Understanding The Old Testament | Meridian Magazine". *Meridian Magazine | Latter-Day Saint News And Views*. <https://latterdaysaintmag.com/article-1-14330/>.
- Ringwood, Michael T. 2022. *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*. <https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/come-follow-me-for-individuals-and-families-old-testament-2022/14?lang=eng>.
- Skinner, Andrew. 2022. "Cain And Abel (Genesis 4 And Moses 5) | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*. <https://rsc.byu.edu/creation-sinai/cain-abel-genesis-4-moses-5>.
- Skinner, Andrew. 2022. "Early Israel In Canaan | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*. <https://rsc.byu.edu/bible-readers-history-ancient-world/early-israel-canaan>.
- Skinner, Andrew. 2022. "Seeing God In His Temple: A Significant Theme In Israel'S Psalms | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*. <https://rsc.byu.edu/ascending-mountain-lord/seeing-god-his-temple-significant-theme-israels-psalms>.
- Skinner, Andrew. 2022. "The Promise And The Provocation | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*. <https://rsc.byu.edu/creation-sinai/promise-provocation>.

Biographical Information:



Andrew C. Skinner was a professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University when this was written. Born and raised in Colorado, he earned his BA degree in history from the University of Colorado. He then earned an MA degree from the Iliff School of Theology in Jewish studies and a ThM degree from Harvard in biblical Hebrew. He did graduate work at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He earned a PhD from the University of Denver in Near Eastern and European history specializing in Judaism.

Skinner taught for four years at Ricks College and has filled three assignments at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, where he served as a faculty member and taught Near Eastern studies. He has served as director of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, dean of Religious Education, and chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture. He is the author or coauthor of over one hundred publications, including *Jerusalem: The Eternal City*; *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*; *Discoveries in the Judaeian Desert: The Unidentified Fragments from Qumran Cave 4* (an analysis of all the unidentified Hebrew and Aramaic Dead Sea Scroll texts); *Scriptural Parables for the Latter Days*; and *Gethsemane*.

He and his wife Janet Corbridge reside in Utah, and they are the parents of six children.

Fair Use Notice:

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* may make use of copyrighted material, the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright holder. This constitutes a “fair use” and any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this podcast is offered publicly and without profit, to the public uses or the internet for comment and nonprofit educational and informational purposes. Copyright Disclaimer under Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976, allowance is made for fair use” for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. In such cases, fair use is permitted.

No copyright(s) is/are claimed.

The content is broadcasted for study, research, and educational purposes.

The broadcaster gains no profit from broadcasted content. This falls under “Fair Use” guidelines:

www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html.

Note:

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* is not affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints nor Brigham Young University. The opinions expressed on episodes represent the views of the guest and podcasters alone. While the ideas presented may vary from traditional understandings or teachings, they in no way reflect criticism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day leaders, policies, or practices.



Hank Smith:	00:00:01	Welcome to FollowHIM. A weekly podcast, dedicated to helping individuals and families with their come follow me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:00:11	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:00:15	As together, we follow him.
Hank Smith:	00:00:20	Hello, my friends, welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith, I am your host. I am here with my co-host the four score years old, John Bytheway. John, have you read the book of Exodus chapter 7? It says that Moses was four score years old. So I figured maybe that would be a compliment to Moses. Do you feel complimented?
John Bytheway:	00:00:43	Yeah, what is this score again?
Hank Smith:	00:00:44	It's a four score years old. It's 28 points. Yeah, touchdown time. John, we are studying Exodus 7 through 13 today. A lot of chapters in Exodus. We needed a brilliant mind and we got one. Tell everybody who's with us.
John Bytheway:	00:01:03	We have Dr. Andrew Skinner with us today and so excited to have him. I have so many books of his on my shelf. One of my favorites of all time is this Gethsemane book that he wrote, which I use in New Testament class sometimes. But our audience probably would love to know there's a two volume Verse By Verse commentary on the Old Testament written by Dr. Ogden and Dr. Skinner. I'm going to use the bio that's here. Andrew C Skinner is a professor of ancient scripture New Eastern studies. A Richard L. Evans professor of religious understanding of BYU, where he served as the Dean of Religious

Education. Is the first executive director of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. A member of the International Editorial Group that translated the Dead Sea Scrolls. How cool is this? An author or co-author of more than 200 articles and books on religious and historical topics. Dr. Skinner taught at the BYU Jerusalem Center and was its associate director. He has served in the church as a bishop, a counselor in a district presidency in Israel. A member of the Correlation Evaluation committee and a member of the Sunday School general board. He and his wife, Janet Corbridge Skinner are the parents of six children and have 10 grandchildren.

- John Bytheway: 00:02:20 We call him Andy because we've known him for years and we just love this man and what he's contributed. Brother Skinner thank you for being with us today.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:02:30 Well, thank you. Thanks for your hospitality. It's a great privilege.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:34 John, you probably know this but BYU religious education has a YouTube channel. I think Dr. Skinner is maybe the star of that YouTube channel. He probably doesn't even know it but he is. I think almost every other video. Let's jump in, Exodus, chapter 7.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:02:53 We really need to go back to chapter six or even the very end of chapter five, to understand the nature of the signs and wonders that the Lord will bring to Pharaoh, King of Egypt. But before we do that, could I make just a couple of introductory comments about this section?
- Hank Smith: 00:03:09 Please do.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:03:10 In graduate school we call it a pericope. It's spelled pericope but if you want to sound really intelligent in theological circles, you can use the word pericope. The pericope, Exodus 7 through 13 is really the story of Israel's deliverance and the institution of the Passover commemoration. I guess the first point to make is that it would be hard to overstate the importance of this section of scripture. Not just for the Old Testament but for all of scripture. Exodus 7 through 13 is the core of the Exodus story, which as our listeners will know reverberates throughout all of scripture. In the Old Testament, in the New Testament, in the Book of Mormon. In fact, this central event in the lives of the Israelites is a core event along with a couple of others.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:04:08 When you think about how the story of the Exodus has influenced the lives of Israelites today, namely our Jewish

brothers and sisters, we come to appreciate the fact that this really is one of the key events in all of scripture. Has had such a significant impact on Israel, on who they are, on whose they are. Their relationship to Jehovah, on Jehovah's power to bring about his purposes. So again, to reiterate, it would be hard to overstate the importance of Exodus. It's huge in terms of the influence that it's had on scripture, the standard works, not just the Bible.

Hank Smith: 00:04:49 In section eight, in the Doctrine and Covenants, this is the spirit of revelation. This is the spirit which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:04:59 Yeah and it's assumed that you understand that, it's assumed that that story. It is so prominent and powerful. Consider for a minute, how many times the Exodus story is recounted every year at springtime around the world. By our Jewish brothers and sisters, by Jewish families, as they participate in the Passover meal, which is also called the Seder meal. Seder is a Semitic word, a Hebrew/Aramaic word that means ordered or arranged. When you look at the preparations that go into a Passover meal, that's literally true. It is one of the most scripted of all of the commemorations of celebrations in the Jewish liturgical calendar. That's one point. A second point is to emphasize Exodus 7 through 13 is a foundational, if not the foundational story of deliverance in the Old Testament. It's the prototypical story of divine deliverance. It serves as the foundation for the kind of deliverance that we see in the atonement of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:06:09 If I can maybe just emphasize that the Passover that we're going to be looking at today is one of two unparalleled occurrences of deliverance, both performed by Jesus Christ. The deliverance in Exodus 7 through 13 is performed by the premortal Christ, who is Jehovah. Jesus was God before he came to this earth. So that significant act of deliverance as a core, if not the core event of the Pentateuch. Then, of course, the deliverance provided by Jesus Christ in his atoning sacrifice. But interestingly enough, the Passover meal was the foundation of the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Jesus as a good, Jewish covenant Israelite, kept the Passover every year as was required. That last night of Jesus's mortal life, then we see that the evening begins as a Passover or a Seder meal. But by the end of the time that the apostles leave the upper room with Jesus, that Passover meal has been transformed into the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The universe is never the same in again.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:07:39 So that's a second point that I would like to make before we dive into the actual text. Then a third point if you wanted to pick a passage in the Old Testament that foreshadows the atonement of Jesus Christ, just a single passage. I think you'd have to go to Exodus Chapter 12 and that's part of our discussion today. The symbolism in Exodus Chapter 12, pointing to the future Jesus Christ seems to me to be without parallel in many ways in the Old Testament. As a single episode in the story of salvation history, Exodus Chapter 12 is hard to beat. So thank you for indulging me but I think it's important that we understand ahead of time what we're looking at today in these few chapters. Just the core of deliverance in the Old Testament and the foundation of deliverance by Jesus Christ. We'll talk more about the symbolism specifically in Exodus Chapter 12. But this really is pretty significant.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:53 Andy, so as our listeners are going into this, they should be kind of in the back of their minds have, obviously, the Savior's atoning sacrifice in the back of their mind as they read about this story. Also, their own maybe sacrament experience that they have every Sunday. If we were to keep those at the back of our mind, we'd probably get more out of this.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:09:12 I think you were absolutely right. This provides a spring board for our own personal devotions, that center on the sacrament every week. We think about Passover in the springtime of the year but it's a one time event per year. But we think about the sacrament, it is, as far as I understand, the ordinance that we get to participate in for ourselves. Not have to be a proxy for somebody else, all the other ordinances, especially temple ordinances. When we go to the temple, we do it one time for ourselves and then we become proxies further. Not so with the ordinance of the sacrament and it happens every week, which is an amazing reflection of our father in heaven's love for us. The Savior's, not just weekly concern but daily continual concern for members of covenant Israel. So you're absolutely right. It provides the springboard for our reflections on deliverance, on substitutionary atonement, on the love of God that's demonstrated in the salvation history of covenant Israel.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:29 I love that, this idea that we worship God with all of our heart, mind, and strength. So as we're listening, let's not just engage our mind but let's engage our hearts here. This is information that we can learn, we can worship God with our mind. But we also just need to be feeling and thinking how can I use this? If you have a sense of the Passover, your sacrament experience really does become better.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:10:53 Let's start at the end of chapter five of Exodus for some background information. The end of chapter five, we understand that Moses and Aaron have been to Pharaoh already. The word Pharaoh is an Egyptian word Pharaoh, which literally means great house, signifying the royal palace. It's the great house where the great man lives in. So that's the connection between the Egyptian word and Pharaoh himself. Of course, Moses and Aaron have asked Pharaoh to let God's people go into the wilderness, so that they can worship God. In chapter five, verses 22 and 23 we see that Moses returns to the Lord because Pharaoh has rebuffed them quite significantly. In fact, he has made life even more difficult for the Israelites that are in bondage. So Moses and understand that Moses is one of the greatest men who has ever lived on the earth. Certainly one of the greatest prophets.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:12:04 But we see a little bit of his human side come through in his protestations to Jehovah. He says in effect, "Why have you brought trouble upon your own people? In fact, why did you send me to Pharaoh? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak your name, he has done evil things to this people." Meaning the Israelites. "You have not rescued or delivered your people at all."
- Hank Smith: 00:12:31 This is not working the way I thought it would.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:12:35 That's exactly right. "Why did you have me go through this exercise if it was going to turn out this badly? Not for me but for your own people." The Lord responds to Moses very, very patiently in chapter six. He says, basically, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh." In other words, Moses, buckle your seatbelt because you haven't seen anything like what you're going to see.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:07 Andy, I'm so glad you pointed that out. How often do we as people do the same thing? We feel like we have a prompting, we're going to move forward. It's going to work out and it doesn't. We go back to the Lord saying where did that prompting come from? I can see it in Nephi, I can see why Nephi taps into this story.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:26 The reason I really appreciate this discussion is I think a lot of us are familiar with these amazing, beautiful stories because of the 10 Commandments and Prince of Egypt, a couple of movies. There's not the emphasis of Christ that I love that I'm hearing right now. That's why I'm glad all of our listeners who may be familiar with those movies can look at this with these kind of eyes. Where we're focusing on look at the Passover meal, look

at the symbolism of Christ. Then we can appreciate that go into actual text. I love those movies and I'm grateful for them but now we get to look for the Savior and all these verses. So thank you for bringing that in and let's continue to do that today.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:14:11 Wonderful, thank you. The part that I like to focus on in my old age is the patience that the Lord has with Moses. He says in effect, "Now, calm down, wait and see what I'm going to do to Pharaoh because of my strong hand. Because of my strong hand, he will eventually drive the Israelites out of his land. Things will be that powerful that he will in effect want them to go. He won't want them to keep around."

Hank Smith: 00:14:50 In Moses' mind, Andy, it's got to be like what? There's no way that Pharaoh's ever going to want us to leave.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:14:58 That's right and we see that throughout the first nine plagues where Pharaoh even at one point says, "Okay, if you'll stop this plague of frogs, then I think we can let you go out, and worship your God." But then he has a change of heart and we'll talk more about Pharaoh's hardened heart. There are a couple of things to say. So notice then in chapter six, the Lord reintroduces himself to Moses in verse three of chapter six. He reminds Moses that he's the one that appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. Notice that they're listed separately because each one is important to God and each one has a separate experience with the great Jehovah. So the Lord wants Moses to understand that Jehovah is capable of bringing about his purposes. Then he says according to the King James Version, "By the name of Almighty God but my name Jehovah was I not known to them."

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:15:59 I think it's okay if we admit that the King James translators misread this passage. It's clarified for us in the JST addition at the bottom of the page, where the Lord's statement is a question rather than a statement. He says and was not my name known unto them? In other words, the name Jehovah was known by the patriarchs, and it was known all the way back before that. I just want to say as a student of Hebrew, that this is a perfectly legitimate translation from the construction. There were no question marks in ancient Hebrew writings. The way that you asked a question was you made a comment in the form of a statement but you inflected it as a question. That's I think what Jehovah's doing. He's saying I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, El Shaddai in Hebrew and by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them?

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:17:01 So the key word in verse three is the word but and interestingly in the way Hebrew works, this is one consonant in the Hebrew text. It's called the vav. Vav then is the way that you insert a conjunction. The point is that rather than translating as but it really is to be translated as and, and by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them?
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:17:29 So we have the JST evidence and we actually have the Hebrew that can be translated appropriately as a question. I've always appreciated the fact that the Joseph Smith Translation helps us to appreciate points that we may miss in the text. Then he says and the Lord says, "I have remembered my covenant." Thankfully, the Lord does remember the covenant that he made with Adam and then reconfirmed to Abraham. Abraham was such a powerful follower of truth and a powerful follower of Jehovah that it becomes known as the Abrahamic Covenant. We all remember that there are four main subheadings to the Abrahamic Covenant. Four main categories of promised land, numerable posterity, priesthood authority, and ultimately exaltation. In this case, we're going to focus on the land part of it.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:18:25 I have made my covenant and I remember my covenant, and I've got us a land, a promised land prepared for the Israelites, who have been groaning under Egyptian for the last several hundred years. It's all again about redemption. It's all about the things that the Lord will do to bring about the fulfillment of his covenant with covenant to Israel.
- Hank Smith: 00:18:50 If I'm the intended audience of these books, isn't the idea to be my family history, where I... If I'm living just after the time of Moses and I pick up my five books of Moses. This is the idea of I'm supposed to get from this, that I'm part of this covenant as well and that I have a role to play?
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:19:15 One of the all time great to Hebrew scholars, Professor R.K. Harrison talks about the beginning of the Old Testament, the Book of Genesis. He says it's nothing more or less than a family history. It's written so that all Israel feels a part of that family history. We'll get to this later. But interestingly enough, when our Jewish brothers and sisters celebrate the Passover every springtime of the year, they are obligated. They're required to consider themselves as part of the Israelites who came out of Egyptian bondage. This is not abstract. They themselves are required to consider themselves as though they were part of the original Israelites. If they don't do that, then they're not fulfilling the requirement of the Passover. That's true even to this very day. There's a special part in the Passover, where we're

told, our Jewish friends are told you must consider yourself as though you were part of the original Israel.

- Hank Smith: 00:20:19 Chapter six, verse five, I remember.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:20:22 So important to keep that in mind that we ourselves are part of this story. We may be removed by however many years, maybe. But the point is that we're part of this story. We're part of this Israelite community. This is us we're talking about here.
- John Bytheway: 00:20:42 I had a student once, it was such a great moment. She was a Jewish convert, one of my students. I asked my class, "Somebody willing to explain the Passover a little bit and the Exodus?" As we're talking about this. She raised her hand, she said, "That is when the Lord brought us out of bondage." She didn't say them, it was her family. I had to stop and say, "Did you hear the way that she said that?" That is when the Lord protected us and brought us out of bondage. I just loved the way that she put that and had to stop and have the whole class remember that.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:21:28 She was well taught by her parents because that is the requirement of the Passover. If you haven't had a chance to participate in a simulated Passover or even in a regular Passover. If you have a Jewish family or Jewish friends, take the opportunity to do that. You then begin to sense that this really is our story, it's not their story. It's our story, absolutely.
- John Bytheway: 00:21:56 It's our covenant, we are children of Abraham. This is our family this is talking about.
- Hank Smith: 00:22:03 If you read these next few verses, Andy, it feels like the intended audience or a modern day reader can sense the Lord speaking to them. I will bring you out of bondage, I will be your God. Just like I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I am the Lord. I swear it to you.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:22:22 Well, and you point out these verses, verses six through eight as very important verses. They foreshadow the four aspects of redemption that are commemorated in the Passover or Seder meal. You just articulated them. I am Lord, I will bring you out from under the burden of Egypt. I will rid you out of their bondage, I will redeem you. I will take you me. So these four aspects of redemption are recounted in the Passover, even in modern times. It wasn't just for them. So again, this draws all of us into this important family history.

Hank Smith: 00:23:04 Someone listening today might think, well, I'm not in to the Egyptians but we are in bonded to the monsters of sin and death, as Jacob would say. The Lord saying I will release you from this bondage of sin and death.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:23:18 Not to put too fine a point on the times in which we're living. But there are people on the opposite side of the world that are living in bondage. No political comment intended but there are all kinds of bondages that people groan under in our day. We're so grateful then that we have this model that reassures us, that Jehovah in ancient times had enough power to bring about his purposes. Jesus Christ in our day has enough power to bring about his purposes. If we extend that, the real lesson is Jesus Christ at our Father in Heaven have enough power to answer our prayers. No matter what our challenges, we have to be patient. Sometimes the Lord for wise purposes allows these conditions to go on and we wonder why. Then we start wondering, well, maybe I'm supposed to learn some different lessons from this. But yeah, bondage is alive and well in 2022.

Hank Smith: 00:24:23 Whatever your own personal struggles are, the Lord says I can bring you out from under that burden.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:24:30 Exactly.

Hank Smith: 00:24:31 Beautiful.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:24:32 We then have Moses that goes to speak the children of Israel in verse nine. But they're not listening to his voice because of the discouragement brought about by the cruel bondage that they're experiencing. So the Lord says to Moses, "Go and speak unto Pharaoh that he let the children of Israel go." Moses says, "Well, they didn't listen to me before. Why are they going to listen to me again?" He puts up this protestation that he has already expressed way back in chapter four of Exodus. He says, "Pharaoh's not going to listen to me, a person of uncircumcised lips." This is a curious phrase, it's a Hebrew idiom. Circumcision versus the uncircumcised suggests the demarcation between those that are covenant Israel. Those that are known as opposed to those that are foreigners. So what we might discern from this is that what Moses is really saying is that I have problems in a foreign tongue and we naturally think, well, yeah he doesn't understand Egyptian. But that's actually not true.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:26:00 If we take a look back or forward in the New Testament, go to Acts chapter 7, verse 22. This is the great disciple, Stephen, who is bearing his testimony about Christianity and about Jesus as the Messiah. But he does it by teaching the history of Israel. So

Acts chapter 7 is Stephen's defense of Christianity and his defense of Jesus as the Messiah but he does it by teaching history. Notice what Stephen says about Moses. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and in deeds. So, well, wait a minute. Moses says, "I'm slow of speech and I've answered. So what's going on here? I think the answer, at least part of the answer is that what Moses is saying is my native tongue, I was raised in Egypt. My native tongue is Egyptian. I don't speak so good the Hebrew lingo. I don't speak Northwest Semitic. As a result, I'm not viewed by either the Israelites or Pharaoh and his court as an eloquent and polished ambassador. Not just for my people but a competent ambassador for my very God.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:27:41 He repeats that by the way, in verse 30. He says, "I am of uncircumcised lips, how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?" Yeah, he speaks Egyptian but he doesn't speak the language of his own people. So he is not regarded as competent, as a worthy ambassador of this. That's a little bit different twist I think than we sometimes think of as what's Moses' problem with language. No, I don't think he stutters. No, I don't think he has a speech impediment. I think he's telling us that because he was raised in Pharaoh's court as a young man, he speaks Egyptian. That's his mother tongue and he's trying to learn Hebrew or a form of Hebrew, Northwest Semitic.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:33 So that he can represent Israel.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:28:35 So that he can appropriately represent Israel. Now, this takes us to another important point. We see this upcoming with the plagues. It is true that the signs and wonders that Jehovah will do through Moses are intended to have Pharaoh let the Israelites go. But the target audience really isn't Pharaoh or the Egyptian Nobles in Pharaoh's court. The target audience for all of these signs and wonders is Israel itself. That's who Jehovah really has in mind. Yes, he's going to use these signs and wonders to make Pharaoh let the Israelites go. But the real intended audience, the audience that Jehovah is most interested in is Israel itself. I think that we get a sense of that in much of this narrative.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:38 Andy, that makes such perfect sense. It reminds me of maybe some people who are new to the church that I've met. Who will start talking and they'll say, "You'll have to forgive me, I don't speak the lingo yet. I don't know the doctrine yet. I'm sorry." There's always this apology of I don't know it as well as I should, I'm sorry. You're thinking, no, the Lord can speak through you even if you don't have the background of maybe someone who

was born in the church and raised in the church. I have students like that, who come up after class. I don't know who this person is or this person is. I don't know what BYC is. I don't know what some of these acronyms mean and they feel uncomfortable. You're saying yeah if it was just Moses, the Israelites would go hey, you don't know what you're talking about. But with the Lord speaking, they're going to go this really is the Lord.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:30:38 Well, and think about the blessing it is to have the New Testament. Specifically, this great disciple, Stephen, who puts us on to this train of thought. Who clues us into the way things are really working so that we don't make assumptions that are wrong. If it wasn't for Stephen's recounting of history before the Sanhedrin. I think about how bold he is in doing that. What's funny is so a lot of my students they have the assignment to read the section in Acts. A lot of them skip over Acts chapter 7 because it's the history of Israel and they say it's boring. Well, it isn't boring if you want to understand the way that the world was working in Moses' day and in all of those periods, up to the time that we see Jesus born on the earth.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:34 John, this reminds me of a story you used to tell about a guy who gets called as a Sunday school teacher and he doesn't even know how to read.
- John Bytheway: 00:31:44 Yeah, I was leaving the mall downtown in Salt Lake City and saw a man standing by a table, signing copies of his book. Nobody was talking to him, people were walking right past him. My heart ached because I have been in that spot before. Why am I here? This is crazy. People look at your book and walk away and don't want to make eye contact. He had this book, Mafia to Mormon. He was in mafia in Michigan, I think it was. He-
- Hank Smith: 00:32:19 You say that so casually, he was in the mafia in Michigan.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:23 Yeah. He came home from work one day, whatever you call it. His wife said, "I let a couple of young men in the house today. They were missionaries." He was like, "You should never let anybody in the house. They're not missionaries, that's their cover story. Those are federal agents. We got to get out of here and everything." It causes this big fight and she says, "Well, they're coming back tomorrow." "What? They're coming back tomorrow?" She convinces him to wait and he's watching them come down the street and said, "One of them looked like he was about 12 and the other was maybe 18." He said, "A cop will never let you get behind him." So he opened the door and said, "Come in." To see if they would walk past him, let him be behind them. They did, they just walked right in.

- John Bytheway: 00:33:08 So he settled down and they had this big discussion. A long story short, he unloads on all these questions he's got, religious questions now that he knows they're really missionaries. The missionaries end up calling the mission president, hey, we've got this man. He has all these questions but it's 9:30. The mission president says, "Well, you can stay until 10:30 but let me talk to your investigator." So here's a mission president with this mafia guy, "Will you follow these young men home and make sure they get home safely? There are some shady characters out there." He says, "Yeah, I'll take care of them." So at 1:30 in the morning he takes them home but he ends up joining the church. Finally, the Bishop with great discernment told him you're in but you need to be all the way in.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:04 At the parallel of his life, he's able to get out of the mafia. The great part of the story is what kind of a calling do you give a former mafia guy? Obviously, you have him teach the 10-year-olds. So as the Bishop extended the call and I love this story. He said, "Bishop, I can't read. I've been conning people my whole life, I skipped kindergarten. I can't read." I can just feel the Bishop having been inspired to extend this call and then the guy says I can't read. The Bishop just kind of said, "You'll be fine. Here's the manual." He says, "I walk into some 10-year-old boys in my class." He says, "Boys, I'm supposed to..." Imagine the tenderness here, the humility. "I'm supposed to be your teacher but boys, I can't read." The boys said, "We'll help you." They were up on the chairs, on their knees surrounding a lesson manual. He said, "Those 10-year-old boys read me the lesson manual. Those boys taught me the gospel." Not just by what they read but by how they treated him, I think. "If you get the book Mafia to Mormon, it's dedicated to my 10-year-old primary class, these 10-year-old boys."
- John Bytheway: 00:35:18 But that's a short version of the story that's so wonderful. But in another way, as you are kind of paralleling this, I don't speak the language. I am so new at this. I'm supposed to be your teacher. I can't read. Here's these boys, we'll help you. I like to illustrate when I tell that story, this is the pure love of Christ, love for Christ, love like Christ.
- Hank Smith: 00:35:42 Yeah. Well, just the idea of I get what Andy's telling us here, is that Moses does not feel like the guy. Think of a missionary, right, Andy, out there? I am not the representative you want, I promise.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:35:52 That you need. I was going to tell a personal story about empathy that I gained for Moses. The first time we went to Israel to teach at the BYU Jerusalem Center. This was in 1990

and the Gulf War was looming large on the horizon. So President Hinckley was a counselor in the first presidency. He and his brother made the decision that they would let the students come to Jerusalem. But they had to go to Greece for six weeks to make sure that things were settled enough. That Saddam Hussein wasn't going to start launching his missiles while the students were trying to make their way to Jerusalem. So the point is that my family and I got to Israel on a Thursday. By I think Sunday, the decision had been made to have the students go to Greece. But the families of the teachers would stay in Israel.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:36:53 That meant that I had to leave my family in Israel by themselves, while I went to Greece to greet the students. My wife didn't speak Hebrew and my children didn't speak Hebrew. They had to start school and they had to figure out the bus system. My wife says, "You mean it's not safe enough for the students but it's safe enough for family with children?" That kind of a situation. So the point is that I went, I was for six weeks with the students in Greece. Everything kind of calmed down, Saddam Hussein did attack Israel but that wasn't until January. So I got back to Jerusalem and to my family at the end of September.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:37:37 The first morning that I was back, sat down for breakfast, and wanted a piece of toast. Janet put this slab of stuff on the table. I thought this looks awfully white for butter. But I thought, well, I'll try it. I tried it, slathered my toast with this stuff and it tasted weird. I said, "What did you buy?" Well, she showed me the package and because she didn't speak Hebrew, she had bought lard instead of butter. I thought you know what? This is the way that Moses must have felt. He is fluent in the language of the Egyptians but he's not fluent in the language of the Israelites, the Hebrews. So he's slathering his toast with lard instead of butter.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:38:27 We joke about that but the real punchline is that we went out and bought butter and that the lard actually tasted better. So we used the lard from then on. But the point is we need to have empathy for those that haven't had exposure to the language that we use. That's kind of a side lesson from Moses' experience. Before we move on, our readers will notice that in the midst of all of this. Before we read about the Lord's solution to Moses' problem in chapter seven, verse one, we get this section of family history dropped right in the middle of the narrative, verses 14 through 25.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:39:16 We're reading along, talking about Moses going back to Pharaoh and how he's protesting. I don't have the qualifications credentials. All of a sudden, the narrative changes, and we start talking about family history. Notice that the history that's been talked about is Moses' history. The author of this wants us to understand why Moses is chosen of the Lord. That is because he is the authentic, legitimate representative of the Israelites. He is a member of the tribe of Levi and only the first three sons of Israel are mentioned here. To get to the point that Moses and Aaron are legitimate, designated representatives, and they are representing their own people. It's done by the insertion of family history, that they really do have the Lord's approval. That they are the very ones whose family they are representing and whose families they're going to save.

Hank Smith: 00:40:28 I was going to say, Andy, that's where we get Moses' parents name.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:40:32 Exactly, yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:40:33 Right here, we wouldn't have them if it weren't for this.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:40:36 We've got this interesting understanding of the way that Moses and the Israelites taught and were taught. It's using the examples of family history to justify their legitimate call. Of course, the other reason that this put in is that Moses and Aaron being Levites will be in charge of the priesthood when the Melchizedek priesthood is taken away at the time of the great apostacy. With the golden calves in Exodus chapter 32. What will be left is the Levitical priesthood. Aaron will be put in charge of Levitical priesthood.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:41:18 So that helps readers as well as the family of Israel understand that this is the reason why Aaron will be in charge of the Levitical priesthood. Is because he's legitimate representative of one of the first four tribes of the family.

Hank Smith: 00:41:36 How would you say Moses' mother's name? Is it-

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:41:40 Jochebed or Jochebel.

Hank Smith: 00:41:44 Jochebel. I just think of her tossing that basket into the river.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:41:46 We do come to appreciate her strength of character and her faith. Trusting that the Lord will take care of this baby boy and guide his life to become the powerful prophet that he did. By the way, some of our readers who know their ancient history

will recognize that this is a kind of a pattern or a theme story that applies to other ancient kings. For example, there was a king in Mesopotamia named Sargon The Great. His story is remarkably like Moses' story, where he has put into a... That very well may be with those traditions, those historical traditions floating about that. May be the source of Moses' mother's inspiration to put him to a reed basket. It was done earlier for other mighty leaders of nations and it worked out fine. So it might very well work out fine now.

- Hank Smith: 00:42:46 You used the word floating there, that was a good little insert. Yeah, that was a good pun. So Moses feels out of place.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:42:56 I don't think he ever quite recovers from that self-recognition. That he has some work to do too, in order to be the consummate leader of the Israelite people that the Lord needs him to be. But he didn't start out that way, that's a lesson for us. Is that the Lord takes us where we're at and whoever he calls, he qualifies. It may take a few years for us to ramp up and become fully the kinds of leaders that we think the Lord needs and that he does need. But he guides us and he nurtures us and he mentors us along, all of us. Moses is a great example of that.
- John Bytheway: 00:43:38 One of the things I love about this story is Moses expressing his inadequacy here and there. Who am I to do this? I love that the Lord doesn't answer the way that we might with you're great, you're awesome. You're wonderful, you're special. The Lord just says I will be with thee, I love that answer. It's you're right, Moses, and to all of us, you all have weakness. But I will be with thee and in me is where your strength is going to come. I love that message to Moses. I think it teaches us to help our children and those we teach have not just conf in themselves but confidence in God and that he can help them. That he'll be with them.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:44:21 The fourth article there, you have faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ means that you trust that he has enough power to bring about his purposes using you. In you he will manifest his power and his glory. Little old me, I do love President Monson's, I guess what we would call it paraphrase of the principle that you articulated. Whom the Lord calls, he qualifies. He doesn't leave people to themselves, he is always with us. That's one of the great lessons that we derive from Moses.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:44:56 So Moses and Aaron, they go to Pharaoh's court but the Lord has told them that he wants them to do something when they first arrive again back in Pharaoh's court. I can direct our attention to chapter seven verses eight through 12. The Lord

speaks to Moses and to Aaron and says, "When Pharaoh shall speak to you saying show a miracle, what are you going to do?" Well, the Lord says, "What you're going to do is you're going to take the rod that's in your hand and throw it down and it will become a serpent." Of course, they do that, and the magicians of Pharaoh's court are able to duplicate that miracle.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:45:42

But what happens in verse 12 is maybe the summary of the message that we need to derive. That is to say the serpent that came from Moses and Aaron's rod swallows up all of the other serpents. That is to say God's mastery over Pharaoh and over the gods of Egypt are one of the first things that Moses and Aaron do in Pharaoh's court. There's an important side note, a footnote to this particular episode. It centers on snakes, on serpents. In almost every culture of the Mediterranean world, anciently, the serpent or the snake was a dual symbol. On the one hand, it represented the ultimate goodness of God. On the other hand, it represented the ultimate evil of demons that also inhabit the world. Of course, that's true in the Judeo-Christian culture. On the one hand, the serpent represents Satan, Lucifer in the garden. On the other hand, the serpent represents the Messiah, Jesus Christ as acknowledged by Jesus in John chapter 3. He was the very one as Jehovah who commanded Moses to raise the brazen serpent. So we live in this world where serpents symbolize so very much good and sometimes evil.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:47:11

That was true in ancient Egypt, that the ultimate beneficent deity in the Egyptian Pantheon was represented by a serpent. Also, the ultimate malevolent demon in the Egyptian Pantheon was represented by a serpent, Apophis. That is demonstrated by Pharaoh himself. As you and many others will remember at this point in history, Pharaoh wears the double crown of upper and lower Egypt.

Hank Smith: 00:47:43

The snake, yeah.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:47:44

The serpent, the cobra, the Ureus as it is called, is the symbol. Right in the front of Pharaoh's crown, the symbol of his power, and the symbol of his authority. Every Pharaoh in Egypt was regarded as a living god on earth. So we have Moses representing the true and living God to one who was regarded by his people, Pharaoh as a living god on earth. In fact, he has the serpent as his symbol. This is his power, this is his authority. What happens? The serpent of the true and living God swallows up the serpents of the false god that are produced. The snakes that are produced by the magicians in Pharaoh's court.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:48:31 So there isn't very much in this section from chapter seven to chapter 13. That doesn't have tremendous symbolism as the backstory of why it is included in the text. I hope I explained that clearly enough but serpents place such an important role in the ancient world. For the Egyptians, the serpent represented Pharaoh, who was the living god on earth. He was Horus, the son of Osiris. Who was the great original god of the Egyptian Pantheon, the god of resurrection. That's why Osiris is always portrayed in papyrus documents in the color green because he represents life, verdancy, and so on. So that's the backstory here. I think it's a fascinating one and I think it's a powerful one. It also helps us to appreciate that this image of the serpent was [inaudible 00:49:30] by Lucifer. So that he could come in the guise of the Messiah. He wasn't the Messiah but he comes in the guise of the Messiah. What does he do? He promises, Lucifer promises things that only the true Messiah can promise. You shall not surely die but you'll be as the gods. Well, he doesn't have the power or the authority to bring that about but he's trying to demonstrate to Adam and Eve that he really does have the power and authority that's represented by the image of the serpent, which is a true image of the Messiah. We see that at even in Christianity as well.
- Hank Smith: 00:50:14 There's a great verse in Revelation. There's a dragon that looks like a lamb, that speaks like a dragon. Where it's I'm trying to maybe pretend that I can say things like the Lord.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:50:30 I think that's what Lucifer is trying to do in the garden. He's trying to make people think because he is a liar from the beginning. He's trying to make people think that he has this messianic qualification. That he's the Messiah, he's teaching the truth. Well, not really. So we see the image of the serpent being a powerful one.
- Hank Smith: 00:50:53 I wanted to say that when Pharaoh saw that serpent eat the other serpent, he maybe should have picked up on the message. This is really big foreshadowing of what's about to happen.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:51:09 Yeah. Well, how many times are we presented with messages from the Lord and we either ignore them because we don't want the information? Don't confuse me with facts, my mind is made up, which is certainly true for Pharaoh. But you're right. What must have been going through his mind is he sees the very image of his own power and authority as a living God on earth. Being overcome by this God whom he is earlier said, "Who is this Lord that I should pay any attention to him?" Well, he's going to start paying attention to the true and living God

John Bytheway: 00:51:50 Do the scriptures differentiate between serpents and vipers? Jesus used the phrase a generation of vipers. I know that in that series, The Chosen, they made a comment about. He said we were vipers, the Pharisees said. Do you know?

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:52:07 Yeah, there are different words, both in Hebrew and in Greek that are used. In fact, in this part of the Exodus narrative, there are two different words that are used. Both are translated as snakes and I suppose that there are fine distinctions to be made. I don't off the top of my head what word it is that's used in the New Testament but it would've been a Greek word. Since the original text of the New Testament was written in Greek.

John Bytheway: 00:52:35 Yeah, I've heard that vipers were poisonous. Snakes are not necessarily poisonous but vipers are. That maybe the Savior when he called them a generation of vipers was you're, for sure, the bad kind of snake, I don't know.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:52:47 Yeah. Just from my personal experience, living over in the land, I can say that many, if not most of the snakes are poisonous. We constantly remind our students if you see a snake, leave it alone. You have no idea-

John Bytheway: 00:53:04 You don't know.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:53:05 That's exactly right. Certainly, the Uraeus, the cobra symbol that the Pharaoh war was poisonous. We could have a discussion about why the serpent becomes a symbol of deity on the one hand or ultimate evil on the other hand. Why is the serpent associated with the concept of resurrection? When the serpent encounters a human, the serpent has to make an instantaneous decision whether to strike and inflict punishment or to slither away. So that idea of instantaneous judgment, which is the purview of the gods. Also, the snakes, they shed their skin every year and they're renewed. So the idea of resurrection immediately comes to mind with the idea of the snake renewing itself or being "resurrected" if you will, on a yearly basis. A lot of reasons why serpents played such an important role in the ancient world. With that then, the Lord is ready to unleash the different plagues on Pharaoh and on the Egyptian kingdom. The first plague, of course, has to do with the River Nile.

Hank Smith: 00:54:22 Now, Andy, as we go through these 10 plagues here, I know that listeners are going to say I don't like the Lord dishing out these plagues. But I think it's important that you started out the way you did because one, Pharaoh is choosing these plagues. God says, "I'm going to remember my covenant. I am going to keep my covenant and no one's going to stop me." I know that some

people get uncomfortable with the Lord sending plagues on these people. But I like that the Lord keeps his covenants.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:54:54 I do too. Lest we start blaming the Lord for things that Pharaoh himself is responsible for. We can look at a verse like verse three of chapter seven. This is an important passage because we see this theme throughout the next chapters. Where the Lord speaking, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." Well, first of all, notice that there's a footnote to verse three of chapter seven, in which we get this marvelous JST correction. Where Pharaoh hardens his heart, Pharaoh hardens his own heart. That JST correction then follows through the rest of the chapters. But even more important than that, in chapter eight, verse 32 and in chapter 10, verse one of Exodus. We have Pharaoh saying, "I will harden my heart." I think that was originally the correct reading of the text and somehow transcribers or translators got confused, got mixed up. Thought that it was the Lord who was hardening Pharaoh's heart when it's really Pharaoh.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:56:08 But even more important than that, chapter eight, verse 32 and in chapter 10, verse one. The word in Hebrew that's used that's translated as harden. I will harden my heart or he hardens his own heart is the word for heavy. Kaved is the Hebrew word, kaved or kaved. So what the text is really having Pharaoh say is I will make my heart heavy. This plays directly into an ancient Egyptian religious practice, which is known as the weighing of the heart. Some of our listeners may be familiar with that. The most common judgment scene that tourists buy that are painted on papyrus pieces is called the Hunefer judgment scene.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:57:01 What we see is a candidate who wants to enjoy the afterlife. Wants to become a god himself or herself and live in the realm of the gods. In order to do that, the person on their deathbed has to pass different tests. One of the tests is the judgment that they must pass through.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:57:25 So we see this person being brought to the god, Anubis, who's the god of the dead. He's the jackal-headed god. We see another Egyptian god, who's got a slate in his hand and a stylist and he's taking notes. That's the god Thoth, who is the god of scribes. Then we see the balance scales, where the candidate for eternal life's heart is being weighed against the feather of the goddess Maat.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:58:00 It's a very famous scene, a lot of people will recognize it. I have a copy of it right here. Where you can see that there is a person

that desires to live life like the gods in the afterlife. He's brought to the balance scales, his heart. Don't get too caught up in the scientific mechanics of how a candidate can stand there but have his heart weighed on the balance scales. They viewed the world differently than we do. So he wants to enjoy eternal life with the gods, his heart is weighed. If his heart weighs heavier than the feather of Maat, it means that the accumulated deeds of his life have been evil. So things are out of balance.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:58:47

If his heart weighs heavier than the feather of Maat, then he's turned over to what's called the Ammit monster. The Ammit monster is represented as a creature with the head of a crocodile, the chest and paws of a lion, and the rear end of a hippopotamus. These are the three largest man-eating animals in Egypt, in the ancient world as they are today. So you stay away from those three. So he's cooked, he's done. He won't get eternal life. But if your heart weighs as light as the feather of Maat, then you are brought into the next realm, where you stand before Osiris. You go through a series of, I guess what we would call ordinances is too strong a word. We would use that word but the ancient Egyptians would say he goes through a series of in enthronement tasks. Then he's anointed for eternal life. The ankh is poured out on his head, he's robed with the robe of the gods. Then he's ushered into the presence of Osiris to live his life.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:59:58

All of that is to say that the Hebrew text, at least in two passages, recognizes the significance of making your heart heavy. That's probably the way that all of the passages in this section of Exodus read. That Pharaoh made his heart heavy because it reflects the actual judgment scene that every Egyptian knew about in ancient times. That's an amazing correspondence there. So remember in chapter 8, verse 32, and in chapter 10, verse one, it isn't Pharaoh or isn't the Lord saying I will make his heart hard. It's Pharaoh saying I will make my heart heavy, which is in perfect harmony with the judgment scene of ancient Egypt. I think that's a remarkable correspondence, frankly. So those who have traveled to Egypt and who have maybe a papyrus representation of the judgment scene can look at it with new eyes. This is, in fact, what's happening with Pharaoh in these chapters as we go through the plagues,

John Bytheway: 01:01:12

Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:00:02 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:08 It's the power of pride, the power of I will not back down. Even if I know I'm wrong, even if I've been shown I'm wrong, I don't even want to see that I'm wrong. I will not back down off of this. And so Pharaoh chooses these plagues. It's not the Lord.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:00:26 I think the point that we're trying to make is that it's not the Lord. The Lord always gives Pharaoh a choice and it's Pharaoh who chooses that which brings about the Lord's promise, his signs and wonders that if he doesn't let the Israelites go, then he and his people will suffer the consequences. And even in the Passover celebration among the Jewish people, there's this sense that Jehovah is sorrowed over the fact that lives are being lost because of the hardness or the heaviness of Pharaoh's heart. He doesn't wish any of his children to have to suffer these kinds of things, but they've been warned. As you pointed out, it's God remembering his covenant. And he would prefer to have all people join the covenant, but because of Pharaoh's hardened heart or heavy heart, that won't happen.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:01:25 I just wanted to kind of make a general comment about the nature of the plagues. The first nine plagues that are recounted in this section of Exodus can be divided into three groups of three plagues each. Chapter 7 verse 15 through chapter 8 verse 19, that's the first set of three plagues. Chapter 8 verse 20 through chapter 9 verse 12, that's the second grouping of three plagues. And then chapter 9 verse 13 through chapter 10 verse 29.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:02:04 What's interesting about this grouping of plagues is that we see Moses going to Pharaoh to deliver the warning as Pharaoh is going out to the River Nile in the morning to participate in his daily devotions, daily ablutions, his washings, in his daily worshiping the chief gods of the Egyptian Pantheon. And so three times the Lord says to Moses, you go out at the time of Pharaoh's early morning personal devotionals if you will,

personal worship sessions, and you remind him that this is going to be his lot if he doesn't accede to Jehovah's wishes.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:02:55 So with that in mind, maybe we can just take a moment or two and look at the first nine plagues. And the idea of the plagues, yes, again, it is to cause Pharaoh to capitulate and to let Israel go so that they can go into the wilderness and they can offer sacrifices to Jehovah and worship him in their own way. The Lord wants them to worship him, the true and living God, and break away from the false gods of the Egyptian Pantheon. So that's the purpose of the plagues, but the audience that Jehovah has in mind is Israel.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:03:37 The first plague which we read about in chapter seven centers on the Nile. We're all familiar with this plague. Pharaoh went to the Nile each morning to worship the supreme deity. And that supreme deity was the River Nile. Historians will remember that it was Herodotus, 5th century BC Greek historian, who said Egypt is the gift of the Nile. So the most important of the deities, and Pharaoh confirms this every morning, is the River Nile.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:04:15 And what happens, the River Nile then ceases to be a source of life. It's changed from living water, if you will, from pure water into blood. And scholars have debated whether or not this is literal or whether or not it was figurative for the red color that the Nile begins to exhibit. Some people say, well, the Nile river was changed because the red silt from Ethiopia was washed down on the banks of the Nile and it caused the whole river to be changed. Others say, well, no, it looks more like an algae bloom, red algae, and this would cause the fish to die and the river to stink. I'm not sure it makes any difference to me. What does make a difference is that this is the Lord's doing and that the Lord is behind the miracle. The Lord says, "By the corruption of the Nile, I have power over your supreme deity. And by extension, I have power over life and death."

Hank Smith: 00:05:20 I hear you saying that the idea is that, yes, Pharaoh is going to suffer all of this, but the Israelites need to know because they've been in Egypt for so long, they've been indoctrinated, they need to know that the God that they're about to learn about is much more powerful than the gods they've been culturally a part of for the last few centuries.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:05:40 That's precisely the point. Thank you for that clarification, because that's exactly what the Lord is trying to do here.

Hank Smith: 00:05:46 Even when they get out of Egypt, they're going to say, "We should have gone back. We should go back."

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:05:51 We had leeks and melons. We had tasty treats on our table and now all we've got is this manna. We don't even know what it is. In fact, the Hebrew that's translated as the word manna, man who literally translates it as what is it? They want to go back because things weren't so bad. Nile treated us pretty well.

Hank Smith: 00:06:13 Yeah. So these nine presentations are hopefully going to remind them.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:06:18 And that's the point is that in every instance, it's Jehovah who controls life and death. It's Jehovah who controls the forces of nature. It's Jehovah who's the true and living God and can extend that power into the lives of every Israelite covenant member if they will allow him to. And they're getting lesson after lesson after lesson to make the point, and yet in a way they also are hardening their hearts. They're just not getting it. And ultimately what will happen, this is skipping ahead, but ultimately what will happen is that the great event of apostasy involving the golden calf, which again is one of the Egyptian deities, is the thing that causes Israel to lose the higher priesthood, the higher law, including what we would refer to as temple ordinances, and in their place we have the lesser law and the lesser priesthood.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:07:18 That's not what God originally intended. If you read chapter 19, God wants to make the delivered Israelites a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. And he's not talking about ironic priesthood priests, he's talking about the kind of priests and kings that we go to the temple in our day to understand and to receive ordinances that help us become that kind of a priest and king. These are Melchizedek Priests, kings and queens, priests and priestesses. That's what God wants to do at the base of Mount Sinai but they won't allow that.

Hank Smith: 00:07:57 They can't let go of the old gods.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:08:00 No. Again, this is jumping ahead, but you think about the way that this is presented to the Israelites through Moses, the Lord says to Moses, "I want to make of them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. I want to make them kings and queens, priests and priestesses." Moses tells that to the Israelites, and what do they say? "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. This sounds great. We will do all of this that you command us." And then when God starts requiring something of them, namely what we refer to as the 10 commandments, what do they do? They retreat. Like

many of us, they say, "Yeah, well, we didn't really realize that we're going to have to do something to receive these great blessings." And so I think that that mindset is alive and well in these chapters seven through 13.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:08:46 The second plague in chapter 8 verses 6-8 centers on the frog or the goddess Heqet. The frog was sacred in ancient Egypt. It was a symbol of life springing forth. It was associated with the concept of resurrection. In fact, it was a symbol of resurrection. And it was an animal considered sacred by all Egyptians that is now being manipulated by Israel's God. And the plague of frogs also shows that miracles and signs don't produce lasting conversion in most people. And we see that with Pharaoh. "Well, yeah, I'm going to let them go, but please get rid of this plague of the frogs." And what does Moses say? "Well, I give you the honor of telling me when you want this to happen." And Pharaoh says, "Ah, how about the next day?" Well, he retreats, he goes back on his promise to let the Israelis go. So signs and wonders, miracles don't produce lasting conversion in many people. They do in some, but some other things are going on there.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:00 Yeah. That's Exodus 8:15. When Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, that yeah, it wasn't that long that he turns around and is like, "Oh, okay. We're fine now."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:10:13 Now, what's interesting about the first two plagues is that the magicians at Pharaoh's court are able to duplicate these signs and wonders just like they were able to duplicate the staff becoming serpent. It ends after this. They will no longer be able to duplicate this. And so as the signs and wonders intensify and they strike at the very heart of who the Egyptians are, the magicians are not able to do what the Lord, God, is able to do. And this is seen beginning in the third plague, Exodus chapter eight verse 16 through 19, referred to in the text as lice but it's actually stinging gnats that issue from the soil.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:10:55 And remember, the soil is also worshiped by the Egyptians. So now Jehovah has caused the soil, which was once magnificent to the ancient Egyptians, to turn on them. In the biblical text, the phrase the dust will become gnats is probably symbolic of the enormous numbers of these stinging creatures.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:11:19 Now, we don't know exactly, I think, the nature of these stinging creatures, but we know, for example, how painful it is to be bitten by a horse fly or how uncomfortable it is to be bitten by a whole bunch of mosquitoes or how uncomfortable it is to receive any kind of a bite from an insect of this sort. And so

there's a passage in the biblical text which said that people become covered with these lice or stinging gnats. And gee-whiz, that cannot have been pleasant. And Pharaoh cannot have been ignorant of the fact that his recalcitrant is causing his own people, those who worship him as a living God on earth, to suffer.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:12:08 Fourth plague. Actually we like to say flies, but if you'll notice the text, it is 8:24. 8:24, and the Lord says, "So there are grievous swarms." But notice the word of flies is in italics. Those words don't appear in the original text. So there are grievous swarms, and these grievous swarms are none other than the dung beetles, the scarab. Egyptologists and students of ancient history will recognize that the scarab is an emblem of the sun God Ra or Ra, one of the greatest and most enduring symbols in ancient Egypt. And so what we have is we have these swarms of scarab beetles that are supposed to represent these magnificent and kind gods but now have turned against the people and it's the Lord's power that's behind that. So I think that that's an important distinction to make.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:11 I'm seeing the plagues are dismantling Egyptian theology right in front of the Israelites.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:13:16 That is a very good point. That's exactly what's happening is that the belief system of the ancient Egyptians is now in significant peril, and it'll get worse from this point on. And that's the point of the plagues is that they intensify and they begin to strike at the very culture and life support system of the Egyptians.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:41 In Exodus six, those wonderful verses 6, 7, 8, I will redeem you, I will bring you out from the Egyptians. Primarily, as you said, he wanted the house of Israel to know who he was. Exodus 6:7, you shall know I am the Lord, your God. But then in Exodus 7:5, the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. And I love that Jehovah is always a teacher, but what Hank just said, look at Exodus 12:12. "Against all the gods of Egypt, I will execute judgment. The Nile is not God, I am God, let my people go. Frogs are not God, I am God, let my people go. Swarms are not God, I am God, let my people go." And he's discrediting those Egyptian gods one at a time. I love that he could have with one plague got the people out, because he's God, but first he wanted to show that each of the Egyptian gods were not God, and then, okay, now we're leaving. It's how I like to look at it.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:44 It's almost last God standing, because he's knocking them off one by one.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:14:49 These are God's children too and he loves them and he doesn't wish the full force of the benevolence of these signs and wonders to attack them or to do them harm. And that's why it's a repetitive request. "Please let my people go." "No, I'm not." "Well, okay. Based on my promise to remember the covenant, then you're going to have to suffer the full force of these signs and wonders." So I think that you've hit on some wonderful insights.

Hank Smith: 00:15:26 So far, it hasn't been too bad. I mean, it's awful with the river turning to blood.

John Bytheway: 00:15:32 First plagues are just inconvenient, right?

Hank Smith: 00:15:35 Yeah. It's very uncomfortable. Life has become very uncomfortable.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:15:39 Yeah. And with the swarms, I mean with the stinging gnats or whatever they are, it's starting to become painful.

Hank Smith: 00:15:47 Yeah. Right.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:15:48 But still you are right. We can manage this. Things are not as bad as they could get. Unfortunately, they're going to get as bad as they can get. The fifth plague then starts to really bear down on the most important of the deities because the fifth plague centers on livestock, both the sacred bull, which is known in Egyptian parlance as the Apis bull, A-P-I-S, and also one of the most beloved of the cow goddesses, Hathor or Hathor. And you remember that the Apis bull is a sacred animal and represents Pharaoh himself.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:16:40 Every year, not every year but every generation, a new Apis bull was chosen and he was treated well. He becomes a symbol of the greatness of Pharaoh and when he dies, there's great mourning throughout the land and they have to choose another one, but they start treating him like a God. I'm even more impressed with the fact that Hathor is demolished theologically than with the Apis bull because Hathor was one of the most popular goddesses in all of Egypt. She was worshiped widely across the empire. She was the goddess of mothers, the goddess of women, the goddess of women's physical and psychological wellbeing, but also the goddess of dance, beauty and music. She's the personification of joy, of goodness, of celebration, of love. And so when she's attacked, then a really significant part of Egyptian culture is being destroyed, at least in the minds of the Egyptians who know what's going on.

- John Bytheway: 00:17:48 I'm looking at a picture of Hathor, that cow-headed goddess of the desert. And it's interesting when you see their pictures because she is represented as a human form but a cow's head in the picture I've got. And you mentioned earlier, Heqet, the God of resurrection. She has the head of a frog and a human body. And the deity, I don't think of them as purely humanoid. Some of them had the heads of kind of what the plague represented, like Hathor was cow headed, Heqet was frog headed.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:18:20 Well. And we shouldn't be too upset in the modern world in which we live, the scientific world. In the Pantheons, parts is parts. And so they're interchangeable. You can have the head of a ram and the body of a lion, for example, that bring together different aspects of eternal life. Every Egyptian noble desired to have eternal life. And there were wonderful aspects of eternal life that we don't need to talk about because we can imagine them; joy and life and living like the gods and having family around. I mean, the idea of family is alive and well in all three periods of Egyptian history, the old kingdom, the middle kingdom, the new kingdom, and you have the gods, male and female God, producing children.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:19:10 Well, the idea that family was going to be part of what you would enjoy as you enjoyed eternal life was inculcated into every young Egyptian. Now what's happening is all of the different aspects of eternal life are being dismantled. They're being destroyed. And who's doing it? Jehovah. And not because he's malevolent, not because he wants his children to suffer, but because he needs the Israelites to be able to reach their full potential because they're keepers of the covenant. They are the ones that are responsible for allowing the covenant to go forth to the rest of the world.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:19:49 A sixth plague of boils shows Jehovah's power over personal health. This is chapter 9 verses 8-11. There's a difference between religion of Jehovah and Egyptian religion. Egyptian religion promoted no one-to-one relationship with God. It was a group kind of effort, and we see Jehovah saying, "No, this is a very personal thing between me and you."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:20:17 Seventh plague of hail also demonstrates Jehovah's power over the gods of hail and fire. The lightning god, Min, was one of Jehovah's targets. Min is also associated with fertility. So you can see that each of these gods has several portfolios, if you will. They're associated with and responsible for different aspects of life and eternal life. The god Min also gave its name to one of the governmental districts. There were 42 districts

that made up ancient Egypt and they're called nomes. And these are not little furry people that are running around. The word nome comes from the Greek nomos, which means law. So 42 centers of law and government, and one of these was dedicated wholly to the god Min and it was a sacred area from which agriculture was regulated. So now we're saying even the ability to grow crops is going to be affected by all of this.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:21:21 Eighth plague of locust or grasshoppers. And these are brought in by the East wind. We all know about the devastating effects of the East wind. It's even mentioned in the Book of Mormon.
- John Bytheway: 00:21:33 Book of Mormon, yeah. Will you talk about that, because a West wind would bring moisture from the Mediterranean. And so why was the East wind, why did that become an old world symbol for destruction?
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:21:47 This intense and dense cloud of dust came with the East wind and it raised the temperature by many, many degrees and it made life unbearable. But even more than that, it destroyed the crops. It was not a pleasant thing. And in Arabic it's called the khamsin. That has reference to a specific time of the year. 50 days after a certain period you could expect the khamsin, and it really is a very unpleasant situation. So the khamsin brings these hoards of migratory locust to devour the crops. It's getting worse and worse.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:22:27 The ninth plague is darkness. And here we see Jehovah hitting the Egyptian Pantheon very, very hard because when the darkness is brought to pass, the target is Ra, the great sun god, the chief of the Egyptian Pantheon from very, very early times. The sun itself became a god, and it's a prominent figure in ancient Egypt because you rarely see rain, or maybe occasionally in the winter months. And even then when the rain falls, it brings the dust out of the air and looks like big black drops of gunk there falling down to the ground.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:23:11 And so this is really, really serious because it's the creator god. In fact, in some accounts written on papyrus, humans were created from Ra's tears and sweat. And so the Egyptian people would call themselves the cattle of Ra. And it's spelled capital Ra or capital Re. But the point is that now we have struck at the very core of external things that the Egyptians had placed so much faith in, so much stock in. It's not the most serious plague. That's of course reserved for the last plague, and the last plague is the death of the first born.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:23:56 I do want to read chapter 11 verses 1-7. I think it is so powerful. It's so interesting. Sobering is exactly the right word. So this is chapter 11 where the Lord, after repeated attempts to get the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, the Lord says to Moses, "Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt. Afterwards he will let you go hence. When he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out. Hence altogether he will be done with you. He will not want to have anything more to do with you. Speak now in the ears of the people and let every man borrow of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor jewels of silver, jewels of gold." So basically the Lord is saying you're not going to go out of Egypt without some wealth. They'll be glad to give you the resources that they have just to get you out of their midst.
- Hank Smith: 00:25:08 So the idea is I'm going to go to my Egyptian neighbors and say, "I'm going to take your silver and gold." And they'll say, "If that'll get you out of here, sure."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:25:15 I look at the word borrow in verse two with some amusement, because what the Lord really says is you go ask. It's even stronger than ask, I think, the context. You tell your Egyptian neighbors that you want this and this and this. And so borrow is kind of a euphemism there because they certainly aren't going to return anything. Verse three, "The Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people." So the signs and wonders has worked its miracle. Even Moses is now regarded with respect and honored among the Egyptian people themselves.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:26:09 Verse four, Moses said, "Thus, sayeth the Lord, about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt." And notice that when it comes to the death of the first born, it's God himself who's acting. He may employ an agent such as a devourer or a destroyer, but it's God himself who takes this upon himself because we are his children and he does not want to leave that, the taking of life, to Moses or to any of his other servants. And so he's the one that's behind this.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:26:50 Verse five, "And all the first born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon this throne, even unto the first born of the maid servant that is behind the mill and all the first born of the beasts." So this ultimate disaster includes everybody from the high born to the low. The first born of every class of people is affected by this last and great plague. And here we begin to see the symbolism of another first born

who would die some 1300 years later or 1250 years later in the person of Jesus Christ.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:27:34 In verse six, "There shall be great cry throughout all the land of Egypt such as there was none like it nor shall be like it anymore. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." And I think that difference is because of the covenant. We come to this very sobering chapter and this is to be read with great sadness. As a child, I delighted in the triumph of a good over evil. But the older I get, the more I realize that this was a sad occurrence not just to the Egyptians but to the Lord himself because he loves all of his children. But he will not go back on his promises.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:27 I want to remind everybody of something Jennifer Lane, Dr. Lane taught us about the flood. She said, mankind chose to put sin everywhere over. And so God had the flood. The remedy matched the amount of sin. So the flood had to cover the earth because sin was everywhere. And I look at this and I'm reminded of when Pharaoh tried to kill all of the Israelite boys. It's almost like so long ago, he chose this last plague, that the answer is fitting for how far they were willing to go to stop Jehovah.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:29:13 Yeah. Looking at it visually, you could say that the chapter 1 and chapter 12 of Exodus represent bookends of a process that began hundreds of years before with the death of Israelite children and the death of now the Egyptian first born. From a literary standpoint, it's absolute genius. But more than that, it's true and it happened. I don't look at this with delight. I look at it as God sorrowing over that which they brought upon themselves through the wickedness of one man. And what's the old saying? When the wicked rule, the righteous mourn. And that's what we see here.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:30:02 The symbolism behind the Passover elements all in one way or another point us to Jesus Christ. And there are many ways to read and to go through chapter 12. But for me, the most important is the symbolism that we derive from the elements of the first Passover that point us to the great and last sacrifice. Out of this Passover, the establishment of the Passover that we see the creation of the sacrament, the transformation of the Passover Seder meal into the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and then the idea of the firstborn, the only one who could make an atonement, the birthright son if you will as we understand

the obligations, the responsibilities of the firstborn to have the leadership of the family, at least I see that in chapter 12 here.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:31:00 So let me just suggest a couple of things as we go through. We notice, first of all, in verses one and two, that the Lord says that this month in which the Passover is established shall be the beginning of months. And actually in the Jewish calendar, it is late March, early April. It becomes the religious new year. And from that, I look at the Messiah, the savior. And Jesus Christ's gospel presents, if you will, a restoration of old truths, but it also signifies a new beginning, and particularly the ordinances associated with the gospel. We're baptized. We become new creatures in Jesus Christ. So the redemption that is provided that will occur here parallels the redemption that's provided by Jesus through his gospel in the ordinances.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:31:59 Chapter 12 verses three and five. To fulfill the Passover, each of the families must choose a lamb. And this lamb has to be without blemish or spot as it's described in verse five. Your lamb shall be without blemish. A male, of the first year, you shall take it from the sheep or the goats. Doesn't make any difference. And this will be sacrificed and then eaten by every family or groupings of individuals as the text seems to imply. And of course, we recognize that this is a pretty unveiled reflection of Jesus who is described as the lamb without blemish or spot, 1st Peter 1:18-19.

Hank Smith: 00:32:54 Seems to me that the Lord has now taken down Egyptian theology thoroughly and he's going to rebuild his new theology. Well, it wouldn't be new, but new to these people, and it's all going to center around the lamb of God.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:33:09 That's a great observation, an important observation. Yeah, he's taken down the Egyptian Pantheon and he's taken down the religious concepts associated with them. And admittedly, they pointed to good things, eternal life, but they did it in the wrong way. All of the ordinances and blessings associated with the Melchizedek Priesthood from the time of Adam on, which is referred to as the patriarchal priesthood, and gave internal blessings to its followers, tries to be imitated by Pharaoh in his day.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:33:47 And that's why when you sail up and down the Nile or you go to all of these tombs and temples in ancient Egypt, you find representations of gods giving to human beings eternal life. And some of them are pretty stark. There's a panel of images on the south side of the Holy of Holies in the Temple at Karnak, and it shows the different stages through which a person had to go in

order to become like one of the gods. Anointed, clothed with a special clothing, a special hat on their head. And then finally being ushered into the presence of Osiris who was the resurrection God. The ultimate goal was not wrong, but the worship of false gods was. And so all of that is done away with, as you point out, and now we have this new order, not so much for the Egyptians but for the Israelites. And that's, again, the intended audience. So I think you're exactly right.

- Hank Smith: 00:34:55 In the first mention, the first thing they're going to do is going to center on this firstborn lamb, this male lamb without blemish.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:35:04 That's the core of this new religious system that Jehovah is revealing to them through the prophet Moses. We look at verses six and seven where it's required of the Israelites to put blood on the doorposts as a sign of their commitment to the covenant, and also a signal that the destroyer will pass by them and that their firstborn children will not be affected. And so we ask a couple of questions, why this action? I think we've answered that, to identify the participant as a follower of the true and living God. Why the blood? Well, because as we learn later on in Leviticus chapter 17, blood is the symbol of redemption.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:35:52 Leviticus 17 verse 11. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." And so by putting blood on the two side posts and the lintel, the crossbar of the entrance, we are signifying that we are fully engaged in the idea of redemption by the shedding of blood. For the next 1300 years, the shedding of the blood will be by animals that represent or point to the ultimate and great and last sacrifice, namely the lamb of God. And so I think that we see that in a broad perspective, understanding the atonement from not just the Bible or the New Testament but from the four standard works.
- John Bytheway: 00:36:52 I remember just trying to study the prayers on the sacrament prayers that we offer and just that little phrase, 'which was shed for them'. It led me to Hebrews 9:22 which sounds like Leviticus 17:11 a little bit, "Without shedding of blood, there is no remission."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:37:12 That's right. That's exactly right.
- John Bytheway: 00:37:14 I love that the Israelites here are saved by the blood of the lamb.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:37:19 Yeah. The verses that just proceed verse 22 in Hebrews chapter nine talk about the blood of the lamb as a substitute for the blood of the individuals, the blood of the people. We could talk about the way that ancient sacrifices were conducted in the temple, but that would take us too far for a field. The point here is that the atonement comes from the shedding of blood. It did anciently. And then the very person for whom all of these elements of the Passover are pointing to comes and he makes the great and last sacrifice and no longer then is the shedding of blood required but something even harder for us, and that's a broken heart and a contrite spirit.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:38:08 Interestingly enough, by the Lord asking us to offer a broken heart and a contrite spirit, he is asking us to offer the very things that Jesus himself offered. In Gethsemane, his spirit was crushed. That's the meaning of the word contrite is crushed. So that happens in Gethsemane to the savior. How does he die on the cross? Well, if you read Elder Talmadge's book, Jesus the Christ, Elder Talmadge says he died of a broken heart. He died of a ruptured heart, however medically you want to describe that. So the very things that Jesus himself offered as part of his atonement are the very things that now we must offer after the shedding of his blood. We must offer the broken heart in the contrite spirit. We must in a sense relive Gethsemane and Golgotha in our own lives.
- John Bytheway: 00:39:05 Interesting that before Jesus shows himself to the righteous in the new world in 3rd Nephi 11, the importance or urgency of it, I don't know, in 3rd Nephi 9, when they just hear a voice, that's when he says no more animal sacrifice. What you'll bring is a broken heart and a contrite spirit, you become the sacrifice.
- Hank Smith: 00:39:28 Andy, it seems to be all centered on the blood of the lamb. And then he also mentions the leaven. He wants unleavened bread, that's verse 8. Verse 15, seven days shall you eat unleavened bread. Get all the leaven out of your houses. So can I see maybe repentance in this, that yeast represents sin. I'm seeing the first principles of the gospel here, faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ, faith in the lamb of God, and repentance with the unleavened bread.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:39:58 Here's the grand secret that really hasn't changed from the time of Adam.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:02 Yeah.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:40:04 Just a couple of more points and then I want to say something about chapter 13. We notice that hyssop is to be used in the establishment of the Passover. You'll take a bunch of hyssop

and dip it in blood that's in the basement, strike the lintel and the side post. Interestingly enough, this hyssop I think foreshadows the crucifixion, and we could read John 19:29, which talks about the use of hyssop in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Again, part of this act of atonement and shedding of his blood.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:40:41 I'm going to skip a little bit just for the sake of time here, but look at verse 43. The Lord says to Moses and to Aaron, "This ordinance of the Passover shall only be eaten by those who are not strangers." Those that are not members of the covenant community shall not eat of the Passover. And it causes me to think about those verses in 3rd Nephi chapter 18 where we're told that no stranger is to partake of the sacrament. It's a covenant requiring a commitment and full participation. This is an act that requires us to use the phrase that's all the rage these days, it requires us to be all in, nothing lacking. Nothing lacking.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:41:28 So there's some significant parallels to that. Verse 46, no broken bone of the Paschal lamb. And of course we know that no bone of Jesus Christ was broken on the cross, John 19:36. These are some of the main elements that we associate with the establishment of the Passover commemoration. And they are what recapitulated, I guess we could say, in the great and last sacrifice that we commemorate not with a Passover meal but with the sacrament of the Lord's supper.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:08 Elder Jeffrey R. Holland gave this talk in October 1995 general conference called This Do in Remembrance of Me.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:42:15 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:16 He gave this great list of all the things that we could remember. But in that talk, he said, do we see the sacrament as our Passover, remembrance of our safety and deliverance and redemption. I loved how he connected Passover with sacrament. That sacrament is our Passover, he said.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:42:36 Yeah. And again, to just reiterate what Paul says, more pointedly, Jesus Christ is our Passover is the way he put it. Now, he very well may have meant Jesus Christ is our Paschal lamb, our Passover lamb. But I love the openness of the statement. Jesus is our Passover.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:43:01 Well, at the end of chapter 12, we see that the Lord then fulfills completely his promise. He brings the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies. And this then leads us to talk

about the results of the Exodus and the results of the Passover. And these are described largely in chapter 13 of Exodus. Number one, Israel is delivered from death and delivered from Egyptians, the bondage of the Egyptian leaders, largely because of the last plague, Pharaoh's sacrifice, if you will, of the firstborn males. And again, we are delivered from all different kinds of bondage as a result of our heavenly Father's sacrifice of his firstborn.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:43:59 I could not help but think of section 69 of the Doctrine and Covenants. I wasn't going to mention this but section 69 has a verse that haunts me because I wonder have I really done what I'm supposed to do. The context of section 69 is that it goes back to section 47 where John Whitmer is called to be the church historian in March of 1831. And then here in section 69 of the Doctrine and Covenants, his assignment is spelled out in more detail in November of 1839. But these are the two verses that haunt me starting with verses seven and eight.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:44:42 "Nevertheless, let my servant John Whitmer travel many times from place to place and from church to church that he may the more easily obtain knowledge, preaching and expounding, writing, copying, selecting, and obtaining all things which shall be for the good of the church and for the rising generations that shall grow up on the land of Zion." It seems like what the Lord is saying, everything that you do, all of your actions are to be funneled to this purpose, and that is to teach the rising generations that shall grow up on the land of Zion. And that's the didactic aspect to the teaching aspect of Passover, that these things are to be taught generation after generation after generation so that, again this idea all of us consider ourselves as though we were part of the original Israelites who came out of Egyptian bondage because of the Lord's strong arm and outstretched hand.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:50 There's an interesting point in that wonderful cartoon, The Prince of Egypt, where Pharaoh's son says, "I will not be the weak link." And that's kind of what the Lord is saying here is pass this down, pass this story down to your children. We have an obligation to tell our children, grandchildren, even great-grandchildren if we see them, what the Lord has done for us.
- John Bytheway: 00:46:14 So much it seems of some of the things we do in the gospel is to remember, and we hear that word in the sacrament prayer twice, the Passover. Now, this is so that you will remember this. The Feast of Tabernacles is so that you will remember that we dwelled in tents when we left, and all these things about

remembering because as we read the scriptures, we tend to forget.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:46:36 President Campbell's old saying, the most important word in our theological vocabulary is remember, and remember for a purpose. Not only to remember that we have responsibilities to others because of the Lord's goodness, but to just remember how good Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are to their children. Jesus Christ is the greatest manifestation of heaven Father's love for us. And that then takes us to maybe the central characteristic of God the Father and his son, Jesus Christ. 1st John 4, God is love. Everything that God does is influenced and shaped and mediated by his perfect love. That's the essence of his personality. And if we want to put a further point on it, to Elder Holland's book, Christ and the New Covenant, has this section on charity, the pure love of Christ. And he says, "Pure charity has only been manifested once in the history of the world, and that's the atonement of Jesus Christ."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:47:41 One of the things that we learn in chapter 13 is that special articles of clothing are to be worn by Israelite men. Verses 9 and 16, special clothing that are markers or symbols of the covenant and markers or symbols of the great and mighty acts of God in not only the lives of the Israelites then but Israelites later on. And thus by extension, the great things that God has done for us in our lives. There are actually three words that are used to describe the same thing in verses 9 and 16. The Hebrew word is totafot, the Aramaic word is tefillin, and the Greek word is phylacteries. And these are small boxes that have leather straps attached to them and they're fastened to the forehead and to the left arm, the arm that's closest to the heart.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:48:48 What's in these little boxes are very carefully, precisely written passages of scripture. They have to be written very small because the boxes are only about an inch or an inch and a half square. And what are the passages that are contained in these phylacteries? Exodus 13:1-10, so where we're at right now, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the Sh'ma, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one. Deuteronomy chapter 11. So two passages from Exodus. Exodus 13:1-10, Exodus 13:11-16. They're broken, they're separated into two separate passages. So four passages of scripture in these little phylacteries or in these boxes and they all have to do with the mighty acts of God, the greatness of God, and how we must remember and teach that to our children, pretty significant.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:49:50 A special route for the Exodus is outlined in chapter 13. Notice that the Lord does not take the Israelites to the land of promise

by way of the Philistines, the coastal highway, because it's too dangerous. He has them go by way of the Red Sea or what's in Hebrew called the Yam Suph, the Reed Sea. Even though it's easier to go the other way, the Lord wants to protect his people, and there's got to be a life's lesson in that. God guides us away from things that we may not be able to handle. And if we listen to him, then we can enjoy his blessings. If we don't listen to him, then we have no promise. I'm weak enough that I don't need to not heed the Lord and step into places or circumstances where I frankly don't have the ability to resist. I think we see that as an underlying theme here. I have a real appreciation for the Exodus story. It increases, I think, our appreciation for Moses as well as for Jesus Christ.

- Hank Smith: 00:51:02 I made a couple of notes here and I wanted to see just what both of you thought about this. If I'm a listener at home and I'm thinking, well, how am I going to relate this to my family or my teenagers or my seminary class? How do I do this? I think one thing has to be that I'm seeing a message that the lamb of God, the savior, can save you from false gods, can save you from bondage, any sort of addiction you may have. Egypt can be seen as an addiction and that you want to get out of that addiction. The lamb of God can save you from that. The lamb of God's going to save you from the sting of death, that you're going to live again.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:40 Andy, I think you've helped us focus here that the entire Exodus story is based on this lamb of God and the blood of the lamb is what saves from all of these different trials and problems and difficulties. When you read verse 17 of Exodus 13, I hear the Lord saying, don't go back to Egypt. And I almost hear that in my mind as we sometimes want to go back to our sins. We have a tendency to go back to the pains of the past, go back to the old gods. He says, "Don't return to Egypt. I don't want you to go back." I like that, that don't reverse course.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:52:20 And don't take the easy path in life. Take the path that will get you to your destination safely and securely. That's become a life lesson for me. There are easy paths to take. Don't always follow the easy path and be open to suggestions from heavenly influences, from the holy ghost that wants you to arrive at your destination.
- Hank Smith: 00:52:48 I think of a new member of the church who has to break down their old theology, the old theology is done away with. This new theology comes in, "Keep going. Keep going. The Lord's going to help you cross the Red Sea. He's going to get you to where you want to be. He'll guide you. Let that old theology go, let this

new theology take root, and the Lord will guide you." John, what do you think?

- John Bytheway: 00:53:16 I love what it points out in our Come, Follow Me manual. The Savior wanted the Israelites to always remember that he had delivered them, even after their captivity became a distant memory. This is why he commanded them to observe the Passover feast each year. What similarities do you see between the purposes of the feast of the Passover and the sacrament? I love that every single week we can focus on the sacrament table. We can focus on the savior sacrifice, that we are saved by the blood of the lamb.
- John Bytheway: 00:53:49 It's not wheeled in at Christmas and Easter, let's put the sacrament table in a storage room. It's every week to help us remember and to make that the focal point. It's not to hear talks. That's great too, but we go to take the sacrament again and renew our covenant. I love that today we're seeing, I don't want to say it all started back then because it started with Adam, but this has always been the focus of the lamb of God and the blood of the lamb is how we're saved.
- Hank Smith: 00:54:16 I see a switch for teenagers as well, that let's say Egypt is like this worldliness and the sacrament is this new theology. And there's this idea of let's dismantle the worldliness out of our life. And even if it's a little painful, let's dismantle this and let's focus on, like you said, John, this sacrament experience where we connect with the real God. I think of entertainment and phones, and all these can be like Egyptian gods that need to be dismantled, taken down, and let's focus in on the savior as our God.
- John Bytheway: 00:54:54 What did President Nelson say recently, that if most of the information you get comes from social media, your ability to feel the spirit will be diminished. And then look at the sacrament table, you can always have his spirit to be with you.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:55:09 Absolutely. I guess I'm in the stage of life where I'm looking at it from a parental and grand parental point of view. I'm always drawn to the words in Deuteronomy 6 which have a lot to do with what we've been talking about today. And the Lord says, "These words, which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart and thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Those are words to live by for parents and for grandparents that we can significantly influence our children's lives by talking always about these things.

- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:56:07 I have the privilege of serving at the Provo Missionary Training Center, and every Tuesday night, we get a devotional presented to us by either a general authority or general officer of the church. And two weeks ago, we had the privilege of having Elder Christofferson talk to us. And of course his message was the doctrine of Christ. But he said something that I think will always stick with me. He said to the missionaries, "Never tire of speaking of Jesus Christ, never tire. When you lie down, when you wake up, your daily walk and conversation, never tire of speaking of Jesus Christ."
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:56:48 And I think that with that concept in mind, our study of the Old Testament becomes so much more rich. The Old Testament is really the human family's first testament of Jesus Christ. We have many testaments. We have the New Testament, we have the other Testament, the Book of Mormon, but the human family's first testament of Jesus Christ is the Old Testament. And you remember Jesus' encounter in Jerusalem with groups of people that lean towards him and those that were opposed to him. And he gives them a surefire way to know that he is the Son of God, the Savior of the world.
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:57:30 He says in John 5:39, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me." And by that, I think what he meant to say is that don't follow the Pharaseic view that simply studying the scriptures brings you eternal life, which was a principle that the rabbis taught in his day, but rather search the scriptures that you can know about me and know me, and that will bring you eternal life. The words on a printed page will never bring anybody eternal life, but feelings that they cause and the actions that they impel you to perform, that will bring you eternal life.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:18 Andy, I think our listeners would be interested in your... Here's your decades of being a religious educator, knowing so much about the scriptures having taught I think a class probably on every standard work. What's that journey been like for you and also the journey of life from being a father to now a grandfather. Walk our listeners through your journey a little bit?
- Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:58:40 Well, that's a really interesting question. I wish that I could say that I lived a wayward life and I had a road to Damascus experience in my life. But to be quite honest with you, I was raised by good parents. They were converts to the church not too many years before I was born. And the truth of the matter is I cannot remember a time when I didn't know that these things were true. I wish that I could say, oh, I had this dramatic conversion experience, but I'm one of those that didn't.

Detractors to the gospel come and go. But the longer I'm at this, the more evidence I find for the truthfulness not just in the Old and New Testaments, but in the restoration of the gospel through living prophets.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 00:59:40 This has been an amazing journey for me precisely because it has strengthened so deeply those things that I have always known to be true. And like everybody else, I've had sacred experiences that have been aha moments. But I can never remember a time when I didn't know that these things were true.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 01:00:06 One of I guess the key elements in my own faith trajectory, if you want to call it that, has been a deeper appreciation of the centrality of Jesus Christ in everything that we do. And also the interest that our heavenly Father has in each one of us. I don't pretend to know how our heavenly Father and his son can know each of us so intimately and so well, I just know that they do, and that's been a source of strength. It's gotten us through some hard times. We had real sadness a year and a half ago when one of our sons-in-law just collapsed and died on a Friday night. We'd just spoken to him 45 minutes before that. We miss him a lot.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 01:01:04 But if there's one thing I can say about him, 36 years old, I don't think I know of a person who was more ready to meet his maker than he was. Just a pure hearted, good souled person. It caused a bit of a crisis in faith for me. How could Heavenly Father let somebody this good die, take him away from a family that needed him and from my wife and I who enjoyed his company? This caused a lot of suffering. It's okay if I call it a revelation. The interesting moments have always been, well, now you can appreciate even deeper the experiences of the savior who faced all injustice, who experienced greater contradictions than any person in any of the worlds that he created has ever faced.

Dr. Andrew Skinner: 01:02:05 Now you begin to understand what he felt in the garden and on the cross. That's been a significant period of growth for me even this late in my life. Always having known that these things are true, but there have been some amazing moments of personal revelation that have come from that. So that's been kind of my journey. I started out not to... I didn't even go to Brigham Young University as an undergraduate. My wife did. So I'm hoping that salvation will come to me clinging to her coattails. But when I first joined the BYU faculty, I think that there are one or two of the old timers who looked with suspicion on me because I had not followed a typical path. I've been grateful for that because I

have seen and heard and experienced things that are undeniable. So that's been a cool part of the experience.

Hank Smith:	01:03:21	Andy, we had a great lesson and then you just gave us just a perfect ending, really. John Bytheway, what a great day.
John Bytheway:	01:03:31	So fun to hear the familiar voice of Andy Skinner for all this time because we haven't talked for a long time, but it just felt so good to sit down with a couple of friends and talk about these wonderful stories. I took a lot of notes today. Thank you.
Dr. Andrew Skinner:	01:03:46	Thank you. You're very kind.
Hank Smith:	01:03:48	Well, what a beautiful day. Well, we want to thank you.
Dr. Andrew Skinner:	01:03:50	Well, thanks for the privilege. Thanks for the privilege.
Hank Smith:	01:03:53	We were very fortunate, very blessed to have you. Thank you Dr. Andrew Skinner for being here. We want to thank all of our listeners. Thank you for supporting us and thank you for your time with us. We know that your time is precious and the fact that you spend a little bit with us is just wonderful. Thank you. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And we hope all of you will join us next week on another episode of FollowHIM.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY WEEKLY SACRAMENT EXPERIENCE MORE MEANINGFUL?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, everyone. Welcome to FollowHIM favorites. My name is Hank Smith, I'm the host of a podcast called FollowHIM. I'm here with my incredible co-host John Bytheway, welcome John.
- John Bytheway: 00:15 Hi Hank.
- Hank Smith: 00:15 FollowHIM favorites this year. We take a question from this week's lesson. We are in Exodus chapter seven through 13 this week, John, we're going to focus in on chapter 12 for our question. The question is this, let me frame it. The Lord institutes, what's called the Passover, this very first Passover. Now fast forward a couple of thousand years later, Jesus has what we would call the last supper or the last Passover in which he makes a change. The Passover is no longer about the children of Israel coming out of Egypt. It's now about him and his blood and body. So, we're going to make a connection here, John, with our question, how can I make our weekly Passover our sacrament, the experience God means for it to be because maybe the sacrament comes and goes and I didn't feel anything or didn't think anything, it wasn't powerful or reflective at all. So how would you say, how do I make my weekly Passover experience, which we call the sacrament, something that has more impact
- John Bytheway: 01:19 This is one of my favorite topics, because I'm just kind of intrigued with things that the Lord has us to repeat. And it's not a Christmas and Easter thing. And after the pandemic, when so many of us missed our weekly worship, but the sacrament, to me, it is the most merciful thing to think that the Lord would say "Come back every single week and take the sacrament." So for me, the thing I look forward to is, as I understand the doctrine, when we're partaking of the sacrament worthy, it's like we are being baptized again, renewing our covenants and the Lord is passing over us. What an opportunity every week to go back and get a new start as if you're being baptized again. So for me, it's very easy to look forward to going and partaking of this sacrament again, and hearing a priest say, "You can always have his spirit to be with you." That's a great way to start a week.

- Hank Smith: 02:11 It's a personal connection here to the Old Testament, Exodus chapter 12, you wouldn't think, "Oh, I experience an Exodus type experience in my life." But here we are every week where the Lord says to these Israelites in Egypt, "You can trust in the blood of the lamb. You can trust it, put it on your door, put the blood of the lamb on your door and you will be safe."
- Hank Smith: 02:37 And every week in my sacrament experience, I can repeat that in my head, that I can trust the blood of the lamb. He didn't say, go out there and fight the destroying angel yourself, just trust in this blood that it will take care of you. This blood will keep you safe. So for me, I can connect to this Exodus 12 moment of the blood of the lamb. I trust it. It will keep me safe. In this Exodus, 12, the Lord says, "Get all the leaven out of your house, all the yeast." We would tie that to sin. So let's get the sin out of our lives. Let's repent as much as we can. And then trust, even in that whole experience, even as we are getting rid of the leaven of our lives, we can still absolutely trust in the blood of the lamb.
- John Bytheway: 03:18 I think if you're having trouble with that, just listen to the priests pray, listen to what they say, that they are willing to take upon them, of the name of thy son, boy, what's he's willing to do for us. And we can be willing to call ourselves followers of Christ, willing to take upon the name of thy son, always remember him, keep his commandments, which he has given them, and then that promise they can always have my spirit to be with them. Can you think of anything greater you could possibly imagine than to always have the spirit of the Lord to be with you? Because I can't. That's the greatest thing ever and every week we can do that. So it's easy for me to be excited about going to sacrament meeting.
- Hank Smith: 03:56 Think of this as maybe the Lord's reassurance. You're in my family, you're coming with me. You and I are both fathers and we've had our children take upon themselves our name. They were born in our family and you're one of us and we don't leave you behind. Sometimes we think, "Oh, I don't know if I'm going to be good enough. I don't know if I'm going to make it." And you and I, as fathers are saying, of course you are, I would never leave you behind.
- Hank Smith: 04:24 In John 17. The Lord asks the father "I want these people whom you've given me to be with me where I am." So apparently it wouldn't be heaven without you. So you can trust him, that he wants you there with him. He wants you. He's not going to give up on you. Jacob chapter five, I'm reminded that the tree is saved not because the tree does anything right. It's because the

gardener refuses to give up on the tree. And that's the same thing with you. You are going to make it not because you are so amazing, but because you have an amazing gardener who refuses to give up on you.

John Bytheway: 04:59 Yeah, exactly. Because it's to what he's done, not what we've done, but what he's done. And we're going to repent, we're going to come to the sacrament table hungry, we're going to be there. And oh, just being there to partake of that, that's super motivating to me. when I was a Bishop, I thought we're not supposed to have visual aids during Sacrament meeting talks. We don't use PowerPoint stuff, but I think there is a visual aid in the chapel, that sacrament table is bolted to the floor it's going to be there every week. And the Lord's saying, "Come back and let's do this again." I love that.

Hank Smith: 05:31 Yeah. I think so too. There's this old story I heard of a man who was visiting a church once and he walked in before Sacrament meeting started, turned around, walked right back out and his friend said "What's wrong?" And he said, "I can't go in there. Whose body is underneath that white cloth up there? You got a body up there? I don't want to go in there." And the guy said, "That's not a body, it's just the bread and water." And then he realizes, "How would I be acting if that really was the Savior's body laying up there underneath that cloth?" And that can have impact on the way you feel. I know I have students who say that they keep the Hymn book open and read through the lyrics of the Hymn. It helps them have more of a powerful reflective moment. Any other tips you would give for having a powerful reflective moment during the most important 15 minutes of the week?

John Bytheway: 06:19 Yeah, I think that what you just said is really nice there because when I was a little kid, mom would say, "Think about Jesus." And all I could think of was like the picture, a picture of Jesus in my mind. And then your grandpa dies and your grandma dies and other people in your life that are important to you. And when it says in remembrance of the body of thy son, my favorite thing to think of is that his body was not there when they went in resurrection morning. And that means all those other people will be resurrected too, my grandma, my grandpa, and that all of them will see them again. And that was the first fruits of the resurrection and all those events, the Gethsemane and the crucifixion on the cross and the resurrection are all together in this sacrament to remember his sacrifice for us. So I'm glad you said that, because that's what I like to think about. He's not here, he is risen, as he said.

Hank Smith: 07:16 And don't feel too guilty for your past sacrament experiences if you've been like, "Oh, I haven't been taking it as seriously as I have." That's why the Lord gives us so many chances. I promise wherever you are, you have seven days in which you are going to get to try again. You're going to get to try again. So go ahead and try again this Sunday to have a powerful, reflective reverent moment. What's interesting to me, John is just 15 minutes of your week can make a difference for every other minute of your week. I don't know how many minutes there are in a week, but there's a bunch and this is just 15 of them, but man, they'll probably make a big difference for every other one.

John Bytheway: 07:55 That's the focal point of all of, it is to go take the sacrament. And one more thing that I think is so interesting is that when the apostle Paul describes the armor of God in Ephesians six, everything except for the very last item is defensive. It's a breastplate of righteousness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, everything is defensive armor. And the last thing Paul says and take the sword of the spirit. But another way to think of the sacrament is I'm going to re-arm Elder Holland said once, "Are we just on the defensive? Or are we just going to get beat up?" He said, "No, we're given a weapon." You are given it. I am given it. And he said, "The thing that actually allows us to do battle with the world is the sword of the spirit." And the last thing the priests will say is that they may always have his spirit to be with them. So I think about re-arming as I go back into school, into work, into the world, I've got the spirit to be with me. I'm armed and I'm going to be okay.

Hank Smith: 08:51 Beautiful John Bytheway, that's why we love you so much. Hey, we hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called FollowHIM, look us up wherever you get your podcast. But if not, join us next week right here for another FollowHIM Favorites.