



“The Battle is the Lord’s”

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:

Why do the Israelites demand a king? Dr. Daniel Peterson explores the rise and downfall of Saul, Saul's complicated relationship with David, and how pride often comes before a spiritual fall.

Part 2:

Dr. Peterson continues and discusses the fall of Saul, David and Goliath, and his personal testimony of Jesus Christ.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Daniel Peterson
- 01:08 Introduction of Dr. Daniel Peterson
- 02:51 The Interpreter Foundation movie *Undaunted*
- 05:32 Guerilla warfare in the Book of Mormon
- 09:19 Samuel’s sons are rejecting the Lord
- 10:59 Israel wants and receives a king
- 15:58 The Israelites are tired of being peculiar
- 19:03 The Lord will help Israel choose Saul as king
- 23:23 Saul is humble when called to be king
- 29:28 Saul is hiding when he is first called
- 31:41 Dr. Peterson shares a personal story about a friend called to difficult callings and jobs simultaneously
- 34:11 The Ammonites threaten Israel
- 39:44 The contrast of Saul in his early days vs later period as king
- 44:36 The beginning of the downfall of Saul, including sacrifice
- 48:56 Samuel tells Saul his son won’t inherit the throne
- 52:24 Obedience and keeping covenants
- 56:45 Jonathan smites a garrison of Philistines
- 1:02:14 End of Part 1–Dr. Daniel Peterson

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Daniel Peterson
- 00:12 Saul becomes self-centered
- 05:01 “Lord, is it I?”
- 09:29 Samuel approaches Saul
- 11:36 Saul no longer is divinely chosen king of Israel
- 14:35 Samuel kills Agag the king of the Amalakites
- 16:08 Dr. Peterson shares a story about the humility of Hugh Nibley
- 22:04 Hank shares a story about a humble stake president
- 25:10 Stories of Bob Barker and Jimmy Stewart being humble
- 26:54 Samuel goes to Jesse to find and anoint new future king to replace Saul
- 28:54 Saul changes
- 32:47 David meets Goliath
- 37:44 David had fought animals while defending his sheep
- 40:12 David goes with his strength

- 44:56 Jonathan loves David
- 46:30 Saul wants to kill David
- 50:59 We are to see ourselves in Saul and David
- 53:41 The profundity of scripture
- 57:59 End of Part II—Dr. Daniel Peterson

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Biographical Information:



Daniel C. Peterson (PhD, University of California at Los Angeles) is a professor emeritus of Islamic studies and Arabic at Brigham Young University, where he founded the University's Middle Eastern Texts Initiative. He has published and spoken extensively on both Islamic and Latter-day Saint subjects. Formerly chairman of the board of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) and an officer, editor, and author for its successor organization, the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, his professional work as an Arabist focuses on the Qur'an and on Islamic philosophical theology. He is the author, among other things, of a biography entitled *Muhammad: Prophet of God* (Eerdmans, 2007).

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- Hank Smith: 00:00:02 Welcome to FollowHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:09 And I'm John Bytheway.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:11 We love to learn.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:12 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'm here with my, now listen to this closely, my 600 shekel co-host John Bytheway.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:34 Shekel, of course, is Hebrew for grams, right? Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:38 Yes. My 600 gram co-host. I don't know if you know that reference, John, 600 shekel.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:45 Oh, that was the weight of Goliath's spear alone.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:48 The spear head, the spear head was 600 shekels.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:53 Available in the gift shop today as you leave, right.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:55 Yeah. John, we are in First Samuel today. We've discussed the first few chapters. But now, we're going to get into the meat of things. And we have a returning guest. Please tell us who's with us.
- John Bytheway: 00:01:08 Well, we are just so glad to have Brother Daniel C. Peterson back again. Before we hit the record button, we've been talking and laughing. And we love Brother Peterson. So glad he's here. And for all of the contributions he has made over the years, in

fact, I was going to tell you I have a double cassette recording. It's called Understanding Islam. I bet when I first got that, I listened to it 10 times.

- John Bytheway: 00:01:31 It helped me so much in not only understanding the Book of Mormon, but I had a student who was Muslim. It helped me so much just to see how she treated the Quran, which she brought to class. It was so helpful to me. So, I have to thank you personally, Brother Peterson. He's been a professor of Islamic Studies and Arabic at Brigham Young University and founder of the university's Middle Eastern Text Initiative. And those are not text messages, are those, Hank?
- John Bytheway: 00:01:59 He's published and spoken extensively both on Islamic and LDS subjects. He's formerly the chairman of the board of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, which has been renamed now as the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. His professional work as an Arabist focuses on the Quran and on Islamic philosophical theology. He is the author, among other things, of a biography entitled Muhammad: Prophet of God.
- John Bytheway: 00:02:27 He was part of that Witnesses movie, The Interpreter Foundation. In fact, I hope all of our listeners will go to interpreterfoundation.org and look at all of the faithful scholarship that is there and that they can learn and benefit from. He has a blog that my father-in-law loves to read, Sic et Non, which means yes and no. That's Latin.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:49 How do you spell that, John?
- John Bytheway: 00:02:51 S-I-C E-T N-O-N. But what's coming up that's pretty exciting is they did the Witnesses film about the three witnesses. Now, they've got a docudrama called Undaunted. And this, you can go to witnessesofthebookofmormon.org. But I want Dr. Peterson to tell us more about this Undaunted and what it is because I'm pretty excited about this.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:03:14 Let me show you. I don't know if this is going to be visible or not, but there it is. And DVD will eventually be streaming, and it's a docudrama. The theatrical film Witnesses was focused on Joseph Smith and the three witnesses. This is not a theatrical film. It goes beyond the three witnesses to the eight witnesses as well. And also, what I call the unofficial or informal witnesses, Mary Whitmer, Emma Smith, Lucy Mack Smith, people like that.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:03:43 Josiah Stowell, other people who saw the plates, had an encounter with an angelic messenger, things like that. And it also incorporates scenes from the Witnesses film, but also scenes filmed especially for it, the story of Mary Whitmer, for example, the experience of Hiram Page with a mob, things like that that are quite dramatically portrayed, and commentary from scholars. We have several of the most prominent LDS historians.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:04:11 We have a retired federal judge talking about the importance of eyewitness testimony, a retired federal prosecutor talking about the same subject. We have the fellow, who made the plates for the movie and who makes them for church visitors' centers or church films, talking about what it would take to make plates, to fake them in effect. So, just a lot of interesting perspective, including a couple of non-Latter-day Saints, who we wanted to get their perspective on these things. So, I'm excited about it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:04:40 It's actually the film that I set out to make initially. The theatrical film was an afterthought. We thought, "Hey, this would be a great story. Let's do that." The docudrama was the one that we wanted to make. And so, now, it's finally appearing. About two and a half hours long and two parts. It doesn't have to be watched all at one sitting. And then, I want to say something else about a series of what we're calling Reels, which are available on The Interpreter Foundation website.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:05:06 And they're seven to 12-minute short features, dealing with specific issues. Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, Sidney Rigdon, the Reliability of Eyewitness Testimony, the Kinderhook Plates, James Jesse Strang, issues like that that might come up, questions that might arise while people are thinking about the witnesses. Especially, we're hoping young people watch them and learn something more about the witnesses than what they have previously known.
- John Bytheway: 00:05:32 Oh, that's so great. I can't wait to see that. I'll watch every minute of it probably repeatedly. Let's see. I think you did a lecture at BYU in speeches once called A scholar Looks at the Book of Mormon. You talked about having a fascination when you were in high school, I think, for guerilla warfare.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:05:51 Yeah, I did. Yeah. For some reason who knows why, teenage perversity, whatever it was, I was really interested in guerilla warfare. So, I read Che Guevara and Mao Tse-tung and people like that, theories of guerilla warfare. Not a very reputable hobby, I think. It got me in trouble. At one point, I was in the

Honors Program as an undergraduate at BYU. And they had you fill out an individual curriculum planning form each semester.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:06:17 I hated those things. I thought they were a waste of time. And so, one year, I just didn't do it and they kept pestering me to do it. So, I finally sat down and said, "Okay, what the heck." It would ask, for example, what is your career objective? Well, some of you may remember the old story of Patty Hearst, the heiress in California, who joined a weird group called the Symbionese Liberation Army. And she described herself when she was captured as an urban guerrilla.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:06:44 And so, I thought, "Ah, that sounds good. I'll make that my career objective." So, I said, "Career objective, urban guerrilla." What courses are you taking toward this? I didn't figure anybody would read it, right? So, I filled it out and I said, "I'm taking some ROTC courses on weapons and tactics, civil engineering courses on bridge design." I just picked them out of the catalog and sent it in. Man, I got to meet most of the senior administrators at BYU. So, I was interested in that kind of thing. But then, I was-
- Hank Smith: 00:07:18 That's great.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:07:19 ... over teaching Gospel Doctrine in the Jerusalem branch after I'd graduated actually and was beginning... I was about to begin graduate studies. That's a story in itself. But I was looking at the chapters in the Book of Mormon about the Gadianton robbers. And suddenly, it occurred to me the Gadianton robbers were a textbook case of guerrilla warfare practice.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:07:38 And even in the arrows they made, which eventually led to their at least temporary defeat, that they were... it was like they were following Mao's playbook. But of course, even if you think Joseph Smith wrote it more than a century before Mao wrote anything, so I'm thinking, "How did Joseph do this? How would he have known anything about it?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:07:56 Joseph's idea of the military was fife and drum parades about the revolutionary war and dressing up in his lieutenant general's uniform, reviewing the troops on his horse Charlie in Nauvoo. That was not guerrilla warfare, which is not romantic at all, and yet the Book of Mormon accurately describes it. And I thought, "That is stunning, really." A small thing, but it's a throw-away details where you think, "How did he pull this off?"

- John Bytheway: 00:08:22 Thank you so much. Because that's what I remember learning from you was like, yeah, they didn't occupy territory. They just came out of the mountains, attacked and disappeared again. And when they got too big and they did occupy territory, then that was their downfall, right?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:08:37 That was the big arrow that Mao warned against what he called premature regularization, where you think it's a mouthful. I don't know what it is in Chinese, but it's where you think you're ready to go toe to toe with a regular army, and you're really not yet. But he learned from that, that you have to bide your time until you really are ready. Because once you hold territory, then you have to defend it. Up until then, you're just lightning strikes, attack and withdraw.
- John Bytheway: 00:09:04 And blend in.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:09:05 Demoralize the enemy. But the Book of Mormon is perfect on that, just perfect.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:10 Dan Peterson is the Hank Aaron of religious educators. It's a home run every time.
- John Bytheway: 00:09:16 We're two minutes in, right? Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:19 Yeah. All right. Well, let's jump in. We are in First Samuel today. Dan, we're going to hand it over to you. We'll throw in some comments here and there. But when we left off with Dr. Strathearn, Samuel was a young man, grew, and the Lord was with him. And then, we pick up continuing with the stories.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:09:37 By Chapter 8, he's old and he's got sons that are supposed to assume his role. And it's the old story. It happened to the other previous high priest. These sons turned out to be corrupt. They're taking bribes and so on. And so, the elders of Israel come to Samuel and say, "This just isn't satisfactory," which is obviously true. And I think Samuel may have a little bit of a problem with that. He never quite admits the problem with his boys. You can imagine that.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:10:06 But Israel says, "This will not do." But they propose a solution, "We want a king." And they say in verse 5 of Chapter 8, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." There's a lot packed into that little phrase, "Make us like all the nations." That's exactly what they're not supposed to be. They're not supposed to be like all the nations. But they were a tribal confederacy at this point. They're ruled over by judges.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:10:28 And the word in Semitic languages, still in Arabic today, for judging is also related to the word for governing. So, it's kind of a little bit of both. It's not just being swearing in on a judge in our modern sense. But they want him to make them a king and Samuel is not pleased because he knows. Well, the Lord will soon tell him that they're not rejecting him so much, although they are rejecting his family, but his family brought it on themselves. But they're rejecting the Lord. The thing displeased Samuel, and Samuel prayed under the Lord.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:10:59 And the Lord says unto Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people. Give them what they want for they," and this is important, verse 7, "for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." I mean, this is a decisive thing and I can't help but think forward to the appearance of Christ before Pilate when Pilate talks about Jesus claiming to be the king of the Jews, and the crowd responds, "We have no king, but Caesar."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:11:23 And I think, "Man, do you not realize this is an echo of that fateful day when the monarchy of Israel was born, and it displeased Samuel, it displeased the Lord." The Lord says, "Look, they've done this all the time. So, you go ahead and give them what they want." But verse 9, "Howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them. Show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. Give them what they want, but tell them what this is going to cost them."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:11:50 Yep. They're not going to go into this blindly. They need to know in advance what this is going to do. And so, he lays out, "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you" in verse 11. And it talks about all these things that he will do, abuses really. He'll draft all your people. He'll make them his servants. He'll draft them into his army. He'll make them work, and cook for him, and take care of his palace, and reap his harvest, and make his instruments of war.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:12:18 He'll take your daughters, make them bakers and so on. He'll take your fields, your vineyards, your olive yards, even the best of them. He'll give them out to his cronies, to his servants, it says here. He'll take the tenth of your seed. This is probably in addition to the tithe that they're supposed to pay.
- Hank Smith: 00:12:33 Yeah, this is tax.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:12:35 Yeah, it's a tax. Now, some of us today would say, "Wow, 10%?"

- Hank Smith: 00:12:39 I'll take it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:12:39 Cool.
- Hank Smith: 00:12:40 Yeah. It's a good tax rate.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:12:40 I'll take it. It's presumptuous on his part to take the same amount, the same percentage that the Lord takes. So now, it's not going to be 10%, but 20% that they have to fork over. That begins to be a burden. And he'll take your best young men, your donkeys. He'll put them to his work. Take the tenth of your sheep, and you'll be his servants. And the word for servant is, well, it's hard to distinguish in ancient Hebrew between servant and slave.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:13:09 And later on, by the way, when Goliath is addressing the Israelite troops, he'll identify them as the servants of Saul. They should be the servants of the Lord, but it's striking that that is in fact what they become certainly in the eyes of the Philistines. They're just the servants of their king. But the people refuse to obey Samuel. They say, "Nay, but we will have a king over us" in verse 19. And they repeat it, "That we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:13:40 I think they've thought that this tribal confederation business didn't work really well, but that's apparently what the Lord wanted for them. He didn't want a king. Now, interestingly, later on, when they do have the battle with Goliath, when Saul was chosen, one of the things that makes him stand out is that he's a full head taller than anybody else. He's a big guy. But then, they confront Goliath who's according to most scholars that comes out to about nine feet tall.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:14:06 They want a king to defend them, fight their battles. But when the time comes and their king meets an even bigger guy, he's terrified. And the whole army of Israel is terrified with him. If you don't have the Lord fighting your battle, which is I think part of the moral of this whole story with David. David goes out and he's a relatively little guy, and he's got no armor, and he defeats Goliath. And we'll talk about that later. But in fact, your strength doesn't consist in the fact that you have a tall king because they have an even bigger warrior.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:14:34 The Lord says to Samuel, "Go ahead, hearken unto the voice. Make them a king."

- John Bytheway: 00:14:38 It always surprises me when I read this because his argument sounds so convincing, and he gets right to the end of it. And they say, "Yeah, but we want a king." It's like, they didn't hear any of that. And having tried to raise kids, it's like, okay, but this, this, this, this, this, this, this, this. But they want what they want when they want it.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:58 And it's intriguing to me, too, the idea of hearken unto the voice of the people, which was so important as the reign of the judges would introduce in the Book of Mormon, that do your business by the voice of the people. And I see that, well, that's a principle here too, but they'll get the consequences of it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:15:15 They will. So, there are the roots of a democratic idea even in the Old Testament. And the Book of Mormon tells us that people won't usually choose evil, but sometimes they do. I mean, I know it's bad form in some circles to cite someone like Hitler, but Hitler was democratically elected. He got a minority of the vote, but the highest single vote total. The people chose evil.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:15:41 The motto of some totalitarians I've heard is one man, one vote once. Once you've won, boy, that's it. No more democratic elections. So, when people make a really bad choice, they need to recognize that it may carry bad consequences for them. But they've been warned.
- Hank Smith: 00:15:58 I use this with my students, this verse 5, make us like all the nations, verse 20, make us like all the nations, the idea of we're tired of being different. I'm tired of being a peculiar people. We want to be like everybody else. I'm tired of getting up in the morning and going to seminary. I'm tired of everyone looking, there's the Latter-day Saint kid.
- John Bytheway: 00:16:20 Reminds me of the Lord's preface in the Doctrine and Covenants in Section 1, where it says that their image as an idol in the likeness of the world. I want to be like the world. Every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, which is in the likeness of the world is about what verse 16, I think. And it's that same thing, I want to be like the world. I want to be like the nations.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:16:41 We don't like standing out, especially we can say this about teenagers. They want to be part of the group, but it's true of all of us to an extent. We don't like being mocked or looked down upon. And I think of the great and spacious building in the Book of Mormon. Well, the people are up there in the building and they're pointing the finger of mockery, the finger of scorn. And

some of the people partaking of the fruit of the tree fall away for that very reason.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:17:05 Man, it's embarrassing. They're making fun of me. I don't like this. And yet the gospel, the kingdom, the church have always got to be out of sync with the world. If they weren't, that would be a matter for concern.
- John Bytheway: 00:17:18 That's right.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:17:20 The point is not to be weird for the sake of being weird. We should be different. If we're in lockstep with everybody around us, something has gone seriously wrong. And I can say that when I was growing up, when I began to be active in the church, most of my friends... well, almost none of my friends were active Latter-day Saints. So, I had a ward that didn't have very many young people in it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:17:37 And I was in a high school with very few Latter-day Saints. And it began to bother me because I began to be very sensitive on certain issues, where if I was three minutes late to sacrament meeting, I felt really terrible. I'd really blown it. My dad wasn't a member, my mother wasn't active. And then, I'd think about my friends who were doing, I won't go much further, but they were doing things a lot worse than being three minutes late for a sacrament meeting.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:18:01 And I thought, "No, they don't feel any guilt at all. How's this an improvement?" I feel rotten for doing things that they wouldn't even think about. You go through that phase where you're thinking, "Is this really better?" Well, in the long term, of course, it is and in the not very long term, it's better. But still, there were moments where I thought it'd be so easy to just toss all this aside and just be like my friends.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:18:27 I think of a really sad confession of a really prominent scholar. You'd recognize his name. He's passed away now. But he told me once how sad he was that he had been critical of the church when his children were growing up. He was active. He was committed. He was a believer. He said, "But somehow I conveyed my criticism and not my faith." And now, most of his children are disaffected, and he was so sorrowful.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:18:54 And he said, he just hoped the Lord would forgive him for that. It was such a mistake, because he genuinely was committed, believed very explicitly.

- Hank Smith: 00:19:03 I've noticed that they're going to choose a king, but the Lord doesn't shut the door. He says, "All right, let's do it your way. Let's go get a king. I'll help you out in this, even though it's not going to work out."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:19:15 Yeah, he does. And so, he inspires Samuel to go and choose a king. And so, you get that story in Chapter 9, there's a man of Benjamin. Benjamin was the smallest of the tribes. It effectively disappears generations later. It merges with the tribe of Judah and just vanishes. But he goes out to visit with a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish. And he has a son whose name was Saul, now a choice young man, it says, and a goodly.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:19:40 And there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. From his shoulders and upward, he was higher than any of the people. In other words, he was a full head taller than anybody else. He was a big, strong guy. And what they're looking for really, it seems is kind of like a war leader as much as anything. And so, it makes sense that you look at him like, well, he's big and he's strong, like Mormon was large in stature.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:20:05 And in these days, the generals were often right in the thick of battle. They weren't necessarily back behind the lines plotting strategy. They were out there fighting. And having a guy who's strong and tall and has long arm span, this makes sense. But he's pretty humble in a sense, and he is. I mean, he comes from humble circumstances and he actually starts off actually humble. That will change.
- Hank Smith: 00:20:27 Yeah. That will change.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:20:29 Yes. And it's the old line from Lord Acton, power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. I think that's what happens here. It's a sad cautionary tale. It starts off with a very domestic or humble everyday case. Saul's father has some donkeys, and they're lost. And he sends Saul and a friend... servant to go out and try to find these donkeys. And they look around and they look around and they can't find them.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:20:57 And finally, they come to a land called Zuph. Saul says, "Let's go back. I mean, we can't find them." But the servant says, "No, there's in this city a man of God. He's an honorable man. All that he saith comes surely to pass. Now, let us go thither. Peradventure he can show us our way that we should go." And it's interesting to me that Saul doesn't seem to have heard of him. Samuel is a famous guy. There's several clues here in these chapters that Saul is maybe not the most spiritually sensitive guy around.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:21:28 His servant knows about Samuel, the great man of God, the seer. Nah, Saul doesn't know anything about him. So, he says, "Let's go ask him." They talk about getting a gift, and we'll give him something. This reminds me, in a way, of the story of Joseph Smith. One of the things Joseph was known for among people who knew him, I won't even say in the early days of the church, before the founding of the church, was his ability to find things.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:21:50 There are several stories about that, that he could see things at a distance. This is the kind of thing that apparently Samuel could do, and he's called the seer. And that was one of his gifts. Very, very humble. I mean, you think, "Surely, there are more exalted things than this that you can do than finding donkeys," but it is something he can do. And Joseph could do the same sort of thing.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:22:12 And he finally gives it up partly because Joseph Sr. tells him, "You've got a great calling. You shouldn't be wasting it on this kind of nonsense. Stop looking for lost coins and things like that. That's not what you're supposed to do. You've got this ability, and devote it to God." There's a point of contact there between Samuel and Joseph, I think. So, anyway, they encounter Samuel and Samuel's already been warned, verse 15, the day before.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:22:39 He says, "There will be a man who'll show up out of the land of Benjamin. And he's the one that you're supposed to anoint to be the captain over my people Israel. He may save my people out of the land of the Philistines. I've looked upon my people because their cry has come unto me." Same kind of language you get when Moses is called to deliver the people of Israel out of Egypt. "I've heard their cry."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:22:59 And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of, this same shall reign over my people." So, Samuel gives him this advice. He's forget about the donkeys, verse 20. They've been found. Don't worry about them. "But what's really important is you, the desire of Israel," it says, "on whom is all the desire of Israel. Is it not on thee and on all thy father's house?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:23:23 Now, the desire of Israel ought to be God, but, oh well, it's right now on Saul. And Saul responds in a humble way. He says, "Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, my family the least of all the families of the tribes of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" This is commendable. He starts off well, at least he seems to. And so, you go through

this little episode of Samuels calling him and anointing him at the beginning of Chapter 10.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:23:57 And I want to say something about that, that in Chapter 10, Samuel takes a vial of oil and pours it upon his head. Now, Latter-day Saints are aware of anointings. We still believe in use of oil for certain kinds of anointing, not only inside the temple, but outside of the temple. But the word for anointing is related to the word Messiah. The verb to anoint is related to the word Messiah.
- Hank Smith: 00:24:21 Anointed one is Messiah, right?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:24:21 Yeah. So, Christos, Christ, that's the Greek word related to anointing, a chrism people sometimes talk about. The Messiah, the Savior, is the anointed one in the ultimate sense. But in the meantime, kings are anointed. He's anointed to be a king as well, Jesus is. Kings have been anointed. We'll have two of them in this set of chapters, Saul and then David, who are anointed with oil literally to become kings.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:24:48 And so, these chapters, I think, ought to be of interest to Latter-day Saints, who know something about oil anointings. And they still do that, I understand, during the coronation of the British Monarch. There's an anointing with oil, which is carryover from biblical practices, I'm sure, inspired by these very chapters. It's a literal anointing with oil that makes them literally the anointed one.
- Hank Smith: 00:25:10 Man, we start out so well here. You're thinking, "This is going to work. We found the most humble guy in all of Israel. This is going to work," and it's not going to work.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:25:22 Now, unfortunately, it goes to his head. Saul is a tragic story. He's not simply evil. Some of the later kings of Israel will be simply evil. He wasn't, but he goes very bad. Has to be removed and his line doesn't succeed him afterwards, which is terribly sad.
- Hank Smith: 00:25:41 This is a lesson in Section 121. As soon as men gets a little power or authority, as they suppose, they can't handle it. They cannot handle it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:25:49 Yeah. One of the things I love about these stories, most of us probably are not going to have the opportunity to serve as kings of Judah or Israel or anything like that, not in this life, but they're so human in a way. This is the same thing, it can go to

advancement in a business, in a corporation, or advancement, frankly, in the church.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:26:11 We have to be careful that if we're called to a position, it doesn't go to our heads, that we don't become better than others because we have that position or that we think that there's glory in it for us. That's not what it's about. I really like the principle that we should look at the scripture and think, "Boy, look how stupid he was. Look at how wicked he was." Is there any chance that I'm guilty of this sort of thing? I mean, could this apply to me?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:26:34 I'm not Saul, but have I ever behaved like this? When, man, I succeed at something, I got an appointment or I get an office or win some praise, and I start thinking, "I really am good."
- Hank Smith: 00:26:46 Because if he just could have kept that attitude, if he could have kept that, am I not a Benjamite, the smallest tribe of Israel, my family is the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Man, if you could keep that humility, you're going to be okay, Saul. But he loses that.
- John Bytheway: 00:27:02 Moses and Enoch, who we've started out with, "All the people hate me. I'm slow of speech," Enoch says. And they seem to have been able to keep it, I guess. I like the idea of sometimes in the scriptures, you have examples, sometimes you have warnings. This is one of those that starts as an example and sadly ends up at, don't do this, a warning.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:27:24 Yeah. I remember my brother telling me once that when he was called as a bishop, he said it was probably the darkest day of his life in terms of testimony. Why? Because he said, "I'd always looked up to bishops."
- Hank Smith: 00:27:40 And I found out they're just like me.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:27:42 Yeah. I was one and I thought, "Really?" But I don't think that's a bad attitude to have. Somewhere I've seen a line from Heber J. Grant and I can't remember where, it's been years, where he said, "If you ever feel totally adequate to a church calling, that's a real problem. You should feel intimidated, humbled and worried, not to the point of being disabled." I'm thinking, "Man, I need help because I just can't do this."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:28:11 If you come to it like, "Man, I've been waiting for this position for a long time. Heads are going to roll. I'm really going to make

changes here." Then I think you need to go back to the drawing board a little bit.

- Hank Smith: 00:28:24 Anyone who wants to be bishop should be.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:28:26 And I've heard that line from general authorities too, who said, "You want this position?" This idea that you should be humbled by the colleague and intimidated by it, rather than exhilarated. "Boy, now I have power and authority, and this is what I deserve. It's about time they called me." That's entirely the wrong attitude.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:28:43 To me, that's really relevant to these passages that Saul starts off with that attitude and so you think at first, this is going to go well. This is a good guy. But he can't keep it and that's the tragedy of Saul. But he's not a rotten person, but he turns to the worst.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:00 The corruption takes hold.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:29:02 Yeah. People are called together, in verse 17, at Mizpah. Samuel wants to manifest to them who has been called. He recites their history to them. "And you've rejected your God," he says again in verse 19. "He saved you. He himself saved you. You didn't need a king then, but you've said unto him, nay, but set a king over us. Now, therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands. I mean, you're going to get what you asked for."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:29:28 So, Samuel calls all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin has taken. I suppose they cast lots or determined in some way which tribe is relevant. Then, he calls the tribe of Benjamin to come forth and he chooses the family. And Saul is chosen out of the family, and they can't find him. And this is actually sort of comical in a way. Therefore, they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:29:51 And the Lord answered, "Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff." Now, what that means is, they've all gathered from all over Israel to Mizpah for this big pan-Israelite meeting. Saul is hanging among the baggage. He does not want to be king. He's hiding out there. So, they ran and fetched him thence.
- Hank Smith: 00:30:13 I want to see a sacrament meeting like this. The new bishop is so and so. Where is he? He's out in the parking lot. He does not want this calling.

- John Bytheway: 00:30:23 He's in the coat closet.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:30:25 So then, they see him and he's head and shoulders taller than anybody else.
- Hank Smith: 00:30:29 You can't hide.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:30:30 No. And Samuel says, "Do you see him whom the Lord have chosen? There's none like him among all the people." And all the people shouted and said, "God save the king," which sounds very British.
- Hank Smith: 00:30:41 Yeah. And you noticed that.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:30:43 And some people really favor him. And then, of course, there's some, the children of Belial, bad guys, the kind of thugs who say, "Ah, how shall this man save us?" And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace. He doesn't respond to them with anger or anything like that. And there'll be a really nice illustration of that later.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:31:02 In some ways, I've thought sometimes the best candidates for positions might be precisely those who don't think themselves adequate, who aren't seeking the position, who would rather on the whole just be left alone or be junior Sunday school teacher or something like that, who don't want to be bishop or stake president.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:21 That's why six months before my bishop is released, I usually send in a full portfolio on why I should be the next bishop, and it almost guarantees.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:31:32 That's right. Boy, I've got plans.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:35 Yeah. Here we go. I've got my ties all picked out, president. Here we go.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:31:41 A friend of mine who's serving as my department chair was eventually chosen to be the dean of my college. He didn't want to be the dean of the college and so he set out to campaign for it. He put up signs on his door announcing his candidacy for dean and all that sort of thing. And he got a call from the academic vice president who told him, "Look, it's not going to work. You're going to be the new dean."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:32:04 And here's the funny thing. That very same weekend that he was chosen as a dean, he had been my department chair. He

was also chosen as... he'd been serving as a bishop of a campus ward. He was also chosen as the stake president of his home stake the same weekend. And here's the really terrible thing. For some reason, there was a mix up and he was not released as the bishop of the campus ward for about a month after his calling as a stake president of his home stake. And he's a new dean as well.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:32:38 And I ran into him in the hallway one day shortly after, and I started to make a crack and he said, "Don't, it's not funny. My life is over."
- Hank Smith: 00:32:48 It's not funny. Too soon, too soon.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:32:54 Yeah. But I love the people who get the callings who didn't want them but rise to the occasion. They do it because they were called. And so far, Saul looks like that kind of guy. And then, we get into Chapter 11 of... that always sounds ominous to me.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:10 Chapter 11.
- Hank Smith: 00:33:11 Chapter 11.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:33:11 I think I made that correct before entering Chapter 11.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:13 The bankruptcy.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:33:14 But we get into the story of Nahash, the Ammonite. This is interesting because there's actually a passage in the Dead Sea Scrolls that should come at the end of Chapter 10, that gives a little more context for this story. There's a version of Samuel in 4Q Sam something or rather from Cave 4, the famous cave. If you ever go to the Dead Sea area, the Qumran, and you go out to that overlook and you see the cave right below you, that's it, that's the cave this document came from.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:33:41 And it has a few verses that aren't in our text of the Bible about how Nahash, the Ammonite, had already done this kind of thing. He'd been harassing the Israelites and putting out eyes. And he's just a really obnoxious, terrible person, right? So, he comes up and he encamps against Jabesh-Gilead. Now, the Ammonites are roughly in the area of today's Jordan. I mean, they're on the other side of the Jordan River. The modern city of Amman has that name for a reason. That's roughly the territory of the Ammonites.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:34:11 And so, Jabesh-Gilead is also on the other side of the Jordan River. Of all the Israelite settlements, it's exposed because it's not in the land of Israel proper, what we think of today as the land of Israel. It's over on the other side. And so, this guy from the Ammonites decides he's going to come after them. They're an outlier, off by themselves. And all the men of Jabesh said to him, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee," because he's besieging them.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:34:39 And Nahash, the Ammonite, answered them, "On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for reproach upon all Israel." Now, that's an attractive deal, right?
- John Bytheway: 00:34:51 Brutal.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:34:51 You can see why they're not very enthused about it. And this is meant not only it's cruel, but it's also meant as a humiliation to have an entire population that had to submit to have their right eyes removed. I mean, they in their lives would never overcome the shame of this. I think there also may be a practical reason. These are archers, they have that reputation. Well, if you eliminate one of their eyes, they can't see as well to be bowman.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:35:16 They will be neutralized and they lose their sense of distance. It's sadistic and it's cruel, but it also has a point. It's a propaganda point and a military point. These days, they allowed gentlemanly warfare in a way, I mean, ironically. The elders said to him, "Give us seven days' respite, and we'll send messages unto all the coasts of Israel." That is coasts, not just the coastal cities, but all the regions of Israel. That's King James English for all the regions of Israel.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:35:46 "And if there be no man to save us, we'll come out to thee. I mean, if this is the only choice we have rather than a massacre of everyone in the town, okay, we'll do it." So, the messengers come to Gibeah of Saul. That's an area in north of Jerusalem. They tell the tidings in the ears of the people. All the people lift up their voices and weep because they don't know what to do. And Saul comes, he's out with the herd.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:36:07 And this is interesting because he hasn't yet become the king with a palace. He's basically a war leader. Well, it hasn't been a war, an active war up till now. And so, he's just out doing what he'd done before, handling the herds. And he comes in at the end of the day and says, "What's the problem?" And they tell

him. And then, the spirit of God comes upon Saul. And we might simply say he was filled with the spirit of indignation.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:36:31 It may have been the spirit of God as well, but it's certainly I think he's just infuriated. This is a terrible thing to demand of fellow Israelites. It's an injustice, it's a humiliation and it's naked aggression. So, he takes a yoke of oxen. He used them in pieces and he sends them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers saying, "Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:36:58 And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. It's a very striking image. They cut up these oxen, sends the parts around. It's a weird thing to do. But it's a solemn oath, it's like what you find in the Book of Mormon where the people rend their garments, listening to Captain Moroni. "May we be rent even as our garments are rent." Use a material object and say, "If we don't do X, Y and Z, may something happen to us just like what happened to this material thing," in this case, the oxen.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:37:30 You have it in the Book of Ruth, for example, where repeatedly, you have characters say... and for Samuel too, "The Lord do so to me and more also if I do not do X, Y and Z." And some commentaries say, "Well, probably then is same image like drawing the hand across the throat, like the image of a sacrifice or something like that." "The Lord do that to me if I don't fulfill the oath that I'm making," which I think is a really, really interesting striking image.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:37:56 It's not something we would do today, but it's got some echoes. So, he becomes the war leader they've wanted. Gives these great numbers and the people come to him, and he goes and he defeats the Ammonites, just scatters them. And then, verse 12, the people said unto Samuel, "Who is he that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, that we may put them to death." Saying, boy, there were people who didn't think he was up to the job, but look at what he did.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:38:22 What a great leader he's proven to be. "Let's put those people to death." And Saul said, "No, no, there shall not a man be put to death this day, for today the Lord has brought salvation in Israel." That's the humble Saul again. "Let there be no recriminations, no revenge, and God did it. I didn't do it. God did it." He's still doing okay at this point. And we admire him. He's an admirable character at this point.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:38:50 He saves his people, I mean, with the help of God, obviously. But he doesn't take the credit. He doesn't take the glory. Samuel says, "Let's go renew the kingdom." And they go to Gilgal, which is probably down somewhere by Jericho over by... probably in the minefield over toward the Jordan River now, which is a good place to renew the kingdom because that's probably where the Israelites had crossed to enter into the land of Israel in the first place.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:39:18 So, they're renewing things. "Okay. Now, we're going to have a kingdom."
- Hank Smith: 00:39:21 This reminds me a little bit of Abraham Lincoln choosing not to destroy the south after the end of the war.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:39:31 Yeah. And we do admire people who do that, who have the chance for vengeance and they don't take it.
- Hank Smith: 00:39:36 They don't take it. Yeah. Is this the author telling us what he used to be like? So, when we get to the point where he becomes-
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:39:44 The contrast becomes clear and it's just tragic. Yeah. But we can see why the Lord would've chosen him, why Samuel would've been pleased with him. And even at the end, we'll get repeated poignant notes about how Samuel never sees him again after he's rejected. But he mourns for him because he started off as a good man. Samuel regretted establishing a kingdom, a kingship. He didn't want to establish a monarchy, but Saul was a good guy.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:40:11 Now, Samuel is about to take his leave here in Chapter 12. And it's an interesting passage to me. He basically goes to the people and says, "All Israel, behold, I've given you what you wanted. The king walketh before you. I am old and gray headed." He says, "Behold, my sons are with you." I mean, he still brings up his sons. And I'm thinking, "Why do you do that?" Sort of paternal, whatever. Your sons are jerks. It's a dad, very human to me.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:40:40 "Behold, my sons are with you. And I've walked before you from my childhood unto this day." And that's really true. This is a prophet whose career began really young, and he's been a prominent figure in Israel all this time. "Witness against me," he says in verse 3, "before the Lord, before His anointed, the king." And then, he asked them, "Have I done wrong things? Have I

taken your ox? Have I defrauded you? Have I oppressed anybody?" And they all say, "No."

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:41:07 And then, he says in verse 5, "The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found ought in my hand." And they answered, "He is witness." He reminds me a little bit of Paul in Acts taking his farewell tour of the cities of Asia. He knows he's not going to see them again. And he goes and he says at one point, "Have I delivered the message to you? Did I deliver to you what the Lord told me to tell you?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:41:32 "You'd be witnesses against yourselves now that I did. I delivered to you everything the Lord commanded me to tell you." And they said, "Yeah, you did." In that case, Paul, whose name originally is Saul, by the way, I think he's probably aware the difficulties are coming. The apostasy is coming. But he wants it certified that he did what he was supposed to do.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:41:51 What happens to them afterwards is not his fault. He carried out his mission, and Samuel is doing the same thing.
- Hank Smith: 00:41:58 Do you remember Elder Holland doing that with his Book of Mormon talk? "I want it clear when I stand before the judgment throne of God, I declared the Book of Mormon is true."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:42:08 And I think that's powerful when a witness, a prophet and apostle bears that solemn testimony that says, "You heard it from me." I mean, there's a passage from George Q. Cannon that I have always been struck by. George Q. Cannon apparently on several public occasions indicated that he had seen the Savior face to face.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:42:27 And at one point, he's speaking and he says, "I want you to know that you heard someone today who knows what he is saying, and that you heard him testify that he knows with a certainty that God lives and that Jesus Christ lives, for I have seen him." And I think it takes a lot to toss that out. This is someone who's bearing solemn testimony to you as powerfully as any human can.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:56 The Lord is witness against you, we've done it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:43:00 Yeah. You told the truth. And then, he goes on to give them the message again that you have rebelled against God consistently through your history and you've done it again. Verse 12, you said unto me, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us, when the Lord

your God was your king." That's in verse 12. "But this is what you wanted and the Lord has given you your king, you've got him now." But he says, "I'm going to give you a witness that what I'm saying is true," verse 16.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:43:25 And this doesn't stand out as much to us as it might have, or as it would have to them. "Now, therefore stand and see this great thing," he says in verse 16, "which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call onto the Lord, and He shall send thunder and rain, that you may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the Lord in asking your king."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:43:46 So, Samuel called onto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day. And all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. Now, what's so impressive about that? The harvest season is the dry season in Palestine, in Israel. And so, there shouldn't be thunder and rain on a day like that and certainly not just when Samuel says, "Okay, I'm going to call on it and it's going to come." And it does.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:44:10 And so, there's thunder and rain. And the people say, "Wow, you're right." All the people said unto Samuel, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not, for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." But Samuel says, "Look, I'm still going to go on praying for you," verse 23. "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you. But you have sinned, fear the Lord."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:44:36 "But if you still do wickedly," he ends the chapter, verse 25, "you shall be consumed, both ye and your king. So, you got to stop doing these things. The Lord is long suffering with you and even I am because I love you. You're my people, and I'll pray for you. But against our advice repeatedly, you've chosen to go down this path." Okay. Now, we're going to see the beginning of the downfall of Saul in Chapter 13.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:45:03 Saul reigned one year. And when he'd reigned two years over Israel, then he begins to do all the things that Samuel has predicted. He'll start drafting your people. And before we see him, he's just out there working with the herds. And when the time comes for a war, he calls on people to join him and they fight. Now, he's going to create a standing army, choosing 3,000 men of Israel. The rest of the people he sent every man to his tent. But he gets a large group together.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:45:30 I mean, the numbers in Israel are probably not that huge in those days. But to have a 3,000 person standing army, that's got

to be maintained. He's got to tax people to get the funds to feed them and maintain their equipment and all that kind of thing. So, he is beginning to become a king like all the nations, which is exactly what Samuel had said and what they wanted, what they said they wanted.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:45:52 And so then, there's this really interesting thing where Jonathan goes off and smites the Philistines. And then, the Philistines gather themselves together to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the seashore in multitude. And they came up and did war. When the people of Israel saw that they were in a strait, it says in verse 6, people were distressed.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:46:17 The people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews even went over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead, which is not exactly a friendly territory. They've had problems over there before. The people followed him trembling. As for Saul, he's still in Gilgal. The people who were there who don't run away are just terrified.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:46:38 And he stays for seven days. Samuel's going to meet him, but Samuel doesn't come. And so, here's where Saul does his first really, really wrong thing and it will become an accelerating series of them. Saul gives up on waiting for Samuel. Samuel said, "I'll see you there." And because even before, Saul even calls upon people to join him and Samuel. It's the king and the prophet fighting together. And he starts off that way.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:47:05 But Saul says, "Okay, he's not coming. Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings." And he offered the burnt-offering. And then, it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came. Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, "What hast thou done?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:47:22 Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash. Therefore, said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord. I forced myself therefore, I talked myself into it or I thought this would be a good idea, and offered a burnt offering."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:47:45 Samuel said to Saul, "Thou hast done foolishly. Thou has not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee, for now would the Lord have established thy

kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:48:08 Now, what's his sin here? He doesn't have the authority to do this kind of an offering, and he takes it upon himself. On one level, you can say, "Well, it wasn't ill intended, but it was really bad judgment, and it was usurpation of Samuel's divine authority. It's like committing a sin. It is committing a sin of usurping priesthood authority.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:48:30 I would say, look, if you're waiting for someone to give a blessing and he doesn't come, and you don't have the priesthood, you still shouldn't step forward and say, "By the authority of the priesthood, I give you a blessing." We don't have the authority to step in on behalf of a church leader. If I don't have the approval to baptize someone and I don't have the keys, I can't just go ahead and baptize. You wait. There's an order in the kingdom, and Saul violated it.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:54 And he knew it. He knew it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:48:56 Yep. He did. Now, you can understand his reasoning. This is a transition step to becoming bad, but it was bad nonetheless. And so, Samuel says to him, "Look, okay, you're not going to be overthrown as king, but your son won't succeed you. Your line won't succeed you after you. You've lost that privilege of becoming the sire of a line of kings," and we would say from our point of view, of being in the line of the Messiah himself.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:49:25 That will become the Davidic house, the role of the Davidic house, not the house of Saul, son of Kish. It could have been apparently, but it wasn't. It's a crucial misstep, not the last one. And it may show a certain degree of arrogance, or "I'm the king so I can step forward and do this act. I mean, we're in tight circumstances, we don't need to wait." But he doesn't have the right. King though he is, he shouldn't do this.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:49:48 It doesn't matter what your status is outside of the church. In the church, there's an order. And you may be a corporate president, and your bishop may be, who knows what, some really humble profession. But still in the church, he's the boss in your ward.

- John Bytheway: 00:50:04 One interesting thing happens at military academies and so forth, when you've got a sergeant being the bishop over a captain or a major who's his first or second counselor. That sort of thing happens sometimes in the military where all those ranks disappear when you're in an ecclesiastical setting.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:50:24 I remember talking to someone on my mission who was a serviceman from Germany, an American serviceman. And I asked him the question, "So, does it ever happen that a general as a member of a stake and the stake president is of a much lower rank?" He said, "Oh, yeah, that happens." And I said, "How does it work?" He said, "Really well, because we understand that, the general commands on six days a week in non-ecclesiastical things."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:50:50 One of the lines I loved most from that meeting with Elder Gong, as I say, it was Elder Gong, and his wife, and three others of us for a couple of hours talking about an interesting issue. And toward the end of it, one of our number, the non-general authority and general authority wife contingent, one of them said to Elder Gong, "Well, we're really grateful for certain things that we'd been talking about and what you do."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:51:10 He says, "I can tell you that we in the pews really appreciate this." And Elder Gong came back really quickly and very mildly and said, "We're all in the pews."
- Hank Smith: 00:51:21 Dan, in that verse 12, "I forced myself, therefore," is this a rationalization of, "Look, I had no choice. I had to do this." What's that I forced myself?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:51:32 I think that's what it suggests. "I talked myself into it." I mean, it suggests to me that he thought about it. He wanted to wait, but then he made this decision and it was a wrong decision. Again, I think it's a transitional bad deed. This is not evil Saul. This is pretty good Saul, but flawed Saul, thinking about this and thinking, "Wow, we're in a tight military situation. I need the blessing of God. Samuel hasn't come. He's a little late. I think in a tight circumstance like this, I can do it."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:52:03 But there are certain circumstances where, no, it isn't fine to step forward and do something like this. What the Lord has always been trying to teach the Israelites, I think, is his exactness in obeying his commandments. I think that's one of the reasons for a lot of the little commandments about not eating this or eating that. It's to teach us that you keep these rules.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:52:24 I'll say this about our own observance of the word of wisdom. I think the word of wisdom is valuable in and of itself. Obviously, it's a good code of health and so on. But it also teaches us obedience. People have asked me, "Do you really think that drinking a cup of coffee would send you to hell?" And my answer is, "Probably not you. I mean, if you're a non-member, I'm sure it wouldn't. But me? Maybe. Maybe." Because it's not so much the cup of coffee, that's nothing.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:52:54 It's the attitude that would say, "I can drink this and it really doesn't matter." Yes, it does matter, not intrinsically. People make it more difficult, sometimes come up with these ridiculous thought experiments. "Well, what if you were in the desert dying of thirst and all you had was a thermos of coffee?" I'd imagine at a certain point, the Lord is going to say, "Go ahead and drink the coffee, come on."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:53:15 But that's not the same thing. It's the light attitude that says, "I can do this. I can violate a little bit of the commandment. I can shave a little bit off the rules and I'll be fine." Well, if you start shaving the rules a little bit, then you shave them more, and then more, and pretty soon there are no rules. So, the Lord is trying to teach his people to obey with exactness and honor, if you will.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:37 This small decision is going to lead to worse and worse decisions until Saul is completely off the cliff here.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:53:45 I'm guessing that in a way that's one of the points in the military of teaching people marching and drills and things like that. It's to accustom the idea that in more weighty issues than just marching down the parade field, when the order comes, you do it. Because you don't want an army where everybody's saying, "I don't know. Maybe I will try to take that bridge, or maybe I won't. Maybe my group will go north instead of south or something like that." No.
- Hank Smith: 00:54:09 I figured it would be okay. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:54:12 I don't really feel like doing that today.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:54:14 If you've ever been in an organization where you have people working under you, I can tell you it's such a good feeling when you have people that you can agree on an assignment with, and you just know it'll be taken care of. You don't have to think about it anymore. It will be done because that person is really

reliable, and that's what you want. And Saul doesn't prove reliable here.

- John Bytheway: 00:54:35 And even I think that the idea of exactness, but also the idea of, will you keep a commandment whether or not it makes sense to you at the time? It's the Adam thing. "I know not, save the Lord commanded me." And the sequence is nice. Okay. Then, Adam had it explained to him. Then, maybe we'll have that explained to us. Maybe we won't. What will we do if it doesn't make sense to us? It's a test.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:55:02 There's a story that Harold B. Lee told about his childhood that I think is really interesting, about him running out in a field in Idaho, where he was growing up, and he came up to a fence that bounded the area that he was in and he suddenly heard a voice. He said it was as clear a voice as he had ever heard, an audible voice that said, "Do not climb the fence." And he said, "I looked around, I couldn't see anybody. I never did see anybody there."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:55:28 But he said, "The voice was absolutely clear." And he said, "So, I turned away and I didn't climb the fence." And he said, "I don't know what was on the other side of the fence, and I won't know in this life." He said, "But I didn't climb the fence, and I learned a lot from that." If the voice comes and says, "Don't climb the fence," don't climb the fence.
- Hank Smith: 00:55:48 And I noticed that Samuel says, "What have you done?" And Saul says, "I saw the people, they were scattered. It's not my fault. It's their fault."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:55:56 Yeah. He'll do that again when he pulls it again. "It's the people. The people made me do it. It's not my fault."
- Hank Smith: 00:56:02 Yeah. What if he just would've said, "I did wrong? What have you done?" And Saul said, "I did wrong, but I had to. It was someone else's fault."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:56:12 I think that covers a multitude of sins. I think quite often, if we do something wrong, we just frankly acknowledge it. We say, "Yeah, I'm sorry, that was a mistake. I'm sorry. I won't do it again." Then, it can be overlooked. But if it begins to suggest a pattern of behavior, "I don't take responsibility, and I make bad decisions and so on," then people lose confidence. The Lord loses confidence in you.

- Hank Smith: 00:56:36 Oh, I'm just looking at it. Because this is the turning point, and then it's going to continue later. I just was analyzing that turning point. All right. Let's keep going.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:56:45 Yeah. Chapter 14, this story of Jonathan smiting the garrison of the Philistines. It's a curious story. Jonathan sets off. He's an adventurous sort, strapping young lad. I'm guessing that if Saul was big, Jonathan might have been too. And he's been raised to be a warrior as the son of the king. And he goes over to take on a Philistine garrison. And he goes with just his armor-bearer. It says they discovered themselves under the Philistines, that's old King James English for it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:57:14 They reveal themselves. They're not hiding anymore. They just stand right out, separated by some distance and say, "Here we are." And the Israelites have been hiding in under rocks, and in caverns, and things like that. So, the Philistines get a kick out of it. And the Philistines are feeling pretty adequate to the case. "Here are two jerks challenging us. What's wrong with these two idiots?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:57:37 And he says to his armor-bearer, "If they say, 'Stay there and we'll come to you,' then we'll stay here. But if they say, 'Come on over, boys,' then we'll know that they've been delivered into our hands." And that's what they do. Verse 11, both of them discovered themselves under the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Behold." This is such stately King James language. I think you have to understand that it's probably not as stately.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:58:01 "Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves," as "Look, the Hebrews are coming out of the holes they've been hiding in. We've had them intimidated. Now, these two guys have come out." And the men at the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, "Come up to us, and we'll show you a thing." Or it's like, "Come on over, we'll teach you a lesson. We'll take care of you."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:58:24 And Jonathan said, "Okay, that was the sign I was looking for. They've been delivered into our hands." And he goes after them, they're very effective. It causes a panic among the Philistines. And the Philistines run and Saul sees it. People can see the Philistine garrison is melting away. And so, Saul calls for some auguring. He wants an oracle to be taken. "Bring the arc over." The arc was with them.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:58:53 And so, they check and then Paul... Saul, excuse me, Saul joins up together and they go into battle. It's a spectacular route. So,

the Lord saved Israel that day. And the men of Israel were distressed that day though for one reason. Here's where another bad decision on the part of Saul comes into play. Saul had adjured the people, verse 24, saying, "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies."

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:59:20 Now, notice the way he personalizes it too. "It's mine enemies. I should be avenged, me, me, me." It just this stupid rule. It's a really hot day probably. And he says, "Nobody should eat," and I'm guessing maybe nobody should drink, "for the remainder of this day until I've been thoroughly avenged in all my enemies." But guess who didn't hear him make that oath? That's a very solemn oath.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:59:43 Jonathan didn't hear it because he was out fighting with the Philistines. He wasn't there. So, it says along the way they've been commanded not to eat. But Jonathan comes across a honeycomb, and he's hungry, and it's been a long day of battle. He needs some calories. And so, he eats a little bit of the honey, totally innocently. And I mean, he's the hero of the day, and yet he violated his dad's command.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 01:00:08 And this shows, by the way, a stupidly literalistic way of understanding a command. I mean, most of us would say reasonably, "Well, look, if he didn't hear it, he's not guilty of violating it." But Saul won't give him that way out. And so, Jonathan says, he responds to this when they tell him, "Your father put the people under an oath that they not eat anything today."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 01:00:30 And Jonathan says... Jonathan comes out of this so often as the better man than his father, Saul, especially as Saul becomes worse. But Jonathan says, "My father hath troubled the land." What he's saying is, "This is a bad decision on my dad's part. Look what it did for me. I mean, I got some calories in me." He wouldn't think of as modern terms. "Because I've eaten something, I feel better. I've got a little more energy now and we can carry on with the battle."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 01:00:55 He said, "Do you not see how much better if the people would've been able to eat today of the food that they came across in the camp of the Philistines, that they would've been more effective rather than less?" And so, they have a tremendous victory. Then, the people go out of control.
- Hank Smith: 01:01:13 Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 Dan, it feels like Saul is changing little by little throughout this story.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:12 Yeah, I think he's becoming more self-centered. It's more about him than about the Israelites or his people. And his judgment is suffering. He's making bad decisions. This oath was a really bad decision. Even Jonathan, his son, the crown prince, I mean, to put it in perspective, Jonathan says, "This was a bad decision." The warriors would've been more effective had they not been hungry. And I'm thinking maybe parched with thirst all day long.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 00:37 Why did he do this? It was a silly oath. And the reason he does it is so that I may be avenged of mine enemies or on mine enemies. That's not about the wellbeing of Israel. That's some sort of weird, personal thing of his own. Things were bad in the previous chapter. They've gotten much worse in this chapter. And he's even going to follow through because the people then they're so hungry that they fly upon the spoil, they take sheep, and oxen, it says in verse 32, and calves. And they slay them on the ground and the people that eat them with the blood. Which they're eating it raw. That's pretty weird.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 01:11 But they're eating it with the blood, which is a sin in the eyes of God in terms of the mosaic code. Even Saul is offended by that so then he says, "You've transgressed, roll a great stone unto me this day," in verse 33, "And disperse yourselves and say unto them, every man should bring his ox and his sheep and slay them here and we'll cook them up. So you're not committing this sin." There's more. Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and spoil them." And they say, "Oh, whatever you think is right." And he says, "Okay, let's draw near unto God, hither unto God." Saul asked counsel of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will that deliver them into the hand of Israel?"

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 01:49 But he answered him not that day, no answer comes. They're used to an answer coming through the ephod. We're not quite sure exactly how this worked consulting the ephod, the stones, the Urim and Thummim, lots, something like that. But there's no answer. And so Saul says, "Well, there must be something wrong. Why is the Lord not answering them? Must be a sin in the camp. And as the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 02:17 This is a stupid and rash oath to make. There was not a man among all the people that answered him. Then he said, "Okay. Everybody else stand over on this side. And Jonathan and I will stand on the other side." And they said, "Okay, fine." And then they have a perfect lot and Saul and Jonathan are taken. And then the lot falls on Jonathan and Saul said to Jonathan, verse 43, "Tell me what thou hast done." And Jonathan told him and said, "I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 02:47 Now, some versions render into this as a question. So I'm supposed to die for this? All I did was take a bit of honey and it's not like it was a great sin. And we would add again, I didn't even hear your oath. I'm not responsible for this. It was a reasonable thing to do. I mean, Jonathan, in every regard is a good guy in these stories. It's sad that he goes down with his father, but eventually. And Saul doesn't say, "Well, son, that was reasonable and my oath was rush." God do so more and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan. This is the heir to the throne. This is insane. And so the people have to intervene and say, "What? Jonathan is the hero of the day. Are you kidding? You want to kill him?" People rescued Jonathan that he died not.
- John Bytheway: 03:34 Wow. They swear an oath, it looks like. As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his... We got dueling oaths here.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 03:41 Yeah. They're both really solemn oaths. They're saying basically we will not back down and we will not let you do this. It doesn't matter if you're king. It doesn't matter if you swore an oath, it's insane. We'll surround him, we'll protect him. You will not do this. And so he backs down. Then it goes on to list all of Saul's military successes. He is pretty successful. He smoked the Amalekites and others, and lists his sons and gives his genealogy and so on. But then we come to chapter 15, which is the really, well, the beginning of the true catastrophe of Saul.
- John Bytheway: 04:15 Can I just ask a quick question?

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 04:16 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 04:17 You read about Amalekites a lot. Do they ever get wiped out or do we just smite some of them every once in a while?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 04:23 I think they're just a good group to smite. My bet is they seem to have been something like bad ones. So they're kind of hard to wipe out, because if it gets really bad, they just leave. They just move away and then they come back. It is in a way sort of like guerilla warfare. They can evaporate. You think you've taken them out, but eh, year or two later, they're back.
- John Bytheway: 04:47 Maybe it was this group of Amalekites, but it was never all of the Amalekites there.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 04:51 Yeah. They seem to live out somewhere in the deserts of Southern Jordan.
- Hank Smith: 04:55 This story is just so sad, the downfall of Saul. It's just so disappointing the way he started.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 05:01 Yeah. And so again, I think one of the questions we have to ask ourselves when we're reading this is, can I see myself in this at all? I always like the question at the last supper, "Lord, is it I?" And I'd like to be able to read these accounts and say, "No, for once that is not something-
- Hank Smith: 05:16 That's not me.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 05:17 ... that I've done." There may be other things where I think, oh, that hits a little too close to home, but maybe not this one. Verse 15, he is sent to smite the Amalekites and it's done. It's kind of an interesting thing. It's for a very historic wrong they worked against the Israelites when the Israelites came up from Egypt, generations before. The word of the Lord comes to Samuel, who says to Saul, "The word of the Lord is this, go after Amalekites, smite them, spare them not, slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 05:49 Now we might just read that and think, oh, that's horrible. What do we make of that? Well, I'm not exactly sure what to make of it. It is all together possible. I throw this out as kind of a liberal way of reading scriptures, not necessarily mine. But I remember years ago I was writing the gospel doctrine lesson for the conquest of Canaan. There's pretty rough language there about eliminating the Canaanites totally. And about that time, I was reading an article in a journal where the guy was saying, "The

archeological evidence is that they didn't wipe out all the Canaanites and they just didn't." There are Canaanite settlements that seemed to have survived through this period and so on.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 06:28 It undercuts the story of the conquest in the Bible. And I thought, oh, that's tough. And then I thought, no, actually it would solve some theological problems for me, at least as many as it would create, the conquest wasn't quite as brutal and total as it's made out to be in the scriptures. And this guy was arguing that maybe it had been exaggerated a little bit, sort of glorify our glorious ancestors. They wiped them out totally. Where in fact they don't seem to have.
- Hank Smith: 06:54 Some hyperbole perhaps.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 06:56 Yeah. I'm kind of agnostic on that. I don't know exactly what happened, but if not every woman, infant and suckling was killed, that wouldn't hurt my feelings.
- Hank Smith: 07:05 Right.
- John Bytheway: 07:06 Yeah. No kidding.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 07:08 But there is another word to be said for this, for the idea of total destruction. In an odd sort of way, one way of looking at it, people have said is, well, it was a way of preventing the Israelites from going to battle for gain, to get all the spoils. Because it was saying all the spoils go to the Lord, you fight these battles for the Lord. You don't get any profit out of it. Because there were a lot of people who just fought all the time to steal things. Somebody has something I want, I go take it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 07:38 Well, if you take it and then you have to offer it up as a sacrifice, you think, yeah, I don't think I'll risk myself for that one again. There is one school, I don't know how persuasive this is, it suggests that maybe it's a way of limiting the brutality of warfare that you only fight when it's a divine command, not just because you want to steal somebody else's stuff. And I suspect when we wake up on the other side and learn exactly what happened, we may say, "Oh, okay, all right, I get it now."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 08:05 But the command here seems to be go smite the Amalekites totally wipe them out. But there's also a bit of mercy. The Kenites who were also a Bedouin group who lived among the Amalekites had been kind to the Israelites when they came through. And Saul warns them and says, "Look, you get out.

Because we're coming after the Amalekites. We don't want to kill you by mistake. So just withdraw, go somewhere else because we're coming." And so there is that mercy.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 08:31

But then Saul has the tremendous military success, smites the Amalekites all the way down almost to the borders with Egypt. So way down in Southern Jordan or that area, I'm guessing below Aqaba and Eilot. But he takes Agag, the king of the Amalekites alive and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen, of the fatlings and the lambs and all that was good and would not utterly destroy them. But everything that was vile and refuse that they destroyed utterly, oh, this is a really good policy, we'll destroy all the garbage that we didn't want anyway, that's a real sacrifice. But we're going to save all the potentially strong slaves, keep the good stuff.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 09:14

So the word of the Lord comes to Samuel saying, "It repenteth me." Now the JST changes that a little bit. It says, "I've set up Saul to be a king, and he repenteth not that he had sinned." This is a turning point. It's not just that Saul's line will not succeed to the monarchy. It's that Saul himself is now rejected. But as the King James reads, "It repenteth me that I've set up Saul to be king." I mean, it shows that God has ... the decree is different now, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments and it grieved Samuel and he cried unto the Lord all night.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 09:49

There are several poignant notes like this, as I've said, where Samuel is saddened by this. But Samuel comes to Saul in verse 13, Saul said unto him, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord." And Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" I've always thought of that as a really funny line. So you wiped everything out, but it's funny, who are you going to believe, me or your lying ears, right?

John Bytheway: 10:20

That's just a recording.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 10:22

Yeah. But I can hear all these animals. He says, "We're going to sacrifice them, that's why we've saved them." You're not going to sacrifice Agag, the king, they don't do human sacrifice. So Agag was meant to be most likely part of a royal triumph, you parade him around the villages and boast, "Look at the great things I did. I conquered Agag. Here's this king. I've got him in a cage." I mean, that's an age old thing. The Romans did it all the time. And other people did it too. Capture the foreign Monarch

and you show him off. And that's what Saul probably wants to do.

- Hank Smith: 10:55 The trophy.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 10:56 Otherwise he would've just killed him. Samuel said into Saul, "Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night." And he said unto him, "Say on. I don't think he knows what's coming." And Samuel said, "When thou wast little." This is kind of what we've been talking about the whole time. "When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 11:18 But what he's implying is now you're not little in your own sight. You think you're big stuff. And so he says, "No, we were going to sacrifice them." And then he blames it on the people. Verse 21, the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 11:36 Well again, are you the king or are you not? I mean, the people did it. You couldn't have stopped them or said this is the command of the Lord. And then Samuel responds with what is one of the classic lines in all of scripture. And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 12:02 And then he says the end of the next verse, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." It's a powerful rebuke that you are in effect rejected. You're no longer the divinely chosen king. Yeah, you're going to sacrifice them supposedly, but the Lord didn't ask you to sacrifice them. He asked you to destroy them and you didn't do it.
- John Bytheway: 12:25 If they don't get anything from the sacrifice, I think you may have just started to answer it. They say they were going to sacrifice it because is this one of those sacrifices that it's basically a barbecue, we're going to eat it.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 12:38 Yeah, I think it is.
- John Bytheway: 12:39 Okay. So it's not really a total sacrifice then.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 12:43 Yeah. You offer it to the Lord, but then God doesn't come down and eat the meat, so don't waste it. So we're going to have a feast. This is going to be great. I suspect that's what's going on here.
- John Bytheway: 12:56 Because otherwise I can see how we're not going to benefit from any of it. But if the sacrifice means we may eat it, then I can see why. No, this is selfish. We're calling it a sacrifice, but it's actually selfish because we're going to hold something back or we're going to keep it or eat it or something.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 13:13 Yeah. I think that the Lord has seen through what they were claiming and so is Samuel. It's just tragically sad, but there's self-centeredness going on here. And Saul said unto Samuel, "I've sinned." And finally he admits it. For I've transgressed the commandments of the Lord and thy words because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." He's still kind of blaming it on them. Now therefore I pray the pardon my sin, turn again with me that I may worship the Lord.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 13:39 And Samuel said unto Saul, "I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." He repeats it. Saul is thinking, well, okay, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Now come with me, we can get past this. And Samuel says, "No. I will not go back with you." And again, the Lord has rejected you, you are done.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 14:03 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, Saul did and it rent. This is another of those simile situations. And Samuel said unto him, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." I mean, this is merciless in a way. Saul is still, it's almost pathetic. He says in verse 30, he said, "I have sinned: yet honor me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 14:35 Samuel turned again after Saul and Saul will worship the Lord. I mean, kind of it's a last bit of mercy. And then I'm gone. This shows Samuel being tough, then said Samuel, "Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites." And Agag came unto him delicately. You can imagine this, he's coming out very cautiously. Like what's going to happen. Timidly I think might be a good word. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death has passed. If they were going to kill me, they would've done it already." And Samuel said, "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women." And

- Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. That's tough.
- John Bytheway: 15:15 Yeah. They didn't make that in a seminary movie, that part right there.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 15:19 No. And then sad again, Samuel went to Ramah. Saul went up to his house to Gibeath of Saul. Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel. Well, again, the idea is that the Lord doesn't repent of it. I think the Lord is sorrowful over what happened to Saul. Saul had his agency and he's chosen to go wrong.
- John Bytheway: 15:45 And yet to me it's what did the Lord say in 1 Samuel 8, "All right, you want a king, but here's what's going to happen."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 15:54 And Saul goes down that very path. And to be honest, so will David.
- John Bytheway: 15:58 I know, this is so sad.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 16:03 The end story of David is not all that happy though. He starts off even better than Saul did.
- Hank Smith: 16:08 One thought here I was looking at when Saul is first told he's going to be king, "I'm a nobody, I'm a Benjamite from a small tribe of Israel. I'm a nobody from a nobody tribe." And then Samuel saying to him in chapter 15, "When you were little in your own site." And then I wanted to read this. This is from October, 2010, General Conference, Elder Uchtdorf, he brought to everybody's mind the 1989 talk from president Ezra Taft Benson on Beware of Pride. And he brought that to everybody's attention.
- Hank Smith: 16:40 I just want to read one part of it. He said, "Pride is the great sin of self-elevation. It is for so many a personal Rameumptom, a holy stand that justifies envy, greed, and vanity." In a sense, pride is the original sin before the foundations of this earth, pride fell Lucifer a son of the morning, who was an authority in the presence of God. If pride can corrupt one as capable and promising as this..." Now Elder Uchtdorf is talking about Lucifer here, but we could be talking about Saul as well. "If pride can corrupt one as capable and promising as this, should we not examine our own souls as well?" What you said, Dan, "Lord is it I?" Examine your own soul for this kind of pride. Oh, this is just a heartbreakin story.

- John Bytheway: 17:26 Can I offer a good example that years ago they made a video about Hugh Nibley called Faith of an Observer. Does that ring a bell? And Truman Madsen is talking about these books they wanted to make of all of Hugh Nibley's books. And he said, "I wanted to call it the Hugh Nibley legacy." "I don't like it, I'm not dead yet," Hugh Nibley said. What's a legacy? I don't know. And Truman Madsen says, "We were at the galley proofs stage. We were just about to go to press, so I thought I had him. And I said, "Do you mean to tell me Hugh Nibley you care that much about a title?" And Hugh Nibley said, "No, I care that little about royalties." Boom, and hung up. Right.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 18:07 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 18:08 Well, on that video, I think Hugh Nibley says, "None of us is very smart. None of us knows very much." This Hugh Nibley who's like 33 languages or something. But what the angels envy us for is we can forgive and we can repent. Is Hugh Nibley able to maintain that? Well, we don't know that much, but we can forgive and we can repent. I guess we're trying to stay little in our own sight.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 18:33 I would hear Hugh Nibley talk sometimes even privately. He'd just say, "Look, we're all idiots." I mean, we know so little about what the Lord is talking about, what the Lord is doing, how the Lord thinks and so on. We just don't know much of anything. There's no reason for any of us to be vain because we're so pathetically small compared to the universe. I love the line in Moses. Now I know that man is nothing.
- John Bytheway: 19:03 Which thing I never-
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 19:03 ... never had supposed.
- John Bytheway: 19:04 Yeah. Isn't that a great one?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 19:06 I'll tell a story if you don't mind. And I may have told it last time because it's one of my absolute favorite stories. I was taking my youngest son and one of his friends to preschool. They were talking in the backseat of the car years ago and I wasn't really paying attention to what they were saying. And all of a sudden I heard one say, "Wow, this teacher's really hard." And the other one responded. "Yeah, but I've heard that kindergarten's even worse."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 19:33 And I thought these guys have no idea what's coming and algebra and trigonometry and all that sort of stuff. But they

were so serious. It sounded so solemn in the back. And I thought that's really funny. But then all of a sudden I hadn't been thinking about theology or doctrine or anything like that. But all of a sudden it came to my mind that the distance between even the wisest parent and the youngest child is nothing like as great as the distance between God and humans. If I thought that was funny, I kind of imagined how the Lord must feel sometimes about hearing us very learnedly discourse on things. And I kind of imagined this scene of God seated upon his throne and he calls the angels over and he says, "Hey, come on, listen to this."

- John Bytheway: 20:19 You got to hear this.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 20:21 The high priests are doing theology. Aren't they cute? We're so solemn debating questions like, is God's knowledge infinite or is he growing in knowledge? And my feeling about questions like that has always been, I wouldn't even know what it meant to answer it one way or the other. I mean, I'm a gnat compared to him, don't even bother me with questions like that.
- Hank Smith: 20:52 I'm looking up a quote from Henry Eyring senior, brilliant chemist, probably should have won the Nobel prize, right? He talks about going into his lab at The University of Utah and how the Lord must think it's adorable with his little chemistry set. Here it is, contemplating the awe-inspiring order in the universe, extending from the almost infinitely small to the infinitely large one is overwhelmed with its grandeur and with the limitless wisdom, which conceived, created, and governs it all. Our understanding, great as it sometimes seems can be nothing but the wide-eyed wonder of a child when measured against omniscience. Here's a man who's probably the best in his field in chemistry and still sees himself as a child in comparison to God. I just thought that fit your story perfectly.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 21:46 It's a good attitude to have.
- John Bytheway: 21:47 But when we've got some humility, then God helps us. I love the story that President Nelson tells about being told as he was doing surgery, how to repair that heart valve. When you've got humility, then you get this help.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 21:59 But if we go into it, think we already know everything. We close ourselves off from learning anything.
- Hank Smith: 22:04 I'm going to tell one more story before we move on from this. This is a shout out to my friend, Myron Richins up in Henefer,

Utah, got a shout out from Elder Uchtdorf in general conference. Elder Uchtdorf told this story about president Richins. He said during the 150th anniversary of the pioneers' arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, Brother Myron Richins was serving as the stake president in Henefer, Utah. The celebration included a reenactment of pioneers' passage through his town.

- Hank Smith: 22:31 President Richins was heavily involved with the plans for the celebration. He attended many meetings with general authorities and others to discuss the events, he was fully engaged. Just before the actual celebration President Richins stake was reorganized and he was released. On a subsequent Sunday, he was attending his ward priesthood meeting when the leaders asked for volunteers to help with the celebration. President Richins along with others raised his hand and was given instructions to dress in work clothes and to bring his truck and shovel.
- Hank Smith: 23:01 Finally, the morning of the big event came, President Richins reported to volunteer duty. Only a few weeks before he had been an influential contributor to the planning and supervision of this major event. On that day however, his job was to follow the horses in the parade and clean up after them. President Richins did so gladly and joyfully. He understood that one kind of service is not above another. He knew and put into practice the words of the Savior. He that his greatest among you shall be your servant. Don't you wish Saul could have kept that attitude?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 23:33 I remember a fellow that I knew in a ward down in California, and I think he's still active in the church. He's a good guy fundamentally, but he was a high price corporate lawyer. And at one point we were asked to go down and work at the welfare cannery somewhere. I remember going and by the way, it was funny because just of everybody I was working with was either a graduate student working on a PhD or was on the faculty with a PhD.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 23:57 But this guy refused to go. He said, "Look, do you realize how much I get paid per hour for my work?" He said, "I could hire 10 people to do this in the time it would take me to go and work there at the cannery." And I thought, you know what, you probably need this more than any of the rest of us do. You need to go work at the cannery. It would be good for your soul. Because of course you could hire 10 people to work at the cannery.
- John Bytheway: 24:20 If that were the only point of it. Yeah.

- Hank Smith: 24:23 This is a powerful lesson, Dan.
- John Bytheway: 24:25 I just love that phrase, when you were little in thine own site, that's a good one to mark, isn't it?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 24:32 Yeah, because he was, and now he isn't.
- Hank Smith: 24:35 And Dan, I know that you'll disagree here, but whenever I've seen you, talked with you, met you, you know languages, you know the backwards and forwards of church history. You've always been down to earth, easy going, never don't talk to me. It's never been a hint of arrogance. When I've heard you talking with other people you're willing to talk to the taxi cab driver, as much as you are to Marion D. Hanks.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 25:01 I grew up in a family that was a working-class family and my uncles were truck drivers and farmers and family was involved in the construction business.
- Hank Smith: 25:10 I was watching a documentary the other day and Bob Barker of The Price is Right. He used to go out and greet the tour buses personally. And someone said, "Why do you do that? Why do you take time for that?" And he said, "I got to thank these people. If it weren't for them, I'd have to work." Right. Jimmy Stewart was the same way. He'd always talk to people and these are my partners. If they watch my movies, they're my partners.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 25:37 There's a wonderful story about him when he was in the military, because he rose to the rank of Brigadier general and he was a pretty serious soldier. He was a bomber, something around-
- John Bytheway: 25:46 Former pilot, wasn't he?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 25:46 ... World War II. But at one point they were on leave near New York city and all of his pals in his barracks wanted to go into goof off in New York. And he said, "No, I won't go with you." And the reason he didn't go is he was already a star before World War II began. And he was just worried that if he went there, they wouldn't be able to have a good time. Because everywhere they went, people would gather around him and it ruined the evening. So he stayed home in the barracks and read a book. It wasn't because he was arrogant. It was quite the contrary. He wanted his friends to have a good time and he didn't want to ruin it for them.

- Hank Smith: 26:22 He probably wanted to be there too.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 26:24 Yeah. He said at one point that people should be grateful to Hollywood, because he graduated from Princeton university with a degree in architecture. But he said they should be grateful to Hollywood that it spared the world a really mediocre architect.
- Hank Smith: 26:43 Oh, that attitude is so refreshing.
- John Bytheway: 26:47 Yeah. That attitude is refreshing. I hope everybody listening is going, "You know what? I need to have that attitude."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 26:54 Well, should we look at chapter 16?
- John Bytheway: 26:56 Yeah, let's talk.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 26:56 This is where the thing really shifts. We're now looking at David. Saul has been rejected. He may linger on as king for a little while, but he's not the Lord's choice as king. And we're going to see the Lord's choice in chapter 16. So the Lord said unto Samuel, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 27:23 And so he goes to Bethlehem, they're a little nervous. He's nervous because he's afraid now that Saul will see him as an enemy and maybe even try to kill him. But the Lord gives him a bit of subterfuge, go take a heifer and say you're going to offer a sacrifice and then invite the family of Jesse to come. And so they come and he looks on Eliab. And this is interesting. Here's the prophet acting as a human being. His response when he sees Eliab is surely the Lord's anointed is before me. Yeah, this is him. And the Lord's response is great.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 27:55 But the Lord said unto Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him, for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." There's some great lines in these chapters, some of the finest in all of scripture. And so you have this review where he has him call the different sons, Abinadab and Shimeah, and seven of the sons. And he says, "Are these all the children you've got? I've looked at all of them and he is not here. This is not the Lord's anointed."

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 28:29 And he says, "Well, there's one other, he's out there, he's keeping the sheep." He didn't even bother bringing him. And Samuel said unto Jesse, "Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down until he come here." And of course that's the one. And in verse 13, Samuel takes the horn of oil and anoints him in the midst of his brethren. And the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 28:52 Now it's interesting that he doesn't do it privately. He does it in the midst of David's brethren, so there are witnesses. They can't say later on that, well, it's just David claiming this story. We don't know that it really happened. There are witnesses. But it's done more or less privately. So the spirit comes upon David, but the spirit in verse 14, departs from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord, it says in the King James troubled him.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 29:18 Now routinely, when it talks about an evil spirit from the Lord, the JST corrects this and says it was an evil spirit which was not of the Lord. Now I don't know if the JST is offering us the original reading or whether it's correcting an error in the original text, but it certainly is giving us to understand this evil spirit doesn't come from God. And what it means that an evil spirit came upon him, I don't know. It could be something given their attitudes as simple as depression or might be madness, I don't know.
- Hank Smith: 29:51 Spirit of contention, hatred.
- John Bytheway: 29:54 I got a bad feeling about this.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 29:58 Yeah. And so this is not the Saul that we met in 1 Samuel 8, alas, Samuel said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee." Or not from God. So go find somebody who's a good player on the harp, the lyre. This is where David is introduced to Saul. One of the versions, it's puzzling, I will admit. Sometimes you look as if you've got two different sources here kind of crammed together. It's hard to tell because in the next chapter David's introduced again. So how to reconcile that, I don't quite know.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 30:29 But we do know that David is the harpist, the soloist, musically gifted, a poet, and he's introduced that way here. When this evil spirit comes upon Saul, whatever it is, depression, anxiety, madness, something, it helps to have music played there. And we know that's true. That's actually clinically true that in some cases music can help people. I know in cases when people have suffered from dementia, Alzheimer's, they can be agitated if you

play a song they knew. They'll remember the song, begin humming along with it. Or even in one case that I know a woman who had severe dementia could still play the piano and remember the old songs that she'd played for years.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 31:12 Music's powerful and so it's one of the ways we teach. And it's one of the ways people internalize the gospel. Now there are a whole lot of songs out there where I think, well, if you start me on it, I can go pretty far before I lose the words. It's amazing how much of this ... any effort made to memorize it. I've memorized reams of song lyrics, which contain a lot of wholesome doctrine.
- Hank Smith: 31:33 How coincidental that the same person they call up is the one the Lord has anointed as the next king.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 31:39 Yeah. He comes to Saul and stood before him and Saul loves him greatly and became his armor-bearer. That is David became Saul's armor-bearer. And I think one of the things that we see about David is that, and his name has to do with being beloved. Everybody seems to like him, the early David, I mean, people fall in love with him. He's lovable. But it does say that in verse 23, when the evil spirit from God or not from God as the Joseph Smith translation says was upon Saul, David took a harp and played with his hand. Saul was refreshed and was well and the evil spirit departed from him. Now we get into one of the most famous chapters in all of scripture. One that kids act out and so on all the time.
- John Bytheway: 32:24 Do we have time for a dad joke, Hank?
- Hank Smith: 32:27 Please. There's always time for a dad joke.
- John Bytheway: 32:30 Yeah. The harp said to the other harp, "You're not a harp, you're not big enough to be a harp." And the other one said, "Are you calling me a lyre?"
- Hank Smith: 32:40 Thank you, John.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 32:41 That's good.
- Hank Smith: 32:43 We needed that break before we met Goliath.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 32:47 The Philistines gather together their armies to battle and the two armies face off in the valley of Elah. And it's a battle. Well, it's not yet a battle between the Philistines and the Israelites. They're on opposing mountains, looking across this valley. And

now here's the scary thing. There went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, verse four, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. That's been estimated at about nine feet.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 33:14 Now, I don't know if that's exaggerated or not, but that's huge. You can imagine somebody like that would terrify everybody. Heck he can reach out his arm and reach you and you're not even close. And so he scares them to death and he comes out and he challenges them. He's got this heavy armor, which they couldn't even carry. The staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, it says. The spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. That's pretty impressive. One burying a shield went before him. And then he challenges them.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 33:43 Verse eight, he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, "Why are ye, come out to set your battle in array. Am I not a Philistine? And ye servants to Saul. Remember that's the phrase early on in first Samuel eight that they said that he'll make you his servants. Well, he has, certainly in the eyes of Philistines, in the eyes of Goliath.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 34:02 You're servants to Saul, choose you a man for you and let him come down to me. And then he lays out this idea that if the two of us fight and if he kills me, then we'll be your servants, your slaves. But if I kill him, then you'll be my servants or slaves or our servants or slaves.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 34:19 Now it actually was a common practice in some cultures to have single combat before a battle like this. And it was a way of saving lives I suppose, if you really bound yourselves by oath, we'll risk everything on single combat. We'll send our best warrior and you send out yours. And so the Philistine says, "I defy the armies of Israel to stay, give me a man that we may fight together."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 34:43 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. And here again, they had wanted a king because the king was going to lead them, fight our battles. And because he was tall, he was head and shoulders above everybody else. But now he's met somebody who's easily head and shoulders and more above him. And this is terrifying. So if you put your trust in the arm of flesh, eventually somebody will come along with a more powerful arm.
- Hank Smith: 35:11 Yeah. With more flesh.

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| John Bytheway: | 35:14 | Well put. |
| Dr. Daniel Peterson: | 35:17 | They're terrified and they're just kind of immobilized there. No one dares to go up against him. Everybody knows, if I go up against him, I'm dead. And what's more, if I'm killed, according to the terms of that agreement, then my people are enslaved, I can't do this. |
| Hank Smith: | 35:31 | Right. I won't win. Yeah. |
| Dr. Daniel Peterson: | 35:33 | But the three eldest sons of Jesse are there and David is the youngest of them. He's not there to battle. He's too young according to this version. The three elders with Saul, but David would go back and forth. He's taking care of the family's sheep at Bethlehem, which is not terribly far away. And the Philistine every day would come out. It says he did it 40 days. Now, I don't know if it's literally 40 days or not, 40 days in the ancient Middle East and the medieval Middle East often meant a long time, lots of days. |
| Dr. Daniel Peterson: | 36:02 | Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves, 40 days in the wilderness, 40 days of rain, maybe literally 40 in every case, it might just mean a lot. Jesse says, "Take some food, find out what's happening. Bring me a report and so on." And you have this funny little family scene where one brother's kind of mad at him. You're just out here because you want to see the battle, young guy who just wants to get a thrill and see the battle. |
| Dr. Daniel Peterson: | 36:27 | But David finds out there's a promise made, there's a dilemma. Will anybody go out and fight this Philistine? And David says, "Maybe I should do it." And so Saul sends for him. And when they're together in verse 32 and 33, David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." |
| Hank Smith: | 36:45 | David. |
| Dr. Daniel Peterson: | 36:46 | This is an astonishing thing. David who's apparently a kid, he's a shepherd. And Saul said to David, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. He's a professional soldier." Now it's interesting that in the previous chapter, David had been declared a mighty man of war. So there's something garbled here I think in these chapters, that David might become a mighty man of war later, but he certainly isn't when he first meets Saul at this battle, because everyone thinks and Goliath thinks too, are you mocking me? Seriously you send a shepherd |

- kid out? Yeah. I mean, this is a joke, right? I'll kill him. But this isn't serious.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 37:27 And so he goes out eventually to fight. But there's an interesting passage in the meantime. He says to Saul, "You think I can't do this? Look, I trust in God." Again, this is good David, early on, before he's corrupted as Saul has been by the monarchy.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 37:44 Verse 37, the Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion. He tells these stories about the beasts he's faced, when he's been defending the sheep. And out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, "Go, and the Lord be with thee."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 37:59 It's interesting to me that Saul is willing to put everything on this throw of the dice, but maybe he sensed something in David. David is so confident. The Lord may well be with him. This is not the kind of bet that a normal worldly person would make. I mean, you towed up all the factors and you think, not a chance. We're not going to put the whole fate of Israel on a shepherd kid. But Saul says, "Okay, I guess you're our guy." And then he arms him. And I think this is kind of touching too. Versus 38 and 40, he arms him with his own armor. Shows he's putting confidence in him.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 38:35 But David finally says, "I cannot go with these, I've not proved them." Well, what does he mean? I'm not used to this stuff. I can't fight with this. It's too heavy. No, I'd rather go out without anything. He took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip. We use that term without purse or a script. This is kind of what it means, a bag. And his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 39:03 Now they're not little stones. I've read some things where people have argued that they might have been roughly as big as a baseball or something. I mean, this is a serious sling. When you sling this at a bear or a lion, if you hit him, it's going to do damage. I've had kids sling stones at me in Palestine, I hate to say it, but they have. But first of all, their aim is terrible, they never come close. Secondly, I think even if they hit me, I'm not sure it would do much, it'd sting a little bit. But this is a serious rock.
- Hank Smith: 39:33 With a sling, Dan, you can get these things cooking.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 39:35 Yeah. You can. Somewhere I read years ago, I think if you're good at it, you can get that rock going up to about a hundred miles an hour. That's as fast as the fastest major league pitchers can hurdle a baseball.
- John Bytheway: 39:49 You add to the length of your arm the length of the sling. And so yeah, you can really ... I remember home teaching a guy back in the day and he pulled out some, I don't know, scientific American magazine or something and showed me an article about these guys that could hurl rocks with slings. And it was fascinating how accurate, how fast, from long range gave me new respect for this story.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 40:12 Yeah. I mean, on one level it seems kind of ridiculous for a shepherd kid with a sling and some rocks to go out and face Goliath. But it's not quite as ridiculous as it may seem. He's pretty good with this I'm guessing. And if you've seen shepherds in places like the Middle East, mostly the day is nothing but boredom. Sheep aren't doing anything. The sheep are just munching on the grass. And so a lot of time to sling stones and get pretty accurate at it. He's confident. If he had gone out with the sword and the armor, he didn't know how to use that.
- John Bytheway: 40:42 Hand to hand combat.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 40:44 Never practiced that. So he wants to do what he's good at. And it does show I think that people should go with their strengths, bring their strengths to the kingdom. I may be stretching on this point, but we're good at some things, we're not as good at others. We don't have to be the other guy. We should bring what we have. That's what David did. He didn't allow himself to be made into something he wasn't. He came as what he was.
- Hank Smith: 41:08 John calls that dance with who brought you.
- John Bytheway: 41:11 What got you to the finals? What got you to-
- Hank Smith: 41:13 Just keep doing that.
- John Bytheway: 41:14 ... this place in the brackets, you dance with who brought you.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 41:18 Yeah. And you try to do something very different and you may lose all together, because just you're not used to it, you don't do this.
- John Bytheway: 41:25 That's a good point with David. He knew how to do this.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 41:27 When the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field." He's a charming guy. But he doesn't take this very seriously.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 41:54 He figures, okay, if they're stupid enough to send you out, I'm going to kill you. No sentimentality here. But then this is another one of those great lines I think. David said to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 42:14 And I think, boy, this is the kind of thing. I love the defiance of it. Sometimes when I see enemies of the kingdom and so on, I think, well, you may have a lot of things going for you, but we come in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel. And so in the end, we're going to win.
- John Bytheway: 42:31 What's wonderful there is he's not saying I'm really good with this sling. He's talking about God and the Lord of hosts. Hosts meaning armies.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 42:41 And then he's going to give all the glory to God. Verse 46, when I win all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel at the end of verse 46. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.
- John Bytheway: 42:57 It's very captain Moroni, he always gave credit to God when they were victorious and always took responsibility when they weren't.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 43:05 Yeah. And the Lamanites will try to say, one commander says, "Oh, come on, we just know it's your better armor."
- John Bytheway: 43:10 You just got better armor.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 43:13 Yeah. No, that's not it.
- John Bytheway: 43:14 We don't need an SR-71. We don't need Google Earth. We have a prophet. Alma, where should we go to defend ourselves?

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 43:22 Yeah, kind of an advanced early warning system. Verse 48, so the Philistine arose, and came, and drew nigh to meet David, and then David hastened and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. There's no hesitation here. He isn't holding back. The Philistine advances, David runs toward him. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 43:50 Now I remember many years ago, hearing president Marion G. Romney speak at BYU I think. He was telling this story. And I just remember just as an aside, he read this line, the stone sunk into his forehead and then he looked up and he said, "Nothing like this had ever entered Goliath's mind before." And he falls with his face to the earth. David prevails with a sling and a stone. And he goes up and he didn't have a sword. So he runs up, he takes the Philistine sword, draws it out of the sheath and slays him and then takes his head.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 44:27 It's an amazing story. And of course it makes David in a sense, it makes him famous. When Saul saw David go forth under the Philistines, he wants to know whose son it is. And he doesn't know yet. This is part of the problem that I have where I think something's garbled here because he already knows him. And he says, "Whose son art thou young man?" And David answered, "I'm the son of the servant, Jesse, the Bethlehemite." But here's where people begin to fall in love with him. Chapter 18, and we'll go through this fairly quickly. There's a lot of good stuff here.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 44:56 First of all, it tells how the crown prince, Saul's own son just is smitten with David. And the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, verse one of chapter 18. And Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day and would let him go no more home to his father's house. I mean, even Saul is kind of taken with him at first. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David and his garments, even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle. He's almost declaring David the real heir. He's giving him a lot of the royal apparel and so on. He may know the fact that it's been predicted, he will not succeed to the throne and he recognizes David for who he is.
- John Bytheway: 45:42 This brings up a question in my mind. And like you said, it's a little garbled, but didn't we just read, Saul, you're no longer king. Or was that more of a prophecy or was that more of a,

- you're going to dwindle in your kingshipness? What's happening?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 45:57 He's rejected as the divinely chosen king, but he lasts on as king for a little while longer.
- John Bytheway: 46:02 Okay. You've lost divine favor. Samuel goes to find David. And then so the transition is a little slower than, okay, you're defrocked or something like that.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 46:12 Now it goes on and eventually Saul and Jonathan both unfortunately are killed in battle. And even then, David has this really interesting attitude. He's not happy about it. He reverences the anointing of the Lord. The Lord doesn't just intervene and say, "Okay, here's a heart attack, you're gone." But he's deprived him of his favor.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 46:30 David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he was very effective. He was accepted in the sight of all the people. When David returns from one slaughter of the Philippines, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet king Saul with tabrets, with joy and with instruments of music. And this is what set Saul just mad. The women answered one another as they played and said, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." Now it has to be said, this is the kind of parallelism that you sometimes see in semitic poetry.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 47:04 They weren't necessarily saying that David is better, but that's how Saul heard it. He goes berserk. Saul was very wroth it says. The saying displeased him. And he said, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands. What can he have more but the kingdom?" I mean, the guy is practically king already. And Saul eyed David from that day and forward. This is the terrible thing, uneasy the head that wears the crown. There's always somebody trying to take it away from you.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 47:34 And Saul already knows by divine revelation that his throne is not safe. He's very suspicious. But does he accept it as the will of the Lord? No, he doesn't. He rebels against it. Just confirms the Lord's choice. David is playing the harp at one point and Saul tries to kill him apparently twice. Now this may be madness. Who knows? But I'm saying something has gone off the rails here.
- Hank Smith: 48:01 Such a sad story of Saul.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 48:03 Oh, it is. Unlike Job who says, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Saul rebels. He knows what the Lord has said, but he's not going to make it easy. And he's going to try to kill the Lord's anointed, even when he knows who it is. Saul was afraid of David. He made him his captain. He sent him out to fight, probably hoping he'd be killed. And he says, "Okay. Now look, I'm supposed to give you my daughter to wife. I kind of promise that for killing Goliath." But he decides I'm going to try to take him out.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 48:31 Verse 17, Saul said, "Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him." I'm going to keep exposing him to battle in such a way that eventually he dies. Now, the irony is that eventually this is the kind of thing David's going to do with Uriah the Hittite. He will literally put Uriah in a situation where Uriah is bound to be killed, to cover up David's sin with Bathsheba. I mean, there are foreshadowings here that are sad, but he doesn't give the right daughter to David. He gives Michelle or Michal. She's in love with David and Saul is pleased. He thinks, so I can use her to punish David. David acts the modest part. I can't be the King's son-in-law. I mean, look who I am, I'm just a humble guy. But Saul says, "No."
- Hank Smith: 49:17 Do you think that reminded Saul of himself? Who am I? And what is my life that I should be the son-in-law of the king? He's like, "I used to sound like that."
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 49:28 Yeah. It might remind him of that. I used to be humble before I was great, but now I'm the king, boy. I demand adulation of the crowds and it's all about me. And I think we're seeing repetition of the story of Saul in a way. And I wish it ended a little better than it does. But this is again a warning to us, Saul and David were both the Lord's choices and they both went wrong. And so we have to ask ourselves again, how am I doing?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 49:52 The scriptures are not meant to record the weaknesses of others so that we can gloat. They're meant for us to look at them and say, "Hope I'm not doing this. What can I learn from this story?" Saul gives him a task, the bride price for his daughter. And it's a pretty gruesome one by our standards. Verse 25, king says, "Look, I don't need any dowry. Just bring me a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be advantage of the King's enemies." And the idea is Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. Basically he's telling him, "Bring me a hundred scalps." That's sort of the same thing.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 50:25 And so David goes out and kills 200 Philistines, brings him 200 trophies. He is given to wife Saul's daughter. And that just

makes Saul all the more afraid of him. He's paranoid about him, that David just continues to grow. He does everything right. So far he's on the trajectory that Saul once was. And that's how the story ends as far as the chapters we read today, which is that Saul has been rejected of the Lord. And a new person has been found who will at least for a while follow after the way the Lord wants him to live.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 50:59

I just think these are such powerful human stories, tragic, tragic stories. There's some doctrine in it, but it's not mostly about doctrine. It's about how we behave, how we obey the Lord and how we deal with the blessings the Lord has given us and who takes the credit for the blessings that we get and our achievements. And that's relevant to every one of us in daily life. These stories are not just about a long ago time, they're about us. If you don't sometimes see yourself in Saul or David, or at least ask yourself whether you can, then you're not reading it correctly in my view.

John Bytheway: 51:37

Somebody we've talked to in the past or maybe something I was reading, just kind of said they loved the Old Testament because it was a book of stories, it has so many stories. These are powerful, amazing, unforgettable stories. And sometimes they're difficult stories to read. But I like, how are they dealing with God? How are they understanding the Lord's will? How are they conducting themselves before the Lord? Are they staying humble? I guess that's what we draw out.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 52:01

Hugh Nibley once, he described the scriptures as the field notes of the priesthood. And I think that's a kind of interesting take on it. They're the notes of people who tried to live the gospel sometimes well, sometimes badly, sometimes who forgot what they were supposed to be doing. But they're the notes about people's experiences with God, not just the priesthood. This is certainly true for women as well, for anybody who's trying to keep covenants and so on.

Dr. Daniel Peterson: 52:26

There are good examples and bad examples and examples that maybe hit a little too close to home for us. I love the Old Testament for the same reason that there's just so much in it where I think, boy, I know a case like that, or I've seen something like that, that's happened sort of in my case. I haven't fought Goliath, but I know some of the issues that are going on here or interacting with someone who is trying to do you harm or where you're trying to not take the credit for things that have gone well.

- John Bytheway: 52:57 I think that Hanks mentioning President Benson's Beware of Pride talk, we can either be humble or we can be compelled to be humble. Make your choice there.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 53:08 Yeah. In the end, every knee will bow. Now will bow willingly out of reverence or not.
- John Bytheway: 53:17 But it will bow.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 53:17 But will bow.
- John Bytheway: 53:20 Yeah. So that was helpful to me because I kept thinking, I thought Saul wasn't the king anymore, but it was more of you've lost God's favor. Now watch this slow transition take over. The prophet selected David, there's a political ruler, a religious ruler maybe is a way to look at it. Is that fair?
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 53:41 Yeah. And to use language out of the New Testament, if Saul were speaking, if he were seeing clearly he'd say, "He must increase, but I must decrease from this point." But it's not going to be sudden. I have a testimony of the scriptures. I have a strong testimony. These stories are given to us, for us to learn from. And the lessons in them are almost infinitely rich. I mean, you can read the scriptures and see a different thing every time you read them. That's true of all great books I think, is that you read them a second time, you think, wow, I didn't understand it that way before. But it's true in spades of the scriptures that they're almost infinitely and exhaustively rich.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 54:23 And these stories, I think they meant something to me when I was a teenager and I read them. They mean something very different to me now. And depending on how much longer I live, they'll mean something to me different again, based on my experiences and so on. I remember home teaching somebody many years ago when I was a kid and we were trying to get him to commit, he wasn't active, but he had been. We were trying to get him to commit to read the scriptures and he said, "Oh, I read them." I think, well, you don't just-
- John Bytheway: 54:52 I did.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 54:52 ... read them and be done with it. I mean a simple story, you read it and you find out the butler did it. Okay, that's all that was of any interest. And there's no reason to ever read it again because you know. But a really great book, even a great novel, you read it again and you think, wow, okay, I understand that character a little differently than I did before.

- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 55:11 And I think the scriptures are so rich and they're so profound. And that's one of the reasons that I have a testimony of them, is that you can go back to them time and time again at different points in your life or different situations in your life. And they'll mean something very different to you. I have an old set of scriptures that I had when I was a teenager. And I see the passages that I marked in those scriptures then, and they're good passages. But I see that I passed over passages that now mean everything to me. They just sailed right over my head when I was 17 or 18 or something like that. And now they're just anchors to me. And maybe my 90-year-old self will read them and say, "Wow, how come I didn't notice that?"
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 55:57 I once heard Elder Packer say he'd been reading the Book of Mormon, but an issue had been on his mind this time. And he said he came through and he found a passage. I could testify almost that that verse was not in the Book of Mormon last time I read it. But this time it hit me. And so that's part of my testimony. It's a small part of my testimony, it was there nonetheless, the scriptures are true and the time spent in studying them and not just reading them, but pondering them and seeking to liken them unto ourselves is time well spent. There's a treasure trove of wisdom as well as divine guidance and doctrine and everything else in them. I bear that testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.
- John Bytheway: 56:39 Amen.
- Hank Smith: 56:40 Amen. That was awesome. What a great day, John, we've had with-
- John Bytheway: 56:45 Yeah, I could talk to Brother Peterson all day long. I have so much. I don't know if you feel the same, but I could talk, you're so much fun to talk to and joke with and enjoy this stuff. Please come back again.
- Dr. Daniel Peterson: 56:57 Thanks for having me. I've really enjoyed it.
- Hank Smith: 56:59 Dan Peterson is a friend of the FollowHIM podcast. We'll see you again soon. We want to thank all of you for joining us. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen. And our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And to our production crew, Lisa Spice, Jamie Nelson, David Perry, Kyle Nelson, Will Stoughton and Scott Houston. We love you. Thank you. And we hope all of you will join us on our next episode of FollowHIM.

HOW DO I OVERCOME FEAR?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with the incredible and amazing and wonderful John Bytheway. Hi, John.
- John Bytheway: 00:12 Hey, how are you?
- Hank Smith: 00:13 We are answering a question from each of this year's Come, Follow Me lessons. The lesson this week is in the beginning of 1 Samuel, chapters 8-18, roughly. John, the question we're going to take on today is one that I get from my own children and from my students, and that is, how do I overcome fear? Fear can be paralyzing, where I'm scared of making a wrong decision. I'm scared of something bad happening. I'm scared, so I just don't do anything. How do you help young people overcome fear? How did you yourself overcome fear?
- John Bytheway: 00:49 I just ran and hide and got under a blanket, and that helped.
- Hank Smith: 00:54 Okay. "And I survived until this day."
- John Bytheway: 00:56 There is such great advice in, oh, Hank, is it section 38? "If you are prepared, you shall not fear." Just to practice, to go through it. I mean, like giving talks or something. When I was maybe seven or eight or nine or something, the astronauts were landing on the moon in those days, and I remember reading something about all of the things that Neil Armstrong said when he was on the moon. "One small step for man, giant leap for mankind." But something else he said up there that I didn't know, but it's in a talk I heard somebody give, he said, "Just like drill."
- Hank Smith: 01:33 Oh, really?
- John Bytheway: 01:34 They had practiced it so many times before, that he was so prepared, that this is going just like drill. I'd already prepared for it in my mind. And so I think that's great advice. If it's the type of thing you can prepare for, then prepare for it. There's nothing

wrong with getting up, practicing, giving your talk to the piano, give your talk to the fridge before you have to do it.

- Hank Smith: 01:58 Practice asking that girl out on a date. Try to prep for the test.
- John Bytheway: 02:04 There's a sense of calmness that comes with, "Hey, I worked hard. I prepared for this. I think I can do this." Sometimes, we just forget we're among friends in certain situations. You're going to give a talk at church, hey, you're among friends. All of us have been there before. But, like you said, you're going to ask a girl out on a date? Hey, I'll tell you, I practiced as a teenager. What am I going to say? I'm going to say, "Hey, if you're not busy on Thursday, I was going to ..." I think, scripturally, that is such great advice. Just be prepared. And you know what? I still feared a little bit, but it was a lot easier, because I was somewhat prepared.
- Hank Smith: 02:41 You know, David does some things here in his battle with Goliath that I think can help us answer this question. One, David only goes with what he knows. He goes with his strengths. He goes with those five smooth stones and his sling. He doesn't want to go in with the armor he hasn't practiced with.
- John Bytheway: 02:59 A weapon he's never used before, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 03:01 Right. So this is the idea of preparation. He understands how this works. Part of David's confidence in overcoming his fear is probably the hours and hours of practicing with the sling out in the shepherd's field. I pictured this isn't the first time David has ever used a sling. I don't know what that looks like with hours of scripture study, or hours of prayer, or whatever it is that already I have behind me, I can move forward with my confidence in the skillset that I have.
- Hank Smith: 03:30 Second, he announces to the world, and especially to his enemy, that, "I come in the name of the Lord of hosts." I remember Elder Holland saying, "Beware any battle in which you're fighting on the wrong side." The opposite of that is, go forward in any battle in which you're fighting on the right side. You know you're on the right side here, so move forward.
- Hank Smith: 03:52 And then what does David do when he sees Goliath? He ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. He didn't hang back and wait and think, "Okay." He moves forward.
- Hank Smith: 04:03 So, three things I think we can do from this story to overcome our fear, John, is practice, practice, practice. Prepare, prepare,

prepare. In whatever fear it is. Even if it's just fear of life. Well, learn all you can. Read, study, learn, be competent. Second, is trust the Lord and be on the right side. Be on the Lord's side of the line. And then, third, go forward. Run forward. Isn't it amazing that he ran towards Goliath?

- John Bytheway: 04:32 I love, too, that there's something to be said about the fact he picked five stones out of the brook. I call it Plan A, Plan B, Plan C, Plan D. There was a backup plan. Why did he take five? He was such a good shot, but he still took five.
- Hank Smith: 04:48 He's over-prepared.
- John Bytheway: 04:50 Yeah. This is for a contingency if something else should happen. There are Goliaths out there, but I like that, "I come in the name of the Lord of hosts." The Lord is on our side. We sing that in a hymn. Do we believe it? "Fear not for the Lord is on our side." And Elder Bednar we'll heed not what the wicked may say. The Lord's on our side. That helps a lot. We can stand up when we're in a situation where we might fear.
- Hank Smith: 05:14 I think, John, if I was scared for the future, if I was thinking, "Oh, what am I going to do?" Instead of running, go hiding in my blanket like you said earlier, I would do these three things. One, I would make sure I'm on the Lord's side of the line. Two, I would become as competent and prepared as I possibly can in all varieties of life. Be ready for anything. Be prepared for anything you can think of. Prepare for it. Think of it. Don't waste your time. I've heard you say this before, John, "Don't waste your time in front of the TV. Get prepared, work on your talents, work on your competency." You've told me before, "Don't watch other people live their dreams."
- John Bytheway: 05:49 Some people dream of doing great things. Others wake up and do them.
- Hank Smith: 05:53 Yeah. It's this idea of don't just watch other people live out their dreams on TV. Go live your dreams. And then, lastly, and I think we've got to mark this in 1 Samuel 17:48, "Run towards what you're afraid of." Go at it. Because odds are, you're going to be like David, and you're going to be victorious.
- John Bytheway: 06:10 Yeah, I like the idea that if you're in a canoe and a big wave is coming at you, the safest thing to do is to go right at it.
- Hank Smith: 06:17 Head right at it. Yep.

- John Bytheway: 06:19 The only way through some things is through. Go right at it. You'll probably surprise yourself.
- Hank Smith: 06:23 I love it. Run toward it, and like David, you're going to shock the world. I love this story, because it's known for all time. David and Goliath. Almost anybody can tell you what that story is about. I think that's going to happen to our listeners as they go toward the enemy, that you're going to become the thing of legend.
- Hank Smith: 06:41 All right. My friends, join us next week for followHIM favorites. Come join us on our regular podcast. You can find us wherever you get your podcasts. It's called followHIM. This week, we are going to be studying these chapters with Dr. Daniel Peterson. He's a lot of fun, has a great voice. You'll want to hear from him, so come join us over there.