



*“Yet Will I Trust in Him”*

## 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 does bad happen to good people? Dr. Adam Miller explores suffering, loss, integrity, and redemption themes in the Book of Job.

#### Part 2:

Dr. Adam Miller continues the discussion of suffering and personal growth to become like our Heavenly Parents. Dr. Miller also discusses the lack of desired answers in the Book of Job but the nature of suffering and loss.

### Timecodes:

## Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Adam Miller
- 01:35 Introduction of Dr. Adam Miller
- 05:16 Background to the Book of Job
- 07:37 Job is not an Israelite
- 10:02 Job is a rare extended discussion about the nature of God and suffering
- 13:50 God shows up but doesn't answer all the questions asked
- 14:49 Job is originally poetry
- 19:16 John Hilton III quote about using different Bible translations
- 22:32 The Book of Job has a narrative frame with center of poetry
- 25:09 Job is an extended answer to why do bad things happen to good people
- 27:21 Satan is better translated here as, “The Accuser,” or “The Tester”
- 28:53 The Accuser should be viewed as the embodiment of loss
- 32:12 Job's friends wonder if he was righteous
- 35:42 Job experiences a series of overwhelming losses
- 39:03 Job stays faithful but the poetry begins and Job is now called the “Impatient Job”
- 41:42 Hank shares a personal experience with loss and service
- 44:46 Religion is learning how to experience loss and redemption
- 46:34 First introduction of personal suffering
- 51:14 John and Hank share stories of speaking after school shootings
- 54:00 End of Part I–Dr. Adam Miller

## Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Adam Miller
- 00:07 Job 3 and a theophany
- 03:00 Tension between despair and trust
- 05:43 Despair is part of our relationship with God
- 08:10 Story about BYU-Idaho teacher John Parker
- 11:21 God offers piece amidst tragedy
- 13:50 The relationship between morals and commandments and suffering
- 17:03 Job 19 and the Resurrection and a list of complaints
- 20:35 Does Paul borrow from Job?
- 23:40 God appears and changes the nature and scale of the conversation
- 26:02 The longest, sustained first person POV in the Bible
- 29:06 God comes when Job prays but doesn't answer his questions
- 31:55 Trials don't come to Job because of sin
- 32:31 Job has many things restored yet will lose everything again
- 35:49 Will I love God when everything goes wrong?

- 37:59 The best book on Job
- 40:57 Job can be understood by ordinary people
- 41:58 Dr. Adam Miller shares his journey of faith and scholarship
- 45:55 End of Part II—Dr. Adam Miller

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## **Biographical Information:**



Adam is a professor of philosophy at Collin College in McKinney, Texas.

He earned a BA in Comparative Literature from Brigham Young University and an MA and PhD in Philosophy from Villanova University.

He is the author of eight books and serves as the current director of the Mormon Theology Seminar.

He and his wife, Gwen, have three children.

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to Follow Him, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:10	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:15	As together, we follow him.
Hank Smith:	00:19	Welcome everyone to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I am here with my co-host. There is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and upright co-host, one that fears God and escheweth evil. He holds fast to his integrity. That is my co-host, John Bytheway. John, welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. John, when I read that verse, you're the first person who came to mind.
John Bytheway:	00:52	No comment. Yeah, but then the trials followed. The trials came after, so tone it down a little bit.
Hank Smith:	00:56	Sorry. I should watch out for that. Because you're like, don't give me that.
John Bytheway:	00:59	Don't set me up.
Hank Smith:	01:03	John, we're going to be in the Book of Job today. Job chapter two, verse three is where that phrase came from. And we had to bring on someone who could help us understand this book. And to be honest, I'm a little bit, I'm nervous, John. Sometimes I'm not nervous because we bring on people I've talked to many, many times, and others I've only seen on TV. And this is someone I've only seen on TV, only on YouTube, when I've watched things where he is speaking. And I'll be honest, John,

it's a home run every time. Can you tell our audience who's here?

- John Bytheway: 01:35 We have Dr. Adam S. Miller here today. I am holding Original Grace, for those of you who can see on YouTube, his newest book, which is so new, it's on deseretbook.com and it takes a little while for them to get all the processing stuff so that it will be on Amazon, but it will be. Adam S. Miller is a professor of philosophy at Collin College in McKinney, Texas. He earned a bachelor's in comparative literature from Brigham Young University and an MA and PhD in philosophy from Villanova University. He's the author of more than 10 books, including Letters to a Young Mormon, An Early Resurrection, and Mormon: A Brief Theological Introduction. He and his wife, Gwen, have three children. And also, as we were talking before, he served a mission in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He loves basketball.
- John Bytheway: 02:28 And Hank, you know and I know that publishers like to say things about the books they publish, but when someone that you know says something about it, it makes a huge difference. And you and I both have a love and respect for Dr. Robert L. Millet. He has been on our program before. In this book, Letters to a Young Mormon, this is what Brother Robert L. Millet said at the beginning. He said, "Adam Miller's Letters to a Young Mormon frustrated me. Not that I didn't like it, because I enjoyed it immensely. No, it frustrated me because I only wish I had had such a book to read when I was a 1960s teenager with racing mind and hormones."
- John Bytheway: 03:09 And when Robert Millet says, "I wish I had had this book," you've got my attention immediately because of our love and respect for him. I just love your writing style. It's beautiful and it's fresh and honest. We're really excited to have you here, Brother Miller. I had no idea about the basketball thing. So maybe if we ever get in the same space, instead of spread out over Zoom, we can play a game of horse and then you'll see how upright and perfect I really am.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 03:38 That would be great. I'd love it.
- John Bytheway: 03:40 So welcome, Dr. Miller. We're so glad to have you.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 03:43 I am very happy to be here. I have never met either of you in real life before, but I've been looking forward to this. And if you'd like to hear it, I do have a John Bytheway story, even though John Bytheway and I have never met.

John Bytheway:	03:56	No way. Oh, I hope it's a-
Dr. Adam Miller:	03:58	Are you interested?
Hank Smith:	03:59	This makes my day because I love John Bytheway stories.
Dr. Adam Miller:	04:03	I was a graduate student at Villanova working on my PhD and I was writing my doctoral dissertation and I came out to BYU to spend the summer teaching a New Testament class for religious education. Because the topic of my dissertation had to do with the use of Paul's epistles in contemporary French philosophy. All the Marxists and the Freudians and the atheists, Paul was a hot topic among them. And John Bytheway figures into this story because while I was there at BYU for that summer writing this dissertation, I was alone. My family wasn't with me. I tried to avoid my apartment as much as I could. And religious ed, they housed me in John Bytheway's empty office in the Testing Center at BYU. A big chunk, John, of my dissertation on contemporary French philosophy in Paul's epistles was written in your empty office in the Testing Center.
Hank Smith:	05:00	Wow.
Dr. Adam Miller:	05:02	So thanks.
John Bytheway:	05:03	Probably the best thing that ever happened in that office, because I'm sure my writing doesn't compare. And that's a beautiful metaphor, because isn't life just kind of a big Testing Center?
Hank Smith:	05:14	Yeah.
Dr. Adam Miller:	05:15	Indeed.
Hank Smith:	05:16	Hey, that's a perfect lead in to what we're going to talk about today. Trials test difficulties. In fact, the name of the lesson in the manual this week is, Yet Will I Trust in Him? So Dr. Miller, Adam, here's what we'd like to do. John and I are just here for the ride. First question is what do our listeners need to know before jumping into the Book of Job? What background do they need in order to get the most out of this book?
Dr. Adam Miller:	05:43	I think a little background here is especially helpful with the Book of Job because in lots of ways, it's not like anything else in the Old Testament. In some ways, a little bit like the Book of Ecclesiastes, it's a miracle that it's in the Old Testament.

Hank Smith:	06:00	Okay.
Dr. Adam Miller:	06:02	Because the Book of Job spends a lot of time calling into question and undercutting and rewriting some of the basic assumptions that we tend to take for granted about God and religion and the nature of suffering. But it does that all as part of its project of faithfully engaging us with God. I think it's an especially powerful and unusual book in the Old Testament in that respect.
Hank Smith:	06:28	I'm a Victor Hugo fan. I wouldn't call myself a reader anywhere near you, Dr. Miller.
Dr. Adam Miller:	06:34	If you've read a thousand page Victor Hugo novel, then you're a reader.
Hank Smith:	06:38	Okay. Yes.
John Bytheway:	06:38	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	06:39	I have. Both Hunchback and Les Miserables.
Dr. Adam Miller:	06:42	Wow.
Hank Smith:	06:42	And I always tell people, the unabridged version. You just have to tell people it was unabridged. I have this written in my scriptures. The Book of Job is perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind. That's Victor Hugo. That is quite an endorsement, wouldn't you say, from quite an author?
Dr. Adam Miller:	06:59	A blurb from Victor Hugo for the Book of Job.
Hank Smith:	07:03	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	07:04	I've read it once, but Elder Bruce R. McConkie was going through books of scripture once and all he said about Job was, "And Job is for people who like the Book of Job." That's all he said. Throw that away.
Dr. Adam Miller:	07:17	Yeah. Well, guilty as charged.
John Bytheway:	07:19	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	07:19	Yeah. Me too. I'm interested in this because we're breaking away, right, from the story that we've had, which has been Israel, the monarchs. We've talked about the exile, we've talked

about Ezra, Nehemiah, we've talked about Esther. And now Job and none of that, right?

- Dr. Adam Miller: 07:37 Yeah. None of that is involved here in the Book of Job. One of the interesting things that makes the Book of Job an outlier has to do with the way that Job is not an Israelite. It's unclear who Job was as a historical figure. It's been speculated that he fits somewhere into the chronology of the Book of Genesis. May have been associated with Egypt in some way. But the book at the bare minimum makes clear that he's not an Israelite, right? The Israelite story, the story of the Israelite covenant, he falls outside of that main branch of the story. He's more like you and I, he's a Gentile in many respects. But he still has this remarkable relationship with God, the best we can tell much later is fashioned into the version of the story that we get in the Book of Job included in the Bible.
- Hank Smith: 08:28 That's fantastic. One thing I've told my students is Latter-day Saints don't have a corner on God. We don't have him to ourselves. Sometimes there might be a tendency to think, oh, true and living church, we're the only ones God is interested in or talking to. And yet you find out people like Job, we might say he's not a member of our church. He has a fantastic relationship with God. And we could say that in our day. People who are not members of our church have a fantastic relationship with God.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 08:57 Yeah. I think that's right. And I think that's also one of the reasons why it's unusual and perhaps surprising that Job made it in to the Old Testament cannon, is that he's not part of the covenant family in that technical sense.
- Hank Smith: 09:11 Okay. Any other background before we jump in?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 09:14 Yeah. I'd like to say, I think that in my estimation, the Book of Job may be the most important book in the Old Testament. Opinions are going to vary about this. Tastes, preferences, interests will play a role. But for me, one of the things that's really striking and unusual about the Book of Job in comparison to the rest of what we get in the Old Testament has to do with the way that the Book of Job is essentially an argument. It's a long series of arguments. Mostly what we get in the Old Testament are stories, narratives, detailed descriptions of the law of Moses. We get prophecy, right? We get wisdom books like Proverbs. We get collections of prayers like Psalms.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 10:02 But the one thing that we hardly ever get in scripture is long, extended versions of arguments, of explanations, of reasonings, of back and forth. And Job in that respect I think really stands

out, because it's an example of someone trying really hard to think about God. And we see that thinking unfolding live in real time, especially in conversation with Job's friends, and I think that's quite remarkable. And as a philosopher, that kind of thing especially appeals to me. I like actual explanations.

Hank Smith: 10:31

I love that. I'm writing this down in my scriptures. It's an argument. Would you say it's a philosophical discussion?

Dr. Adam Miller: 10:37

Yeah. I think the Book of Job, more than any other place perhaps in all of scripture, directly addresses as questions, as questions, not just as answers, but as questions, the basic problems at the heart of human experience. What's the nature of human suffering? Why do we suffer? What relationship does our suffering bear to justice? And what do both suffering and justice have to do with our relationship to God? Those are at the heart of what it means to be a human being and to try to live a religion. And Job may be our best and clearest and most extended and rawest example of what it means to try to think about those questions.

Hank Smith: 11:15

Oh, that's beautiful. It's not fair, just on the side note, it's not fair that someone can write and speak this well, just so you know. You better not be able to shoot threes. Because if you can, then you're a trifecta. You can speak right and shoot threes.

John Bytheway: 11:30

I love that kind of introduction because it is such a question that is ongoing, it seems we are constantly asking. The very first line in the official manual, "It's natural to wonder why bad things happen to good people. Or for that matter, why good things happen to bad people. Why would God, who is just, allow that? Questions like these are explored through the experience of Job, one of those good people to whom bad things happen." And the reason I like what you said is the question, it's not we're just all done with that question when we're done with the Book of Job. It will go on in each of our lives. We'll still be asking that question. So I like the way you put that. It's a long argument. It's a long philosophical discussion. That question will persist I think for all of us as we go through life.

Dr. Adam Miller: 12:21

We get to witness, I think in a really raw and unfiltered way that's unusual for scripture, what it looks like to wrestle with God, not knowing what God is doing or why. And to see that as part of your religion, rather than as a kind of departure from your religion.

John Bytheway: 12:40 I love the word wrestle in there because I just think that, who was it? Enos in the Book of Mormon, let me tell you the wrestle that I had before God. And I took in high school a wonderful class just called sports for life, and we played football and then we played basketball and then we played volleyball and then we wrestled. And wrestling was the most strenuous thing. You use every muscle. You'd be sore. You'd walk off the mat going, I feel like I just ran a marathon or something. But wrestling made you stronger everywhere. And so I love the idea of a spiritual wrestle and the outcomes that can come from a spiritual wrestle.

Dr. Adam Miller: 13:21 So intimate, wrestling. You're right in there with the other person's body as close as you'd ever like to get to another human being.

Hank Smith: 13:28 Yeah. This is just for me. To see the wrestle, to see suffering, to see the questions and the back and forth with the Lord as part of your religion.

John Bytheway: 13:42 As soon as I get this answer, I'll be fine. Yeah. It's an ongoing. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 13:48 Yeah. That was very touching.

Dr. Adam Miller: 13:50 I don't want to spoil the ending, but though God does show up at the end of the Book of Job in a quite remarkable way, he doesn't answer any of Job's questions.

John Bytheway: 14:00 Right. That's one of my favorite parts, is he still doesn't get his questions answered except that God is there. I love that part.

Dr. Adam Miller: 14:08 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 14:09 God is there.

Dr. Adam Miller: 14:09 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 14:10 God is aware. But I'm just going to tell you how grand my creations are and ask you, where were you when I did all this? That's one of the parts that I love too because it's open ended at the end.

Hank Smith: 14:21 Don't tell me my questions are not going to be answered you guys. That's an interesting thing, that when I see God, he'll give me all my answers. And he says, at least in this book, no. No,

you're not going to get all your answers right now. This has been great so far. Are you ready to jump in?

- Dr. Adam Miller: 14:39 I have two other notes I think that might be-
- Hank Smith: 14:41 Okay. Let's do it.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 14:42 Helpful in terms of readers approaching the Book of Job.
- Hank Smith: 14:48 Okay.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 14:49 One has to do with the fact that because Job is such an unusual book, it's also pretty hard to read. Just at the level of individual sentences, it can be hard to read. And I think this is partly a function of the fact that it's poetry and people in general aren't very good at reading poetry. And it takes a little bit of practice and is partly a product of the fact that we try to read it in King James English, which when you layer that on top of the difficulty of the Hebrew poetry together with the fact that the King James English, especially in our edition of the scriptures, hides the fact that it is poetry, right? Presenting it as if it were prose rather than a poem, it makes it really hard to read.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 15:36 And so one thing that I would recommend to people who are really interested in trying to dip their toes into the Book of Job is to take it slow and to read that King James translation with a contemporary translation in hand. So that you can get over the hump of just trying to understand what's being said, and you can get a feel for the way that it is a poem and you can see it structured as a poem. That goes a long way all by itself.
- Hank Smith: 16:09 Do you have one that you use?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 16:11 Any contemporary translation in modern English would be fine, especially if it presents it as verse.
- Hank Smith: 16:18 Okay.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 16:19 The new revised standard edition is fine. The new English translation is fine. I think anything that presents it in modern English as poetry, that'll work.
- Hank Smith: 16:28 I direct my students to a website called biblehub.com, in which you can look up a verse and it gives you any number of translations, up to 25 or 30 different translations. And I've told them, if you stumble across a verse you don't understand, which sounds like it's going to happen a lot in the Book of Job.

Dr. Adam Miller: 16:45 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 16:45 Go over to the website and read the different ways other translators have rendered that and you'll find yourself going, oh, okay. I get it.

Dr. Adam Miller: 16:54 Yeah. I tend to use on my phone an app called The Blue Letter Bible, that also gives you multiple parallel translations. And if you're interested in that kind of thing, it also gives you links through to the original Greek and Hebrew, along with concordances and translations of key terms, stuff like that.

Hank Smith: 17:14 Fantastic. Yeah. And I've found in my reading of the Bible, those to be an immense help.

Dr. Adam Miller: 17:19 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 17:19 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 17:19 Me too.

Hank Smith: 17:20 I mean, yeah.

John Bytheway: 17:21 I'm glad we're talking about this because I feel like some are a little hesitant, like, oh no, that's not the official version. Well, we do have an official version, but what a blessing to have these others. And go back to your King James, but go look at those others. I was at education week in Hawaii, Hank, had to be 30 years ago, something. Brother Dr. A. David Thomas was lecturing and he said in his class that he read some Old Testament, couldn't understand it. He looked both ways and said I bought myself a contemporary version and I understood it for the first time.

John Bytheway: 17:54 And I laughed and ever since then, I think you saw me hold this up. I got this one and this says kids' application, but the translation is called The Living Bible. Sometimes I'll use this to prepare for this podcast. Tell me the storyline. Okay, now I can hear it in King James. And sometimes the King James is hard to understand. Sometimes it's beautiful, the King James. But at least I can see both of those and say, oh, now I get what's going on. I just hope people aren't thinking, is it wrong for me to look at another translation? No, it's helpful. And the King James, as far as I know, will remain our official one, but really helpful.

Dr. Adam Miller: 18:31 Well, the church of course uses contemporary translations in all of the other languages except for English. My understanding is

that we stick with it in English, the King James, because that's the language of the restoration. Right? If you want to see the parallels between the King James Bible and the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, which is crucial, you need to stick with the King James, because we don't have the alternate translations of the Book of Mormon or Doctrine and Covenants in English. But the authoritative version doesn't do you much good at the end of the day if you didn't understand what it said.

- Hank Smith: 19:04 Exactly right.
- John Bytheway: 19:05 Yeah. And the Book of Mormon sounds like King James English and the Doctrine and Covenants does, so it's nice to have those kind of having that same sound.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 19:14 Yeah. They're married together in a way.
- Hank Smith: 19:16 Our friend, John Hilton III, on his website has just a little blog entry called, Is it Okay to Use Bibles Besides the King James? And in this, he says, "Recently people have been asking why I sometimes use versions of the Bible besides the KJV. Some have even asked if it's okay to use alternate versions, like the new revised standard version. Personally, I love the KJV, have used it through all my life and continue to do so. At the same time, I've found that my understanding of passages is expanded as I read alternate translations."
- Hank Smith: 19:48 If you read a little further, he quotes the church's handbook, 2021 Church Handbook, "When possible, members should use a preferred or church published edition of the Bible in church classes and meetings. This helps maintain clarity in the discussion and consistent understanding of doctrine." Then this sentence, "Other editions of the Bible may be useful for personal or academic study." It's very clear that we are in, what would we say, John? We are in the safety of the church's guidelines.
- John Bytheway: 20:16 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 20:16 I just don't want anyone to go, "This is apostasy. What are they doing?"
- Dr. Adam Miller: 20:19 You guys pushing the boundaries here.
- Hank Smith: 20:20 Yeah. Pushing the boundaries.

John Bytheway: 20:22 A good example that helped me was when the theme for the youth a number of years ago in the New Testament was First Timothy four, "Let no man despise thy youth." And I didn't know what that meant. Oh, that means don't let them look at your life as a teenager. I didn't know what that meant. I found another translation that said, "Don't let others look down on you because you are young." I thought, oh, this is about, don't worry about your age, worry about your call type of a thing.

Hank Smith: 20:49 Exactly right.

John Bytheway: 20:49 And it changed the meaning for me, because I looked at another one and then I understood, oh, Paul was saying to Timothy, don't worry about your age. Which was different than what I thought let no man despise thy youth meant. So I benefited from those other translations.

Hank Smith: 21:04 That's perfect.

Dr. Adam Miller: 21:05 So I think on the one hand, it's difficult to read just at the level of individual sentences because it's mostly a poem and it's really high, difficult poetry. But at the larger scale, it can also be difficult to read because the Book of Job doesn't present us with one single clear voice. It gives us Job's voice. It gives us God's voice. It gives us the voice of the heavenly council. It gives us the voice of Job's three friends in conversation with Job. And it gives us the voice of a fourth friend who shows up at the last moment before God's theophany.

Dr. Adam Miller: 21:39 And all those voices overlap and agree and disagree with one another in ways that allow you to see that they're all making good, useful, powerful points, even as the Book of Job itself resists the temptation to reduce that to one single answer for you. And that can also make it difficult to read as well, especially the first time through, right? If you're taking your first real crack at the Book of Job, you should go in knowing that you'll probably want to read it three or four times in a couple different translations. And you should go in knowing that the Book of Job will reward that kind of effort in a way that few books in the Bible will.

Hank Smith: 22:20 Well said. Well said.

John Bytheway: 22:22 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 22:22 And what was your third point?

- Dr. Adam Miller: 22:24 I think it's also useful for people to have just a feel for the basic structure of the book.
- John Bytheway: 22:30 Do a big picture and yeah.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 22:32 Well, the structure of the Book of Job as a whole breaks into a kind of a frame and then an internal section. You get kind of a narrative frame that's delivered in prose at the beginning that describes God's conversation with the tester or the accuser or what gets translated as Satan. And then the description of Job's trials. And then you get similarly at the end of the Book of Job, a kind of prose frame that describes in narrative fashion, how he's restored to health and wealth and new children. The whole middle of the book unfolds in poetry as a conversation between Job and his three plus one friends. They speak in rounds. Job speaks and then his friend speaks and then Job replies and then another friend speaks and then Job replies and then another friend speaks. And it goes through these rounds in poetry, as Job tries to figure out why all these terrible things have happened to him and his friends also try to explain to him why they think all these terrible things have happened to him.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 23:37 The most important thing to recognize about that long conversation that unfolds in poetry is that Job's basic strategy in the conversation is to build a kind of court case against God. He imagines that he's going to call God to account for all of his suffering in court and he lays out all of the evidence for this position. And he keeps asking God to show up and defend himself in this kind of courtroom scenario that he's imagining in his head. And at the end of the book, then God shows up to defend himself, without answering any of his questions. He offers this kind of defense of himself.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 24:15 And at the end of the book, then I think the most fascinating thing about it is the way that God comes out in favor of Job. In terms of all of his impious, raw, unfiltered questioning of God, God sides with Job and not with Job's friends, who were defending a more common sense notion of religion. And he tells Job's friends to repent. And then Job is restored. That's the basic structure of the book. And having that in mind too can make working from sentence to sentence an easier job.
- Hank Smith: 24:45 Absolutely. My friend Tyler Griffin calls that like a 30,000 foot view. Now we can go down and get into it. When you talked about the friends, I was thinking, as I read the manual this morning, because of Job's trials, his friends wondered if he really was good after all. Right? Wow. When really bad things happen to you, you must have been sinning secretly.

Dr. Adam Miller: 25:08 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 25:09 I mean, what a fascinating idea. It reminds me of when Jesus is in Jerusalem and his apostles ask, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

John Bytheway: 25:17 Yeah. There's got to be a reason. Something has to make sense of why this guy is suffering. For them, it's these two alternatives. It was either him or his parents, right? And what's Jesus' answer, Hank?

Hank Smith: 25:28 Jesus responds with, "Neither did sin this man or his parents, but that the works of God may be made manifest." So maybe we're getting a version of that here, Adam, in Job?

Dr. Adam Miller: 25:38 I think we're getting a book length version, a kind of book length explanation there of Jesus's response to that question. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 25:45 Wonderful. With that, I'm now more excited. I was excited before, now I'm even more excited to jump in.

John Bytheway: 25:52 One of the things that intrigues me about the Book of Job is the way that it starts off this day where the sons of God came together and Satan came also. And it's like, I don't know, this introduction of how are we going to test Job? What would you have to say about that kind of a strange thing where the Lord would say, "Have you considered my servant Job?"

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:14 It's a striking setup for the story and conversation that follows. The narration that we get of a kind of heavenly council where the sons of God come together to meet with God, reporting back in, and among them is this figure that the Book of Job refers to as the ha Satan, what gets transliterated really into English as the Satan. It's easy for us I think to just associate that straightforwardly with who you and I call Satan. But in the context of the Book of Job, I'm not sure how strong that identification should be. The figure here described as the Satan is a member of the heavenly council, in some respect. His name translates as something like the accuser or the tester. So he plays this kind of role in the divine economy of testing people to see whether or not they really are made of what they claim to be made of. Clearly he's not a friend of Job, as the story lays it out. But as the story tells it, I'm not sure that we should identify him straightforwardly with who you and I think of as the devil.

Hank Smith: 27:21 Yeah. I think that's wise too. What word did you say that that became? Satan? What word was there originally?

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:28 Yeah. Satan is more or less a transliteration of the Hebrew word. Just ha Satan, but it means... My Hebrew pronunciation is terrible, but it means something like the tester or the accuser.

Hank Smith: 27:39 The accuser or the tester. I like that.

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:41 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 27:41 Well, in the Book of Revelation, it talks about the accuser of the brethren.

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:46 Yeah. And so this develops into, I think, especially over the course of the New Testament, into an idea about the devil that's much closer to how you and I would think about it. But especially at this point in the Old Testament and in Israelite history, there doesn't seem to be any strong, clear notion of the devil as you and I think of it.

Hank Smith: 28:02 I've had students ask me before, "Why is God having this conversation with Satan?" I've said, "Well, whether it's Satan or not, I doubt this conversation is taking place." The writer... Who would we say is the narrator? Do we even know? It's an unknown narrator?

Dr. Adam Miller: 28:17 Yeah. We don't have any idea who the author of the Book of Job is. Probably much, much later than the historical time period Job would've lived in. I think even on historical grounds, just purely historical grounds, it's totally plausible that there's a kind of root historical figure here. Even if that's the case, I think it's important to recognize that the Book of Job as we have it is carefully fashioned high literature that's written much, much later, reflecting on Job's life experiences.

Hank Smith: 28:47 Excellent.

Dr. Adam Miller: 28:47 I might say one other thing about the Satan before we move on from that, if you want?

Hank Smith: 28:52 Yeah. Please do.

Dr. Adam Miller: 28:53 For me, as I've tried to think more carefully about the Book of Job and what it's saying about the human experience, I think one useful way to read the figure of the Satan, of the tester, of the accuser, is to read him as something like the embodiment of loss. The way that loss and suffering are an inevitable part of the human experience. Everyone is going to get sick. Everyone is going to suffer. Everyone is going to lose people that they love.

Everyone is going to lose the things that they tried so hard to acquire. And in some ways, this figure is kind of the embodiment of that basic dimension of human experience across the board.

- John Bytheway: 29:31 I like that.
- Hank Smith: 29:33 See it as this part of life that questions, because isn't that the role of this accuser? He's saying, "Look, Job is great because he has all these blessings. If he didn't have all those, he wouldn't be so great." And that's life's question for us sometimes, is how faithful are you going to be with loss? How are you going to deal with loss?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 29:56 Yeah. What are the grounds for your faithfulness? Are you faithful to God because you hope to get something out of it? Is it a kind of quid pro quo? Or is your faithfulness to God grounded in a kind of love that's not conditional on God giving what you thought you wanted?
- Hank Smith: 30:12 Yeah. Elder Christofferson called that the cosmic vending machine, didn't he?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:16 That's the danger, right? Is the perpetual danger is to treat religion as if it were a kind of cosmic vending machine. And you can't make a stronger case I don't think than the Book of Job does, that that's not how life works. Thinking about religion that way comes pretty naturally to us though. It's the natural man's way of thinking about religion in terms of using God to get what we want out of reality, out of life. A lot of learning how to live your religion involves growing out of that natural way of thinking about God and religion.
- Hank Smith: 30:47 It goes back to what you said earlier about this is going to rewrite the basic assumptions that we have about God, the natural man's assumptions about God.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:57 Exactly. And that's what we get kind of a front row seat here to seeing Job undergo that transformation live in real time.
- Hank Smith: 31:06 And I like how you said that, that everyone is going to experience, maybe not Job's type loss, but loss.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 31:11 Yeah. Maybe not dramatic and all at once, but for all of us, inevitably.

- Hank Smith: 31:16 I can imagine how many people are listening, going, "That's me, I've experienced serious loss." John, you already know this. Adam, I doubt you do, but my brother passed away and my father passed away and it was within 90 days of each other. And it definitely wasn't Job like, but there were moments where those are very real moments where you have to self-analyze. You have to turn inward and say, do I believe? What do I believe? Why do I believe? And to say that that's happening here in the Book of Job is an exceptional experience we can have.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 31:54 Yeah. I think we could say too that Job is a kind of case study in what it looks like to mourn with those who mourn. Or to fail to mourn with those who mourn, depending on how we evaluate how Job's friends are doing in mourning with him.
- Hank Smith: 32:12 The manual doesn't put it very closely, right, when it says, "Because of Job's trials, his friends wondered if he was really good after all." Doesn't sound like their first thought was, I need to mourn with those that mourn.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 32:23 We get some contrast between the prose frame and the poetic core of the Book of Job in terms of how they treat Job's friends. And also in terms of how they treat Job, but especially how they treat Job's friends. In the prose frame to the book, the friends are initially described as coming from a long way to come and comfort Job. And when they see him at first from a distance, he's such a wreck, they don't even recognize him. And when they finally come to greet him, they can't find anything to say. And all they do is sit in silence with Job for seven days. That's probably a pretty good example I think of what it looks like to mourn with those who mourn. That when the conversation kicks off, then the accusations begin to unspool, especially in terms of those assumptions about a cosmic vending machine version of religion. And then things get a little ugly.
- Hank Smith: 33:16 John, I've heard you say this before, things were going well until they started talking. Haven't you said that before?
- John Bytheway: 33:23 I feel like it was wonderful that they came and they just sat with him. They couldn't explain it and they shouldn't have tried. But just the comfort of somebody else there, as the mourn with them that mourn, as Alma the Elder put it to those who were about to be baptized. And as soon as they tried to explain things or tried to make sense of it, that's when everything went south. But at first they just came and sat with him and I had loved that part. And it teaches me, things happen I cannot explain, but if I can just be there, sometimes that's the only thing I have to

offer. And trying to explain it might only not be an error. I might be wrong and hurtful by trying to explain it. When they try to explain it, that's when everything goes bad.

- John Bytheway: 34:09 So that's exactly what I was thinking. They come and they sit with him. It reminds me of a talk I heard in general conference where somebody had a loss in their family and a neighbor came over and just took everybody's shoes and shined all the boys and everybody's shoes. Does that story ring a bell? And just did that quietly and left. And this person giving the talk, talked about what a blessing it was that someone would just come and care and shine their shoes for them so they could be ready for the service. But they didn't come in and, "Well, let me try to make sense of everything that just happened." You know? It was just, "I'm going to be here."
- Hank Smith: 34:47 I love it.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 34:48 There's certainly kind of powerful beauty to the silence, especially when it's shared and especially for such a long time. And there's certainly a kind of messy ugliness that ensues once the conversation begins and that verbal wrestle starts to unfold. But it's also the case that at the end of the day, that that messy, sometimes ugly verbal wrestle was really powerful and it results in God showing up, right? God doesn't show up when they're sitting in silence there. He only shows up after that long, messy conversation. And at the end of the day, not only is Job vindicated for having asked those difficult questions out loud, Job's friends repent.
- John Bytheway: 35:25 They're educated. Yeah.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 35:27 Yeah. They're educated in the process as well. And so the silence is beautiful and in lots of ways necessary. But also, lots of times, despite the difficulty and the trouble of the talking, that can get us to where we need to be too.
- Hank Smith: 35:40 Yeah. It can propel us forward.
- John Bytheway: 35:42 Let's talk about Job chapter one. I'm intrigued that the book is like 42 chapters long, but everything that happened to Job happened in about six verses in chapter one. And then we spend the rest of the book trying to figure it out and wrestle with it.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 35:56 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 35:57 So what happened to Job in the first place?

Dr. Adam Miller: 35:59 So Job, as Hank described, is an upright and just man. God doesn't disagree with that assessment of Job.

John Bytheway: 36:08 He would of me, but of Job, yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 36:10 When the tester asks God for permission to see why Job is a perfect and upright man, God gives him permission and Job goes on to experience a series of devastating losses. He loses his wealth, he loses his servant, he loses his children, and eventually he loses his own good health.

John Bytheway: 36:35 And it happens so rapidly. It's like one messenger comes in and says the oxen were plowing, the asses feeding, the Sabaeans fell upon them and took them away. I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking there came another, and that phrase happens what, three times. While he was yet speaking, another guy comes in and says, oh, and another thing. You just lost all of this. Oh, and another thing. You just lost all of this. And I think there's a different type of a trial, maybe I'm jumping ahead, with I lost material things. Then it gets kind of... And you lose your health, but then it becomes, and another thing, Job, you're not worthy. That's even worse. While all of this happens and then they, okay, all of this happened because of a flaw in you. That's even another hard thing to go with all of this.

Dr. Adam Miller: 37:21 Yeah. Well, that's the question that follows hard on the heels of all that loss, is what it means. And that's the question that Job and his friends wrestle back and forth about, as Job adamantly insists that he did nothing to deserve any of this. And his friends just as adamantly insist that it wouldn't have happened if he didn't.

John Bytheway: 37:41 Yeah. And I think for all of us today, in our time dealing with stuff, because so many things do make sense in the gospel, we want everything to make sense. I just think sometimes it doesn't. So that's what they are trying to do, make sense of this now. And maybe it's because of you, Job, that all this has happened.

Dr. Adam Miller: 38:03 Yeah. There's a kind of deep background assumption there about suffering, that suffering is inherently a moral judgment.

John Bytheway: 38:12 Deserved.

Dr. Adam Miller: 38:12 That suffering is in some sense, inherently punishment. Whereas I think the lesson for me that I take from the Book of Job at the end of the day is that we're always wrong when we think that suffering equates straightforwardly with punishment.

Hank Smith: 38:28 Excellent. And there's also a loss here with his wife. His wife says in chapter two, verse nine, "Does thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die." So can I add here that my loved ones have lost their faith to another type of loss, in me, in God?

Dr. Adam Miller: 38:48 Yeah. At the very least she's lost her faith in him. She doesn't die with the children. She's the one person left at his side. But in lots of ways, it's maybe more salt in the wound that though she survives, she repudiates him in this sense.

Hank Smith: 39:03 Oh, loss after loss after loss. In all this, Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly. That's Job 1:22. So at least here on the outside, his response to his wife, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and not receive evil?" So on the outside, I think the rest of the book, right, Adam? Is going to kind of show us what's happening inside of Job, but on the outside, his grief is very great, but he is staying the course. He is staying faithful.

Dr. Adam Miller: 39:33 Yeah. And those very famous lines, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away. Shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord and not receive evil?" Those are the things that Job says in the narrative frame. Those are what he says in the prose part of the book. Commentators have often suggested that you have kind of two versions of Job in the Book of Job. You have Job from the narrative part of the Book of Job that's called the patient Job. That's also a famous biblical phrase, right? About having the patience of Job.

Dr. Adam Miller: 40:04 But then once you get to the poetry part and the conversation unfolds, the commentators refer to that side of Job as the impatient Job. On the one hand you have Job demonstrating his faith to God by his extreme patience under extreme duress. And on the other hand, you have Job expressing his faith in God by way of his extreme impatience with all of this loss and suffering and demanding answers and looking for connection and looking for God to come and be involved and answer and account for this. But I think both of those, both the patient Job and the impatient Job, we're best to see those as manifestations of his faith.

John Bytheway: 40:42 I love the idea here of time passing because I think his reaction at first is so... These are some of the most memorable lines to me in the whole Old Testament. "The Lord hath given, the Lord

hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord," in Job 1:21. And then in Job 2:10, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, shall we not receive evil?" At first, you can see him, okay. And then as time goes on, then the impatient Job, as you call it. I like you put it in that way, because patience implies a passage of time. And as time goes on, it gets harder and harder to make sense perhaps.

- Dr. Adam Miller: 41:19 Yeah, I think that's right.
- Hank Smith: 41:21 And maybe there's a public and private here too. So after the first two chapters, then we get into the dialogue, right?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 41:30 Yeah. Then the poetry kicks in.
- Hank Smith: 41:33 I wanted to mention just really quick, in Job chapter two, verse 13, you already mentioned this, Adam, but I just wanted to say how important this is.
- John Bytheway: 41:42 Oh, I love this. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 41:42 So his friends come. They sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great. We've already mentioned this, but I'll just add a story. When my mother-in-law died, Sarah's mom, it was devastating for us. And I remember, me and my wife and our children were sitting together and all of a sudden we can hear the lawnmower. And I'm like, who's mowing the lawn? Right? Because there's seven of us. We're all sitting in the house. So who's mowing the lawn? And I look out and there's my dad. He didn't even come to the door. He just went over and mowed the lawn and pruned the trees. And I'll always remember that. It was him, I think, coming over, not speaking a word for he knew our grief was very great. So he just decided to, what does Mosiah 18 say?
- John Bytheway: 42:39 Mourn with those that mourn.
- Hank Smith: 42:41 Yeah. I think in this one, he was, bear up their burdens that they may be light. I think for a long time, maybe both of you can comment on this. For me, when I read Mosiah 18, perhaps as a missionary, it all just kind of sounded the same. Bear up another's burdens that they may be light. Mourn with those that mourn and comfort those that stand in need of comfort. I think 20 years ago, I would've said, yeah, yeah, yeah. That's all just kind of repeating the same thing. But if you take those apart, they actually all play different roles at different times. To

bear up someone's burdens is different than mourning with them. Can be the same, but can be different, as also comforting those that stand in need of comfort. Perhaps I have to be a good judge of when to use those parts of the covenant.

- John Bytheway: 43:25 Elder Jeffrey R. Holland called that Alma the Elder's invitation to be baptized as the most complete list of what the newly baptized commit to do and be, he said. And I love how others centered that is. There's some parts that are about us, but some are about others. When they're mourning, when they need comfort, when they need to bear their burdens. And I hadn't thought of that, Hank, but I like that idea that people may be in different places. I love that your dad came and did that. That was just a, I'm here, type of a thing.
- Hank Smith: 43:56 Yeah. And he wasn't trying to cheer up those that mourn.
- John Bytheway: 43:56 He couldn't fix it. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 43:57 He wasn't trying to comfort those that mourn. He couldn't fix it, so he decided at that moment to bear up another's burdens.
- John Bytheway: 44:07 I'm here.
- Hank Smith: 44:08 Because the lawn was looking bad and no one had mowed it for quite some time because we were so sad. So that was a bear up another's burdens moment for us. Adam, back to you.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 44:22 Yeah. That's really powerful. I appreciate your sharing that. You mentioned that when you were young, you didn't notice this about that description of the covenant there in Mosiah 18. But yeah, I think part of this story has to do with the way that when you're young, especially if you grow up in the kind of extraordinarily privileged circumstances that you and I likely did, you're just not very acquainted with loss.
- Hank Smith: 44:46 Yeah.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 44:46 It happens mostly in the margins to other people off stage. You have very little experience of it yourself personally. I think it's really only as you start to get older that you begin to get a feel for the way that that experience of loss is just core to what it means to be a human being. Such that the very practice of religion is not so much at the end of the day of finding a way to get God to give you what you want, which is mostly how I thought about it as a kid. But instead, the very essence of it is to mourn. The very essence of religion is to find a way to handle

loss and to handle that loss together in a way that can redeem it, even if it can't roll it backwards.

Hank Smith: 45:27 Mike Wilcox taught us something that I think you would appreciate and probably want to comment on. He says the problem in Western religions is sin, but the problem in Eastern religions is suffering. You're very well read. Would you say that there is a part of religion we need to make sure addresses suffering, not just sin?

Dr. Adam Miller: 45:46 Yeah, I think that's right. I feel like I really started to get a handle on what was at stake in sin, why I was sinning, when I understood that my sinning was a response to my experience of suffering, right? That the bad choices I was making, the selfish desires that were driving my choices, those were grounded in my experience of suffering. And they were an attempt to escape from my experience of suffering, but they were a bad way to do it. What makes sin sinful is the way that it makes suffering worse rather than redeeming it. And if we can start to connect those two things together and see the way that our own poor choices are grounded in our experience of suffering, then we can get our heads around I think the way that Jesus makes it possible for us to overcome sin by changing our relationship to our suffering.

Hank Smith: 46:34 What do you remember as your first introduction to suffering? For Joseph Smith, it came so early with that leg surgery. I mean, that is just when... As I've read the descriptions from his mother, the suffering is so intense. It feels like it changes his very personality almost, his nature. Either of you have any thoughts on that, when was your first exposure to real suffering? John?

John Bytheway: 47:00 My dad, as a teenager, stated his post and fought for his life on an aircraft carrier while suicide attackers were hitting his ship. And he was a teenager. He wasn't a member of the church. That whole thing I think began a bunch of really deep and important questions about life and everything. And because of some buddies that joined the Navy with him on the same time started grabbing him and literally pulling him to church with them, he was introduced to the gospel. And I think about those friends, I think more in the way of the story in the New Testament of four friends carried a man in a bed who was taken with the palsy.

John Bytheway: 47:44 My dad, through luck, through blessing, through design, had friends that took him to the Savior and helped him figure out how to survive the kind of things he saw. Some of them he explained to us what he saw, the death and burning, death and

everything on the ship that I won't explain. That changed him. I think you're right about that, that changed him and maybe made him ask some really deep questions that perhaps is partly why I'm sitting here today.

- Hank Smith: 48:16 Excellent, John. Adam, let's go back to you.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 48:20 To be honest, in my experience, all of my suffering has been of the most ordinary baseline level of I've enjoyed good health and enormous privilege all of my life. It's a mistake to think that that means that people haven't suffered. Because there's a kind of shared suffering that's involved just in being a human being period. But my own acquaintance with grief has been relatively soft and marginal in those respects.
- Hank Smith: 48:50 Yeah. The family that started our podcast, the Sorensen family, experienced a deep loss with the loss of their father, Steve, in just a sudden loss. Much like the Book of Job, everything was fine and then in one day, the happiness was gone. When you see someone in that much grief, it's hard to even find the words. In fact, there are no words. I wanted to say something that would take the pain away. I've had this experience many times where you're thinking, okay, what's the right scripture verse that can fix this? What's the right quote or thought or general conference talk? There's got to be something that can fix this. When it finally comes down to it, you realize there are not words.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 49:35 Yeah. It's tempting to think that religion is about always making sure we know what everything means. Always being able to assign meaning to everything that happens. But the older I've gotten, the more it seems to me that I would prefer to describe religion as the ongoing business of grappling with some things that simply lack meaning.
- John Bytheway: 49:56 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 49:57 In fact, John, you wrote a book called, When it Doesn't Make Sense. Is that right?
- John Bytheway: 50:04 I did.
- Hank Smith: 50:05 Now, I want to make sure that everybody knows John did not ask me to bring this up, but-
- John Bytheway: 50:09 This is what the publisher said to me when they looked at the manuscript, "This doesn't make sense."

Hank Smith:	50:14	So you're like, "That's a great title."
Dr. Adam Miller:	50:17	There you go.
Hank Smith:	50:17	When it Doesn't Make Sense. But John, you did a chapter on Job. What did you learn in that study?
John Bytheway:	50:23	Well, I'm just loving this because this is exactly what we're talking about. I think there's something that some theologians have called it, the doctrine of retribution. And we see it in scriptures. If you do this, you will get this. There's if then statements in the scriptures, and they work sometimes, and sometimes they don't. There's the law of the harvest. And we want to say, if I sow this, I will get this. And Hank, you brought up the example in John nine, because I think that's where the 12 were at. Hey, well, who sinned? This man or his parents that he was born blind, because they had that mindset of the doctrine of retribution. There's got to be an explanation for this. And Jesus brought up, hey, you think that that tower in Siloam that fell, do you think those people were sinners above all? And he would bring up these examples to try to say no, that's not always the case. Jesus brought up a lot of those.
John Bytheway:	51:14	So I loved the Book of Job for the Lord allowing space for suffering that we can't explain. And you know, Hank, that a pivotal experience in my life was to try to go talk to a bunch of young people after a school shooting way back in 1999. And how I wrestled, and I finally thought, I cannot explain this. So my approach is going to be, I don't know, but what do we know? From a source where the answers don't change. And Nephi helped me so much. I know that God loves his children, but I do not know the meaning of all things. And it was such a great starting point for Nephi to lead with what he knows, but say, I don't know the meaning of all things. And to leave some questions unanswered. We know some things, some things we don't, was a helpful thing for me and I hope it was helpful for them. And as I see the Book of Job, we know some things and some things we might not know yet.
Hank Smith:	52:12	Yeah. That was perfect. And I do know that you went out to Colorado to speak that year because four years ago I went to Florida to speak and I called you, if you remember. I said, "John, what do I say?" And you said, "There's just no words. There's just no words."
John Bytheway:	52:34	Please join us for part two of this podcast.



John Bytheway:	00:02	Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
Hank Smith:	00:07	Let's get into the dialogue now of chapters three, through what? This goes on for quite some time.
Dr. Adam Miller:	00:15	My understanding is that it goes all the way up to the final two or three chapters where God arrives on the scene, and then we get the little bit of a narrative closure again.
Hank Smith:	00:26	But we have bookend chapters. We have verse chapters one and two, and then we have the chapters that the last three as the two bookends and in between is this conversation.
Dr. Adam Miller:	00:36	God, I think arrives as part of the conversation.
Hank Smith:	00:38	Okay.
Dr. Adam Miller:	00:38	He enters into the conversation. He also speaks in a poetic register. And then we get the bit about Job's fortunes being restored again in terms of prose narrative. I think it's probably right to see God's theophany as part of the conversation. His contribution to that conversation.
Hank Smith:	00:55	And then just a little bit of a narration there at the end to close it.
Dr. Adam Miller:	00:58	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:58	Okay. It seems the Book of Job needs to be felt. As I've been reading this so far, just these opening chapters, if you just read, you're not going to get it. It was William Tyndale who said, "We must not read and talk only, we must understand and feel." And this book, don't you think Adam, needs to be felt. That chapter 11, why did I not from the womb, you have to feel how excruciating this must be for Job.
Dr. Adam Miller:	01:29	Yeah, I think that's right. I think the Book of Job wants us to feel along with Job what he's feeling. It wants to put us in his shoes,

it wants us to wrestle with the thing that he is wrestling with. And I think that part of why we get so much of it written then as poetry is for this very reason, because if you can get your head around it, if you can just follow what's being said on a sentence by sentence level, the poetry is designed to be felt more than understood. Poetry is the perfect vehicle for generating those kinds of emotions, if you can get into the spirit of the poetry itself.

- John Bytheway: 02:08 We emphasize empathy and feeling a lot in the church. We've already talked about, if you mourn with those that mourn. I'm always intrigued with that idea of Jesus wept just before he raised Lazarus and knowing what he was going to do. However, he must have been feeling what they were feeling. And I suppose that's why he wept, which I've always thought was beautiful that he was feeling what they were feeling on such a level, even though he knew what was going to happen. I look at chapter 13 and the title of our chapter is Yet Will I Trust, look at verse 15 of chapter 13, though he slay me yet will I trust in him. It sounds like it took him a while to get to that place. Would you say that Adam? Through the previous chapters to this place?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 03:00 Yeah. I think part of what we see, if you track where Job is at throughout the discourse, you see him constantly wobble back and forth between these different positions between this despair and these almost spontaneous exclamations of trust. Nonetheless, it's not like he's only in one place or the other. You see him constantly in the tension between those two positions.
- John Bytheway: 03:24 For him to say, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, what does that mean? His love, his motives, his care for me, I will trust him. There must be a reason?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 03:34 I think usually in the scriptures, what we primarily mean by the word faith is trust. Usually in the scriptures, we don't mean by faith a willingness to believe things that we don't know for sure. Right? Usually what we mean is something much more like my willingness to place my trust in another person. And I think that's the kind of thing that you have here, where Job expresses his trust in God as a result of finding himself in this place of tension between his despair and his willingness to bear up under it. Faith is that kind of tension between the two. That willingness to stick with it in relationship with another person, even though things haven't gone the way that you wanted.
- Hank Smith: 04:17 Adam, you mentioned the wobbling between, "Why was I born," versus these declarations of faith. Is that not being a human being? To me, I have friends and me myself have lived

that wobble. These declarations of faith, and you mean it, you really mean it. And then the times of the day or the night where you think, "I can't live this anymore. I can't keep going." There's a point in chapter three where Job says, "Which long for death, but it cometh not," I just can't keep doing this.

- John Bytheway: 04:53 Yeah. I can't live like this. If this is what life is, I don't want this.
- Hank Smith: 04:58 I like how you called it the wobble between declarations of faith and declarations of just pain.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 05:05 I think it's important to see even his declarations of despair as part of his religious journey, as part of his religious commitment. That what has to be done with that despair, it's not the case that he has to avoid feeling it. It's not the case that he has to avoid feeling sorrow or mourning or being filled with this kind of despair. It is the case that when he feels that what he needs to do with it is give it back to God. He needs to express that despair to God. And if he's bringing that despair back to God, then he is in the process redeeming even that experience of despair.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 05:43 When we get in trouble is when things implode and we stew in that despair and we don't make that despair itself part of our relationship to God, we refuse to acknowledge it or refuse to deal with it or refuse to think that it might be part of what a real relationship to God looks like. But I think that Job is a really good example of this, the Psalms in general in the Bible are a really good example of this, of the way that kind of despair is the material, it's the raw material for prayer. It's the stuff out of which our relationship with God is made. Not the thing that you have to get rid of before you can have a relationship with God.
- Hank Smith: 06:20 I'm writing in my scriptures here. What a great statement. We shouldn't see, correct, the feeling of despair and the expression of despair as automatically the antithesis of faith. It's not.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 06:33 Right. To whom are you expressing that despair? And if it's to God, then you're on the right track.
- Hank Smith: 06:39 I'm thinking of a talk from Elder Cook. Do you remember? There was a little boy who was really scared during a snowy drive. And he called his mom. And the first thing he said is, "I hope you know, we had a hard time."
- John Bytheway: 06:50 Had a hard time. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 06:52 He wanted someone to know he was suffering. Maybe that's part of what Job is doing here.

Dr. Adam Miller: 06:57 Yeah, I think so. If you think how it unfolds in testimony meetings, a lot of those really most powerful testimonies that are born on fast Sundays come when people share what they are suffering. And in that context express their faith.

Hank Smith: 07:13 Hope you know, I'm having a hard time. That's a Elder Quentin L. Cook's talk from October of 2008. It's okay to express that. And maybe in the church, Adam, we get this idea that if I'm not cheerful, I'm not faithful. When the Book of Job says the exact opposite. If you're calling out in despair to God, that's an act of faith.

Dr. Adam Miller: 07:35 You should feel free to dance and shout and sing like David as well. But you should also feel free to cry out in despair if that's what you're feeling.

Hank Smith: 07:45 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 07:46 President Packer used to quote a little poem, I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way, but left me none the wiser for all she had to say, I walked a mile with sorrow and not a word said she, but oh, the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me.

Dr. Adam Miller: 08:05 Poetry, there it is.

John Bytheway: 08:07 Yeah, there it is. Did you feel that?

Dr. Adam Miller: 08:10 I felt that.

Hank Smith: 08:10 That's awesome. John, you mentioned chapter 13, verse 15. And I wanted to share a story that has stayed with me ever since I heard it. It was told to me by a BYU Idaho religion teacher, his name is John Parker. He's a fantastic teacher. Fantastic man. When John was just in his late teens, 18, 19, 20 years old, either just before his mission or just after, he and his family were getting together on a Sunday afternoon to take family pictures and his little sister, Michelle, 17, didn't show up. She was late and John was, "Why is Michelle not here?" Family pictures is something you're not generally this late for when the news came from the police that Michelle and her best friend had been out to sing a song at a sacrament meeting on the other side of town. And on the way back were both killed in a car accident.

Hank Smith: 09:09 John said his dad who's also is his name is John Parker had been the seminary teacher in Rexburg for decades. It was one of those seminary teachers that you taught my mom type thing. And everybody came out to the funeral to support this family. And this is the story John told me. He said at the funeral, my dad stood up. He went to the pulpit. Couldn't say much, obviously so much grief, so much pain. But the one thing he said was a quote of Job 13:15, having those thousands of students there listening. He said, Job 13:15, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. John Parker told me, he said, "At that moment, I thought I knew what faith was. I thought I knew what belief was. But when my dad stood up there and quoted that verse," he said that was seared into his memory as faith. Adam, maybe it is in our moments of suffering where we can have our finest moments of faith.

Dr. Adam Miller: 10:25 Yeah. I think it's where the rubber meets the road. It's where the relationship unfolds. It's where we connect with God or not.

Hank Smith: 10:34 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 10:35 I think that we sing because I have been given much, I too must give. We say, I love God because he's done so much for me. And I love the Book of Job because it says, "Okay, but what if he doesn't?"

Hank Smith: 10:47 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 10:48 What will you do when you lose everything? That's why I love the Book of Job because, because it's a new thought that what if nothing good comes back or at least in the timeframe I expect it, then will I love God? And that's why this, though he slay me, which sounds like to be slayed though, yet will I trust him. It sounds like he had to get to that. It took a while to get to that point where even if he slays me, I'm going to trust him. It shows that this is a process, I think, for Job.

Dr. Adam Miller: 11:21 This is the very thing at stake in what Jesus describes when he promises peace, but not necessarily in the way that the world gives peace. Maybe it will come in the way that the world gives peace. Maybe Job's fortunes will be restored. Maybe though he won't get his old children back, he'll have new children. But regardless, the thing that God is promising is the kind of peace that operates at a different level than the coming and going of our fortunes in this world.

John Bytheway: 11:51 Great.

Hank Smith: 11:52 Wow. This has such a fantastic discussion.

John Bytheway: 11:56 Yeah, it's true. When we come to expect a vending machine, I put this in, I get this out. When we come to expect that over and over, it can be frustrating. It's so interesting to think of the Abinadis, who just did everything he was supposed to do and suffer death in a horrible way, who did everything right, and the Jobs and the Joseph Smiths and the Abraham and the Jesus himself. There's a statement that I have from Elder Orson F. Whitney, that I've always loved.

John Bytheway: 12:26 He said no pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude, and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, see, and it gets even harder, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, here's my favorite, expands our souls and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God. And it is through sorrow and suffering toil and tribulation that we gain the education that we came here to acquire, which will make us more like our father and mother in heaven.

John Bytheway: 13:07 I love the phrase soul expanding. It doesn't say it'll make us happier. But when we come across somebody who's having a trial and we've had one, there's just something about knowing someone else has been through this that can be a comfort.

Hank Smith: 13:25 Yeah. You call that same boat therapy,

John Bytheway: 13:28 Same boat therapy. That happened to me to be able to say, "Oh my goodness, that happened to me," and put an arm around or whatever. But I like that even though we're talking about this senseless suffering that I like that Orson F. Whitney would say, "This isn't wasted. This can be soul expanding."

Dr. Adam Miller: 13:50 Yeah. I think for me, another one of the big takeaways of the Book of Job has to do with how we think about the relationship between morals and commandments and suffering, right? It's tempting to think about it in the way that the natural man does and to see suffering as a punishment for failing to keep the commandments.

Hank Smith: 14:14 Right.

Dr. Adam Miller: 14:14 But I think we're probably better off thinking about it from the other direction, in terms of thinking about the commandments

as God's remedy for suffering. Morality, commandments, God's law. Those are a response to suffering, right? Not an explanation for suffering. And I think Job really drives home that point.

- Hank Smith: 14:34 Wow.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 14:34 You can't use morality to explain suffering, but you should and must use morality to respond to suffering.
- Hank Smith: 14:41 That is fantastic.
- John Bytheway: 14:43 That's a great way to put it.
- Hank Smith: 14:45 We come to a verse in Job 14 that I almost can only read in President Monson's voice. And that is Job 14:14, if a man die, shall he live again? The only reason I know that verse is because of President Monson quoting it over and over. And as I've read it, I've often of course talked about resurrection. But today Adam, as we've been discussing, it almost seems to me that Job is asking if I suffer this much, can I ever be happy again?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 15:19 I'd encourage us to read the Book of Job in a pretty open-ended way, because I think it's designed in that way to allow for a richness and complexity and a range of possible meanings. I quite like what you suggest though, Hank. As best I can tell in the context of ancient Israel and in the context of the Book of Job, resurrection is not something that's on his horizon. Right?
- Hank Smith: 15:42 Right.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 15:42 It's not dead center on his radar. And instead, these other kinds of live questions about whether or not it's ever possible for him to be happy again, that's much more in tune I think with the general vibe of what the Book of Job is after.
- Hank Smith: 15:54 That's why I think so too. I have no problem with that because resurrection is a true principle that we believe in. But as I read it in its context, I'm going, "Yeah. This isn't something he's saying, 'Am I going to be resurrected?'" It seems that he's just going, "Can I ever recover from this?"
- John Bytheway: 16:12 I really like that, Hank. I'd never seen it that way. To restate if a man dies, shall he live again? If a man goes through lots of trouble, if he has lots of troubles in his life, will he ever be happy again? Or can I ever enjoy life again? That's a really good way to put it. If you look at Job 14, verse one, it's an interesting

comment, man that is born of a woman is a few days and full of trouble. That's one way to describe life. It's short and it's full of trouble.

- Hank Smith: 16:40 I like that. Someone who is born of a woman, I'm pretty sure that's all encompassing, right?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 16:45 Yeah. That covers everybody.
- John Bytheway: 16:45 Yeah. Pretty sure it comes down to it, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 16:48 That covers everyone.
- John Bytheway: 16:50 I like that you're addressing maybe his development through this wrestling because he does sound like a real resurrection type expectation he has in Job 19. Do you want to take us in there?
- Dr. Adam Miller: 17:03 Yeah. I think especially if we give the verses a little context in pick up in verse 23 in chapter 19, we get Job saying, "Oh, that my words were now written. Oh, that they were printed in a book." He got his wish, I guess.
- John Bytheway: 17:18 They are.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 17:20 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever. For I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh, shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself and my eyes shall behold and not another though my reins be consumed within me. Well, it's that line in particular, in verse 25, that's most famous. Right? I know that my Redeemer liveth, yet in my flesh, shall I see God.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 17:53 I think we're right as Christians here in the context of the New Testament to read that in light of what we know about resurrection as a type of the doctrine of resurrection. Though I think also in the context as Hank was just pointing out with the previous example, in the context of this chapter itself, what Job has just said fits in very neatly with his general project of trying to layer by layer, conversation by conversation, build a case against God. To get God to come and account for why he has suffered all these things. And partly what he's expressing here then is the confidence that God will show up at some point and explain himself, that God's going to stand in front of him at some point at the last days and give an explanation for why all these things have happened to him.

Hank Smith: 18:41 Yeah. How fascinating. He's almost saying, "I want answers. In my flesh shall I see God. I am going to get my answers."

Dr. Adam Miller: 18:49 Yeah. And what he once printed in the book, what he once graven with an iron pen are the list of complaints that he has about all the things that he has suffered without any justification. And he wants a permanent record of the lawsuit that he's bringing against God though. Though also expressing confidence that God will answer at some point for what he has suffered.

Hank Smith: 19:11 I don't mean to laugh, but man, that is so human. Right?

Dr. Adam Miller: 19:15 Yeah. Very human.

Hank Smith: 19:16 I have some complaints.

Dr. Adam Miller: 19:18 I have a list of grievances. May they be written in stone forever?

Hank Smith: 19:22 Yeah. Is there a suggestion box in the spirit world where you say, "If you have any suggestions?" "Yeah. I have some suggestions."

John Bytheway: 19:32 Have you ever had a time, I think I have, where I quoted my patriarchal blessing back to God wondering, "Hello, I'm waiting."

Dr. Adam Miller: 19:42 That's a great example.

John Bytheway: 19:43 I have this written in a book that's printed right here. It ain't happening.

Dr. Adam Miller: 19:47 Yeah. You said.

Hank Smith: 19:48 Yeah. You said this. That's a great example, John of, "I need some answers."

John Bytheway: 19:56 It says right here in this contract.

Hank Smith: 19:59 I love that we quote this, verses I know that my Redeemer lives where Job is saying, I know that my Redeemer lives and he is not answering me.

Dr. Adam Miller: 20:07 Right.

John Bytheway: 20:07 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 20:07 Right. Where is he? Why has he not answered my questions and acknowledged? Or is he also saying Adam, that one day I will get my answers?

Dr. Adam Miller: 20:17 If you dig into the commentary a little bit on the verses here, you discover that the Hebrew is really pretty garbled. The Hebrew is very hard to parse here, even if you're an expert in Hebrew. And so it's very hard to make out exactly what he's saying, which in some ways gives us more room, more freedom to look at it from these different angles.

Hank Smith: 20:35 I wanted to ask you, does Paul borrow from Job? Do any New Testament authors lean on Job? Because I'm noticing some Doctrine and Covenants phrases like strengthening the feeble knees.

Dr. Adam Miller: 20:47 Right. You are right that suffering is in many ways the central question for Paul too, right? For Paul, the whole business of faith of learning how to live under the law of grace rather than the law of works, turns around this same basic question, about whether or not morality is the thing that you use to get what you want and avoid suffering or whether morality is at the end of the day, a grace filled response to all suffering.

Hank Smith: 21:11 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 21:11 That's Paul's same basic question.

Hank Smith: 21:13 In Romans eight, Paul says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword?" He goes on down a little bit further to say in verse 38, "I am persuaded that death, life, not angels, not principalities, powers, nor things present, nor things to come nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." That seems to be the Christian version of what Job is going through here with God.

Dr. Adam Miller: 21:49 I think that's right. And in the context of Romans eight, this is in the context of Paul's discussion of how the whole world groans under the weight of sin, right? That the earth itself is crying out with this un-articulatable amount of suffering under the weight of sin. And it's in that context that Paul makes that declaration. For me, the Book of Romans is like the parallel case to the Book of Job in the Old Testament. What strikes me about the Book of Job as being special in the Old Testament is the fact that it's a really long argument slash explanation.

Dr. Adam Miller: 22:25 That's also, I think, what singles out the Book of Romans as really, really special in the New Testament is that it's a long, clear uninterrupted explanation of what Paul thinks the gospel of Jesus Christ is about. And he doesn't tell us any stories. We don't get any poetry here, but we get an argument from Paul. And I think it's really powerful. And Job and the Book of Romans. I think if I were to pick just two books from the Bible to take with me to a desert island, those would be my two.

Hank Smith: 22:52 Well, how exciting then we might as well just put you on the schedule for next year.

John Bytheway: 22:56 For Romans. Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 22:57 Sign me up.

John Bytheway: 22:58 There you go.

Hank Smith: 22:58 Because you wrote a book on that one as well. What's that one called?

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:01 Well, I've been writing about the Book of Romans since that dissertation I worked on in John's office in the testing center.

John Bytheway: 23:08 Do you use my notes?

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:09 I've been writing about Romans.

Hank Smith: 23:10 Yeah, sure.

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:11 Anything and everything, I was happy to. Stuff I found in your drawers, whatever. But yeah, I have a little-

Hank Smith: 23:20 A little book, right?

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:21 I have a little paraphrase of the Book of Romans where I try to render the epistle into contemporary English in a way that makes the logic of the argument as clear as I can.

Hank Smith: 23:32 Yeah. What's that called?

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:33 It's called Grace is Not God's Backup Plan.

Hank Smith: 23:36 So Adam, let's jump back into the Book of Job. Where do you want to go from here?

Dr. Adam Miller: 23:40 Well, I think a lot of the rest of what we get in the cycle of conversations that Job has with his friends and the center of the book, very similar to what we've already discussed. Job protesting his innocence, making his case against God for having made him suffer anyway, and Job's friends attempting to argue instead that Job must deserve his suffering if he is suffering. And that conversation builds in intensity and complexity. But ultimately, I think it's the points that they're making are very similar to the ones that we've already seen.

Hank Smith: 24:10 Okay. And that leads up to where?

Dr. Adam Miller: 24:12 Until God shows up and changes the nature and scale of the conversation altogether.

Hank Smith: 24:17 Tremendously.

John Bytheway: 24:18 I love that it's out of a whirlwind. It's not a still small voice here. He comes out of a full gale tornado.

Dr. Adam Miller: 24:27 This is something like God showing up in the form of an enormous roiling boiling lightning filled storm cloud. That's the guise in which he appears here to Job.

Hank Smith: 24:39 Is this the part where it says, "At this also my heart trembleth."

Dr. Adam Miller: 24:43 We get a little bit of Job's reactions here, are spliced in a little bit into the theophany.

Hank Smith: 24:48 Yeah. He shows up and, "You're looking for me?" And it's, "Oh, wow."

John Bytheway: 24:52 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 24:52 There's one thing to call God down. There's another when he actually shows up and says, "All right."

John Bytheway: 24:57 Oh my gosh. I think so.

Dr. Adam Miller: 24:57 Be careful what you wish for.

John Bytheway: 24:59 First three. "Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee and answer thou me, where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" I mean, whoa, this is so ...

Hank Smith: 25:08 This is great.

Dr. Adam Miller: 25:10 I think it's worth getting a feel a little bit here, especially for those opening verses in chapter 38, when God arrives on the scene. In verse one, then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, "Who is this? That darkeneth council by words, without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee answer thou me," right?

John Bytheway: 25:32 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 25:32 Job's been demanding answers from God. And God's first move when he shows up is to demand answers instead of Job.

Hank Smith: 25:38 This is beautiful.

Dr. Adam Miller: 25:40 Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if thou hast understanding, who has laid the measures thereof if thou knows, or who has stretched the line upon it? Where upon are the foundations thereof fashioned? Who laid the cornerstone thereof when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" And it largely goes on in that vein.

John Bytheway: 26:01 It's so great.

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:02 For two whole chapters, God laying out all the things that Job's not in a position to understand. And it's quite powerful. It's worth noting here I think that in the Bible, depending on how we count, maybe in restoration scripture, but in the Bible, this is the longest sustained first person discourse from God.

John Bytheway: 26:19 Oh, that's a really cool insight.

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:20 Those two chapters.

Hank Smith: 26:20 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:23 This is the longest we get God speaking of the first person to anybody, anywhere in the Bible,

Hank Smith: 26:28 Adam, this is fantastic.

John Bytheway: 26:30 Job's friends have been going on for 30 chapters here. When he gets ready to answer, he's going to let him have it with both barrels. Right? And that's what it sounds like. Say that phrase again, the longest ...

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:41 Longest sustained first person discourse from God that we get in the Bible.

Hank Smith: 26:47 The reason I'm loving this is that Job had so many questions and God comes with questions. His first statement is a question.

Dr. Adam Miller: 26:55 Yes. It's basically nothing but questions for two chapters.

Hank Smith: 26:58 Yeah. I'm highlighting all the question marks here.

John Bytheway: 27:01 Yeah. I love the idea of teaching through questions too, because I just imagined you'd have to be speechless after hearing all these questions. Don't you think? And I think Hank, you gave me a nice compliment at the beginning. I think I am described in verse two, words without knowledge. That's pretty much me right there. All of these questions and no chance to answer them but it gets to the point where, "Okay. Okay. You're right. I don't know what I've been talking about."

Hank Smith: 27:27 Adam, is the Lord talking to Job and his friends here?

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:31 I'm hesitant to say a hundred percent for sure. My impression is that God is speaking directly to Job and that his friends are overhearing.

Hank Smith: 27:39 Okay.

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:39 Because when you get to the end of it, God has instructions for how those friends are supposed to repent. And so they may be in some sense, witnesses of what's going on here.

Hank Smith: 27:47 What do you think the point is of all these questions, to show Job all he doesn't know and can't do?

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:53 Yeah. I think that's part of it.

John Bytheway: 27:55 Like, "This is bigger than you imagined."

Dr. Adam Miller: 27:57 Yeah. I think part of the experience of grappling with suffering as a human being has just to do with the scale of the world in relationship to you as a human being. Part of what it means to suffer as a human being is to be confronted with how little you have control over. How little power is at your disposal, how little change you can affect, how few outcomes you are able to determine. And that's a big part of suffering, right? Is to be confronted with the limits of your own power and your own

knowledge as a human being. And God puts that center stage here for Job.

- Hank Smith: 28:33 Is this the point where the Lord says, "All right, now it's your turn to talk back." This is chapter 40. The Lord says to Job, verse two, "Shall he that contendeth with the almighty, instruct him? He, that reproveth God, let him answer." And Job responds with, "I don't want to say anything. I am vile. What shall I answer?"
- Dr. Adam Miller: 28:55 I lay my hand upon my mouth. Job essentially responds by zipping his mouth shut.
- Hank Smith: 29:02 Which is probably a good idea. "I will proceed no further," he says.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 29:06 There's intentionally here a comic element with the degree to which God shows up in this overwhelming blustering expression of his own power in response to Job's questions. There's a comic dimension to that. But I think it's really important to keep what God has to say here to Job in the context of two things. One of the fact that Job cried out for God to come. And he came.
- John Bytheway: 29:34 Yeah.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 29:35 He doesn't address Job's questions.
- John Bytheway: 29:37 But he's there.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 29:38 But he does address Job. Yeah. He's there with Job. And I think the other thing to put this in the context of has to do with the fact that once God wraps it up, once he's schooled Job in the limits of his own understanding and power, God says to Job and his friends that Job was right to have asked all those questions and Job's friends were wrong. It's easy to get the impression as you go through God's discourse that God is in some sense chastening Job.
- John Bytheway: 30:05 Right.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:05 And telling him, "But you shouldn't be asking all these questions." And he does that, but once he's done, God says, "Job was right to ask all those questions. And you friends were wrong for telling him not to ask them. And you better repent." It's just a remarkable layering of all those different dimensions

into this experience here with God at the end of the Book of Job.

- Hank Smith: 30:27 Yeah. Wow. This has just become so beautiful in my eyes. He told him not twice. Gird up thy loins now like a man, I will demand thee, declare thou unto me. And then he goes on again with more questions.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:39 We get long descriptions of the amazing creatures that he's made.
- John Bytheway: 30:43 The creations.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:44 Especially of the amazing mythological creatures, like the Leviathan and the behemoth.
- John Bytheway: 30:49 Right.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 30:50 That represent chaos writ large, and how God tamed them and made them and controls them. And it's pretty extraordinary stuff just in terms of poetry and literary quality.
- Hank Smith: 30:59 I'm reading here, Job's response in 42. Then Job answered the Lord and said, "I know that thou canst do everything. And that no thought can be withholden from thee, who is he that hideth council without knowledge? Therefore, have I uttered that I understood not. Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not."
- John Bytheway: 31:18 I can't wrap my head around it and now I get that. But the trust is still there.
- Dr. Adam Miller: 31:25 Then we get in verse seven when we switch finally back here to the narrative, to the prose, and it was so that after God had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath has kindled against thee and the two friends for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath." All Job's friends thought they were defending God. Job's friends thought they were defending God, but God says to them that Job who was complaining about God, he was the one who was right.
- Hank Smith: 31:55 He was right. What was it that they were wrong about, if you had to sum it up? Was it the idea that you must have sinned Job, you must have sinned.

Dr. Adam Miller: 32:04 Yeah. I think they were wrong about that natural human tendency to draw a straight line between suffering and punishment.

Hank Smith: 32:13 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 32:13 Right? They were wrong to think that suffering is the kind of thing that can be deserved.

John Bytheway: 32:19 There's always a cause or an effect.

Hank Smith: 32:21 That's great. So now we come to the conclusion and it ends up being absolutely beautiful. John, you want to read a couple verses from chapter 42?

John Bytheway: 32:31 Yeah. The closing verses of Job 42. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning, for he had 14,000 sheep and 6,000 camels and a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. Verse 15 says, and in all the land, there were no women found so far the daughters of Job and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this lived Job 140 years and saw his sons and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died being old and full of days. That's how it ends.

Dr. Adam Miller: 33:09 We do get the happily ever after note here though. I think it's worth noting that the only time you get happily ever after is when you stop the story in the middle. Job's fortunes are restored here. His wealth is restored. He and his wife have new children, but he still lost his previous children.

Hank Smith: 33:28 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 33:28 They still died. He still lost them. The open wound of them would remain, having new children wouldn't have erased that from his heart or mind. And Job like everyone else here, while he may not experience the loss of these new good fortunes in instantaneous and dramatic fashion like he did previously, he will still lose all these things. Again, his life will still pass away. He will still get old and sick and die. His children will still get old and sick and die. He will still lose his fortune again. And the key point, I think, perhaps being, not that he lived then happily ever after, but that he learned something crucial in his interaction with God about how to handle life's passing away. And I think that's what the gospel's about at the end of the day.

Hank Smith:	34:15	I love that Adam, perhaps he was so full of days because of what he went through.
Dr. Adam Miller:	34:20	Yeah. It's a beautiful line, full of days. That's what you're looking for.
John Bytheway:	34:24	It seems to me that Elder Neal A. Maxwell talked a lot in his life about suffering and making sense of suffering and things like that. And he made a comment that makes you smile about Job in this chapter 38 that we just read. He said, "While most of our suffering is self-inflicted, some is caused by or permitted by God. This sobering reality calls for deep submissiveness, especially when God does not remove the cup from us. In such circumstances, when reminded about the premortal shouting for joy as this life's plan was unfolded, Job 38:7, we can perhaps be pardoned if in some moments we wonder what all the shouting was about."
John Bytheway:	35:06	That would've been in April 1985 conference. When I was reading about Job, I read a comment from a biblical scholar named Moshe Greenberg. He wrote this, "A pious man whose life has always been placid can never know whether his faith in God is more than an interested bargain, a convenience that has worked for his benefit, unless it is tested by events. The terrible paradox is that no righteous man can measure his love of God unless he suffers a fate befitting the wicked." So I see that idea, "Oh yeah. I love God. He's been good to me." But what if the life you think you're living sounds like something that's more fitting for the wicked? Will you still love God?
John Bytheway:	35:49	I think that's what the Book of Job kindof pushes us against the wall. Will I love God when everything is going wrong? Will I trust him when everything is going wrong, and none of it makes sense to me? And that's why this book is a wrestle as you put it so beautifully, Adam. I have always thought I love God because he blesses me. Well, what if there comes a time when the blessings aren't there and they don't come the way I think they should?
Dr. Adam Miller:	36:14	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	36:15	Then what will I do in those times?
Hank Smith:	36:17	I'm reminded of a thought from Elder Richard G. Scott from a talk called Trust in the Lord, October, 1995. And this goes right along with something Dr. Miller said earlier, Elder Scott says, quote, "This life is an experience in profound trust. Trust in

Jesus Christ. Trust in his teachings, trust in our capacity as led by the holy spirit to obey those teachings, for happiness now and for a purposeful supremely happy eternal existence. To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning."

- Hank Smith: 36:56 He goes on and he says a little bit further down, "To exercise faith is to trust that the Lord knows what he is doing with you and that he can accomplish it for your eternal good, even though you cannot understand how he can possibly do it. We are like infants in our understanding of eternal matters and their impact on us here in mortality, yet at times we act as if we knew it all." That sounds like the end of Job, right where the Lord says, let me come in and just remind you how little you understand. John, what does section 58, say, you cannot behold with your natural eyes ...
- John Bytheway: 37:34 Your natural eyes for the present time, things that God-
- Hank Smith: 37:36 The design of your God.
- John Bytheway: 37:38 The design of your God concerning those things, which will come here after. Such a great verse.
- Hank Smith: 37:43 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 37:44 To me, the whole Beatitudes are blessed are the right now, which all sound at first glance negative, those that mourn, blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those that mourn. Those don't sound blessed.
- Hank Smith: 37:59 John, I remember you telling me in the process of writing your book, when it doesn't make sense that you had a conversation with Dr. Robert Millet.
- John Bytheway: 38:07 Called him at the time. And I said, "I've had this school that wants me to do some presentations on Job," a private Christian school. And I said, "What's our best book on Job?" Thinking there's one of our colleagues or something. And he said, "We don't have one." Now, I don't know if that's still true. But he said, "Go get a book by Philip Yancey called The Bible Jesus Read. He was an editor of Christianity Today Magazine or something. And I read this and I thought this to me was such a great application of how do I apply this story of Job in not wanting to do what Job's friends did? So this Philip Yancey used to write for the Reader's Digest. Now that's a magazine that my grandma used to read, right?"

Hank Smith: 38:46 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 38:46 And you remember the series called Drama in Real Life. Somebody's jogging and they get attacked by a bear or somebody gets caught in a natural disaster or something. Well, he used to write for that. And he said, he went to hospitals a lot. This is what Philip Yancey said.

John Bytheway: 39:03 Quote, "Every single person I interviewed told me that the tragedy they had undergone pushed them to the wall with God. Sadly, each person also gave a devastating indictment of the church. Christians, they said, made matters worse. One by one, Christians visited their hospital rooms with pet theories. God is punishing you. No, not God. It's Satan. No it's God who hand picked you to give him glory. It's neither God, nor Satan. You just happen to get in the way of an angry mother bear. As one survivor told me the theories about pain confused me and none of them helped. Mainly I wanted assurance and comfort from God and from God's people. And almost every case, the Christians brought more pain and little comfort."

John Bytheway: 39:47 That's an excerpt from that, The Bible Jesus read. And I thought this is a wonderful way for me to apply this is be careful that we're not like Job's friends in trying to explain. Be the one who comes and not trying to say, "Okay, I'm going to make sense of this for you, why this is happening." But the one who comes like your dad did Hank, who just comes and spends time with people, but can be totally silent. And I just thought that was, "Oh, I don't want to be that person that actually comes and make things worse by trying to explain what God is doing."

Hank Smith: 40:22 I think that's excellent because that's something that Latter-day Saints, I don't know if other faiths struggle with this, but I think it's something that Latter-day Saints struggle with is we want to come in and fix.

John Bytheway: 40:30 We want to make sense. I love what you said Hank about ... I got to find just the perfect scripture for this. Sister Sheri Dew said once, "Although the Lord will reveal many things to us, he's never told his covenant people everything about everything. We are admonished to doubt not, but be believing."

Hank Smith: 40:47 Adam, before I ask you our last question, do you have any final thoughts on Job for our listeners? Any anybody who's listening at home? Anything that you'd hope they take away that we haven't hit?

Dr. Adam Miller: 40:57 I would hope that they would take away a sense of a hope and possibility that the Book of Job can be read by ordinary people without any special academic training.

John Bytheway: 41:10 Don't skip it.

Hank Smith: 41:10 Yeah.

Dr. Adam Miller: 41:10 You can read it. Right? It'll take a little time and it'll take a little effort, like anything worth doing, but it can be read and the experience of reading it can be profound if we'll let ourselves sink into it and sit with it and ponder on it.

Hank Smith: 41:24 Yeah, for me personally, there's something exciting about becoming more scriptural literate. When the scriptures open up to you, what did Elder Maxwell say? It's like a mansion with rooms yet to be discovered and fireplaces by which to yet warm ourselves.

John Bytheway: 41:41 I think about President Benson's approach with the Book Mormon. Why did Alma or Mormon and Moroni include this? And we can do the same thing. The book of Job can bless me. This is not a trial. I want to read it. And why is this book here? And how can the Lord help this book bless me? So I like what you're saying, Hank.

Hank Smith: 41:58 John, fantastic. Adam, before we let you go, I think our listeners would be interested in hearing your journey of your faith and your scholarship. You said early on that you knew books were for you. What's the journey of your education and your faith been like?

Dr. Adam Miller: 42:14 It has been heart and mind expanding. It has been challenging in the ways that all heart and mind expanding are and worth all the more for it. I feel like I have become increasingly sensitive to the ways that books can be doors that open unto God, but I've also become increasingly sensitive to the way that books can be a way of avoiding God. Both of those are constant temptations. I'm interested in the Book of Job, especially because I'm interested in God. And a surprise turn of events that your listeners might find surprising, though I am a scholar of religion and specialize in philosophy of religion, I'm not especially interested in religion at the end of the day. What I'm interested in at the end of the day is God, that's what I'm looking for. And religion, sometimes it can help you get there. And sometimes as Job's friends illustrate, it can get in the way, as John was also indicating just a minute ago too.

Hank Smith:	43:28	Yeah.
Dr. Adam Miller:	43:30	There are a lot of things I don't know or understand about my own religion or my own experience of religion. My sense for my own ignorance has only grown in that respect the more that I've studied in the farther that I've gone, but at the end of the day, that's not decisive for me. Because I didn't come to religion looking for religion. I came to religion looking for God and I am a Latter-day Saint and will till the day I die be a Latter-day Saint, because this is where God has shown himself to me.
Hank Smith:	44:08	What a fantastic day, John, this has just been. I love the Book of Job now, much more than I ever have.
John Bytheway:	44:18	And it's so unique. I think Adam showed us how uniquely it's an argument from start to finish. I'm never going to forget that idea.
Hank Smith:	44:25	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	44:25	A wrestle from start to finish, not just here's some doctrine, here's a story, but here's a wrestle from start to finish.
Hank Smith:	44:32	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	44:32	And here's the outcome of the wrestle. It's really good.
Hank Smith:	44:36	We want to thank Dr. Adam Miller for joining us today. What a great day we want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And we hope all of you will join us on our next episode of FollowHIM.
Hank Smith:	44:54	We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Nielsen, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN  
TO GOOD PEOPLE?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. If you've been following us this year, you know the routine. John and I take a question from each week's lesson to focus on. John, this week's lesson is on the book of Job. So, the question becomes, I think, really easy. And this is a question that hasn't just been asked by our students, but it's been asked by all human beings throughout all of time, and that is why suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people on this planet?
- Hank Smith: 00:37 So, John, if we've got listeners out there who are wondering that same thing, why is there so much suffering, what would you say? What can I get from the book of Job and other scriptures that will help me at least maybe not answer this question completely, but give me some semblance of peace?
- John Bytheway: 00:52 I love that you said maybe don't answer this question completely. Because in the book of Job, all these things happen to him. In a matter of a few verses, he loses everything in chapter one, and the next 41 chapters are trying to figure it out.
- Hank Smith: 01:10 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:11 Just some amazing things happen. I love that his friends come up first and they just sit with them.
- Hank Smith: 01:17 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:18 They don't try to explain it. They don't try to say... And as soon as they do try to explain it, that's when things actually get worse.
- Hank Smith: 01:26 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:27 Because they're, "Well, maybe God's doing this, or maybe God's doing this," and they're in error. They think, oh, maybe you sinned or that sort of a thing. It's such a good question, such an ancient question. And it comes down to the you theme. Do you trust God? There's a purpose and a plan. Will you trust Him

when you don't have the answers right away? You know that verse, Hank, that we all love in Abraham 3, what is it, 24, 25 that gives a purpose of life type of statement?

Hank Smith: 01:56

Right.

John Bytheway: 01:56

I will prove them now herewith, to see if they will do whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them. And I like to add, even when it doesn't make sense. I wonder what Job will do when everything goes south and there's no reason for it.

Hank Smith: 02:15

Yeah.

John Bytheway: 02:16

Will he stay faithful? Will he keep his integrity? And he does. Job keeps his integrity. And at the very end, Job gets everything back. But the Lord never tells him. He never explains why. He just says to Job, "Hey, were you there when I set up everything, when I created everything?" And talks about the grandeur of His creations and everything. But He still never really tells him why. And it's that kind of a test. Can you hang on when things don't make sense? And boy, sometimes they don't.

Hank Smith: 02:47

God tells us in Moses 1, My work and my glory is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of men. So, we know His end goal. Children who choose to be like him. Right? Children who choose to be exalted. In my mind, John, this process of exalting people involves suffering. I don't know why it has to involve suffering. I'd rather instead of suffering, I'd rather just lay in a hammock all day and drink yummy drinks and then choose to be exalted.

Hank Smith: 03:18

But there's something about this that isn't easy, that involves a lot of change, a lot of transformation. And those often happen in painful experiences. So, for me, I take comfort in all of this has a purpose. That we know the Lord's end goal. We trust His end goal is exalted children. And so, I believe that whatever I specifically go through or you specifically go through or whoever, their plan was designed for them to get to that end goal.

John Bytheway: 03:54

There is something that is so helpful about a belief and a faith in God that just says there must be a reason, even if you don't get it. You have this hope that ultimately I will know. There must be a reason. Maybe someday next life I'll know. Just that can help us go on. Just knowing there's got to be a reason, and maybe I'll struggle my whole lifetime to figure it out. Maybe I will, maybe I won't. But there's got to be a reason. But I know God loves me.

Hank Smith: 04:30 I think it was Viktor Frankl who said it's not suffering that hurts us so much. It's suffering without purpose. So, what the gospel does is it gives us the knowledge that there's a purpose in all of this suffering. Elder Holland was quick to point out that the Lord didn't ask us to go through this suffering alone.

Hank Smith: 04:49 He didn't say, "I'll stay up here while you suffer down there." He said, "Yes, this process, this end goal, involves suffering. And I will suffer the most of everyone." Wasn't it Elder Holland who said, "How could we think it would be easy for us when it wasn't easy for him?" This is the business of salvation and exaltation. It's not easy. It involves great difficulty and great suffering.

John Bytheway: 05:13 He talks about the significance of the wounded Christ who comes to our rescue, one who has chosen, at least for now, to keep those wounds so that we will know I went through it, too.

Hank Smith: 05:27 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 05:28 I went through earth life, too. And oh, the lesson from that is, wow, even he had to suffer.

Hank Smith: 05:34 The son of man hath descended below them all.

John Bytheway: 05:38 One of the things that really helped me was a talk that President Oaks gave back in October of 2000 called the Challenge to Become. And we've talked about this talk before. The purpose of coming to earth wasn't just to pass a test or to check some check marks. It was to become something. Suffering can help that.

John Bytheway: 05:59 Let me read something that Orson F. Whitney said. "I know you all have favorite quotations of Orson F. Whitney. This is a long time ago, but listen to this statement. No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility.

John Bytheway: 06:22 "All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God. And it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we came here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven." It helps me to think I'm not just going through something. I'm becoming something through all of this.

John Bytheway:	06:56	I know you've experienced this, Hank. We both did. We both had deaths in our family in these past couple of years. You can look at me and say, "John, I know how you feel." And I can look at you and say, "Hank, I know how you feel." This is how we dealt with the loss of my mom, or with you your dad, your brother.
John Bytheway:	07:15	The Lord uses us sometimes when we've been through something and puts us next to somebody who's going through the same thing where we can just be a little bit of help and say, "I've been there. I know what you're going through." And here's the ultimate, the Savior, saying, "I've been there." I know according to the flesh, to use Alma 7:11 and 12, what it was like to be on that earth that you're on right now.
Hank Smith:	07:39	Thank you for joining us for this week's followHIM Favorites. Come back next week, we'll do it again. And come join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. We'd love to see you there. This week, we're studying the book of Job with Dr. Adam Miller. We think you're going to love it. So, come find us soon.