



“The Lord is My Shepherd”

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:

Have you ever felt forsaken by God? Dr. Shon Hopkin explores the structure and purpose of the Psalms, the effect of music in worship, and how the Psalms prepared the Lord and the disciples for difficult times.

Part 2:

Dr. Shon Hopkin returns and discusses the influence and importance of Psalm 22 in understanding the life, suffering, and triumph of Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Shon Hopkin

- 01:35 Introduction of Dr. Shon Hopkin
- 03:30 The Power of the Psalms as Music
- 05:16 Background to the Book of Psalms
- 08:05 Music as group unifier
- 13:33 John shares a personal story of the importance of song
- 14:07 Music prepares people emotionally
- 16:40 Some Psalms are acrostics
- 19:12 The structure to Psalms
- 23:39 The disciples sing Psalms at the Last Supper
- 27:48 The correlation between music and happiness
- 30:30 Different purposes of Psalms
- 37:33 Psalm 4
- 43:51 Can we complain to God?
- 46:35 Psalms and imagery of hands
- 50:45 Consecration and pouring out
- 55:32 End of Part I—Dr. Shon Hopkin

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II—Dr. Shon Hopkin
- 00:07 Psalm 73 and 2 Nephi ask God to hold them and for us to be whole with Him
- 03:40 Yom Kippur and mankind reuniting with God
- 04:49 Jesus quotes Psalm 22 from the cross
- 07:32 Jesus quotes a Psalm like a Latter-day Saint would quote a hymn
- 09:00 Psalm 22 connects to Christ's ministry
- 12:08 Dogs and gentiles
- 14:34 Wounds in His hands and feet
- 17:13 the Lament Section
- 21:05 Allusion to the Beatitudes
- 23:07 John Hilton III: *Considering the Cross*
- 27:11 Jesus expounds on all things in one
- 29:19 Does God forsake His Son?
- 35:19 Psalm 23
- 36:57 Prisoners of War used the Book of Psalms
- 43:48 Psalm 24 reminds us of the temple
- 48:02 Dr. Shon Hopkin shares his journey of faith and scholarship
- 53:55 End of Part II—Dr. Shon Hopkin

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Biographical Information:



Born in Denton, Texas, as the son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin, Shon Hopkin attended Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Texas and graduated from Orem High School. He received a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Brigham Young University in Near Eastern Studies with a focus on Hebrew Bible. He received a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew studies with a focus on medieval Hebrew, Arabic, and Spanish literature. Before coming to Brigham Young University, he taught in Seminaries and Institutes for four years at Timpview High School (1997–2001), four years at Provo High School (2001–5), and six years at the Austin Institute of Religion (2006–11). At BYU he has served as Chair of the Book of Mormon Academy and Chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council. He is one of the principal organizers of the ongoing Jewish & Latter-day Saint Academic Interfaith Dialogue project. He has authored, co-authored, and edited numerous books and articles on Isaiah, the Hebrew Bible, Latter-day Saint beliefs, and medieval literature, including *Opening Isaiah: A Harmony* (with Ann Madsen); *Abinadi: He Came Among them in Disguise* (edited, Book of Mormon Academy); *Mormonism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (with Robert Millet, as part of Bloomberg Press' Guide for the Perplexed series); and the forthcoming *Understanding Your Neighbor: Judaism* (with Rabbi Mark Diamond, as part of the Widtsoe Foundation's series). He and his wife have four children and one grandchild.

Classes taught: Book of Mormon, Old Testament, New Testament, Isaiah, Pearl of Great Price, Book of Mormon for Non-Members

Research interests: Judaism and Islam, Medieval cultures and literature, biblical studies, religions of the world

Languages: Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic

Other interests and hobbies: teaching and directing in the Especially for Youth program; interfaith dialogue; BYU and University of Texas sports programs; basketball; home improvement projects; reading, reading, and reading

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| Hank Smith: | 00:01 | Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:09 | And I'm John Bytheway. We love to learn. We love to laugh. We want to learn and laugh with you as together, we follow him. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:19 | Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of follow him. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my clean-handed and pure-hearted co-host, John Bytheway. John, you are clean-handed and pure-hearted. Did you know that? |
| John Bytheway: | 00:36 | Hand sanitizer has blessed my life, Hank. Yeah. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:39 | Anyone whose favorite television show is the Andy Griffith Show has clean hands and a pure heart. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:48 | Haha. Some's got it, and some ain't. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:51 | That's perfect. That is clean hands and a pure heart. Hey John, that phrase comes from the book of Psalms. We brought a Bible scholar. Who's joining us? |
| John Bytheway: | 01:01 | Well. We're really excited to have Shon Hopkin back, because he was here when we talked about the Fall and Cain. And in fact, it's one of our most listened to podcasts. It's such a great topic because Shon did such a great job. So we have Dr. Shon Hopkin here. And just to refresh our listeners' memories. He was born in Denton, Texas, son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin. He attended Southwest high school in Fort Worth, but graduated from Orem high school, received a bachelor's degree and master's from BYU in Near Eastern Studies with a focus on the Hebrew Bible. Received a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew studies with a focus on medieval, Hebrew, Arabic and Spanish literature. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:47 | Hank, it just blows me away the people that we bring on here and how widely read and educated they are. Before coming to |

BYU, he taught in the seminaries at Timpview, Provo, six years at the Austin Institute of Religion. He served as chair of the Book of Mormon Academy, chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council. He's one of the principal organizers of the ongoing Jewish & Latter-day Saint Academic Interfaith Dialogue Project. He and his wife have four children, one grandchild.

- Hank Smith: 02:17 We have that in common. We just had one grandson a couple of months ago, which is so fun. Every day I'm texting my daughter, "Bring the kid over." Welcome back. We're really happy to have you again.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 02:28 Thank you. I don't remember most of those things you said in the bio. Did that happen? I am a grandpa of a beautiful grandson. He's about three now and we are expecting, and I say we, in very general sense a granddaughter now in September. So for father's day, I got the card with the photo and the little-
- John Bytheway: 02:52 Oh, how fun.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 02:52 ... traced hand, and I'm like best Father's Day ever.
- John Bytheway: 02:57 Oh, Grandpa Shon.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 02:59 Grandpa Shon.
- Hank Smith: 03:00 For those of you who maybe didn't listen to the first episode we did with Shon this year, he's also, John and I's direct supervisor. So if we sound a little more shaky and nervous, this is our boss at BYU, but oh, what a boss he is.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:14 I'm very intimidating. I have a very intimidating personality, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 03:17 Shon, we are in the book of Psalms today and anybody who knows Latter-day Saint scholars knows that you're the best of the best when it comes to Psalms. Talk to us. How do our listeners approach this awesome book?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:30 It is interesting, as often happens, as you're reading the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, you get to books like this and you think, "Wait, this is reading differently than what I'm used to." The chronology disappeared, this storyline kind of approach is gone and we can feel a little bit lost. There are a number of good Hebrew Bible scholars and Old Testament scholars and teachers in our department, Hank and John, a shout out to them. And then I have to give a shout out to my dad. He and I

wrote a paper together. He was a vocal performance faculty member at BYU, and we wrote a paper together on, I think we called it The Psalms Sung. We talk about the power of the Psalms as music, so I think I might be interested in starting there if that's okay.

- Hank Smith: 04:18 We will link this article in our show notes. It's called The Psalms Sung: The Power of Music in Sacred Worship, J. Arden Hopkin and Shon D. Hopkin. Just go to followhim.co. Followhim.co, you'll find our show notes. Tell us more. What'd you and your dad find there?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 04:36 This entire scintillating article. But we loved working on this together, because he brought this musical acumen to the project. And it was really fun for father and son to be able to look at the Psalms together. I want to talk about these as music for a moment, because these were designed to be set to music. So the verse I'm looking at is 2 Samuel 6:5 "David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals." So these are put to music and these would've been really touching, really powerful, really comforting, really motivating to those who are reading them. And so we get the benefit and the power of the language. But then I want you to think of these moments when you have been in distress and how often music has healed your soul.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 05:32 And I want you to think about the Psalms in that way for just a moment. David, if you remember, he played the harp for king Saul. The scriptures say there was an evil spirit that would be upon Saul, and David would come and play and the evil spirit would pass from Saul. And so, David understood the power of music. It's not just the power of the word. Along those lines, let me make a connection between these as music, and then the reality that these were often used, and many of them were used in temple worship. And there's a lot of scriptural evidence in Chronicles and elsewhere that there's singing Psalms. There's a section in the Talmud. Let me just quote this for a moment.
- Hank Smith: 06:18 Shon, remind our listeners what the Talmud is when you bring that up.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 06:21 The Talmud is written a few hundred years after any of our biblical texts. So it's a Jewish text describing and talking about Israelite views and biblical views and that kind of thing. But the way they are understanding what's going on in the temple, they talk about the most sacred day of the year, the day of

atonement or Yom Kippur, these sacrifices, these powerful sacrifices that are going on at the temple and they connect it to and actually say, "Look, while this is happening, people are singing." Let me read this to you from the Talmud. "They gave him wine for the drink offering, and the high priest stood by each horn of the altar with a towel in his hand." So you've got the high priest on this very sacred day at this very sacred occasion, standing by the altar. And two priests stood at the table of the fat pieces with two silver trumpets in their hands.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 07:11

So there's portions of the sacrifice there. That's what those fat pieces are. And they've got two silver trumpets in their hands. "When he stooped and poured out the drink offering, the lead priest waved the towel and Ben Arza clashed the symbols and the Levites broke forth into singing. When they reached a break in the singing, they blew up on the trumpet, and in every blowing of the trumpet, a frustration, their bowing down." This was the right of the daily whole offering. This was the singing, which the Levites used to sing in the temple. The fascinating thing there is, we think this strange animal sacrifice thing. And then we've got the Psalms and linking those together and showing how there's music... These were supposed to evoke feelings of supplication to God and comforting his people, and there's music that's building and connecting with this temple worship that they're doing under the mosaic covenant.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 08:05

And you get a very different sense of the temple experience at that point. Let me just connect that for a moment with our modern day hymn singing. Because we think, "Oh, you go to church, you sing hymns. If it's a hymn I'm comfortable with and I love it. If it's one of those annoying ones that the song picker picks, because she thinks we need to sing every hymn in the hymn book, then I'm annoyed." So we've got these hymn singing experiences, and notice, what we're doing there, we're demarcating sacred time and space. We've dressed to the best of our ability. And however, each of us are different this way, but we've dressed to worship. So we're distinguishing our worship behavior as a little bit different than our daily behavior. We've come to church. We're talking, we're milling around. And then there's this moment, boom, where the music starts and we are united.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 08:59

And there's something about singing, I don't know if you've ever thought about it this way. The Old Testament talks about how right before Solomon basically enters into the presence of the Lord, the Lord's presence descends upon the people. They are singing in this unified way, and then they enter into the presence of the Lord, so to speak. We'll read that verse in just a

moment. But if you think about unified prayer at the temple, seeking to enter into the presence of the Lord, and then you think about what hymn singing does for us. You're saying words and feeling things in your own little space. So there's no other place in life we do it like this. The person all the way across the room is singing with their hearts and you are giving exactly the same message, and then heavenly choirs. That's the idea's that you're joining in with heavenly choirs.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 09:54 And so it's heaven, and each of us as a congregation saying the same message, pleading with the Lord and boom, sacred time has begun, and now we're focused. Now we're in holy space. And the notice we do it again before the sacrament, now we demarcate more holy space, and then that prepares for the sacrament ordinance. And it happens with unified prayer, unified singing. We are seeking to enter into the presence of the Lord. But we don't think of just how powerful this unified language is that unites us with heaven and unites us with each other. This is worshiping each of us individually, but all of us with one heart and one mind. There's nothing better than music to do that.
- Hank Smith: 10:42 We'll sing and we'll shout with the armies of heaven. That's that idea. We're all unified.
- John Bytheway: 10:49 I was thinking as a kid, the reason we have an opening hymn, is for all the late people to get here before we actually start. And the reason we have special musical numbers before firesides is to get all the late people here before we start. But I have never thought of it this way. They bookend the worship experience. I love that idea.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:13 So you've got it at the beginning, like you're saying John, you've got it, and then you sort of undemarcate, so to speak, sacred space. Now we're done and we've got someone who's speaking the prayer there at the pulpit, and we're all joining in, but we pray with music and then we pray in this united way and that ends the service as well. And now we come back into more what the biblical languages or the religious studies languages, more profane space, right? Sacred space back into profane space. Let me just read these from 1 Chronicles. And it's actually David. 1 Chronicles 15 shows David leading a procession in song in dance, as they brought the arc of the covenant, the most central symbol of God's presence in Israel back among the Israelis to reside in the tabernacle.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:58 As the Levites made holy sacrifices and entered into the tabernacle or temple, David delivered a Psalm of Thanksgiving.

It's a song and urges people, sing unto the Lord, sing Psalms unto Him, glory ye in his holy name. And then listen to this language, seek the Lord and his strength. Seek his face continually. So they are praying unitedly seeking the face of the Lord. And so, he's connecting music with temple activity, with seeking the face of the Lord. They're in the background, the Levitical priests are ministering before the arc of the Lord. And this is 1 Chronicles 16 is where this comes, that goes on then to this incredible experience.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 12:38 And then it is Solomon, as I had mentioned before in 2 Chronicles 5, that as this is happening, the trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound, to be heard and praising and thanking the Lord when they lifted up their voice, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord. And God's presence enters in as they're preparing through unified prayer as Doctrine and Covenants 25 says. "The song of the righteous is a prayer unto me." Even though we don't do a lot with singing in our temple worship today, if you would think of these unified symbolic actions we do in our covenant making in the temple as a song and a prayer and a little bit of this divine dance almost of preparing to enter into the presence of the Lord. There's some really powerful, I think the ancient prepares us to understand what's going on today a little bit better.
- John Bytheway: 13:33 Oh, I love this. My mission president taught me once I was talking to my companion at the beginning of some meeting, I was sitting next to my mission president about something during a hymn. And my mission president Menlo Smith lives in St. Louis, "Elder Bytheway, you wouldn't think of talking during a prayer, would you?" "No president." Well, section 25 says the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and I'd never forget that. So do that later and sing and participate. And I'm glad you brought that up. That reminded me of that.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 14:07 Well, and you can all think of, we all have different kinds of music that we enjoy, and that helps us prepare emotionally.
- Hank Smith: 14:14 I will say that I've gone through dark times myself, and it seems sometimes, Shon, the only thing that can speak to you in that kind of darkness is music. It reaches beyond the spoken word. It's pretty incredible. I've had many experiences where I've felt, man, I'm in a really, really dark place and music was able to reach me there.

- John Bytheway: 14:38 I bet. I listened to It Is Well With My Soul, the Tabernacle Choir singing that every Sunday, that is so beautiful. I love thinking of it as a prayer and a part of worship.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 14:51 Yeah. And then you'll find places in the Psalms that just speak to you in those times when you desperately need peace and reading beautiful chapters like 2 Nephi 2 or 2 Nephi 9, these doctrinal discourse is not, your brain just isn't in a space to do that. But then you've got the pleadings, the way that it evokes and describes our own sentiments. And if you go to the Book of Mormon, you've got 2 Nephi 4, the second half of that, which many have called Nephi's Psalm and he's mourning, and then he turns to rejoicing. And you can see this progression that it's pulling us, meeting us where we are, and then helping us express our needs, and then expressing confidence in the Lord. And it helps us walk through the grieving process. And I would say, if you don't have places you can go when you are devastated, when you are unable to connect the more cerebral portions of thinking about the gospel, find a favorite Psalm and just let David's own angst, let the Psalmist's own sense of the challenges of mortality, because they felt it too.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 16:03 And then think of this temple sacrifice and think of the Psalm as a backdrop. You are bringing and offering to the Lord in your own weakness and brokenness and you have this pure lamb there, and you're offering the lamb, and the tension of that, and then the tension builds, and then it resolves into this triumphant. The Lord has accepted your offering. He sees you. He loves you. He accepts you as his own and think of this full bodied experience. And then I think that can help us think about our own sacrament meeting worship, Sunday worship, but also our own temple worship in a little bit different ways.
- Hank Smith: 16:40 Shon, let me ask you something, would you say for our listeners, this is something that if... We've had a couple of guests say this, that a lot of this was not meant to be read. It was meant to be heard. Is that how it is with the Psalms? When I'm reading this week, should I be reading out loud for my own ears to hear the words? Do you think that makes a difference?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 17:01 Well, what we should really do is have you sing it out loud as you... Yes. So the ideas are beautiful, but it's the beauty of the expression. So there's a few Psalms that are what are called acrostics, where you can either start with the same letter every time, or it can spell something with the first letter, or sometimes it'll work through the alphabet. That helps people remember, because it was this very, not always reading things, but remembering and then performing them in the place. But it

also just creates this beautiful, poetic, repetition, where it has power as you speak it out loud. And this is the King James version. As most of us are a little biased towards the King James version. It is so poetically beautiful, but it can also help to read other English translations as well, and just hear things a little bit differently. And you may have your own favorite version that you find.

- John Bytheway: 17:59 Everything you just said reminds me of a really nice paragraph from the Come, Follow Me manual. It says as believers today, all over the world, we still use these words in our worship of God. The writers of the Psalms seem to have had a window into our souls, and seem to have found a way to express how we feel about God, what we worry about, and how we find peace. And what you had said about these Psalms, that's a great paragraph. This does talk about what we worry about. The variety we're going to see in these is really interesting.
- John Bytheway: 18:33 Another thing that the manual gives us, I love it when you're giving me a way to read it. Not just read it again, but read it and look for something. The Come, Follow Me manual for individuals and families says watch for the following. Write down what you discover. Invitations to trust the Lord in the Psalms, words that describe the Lord in the Psalms, words that describe the peace, strength and other blessings the Lord provides, and words that describe those who trust the Lord. I thought what a great way to look at it and to take it apart and see all of those different things. That was a good recommendation.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 19:12 Love that. Before we start looking at some individual Psalms, let me give you some things that are structural and overview kinds of things, what we're seeing in the book of Psalms. So first, let me read this statement by a biblical scholar. The book of Psalms is unique in the Bible, because it is a collection of literature, of prayer, praise and meditation. If the Bible's narrative materials relate what God has done, and the prophetic literature reports what God has said, the Psalms present the response of the people to the acts and words of God. So we should be able to connect to this and feel it because this is how we feel as we interact in mortality with all of our weakness, with the divine with our Heavenly Father. As a book of the people, the book of Psalms has been especially valued for both public worship and private devotion among Jews and Christians. That comes from the anchor Bible dictionary.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 20:08 There are five main sections in the book of Psalms, which is known as Tehillim in the Hebrew. If you think about those five

divisions, traditionally then, that would mirror the five books of the Pentateuch or the Torah, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Psalms one through 41 division 1, 42 through 72 division two, if you like marking things in your scriptures or whatever. Psalm 73 through 89 is three, 90 through 106, and then 107 through 150, those are the five divisions, and each of them end fascinatingly enough with a short, what is known as a doxology, a hymn of praise. It's just very short. You can find that in 41, 72, 89 and 106 and then Psalms 150 provides the concluding doxology for the fifth section, and for all of Psalms. It's beautifully organized and that is maybe unnecessarily detail-oriented, but those kinds of things can help as you're reading through the Psalms and looking for that organizational pattern.

- Hank Smith: 21:15 They didn't just throw a bunch of hymns together saying, "Yeah, just put them in there." They put them into five specific sections.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 21:21 They organized this. Who wrote the Psalms would be a question we should ask. There are superscriptions above many of the Psalms, some of those may have been added later. And so, they are of interest. David was a Psalmist. Did David write all the Psalms? No, he was a Psalmist. And so, we have in the Psalms a record of the kinds of things that he wrote, and things that he wrote, but not all of them are written by David. 73 are ascribed to him, 12 to someone who's mentioned in 1 Chronicles 16. I was just reading from 1 Chronicle 16 with you, to Asaph, two to Solomon, one to Moses, that's Psalm 90. And then there's a bunch of unknown ones.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 22:06 If you go to 2 Samuel 23, you can read a Psalm of David. So right there in the scriptural account, you're reading through, and it's a history, it's a storyline. And then pause and hear. It's like Nephi's Psalm, right, where you're reading through, and all of a sudden Nephi breaks into song or into this beautiful poetic language. And so, that I just wanted to give you a little bit of overview of what we're looking at here with the Psalms. Three most quoted books in the New Testament, Isaiah, Deuteronomy and Psalms. Jesus loved the Psalms.
- John Bytheway: 22:43 Oh, can I bring up something right there? That's actually one of the verses that says to look at in the manual, and I have appreciated this when I've taught New Testament, because what you just said, I think that's an aha. They're referred to a lot. Look at in the last chapter of Luke. Okay. So here's the resurrected Christ, Luke 24:42. "They gave him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb, and he took it, and did eat

before them." Verse 44, "And he said unto them, these are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me." And I love that. Here's Jesus saying, "Hey, look at the Psalms. I'm in there." I'm glad you brought that up. Say that again. The ones that are most quoted in the New Testament.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 23:35 Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Psalms.
- John Bytheway: 23:39 Wow.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 23:39 And a couple of examples, you just gave us a really nice one. And by the way, they sing a Psalm at the end of the last supper. If you think of singing Psalms to prepare for challenging moments and also to seek to enter into the presence of the Lord, so to speak, and then what Christ is going to be doing shortly thereafter, you can see that he is using music to help prepare others, to help prepare himself for the challenging things ahead. A couple of fascinating places.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 24:07 One of them is Jesus. So John 10:33, Jesus answered them. Is it not written in your law? I said, ye are gods. He is quoting from Psalms right there. If he called them gods under whom the word of God came and the scripture cannot be broken. He's saying, why are you criticizing me for calling myself the Son of God, if the Psalms themselves. And so, he's using the Psalms to support what he's teaching that I'm the Son of God. So why are you critiquing me that I'm declaring that I'm the Son of God? If your very own scriptures say, ye are Gods. Don't take up stones to throw them at me.
- John Bytheway: 24:43 Is that Psalms 82-
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 24:45 It's 82:6
- John Bytheway: 24:46 82:6. "I have said, ye are gods. And all of you are children of the most high God."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 24:55 And he's saying, "Why are you bothering me for talking about being the Son of God if your own scriptures call all of you, the children of God." Which is pretty fascinating and fascinating for us as Latter-day Saints to consider that message there. Because there are certainly those who might critique some of the way we think of ourselves as the children of God.

- Hank Smith: 25:15 I was going to mention, I loved how you said Jesus loves the Psalms, because this is the same Lord who July 1830, the church has been around for a whole two months, three months calls on Emma Smith to create a book of hymns. It's the same Jesus. He said, "You know what we need in my church, we need songs. We need music."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 25:40 We know God loves music because of the way it resonates with us. And we, as his children, were built that way. And I don't know that we fully know why, but we are built to love and be changed by and be comforted by and be strengthened by these kinds of things. John, you talked about the song that you sing. There's an arrangement by Dan Forrest, who's a more current composer. I heard somebody sing it in church and I fell in love with it. And then my poor kids are like, "Dad, you got to stop listening to that song." It just spoke to me. It just comforted me.
- John Bytheway: 26:15 I think of a Book of Mormon reference when in Alma 5, he was chief judge. He steps down. I got to go talk to my own people. He's saying, "Do you remember, I'm paraphrasing when you were first felt to sing the song of redeeming love? Can you feel so now?" It's like, there was a time when you just wanted to sing. And he seems to be asking, are you sloping upward or sloping downward? And I love that he would compare that to a song. What you felt when you came into this, you wanted to sing. Do you feel that way now? Reminded me of that.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 26:52 That really is great. When I hear that in Alma 5, I think of the Victoria song that is sung after they've come through the red sea. So Miriam's song and Moses' song, which is considered very ancient literature, all biblical scholars would say this is some of the earliest literature that we have, God saying, "I have freed you. And then you exalts, in the speaking as Christians, the freedom that comes through the atoning love of Jesus Christ has made us free. Why are you going back? But you won't stay free. You want to bind yourself back up with chains of pride and rebellion and rejection of the God who is trying to free you. Can you still sing or did you lose the song? You were free and then you burst forth into song. But now you're back where your heart doesn't sing anymore."
- John Bytheway: 27:46 Like Alma.
- Hank Smith: 27:48 I wrote a book on happiness. It sold dozens of copies. In the research for that book, one thing I found is, one of the habits of the happiest people is they're deliberate about their music. They're very deliberate on this music makes me feel this way. They don't just kind of, "Hey, whatever comes on, I'll listen to."

It's, I have a happy playlist. And I even read one study where those who listen to an hour of uplifting music every day, versus those who got an hour long massage every day for 90 days, those two groups, the music group reported being happier, less anxious and less depressed. There's just something about music that touches us in a way that just nothing else can. I think you're right, Shon, the Lord loves music. It rings true to our souls. There's something inside of us that maybe even remembers our heavenly home when we hear the language of music.

- John Bytheway: 28:46 Yeah. I feel like music is an otherworldly thing. It's from someplace else. It can do everything we've just been talking about. I love what you had said, Shon about, it's a universal language and we all unite together at the beginning of a meeting. It's a uniting thing when we can all sing the same song together.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 29:06 That idea of praying unitedly and there has to be this unity of feeling, a unity of heart, and thinking of myself sitting in a worship, a sacrament worship service, and maybe there's a neighbor from a few houses down, who I'm not close with, but then he cares about the same things I care about. There's a five-year-old, who's singing at the same time and the community of God joining together, putting it all aside, and we are of one heart and one mind, and the way that can change us, I think that's what the Psalms are trying to accomplish.
- Hank Smith: 29:41 Oh, I just remember one of my high school teachers saying, "Who here loves movies?" And we all raised our hands and he said, "It's not movies that you love. It's music." You watch a movie without the music, Harry Potter without the music, Jurassic Park, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Star Wars, all of these movies-
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 29:58 So true.
- Hank Smith: 29:59 ... speak to our souls not necessarily because of the movie, because of the music.
- John Bytheway: 30:04 I watched a YouTube the other day or had it going while I was cleaning up my office of John Williams movie soundtrack classics that he had written Raiders of the Lost Ark comes up and you're [*sings along*], and then Star Wars and all the ones you've mentioned and brings back all those, some of them some triumphant feelings and everything else we're talking about.

- Hank Smith: 30:26 Beautiful. Thanks for letting us go off there, Shon for a minute.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 30:30 I love it. I love it. So fun. Before we actually, and we should dig into some of these Psalms, the text, but before we do that, just one other thing I need to just communicate here. And that is that there are different kinds of Psalms that are here in the Tehillim. They're for different purposes. They were for different times and different needs. And so, let me just give a list of the different kinds that you can find, and then you could recognize them when they're there and say, "This might be more useful for me in a certain kind of setting." So Psalms of lament or prayer, and these are powerful. We've already talked of them. There's this threefold movement of expressing vulnerably how I feel. When we'll look at Psalm 22 in a little bit, and when Christ quotes it, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 31:23 He's quoting from the first lineup, but that first section of a Psalm of lament, that then moves into a plea for help, and then an expression of confidence that God will help almost like he already has. And you can think of these, again with temple sacrifice. You're bringing the sacrifice, the death of the sacrifice as visceral, literally visceral of an experience as that would've been. And that turns into a plea, and then you're pouring out, or the priest is pouring out, the blood upon the altar, but then that acceptance of that sacrifice by the Lord. So you can see that mirror there. Psalms of lament, Psalms of praise is another grouping. Psalms of Thanksgiving, and those are similar, but the Psalm of Thanksgiving comes after the blessings have been received and you're coming up to the temple to praise the Lord in song. Royal Psalms are sung on specific feast days.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 32:19 And there are good scholars who believe that the Psalms actually hold echoes of earlier, what might have been closer to our understanding of Melchizedek priesthood temple worship that you can find embedded in the Psalms, the concept of the anointing of the king, of the death and resurrection of the king, and potentially even of the death and resurrection of God, that those may be embedded in that earlier temple worship that existed for ancient Israelites. Certainly, that's debatable. Not everybody would believe that, but some have proposed that possibility. Songs of Zion and then these liturgies. And you started, Hank, it was really fun. John's clean hands and pure heart. But many believe this was a temple recommend. Well, who's going to ascend? and well those with clean hands and pure heart. And you're singing that as you ascend, potentially those temple steps.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 33:17 And for those of you who have stood on the Southern temple steps that have been excavated, they're in Jerusalem. You're walking up those uneven steps that mirror ascending a mountain, and you're singing, "Well, who's going to ascend into the mountain of the Lord. And you're preparing those with clean hands and a pure heart." And you've probably, depending on the different timing, have had a ritual bath. You've immersed yourself in a Mikva and you're then ascending, maybe carrying the lamb. Is my heart pure? Are my hands clean? Am I ready for this? And there might even be times that there's a call and response sometimes with the Levitical singers, that one side will sing something and then another side will respond. So there's all kinds of different moments that these Psalms would've been powerful.
- Hank Smith: 34:04 Wow. That's great. Shon, I want you to break into song here at any moment. I'm just feeling it.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 34:12 I had a really fun experience where I was talking with Psalms sitting next to Yahosh Bonner. And of those of you who have heard any of the Bonners and I said, "Hey, could you sing that?" And he just, and I thought, "oh, that's what the Psalms are supposed to sound like." So you were saying, should I read these aloud? And I'm like, "Yeah, but have Yahosh Bonner come over and have him sing some Psalms to you. And then that'll give you the sense of it, I think. Maybe it behooves all of us, I don't know, that we're all suited for this. I don't know that I am, but to be a little bit of Psalm writers and express ourselves through journaling or whatever the case may be. Let me just read you a few statements from Joseph Smith.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 34:56 It's not to music, but he's writing in his journal. "Oh, how marvelous are thy works oh Lord and I thank thee for thy mercy unto me thy servant. Oh Lord, save me and thy kingdom for Christ's sake. Amen." Now that's a prayer, but that's beautiful poetic language. Here's another one. "My heart," this is 1835. "My heart is full of desire today to be blessed of the God of Abraham with prosperity until I will be able to pay all my debt. For it is the delight of my soul to be honest. Oh Lord, thou knowest right well. Help me, and I will give to the poor." Isn't that beautiful? The expression of the heart. One more from Joseph Smith. "I say in my heart, I will trust in thy goodness and mercy forever for thy wisdom and benevolence, oh Lord, is unbounded and beyond the comprehension of men, and all of thy ways cannot be found out."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 35:45 So we talk about David the Psalmist, here's Joseph, the Psalmist. There's a beautiful one. If you want to go to October 1973

general conference report, read Elder McConkie's Psalm that he writes. I'll just read the last couple of lines. "Oh, praise ye the Lord. Seek ye the Lord. Seek him who rules on high. Seek him whose will we know. Exalt his name and seek his face. Oh, seek ye the Lord." And then if I can just do one more from President Hinckley. This is beautiful. And this was performed at his funeral.

- Hank Smith: 36:21 Yeah, I remember this one.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 36:22 "What is this thing that men call death? This quiet passing in the night? 'Tis not the end but genesis of better worlds and greater light." And those of you who remember with fondness President Hinckley, can imagine him writing this, "O God, touch Thou my aching heart. Calm my troubled, haunting fears. Let hope and faith transcendent, pure, give strength and peace beyond my tears. There is not death, but only change with recompense for vict'ry won, The gift of him who loved all men, the Son of God, the Holy One." So what would the expression of my heart look like? What would the expression of your heart look like in the Psalms?
- Hank Smith: 37:01 So we're encouraging everyone, give it a try, get your journal out and see if the pen of heaven doesn't come to you. I know it has for me before. Shon, you're reminding me that I haven't done it in a long time. I haven't sat and written out a prayer, because it turns into a Psalm.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 37:16 Good. What would you like to do? Hank and John? What should we do next? Do you want to look at some powerful Psalms?
- John Bytheway: 37:23 Yeah, let's do. Let's start going through some.
- Hank Smith: 37:26 This is the first third of the book. We can't look at all today, so we're counting on you to show us where we need to highlight.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 37:33 One of the things I really want to do is spend some time in Psalm 22. We'll get there eventually. And then, we've got to spend some time in Psalm 23, of course. We've already talked. We danced around Psalm 23 a little bit, because it's such a powerful one for so many including me and I assume both of you. Psalm 24, we've already referred to that one, but we should read that together again. There are some sweet spots in the Psalms. And let me just mention some of these to you. And then let's just read some of them, enjoy reading the Psalms together. So the theme, the Lord will protect, defend and deliver his people. Psalm 4 has beautiful messages, Psalm 5,

Psalm 7. So let's just go to Psalm 4. John, why don't we have you do verses 1, 3, 5 and 6 from Psalm 4.

- John Bytheway: 38:24 "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and put your trust in the Lord. There be many that say who will shew us any good. Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 38:54 So you can see this connection with, I have a need. I'm bringing and expressing that need before thee, and I'm expressing confidence in the Lord. And then this concept of seeking after the face of the Lord in his holy temple. If you think of when we pray beside our beds, we do this as well. We demarcate sacred time and sacred space, and we use the sacred name of the Son of God to enter into the presence of God. And you could almost picture him hiding behind a veil or hidden behind a veil. And you could think of the veil of Solomon's temple. Think of the brother of Jared, where he's praying, and then he looks up, and God's hand pierces through that veil. And he's like, "Whoa, God has a hand? If he has a hand, he must have a body. If he's willing to show me his hand, maybe he's willing to show all of himself to me."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 39:52 And then he pushes through the veil and stands in the presence of God. It's very, very powerful. And this is what we're doing here. This is prayer that you're seeking after the presence of God, and this symbolizes all of our prayers. Maybe not the ones where I'm just exhausted, laying in bed like a cocoon. Maybe, maybe not, although I think God probably is compassionate even in those moments, but where we're truly seeking to come to know God, and you can see that God will come and protect you and save you. Why don't we go to Psalm 6? "The Lord will give them mercy and forgiveness." And Hank, John read it really poetically. So, no pressure, Hank.
- Hank Smith: 40:35 I'll do my best. I'll do my best.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 40:38 Do verses 1-9. And then those that are listening, I hope you'll just enjoy some scripture being read here.
- Hank Smith: 40:44 "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake. For in death there is

no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks? I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears. Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 41:35 Oh wow. I mean, it's got to be a new favorite spot. That is just... The next time you're just beside yourself because something difficult has happened, you've had a disagreement with someone that you care about, or you're in the midst of conflict and you're being misjudged, or maybe not misjudged correctly judged or whatever the case may be, or something financially has gone wrong. Something's broken, so to speak. This expresses the heart cry before God.
- John Bytheway: 42:10 I did a study once of all the different places we find that question at the end of verse three. How long? It's not, I don't believe in you anymore. It's, you're there, but how long do I have to go through this? Can you think of some of them with me?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 42:25 Well, you've got Joseph Smith.
- John Bytheway: 42:26 Yeah. That's a Joseph Smith Liberty jail. How long? Where's the pavilion that covers the hiding place in that. When Isaiah receives his call, Alma in prison, how long? When Isaiah receives his call and hey, how long is this going to be this hard? Well, until the earth is wasted without inhabitant. That's not a very good answer. Those are fun to see. And I like that the question is not, why have you abandoned me? Or, is God real? It's I'm going through something hard. How long do I have to go through? I think there's a testimony in there. Do you hear what I'm saying? It's not that I don't believe in God anymore. It's just, how long will you help me through this?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 43:09 Yeah. And, in fact, how often is this? I mean, it really does reflect our issues. How many times have you been asked to comfort someone? Someone was in need of comfort. And really, the question of the soul is when? How long? It's a timing thing. And you have confidence that this is all going to work out, but that person is in the valley of the shadow of death and they just can't see it. And that's the cry. It's not that I don't believe. I'm trying to believe. How long is this going to last? Can I handle this? And so, to hear that reflected in Joseph Smith's cry to hear that reflected in the Psalmist cry over and over again is really powerful.

- John Bytheway: 43:50 Yeah. It's great.
- Hank Smith: 43:51 Shon, sometimes I think we say in our heads, oh, I can't complain to God. It's sinning to complain to God. But just read a Psalm then, because they complain enough for you. This is getting old. I love that. It waxeth old because of my enemies. God, this is getting old. I don't like this. So if you feel like, oh I could never complain to God. Just go ahead and read a Psalm and just say, I'm just reading scripture, because wow.
- John Bytheway: 44:15 Yeah. That opening paragraph in the manual, this is a window into our souls. How we feel, what we worry about.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 44:21 Let me take just a little bit of a different tact and approach for just a moment. And then maybe let's move to Psalm 22. There is both in Isaiah, you're saying, if you think that we're not supposed to complain, ever read the Psalms, or you could read some prophetic literature from the Hebrew Bible. Jeremiah, he's feeling it, and he talks to God. He's not like, "Well, I got to be careful." He's like, "No, God knows how I feel. And I'm going to express myself here." And there's something healing about that. There's something healthy about God helping us work through the mourning process. And it's not, no, you got to shut it down and just put on a smile all the time. God is the one that he can hear you. He already knows what's in there, so let it out with God.
- Hank Smith: 45:03 Yeah. He already knows. Might as well talk about it.
- John Bytheway: 45:06 You know what that reminds me of is, some of you might know brother John L. Lund, he's a marriage family guy, right?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 45:14 Yeah, John Lund.
- John Bytheway: 45:15 And one of the things he talks about is that we tend to take our frustrations to our family and our love to God. We only talk to him about how much we love him. And he says, can we switch that and take our love to our families and take our frustrations to God, which is such an interesting idea is what we're talking about right now. Take your love to your family. Take your frustrations to God and letting him help you with them. That's what these sound like.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 45:43 And wow, you see that here and you see a mourning because of sin. These are the ones that are often ascribed to David, where he just, "I have sins nigh unto death, please give me a right heart again. Please heal me." Now, let me hit a little bit of a

different topic. We've talked a lot about how God connects with our hearts. There are a few verses that I want to point out where, and we've talked about the ancient temple imagery here, that, and the way these were used in the temple. But there is some really powerful hand imagery in Psalms where God is reaching out. And if you think of an image where God is reaching out to grasp you and pull you into a relationship and save you maybe from drowning or whatever the case may be. Let me point to just a few of these powerful verses.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 46:35 This may get us a little bit out of our first third of Psalms. Look at Psalm 48:10. Let's look at that one for a moment and look at how they're understanding the relationship with God. Psalm 48:10, "According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth:" And then this moment "thy right hand is full of righteousness." So notice how it's saying God blesses and lifts. He has a right hand that is full. And in Hebrew, the letter kaf is shaped like this. And it's also the poem of the hand. And the idea is that hand is full of blessings of power, of strength, and then it turns over and pours those blessings out upon God's people. That's the first image, thy right hand is full of righteousness. Let me show you another one in Psalm 73:23.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 47:41 "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand." Now God, whose hand is full of strength, power, goodness, and righteousness is reaching out and holding us by our right hand. And he's pulling us into ... So the Supreme power, so to speak of all things, the one who can hold all things in his hands, then meets us face-to-face and holds us, and think of this beautiful image of holding hands with someone you love, or you're maybe an older person holding the hand of a little child and walking with them and keeping them safe and communicating your love, and this beautiful imagery in verse 23, you have held me by my right hand. This is how well the Psalmist knows God.
- Hank Smith: 48:35 What Psalm is that again, Shon?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 48:37 That's Psalm 73:23. I think we're now out of our first third. Just go one Psalm over. Let's just do one more. Psalm 74:11. This is a little bit of a different approach. And this is someone saying I want to restore that relationship with you and look what he's saying. Well, let's start verse 10. "O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?" This is the, how long question. I want to restore this relationship. I want this restored. And look at the way he describes this, "Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom." So the image here is God, give

me your hand again. Let me return to that relationship, that covenant relationship with you. Really evocative language, if you think about relationship and connection and this covenant of love that exists between God and his people. I love what the Psalmist is doing there.

Hank Smith: 49:37 Give us those three one more time. What are they again?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 49:39 So take a look at Psalm 48:10, 73:23 and 74:11. In fact, let me just, since we're talking about it, this is not Isaiah, of course, that we're talking about. We're talking about the Psalms, but let me just mention to you the powerful one that we're most familiar with from Isaiah, which is, "I have engraven you upon the palms of my hands" anciently there were those who were not necessarily Israelites, but there are others who would put the name or the image, something representing the God they worshiped on their hand. So they could show that so people could look at that. They could show it, here's who I'm devoted to. And God seems to be reversing that I am eternally devoted to you. And that symbolism of your name is on my hand. I am devoted to you. It reverses almost that relationship. And then let me just read a little statement about this idea of the hand that I've been referring to.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 50:45 So we'll point to this in Isaiah, and then we'll leave this hand imagery topic alone for a little bit. But if you look in Isaiah 49:15-16, first of all, the nursing mother may forget, yet I will not forget. And sometimes we just take that as well. Mothers love so much that they wouldn't forget, but there's something more there. Physically speaking, the nursing mother cannot forget. It's physically painful for the nursing mother to be separated from her nursing child. And so, God starts by saying, I am pained like a mother. If a nursing mother is pained by her separation from her child, more so, eternally more so am I pained by my separation from you. The nursing mother might forget. I will never forget you. I've engraven you upon the palm of my hand. In the Hebrew Bible, when someone is consecrated to an office, what we would say they're set apart to an office.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 51:40 The English word that the King James version gives is they're consecrated. They're set apart, that kind of thing. But the Hebrew doesn't say that, actually that's just the way we translate it. The act is to *male etihad* to fill the hand. I filled the hand of the priest, and that's what's happening in the Hebrew. So the idea is God is placing in our hands, his power, his strength, his blessing. He's filling our hands, maybe with symbols, with signs. So if it's a priest, maybe you've got consecrated oil, maybe you've got the blood of the sacrifice, the

pieces of the sacrifice, that which you need to do to function. And so, if you think of being set apart, then those hands are pouring out upon you, blessings, power and authority, and you are receiving that so that then you can pour it out upon others. And so, we're receiving power from God and then pouring it out.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 52:33 So let me read this from a non Latter-day Saint biblical scholar. To consecrate means to fill the hand, especially which that is the sign and symbol of office. I.e. To fill the hand with a scepter was to consecrate to the office of king. So you're king now. And what do I do? I put in your hand, the symbol of the office so that people know who you are, what authority you have. To fill the hand with certain parts of sacrifice was to set apart for the office of priest and to confirm their right to offer both gifts and sacrifices to God. Whenever the word refers to official appointment or separation to a work or dignity, it is the sovereign act of God. The accompanying symbolic act was the filling of the hand of the person so appointed with the sign, which marked his office. May feel like I've gone off on a tangent, and I maybe have a little bit, but I want to go back to this image of Jehovah saying, "I've engraven you, my hand is filled with you."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 53:27 And then when he drinks that bitter cup in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross, his hands are filled and then he drinks it, that's what he needs to do to express his eternal and infinite love, his healing love for us, that then will conquer death and sorrow and sin. There's all kinds of things embedded in this hand imagery. My right hand is full of goodness. The right hand of God is full of goodness. And you're going to grasp me in this loving connection by my right hand. And there's this transference of love, of power, of authority, of a covenant relationship.
- John Bytheway: 54:06 Is that a study Bible?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 54:08 The bulliger B-U-L-L-I-G-E-R number in scripture, so it's the work that's talking about symbolic language in the Hebrew Bible. That's page 145. So that's where you can find that if you're interested in going and doing some studying and looking that up.
- Hank Smith: 54:26 It's just, this is mind-blowing stuff.
- John Bytheway: 54:32 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 You've got Psalm 73. You mentioned verse 23. "Thou hast holden me by my right hand." Not only are you holding my right hand, but you're holding me. And it reminds me of Nephi. What does he say in his Psalm? "Will thou encircle me about in the robes of righteousness?" It's just almost like, "God, please hug me. Hold me." That's almost childlike, idea of, "I just need to be held by God."
- John Bytheway: 00:35 2 Nephi 4, Hank. What has just happened? My father died, arguably, one of his best friends in the whole world. My brothers, that's not going well. I feel really alone. My family's broken. And that's when that Psalm comes forth, which is the placement of it makes sense. And then it's, "Oh," wretched man that I am. I'd love to be as wretched as Nephi. And then our youth theme this year, "Trust in the Lord. I know in whom I have trusted." And that's the pivot point of the Psalm. I love that.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:09 And just, I hope it's okay to be a little bit personal here, but I think there are those of us who are sitting together talking who have really dealt with some significant loss over the past few years. Hank, forgive me for being personal, but you certainly have had to deal with some real loss. I lost my older brother, my best friend, about a year and a half ago.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:34 And this is when I need God to hold me by my right hand and comfort my soul. And life is wonderful and it's rich and it's good. And wow, mortality can be a bear sometimes, and navigating those feelings. And to have a place I can go that is going to express that for me or help me express that is really cathartic. It's really healing. That's what I think God wants from our religious worship. "Let me heal you. I want you to be healthy. I want you to be mine. I want you to be okay, even though life is difficult, and that's okay too. Come through that and reunite with me on the other side. Let me offer you my hand, my hand of love."

- Hank Smith: 02:17 It's almost that, "Come here" idea. "Come here." Right? "Let me hold you." All of us are fathers here. How many of us would ever turn away our child who wanted to be held? It wouldn't matter what had happened. "Yes, I'll hold you."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 02:31 I agree. Isn't that sweet? This very innocent sort of in 74:11. "Don't withdraw your hand. Give me your hand again." I think of the Father hearing that, going, "Yeah." If a little child reaches out her hand or his hand to you, you don't leave that hand hanging.
- Hank Smith: 02:48 Yeah. That's that's awesome, Shon. Thanks for all this.
- John Bytheway: 02:51 It just reminds me, and Shon, you know Hebrew a lot better than I do, but the idea of kafar, to cover, is also to embrace, right? And that the word that we say so often, the atonement at-one-ment, the atonement of Jesus Christ. That's the whole outcome to be at one again. Doesn't that come from kafar? That sounds like an embrace, like a whole, to be at one again.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:21 Absolutely. Yep. Beautifully said. And you can look at other languages like Arabic, the kafara, and that is all implied in that very beautiful word that was translated as atonement, at-one-ment, that comes from the Hebrew kippur or kafar or kaphar.
- John Bytheway: 03:40 It's not a separateness that God is trying to do. He wants to bring us all back and be one. And that was the intercessory prayer of Jesus in John 17, "That they may be one as we are one." We're all going to be in that embrace, which is such a wonderful idea to think about. It's not only the way that all this happens, but it's the outcome that we all want, is to be at one with God again.
- Hank Smith: 04:07 I know I'm stretching things here, Shon, but the day of Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement, it could be Day of Embrace, the Day of Atonement, coming together.
- John Bytheway: 04:17 Be reunited. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 04:19 Shon, you wrote an article called My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me? Psalm 22 and the Mission of Christ. I just want to read a little bit from the introduction of this and then hand it over to you. You quote that same verse in the opening paragraph. "My God, my God. Why hast thou forsaken me?" That's Psalm 22:1, and then a second from Isaiah, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." That's Isaiah 53.

- Hank Smith: 04:49 And then you wrote this, "These two statements, one quoted from the Psalms by Christ as He hung upon the cross, and the other taken from Isaiah by Abinadi in the Book of Mormon, are familiar and dear to all Christians as prophecies that found their fulfillment in Christ's grand atoning sacrifice. Perhaps no Old Testament text as a whole exerted more influence on the New Testament understanding of Christ's mission than Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. Psalm 22 was quoted or alluded to at least 11 times by New Testament authors, while Isaiah 53 was used at least 10 times. Indeed, these texts could be considered the twin pillars of Old Testament prophecy regarding Christ." That is an opening paragraph. Shon, let's hand it over to you. I want to hear your thoughts on Psalm 22. What has it done for you?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 05:40 I do love this chapter, and I guess if it's a good opening paragraph, it's mostly because I'm quoting from those two powerful verses. But that concept of Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 as these twin pillars of Old Testament prophecy regarding Christ, and for most of us as Latter-day Saints, that's going to resonate with Isaiah 53, and with Psalm 22, we're going to say, "I do not know what you're talking about," because Abinadi helps so much for us, as Latter-day Saints, us understand how Christ-centered Isaiah 53 can be and is, we just gravitate to that. And it's powerful. And New Testament authors gravitated to it as well as they're describing Christ's life, His sacrifice, the passion of Christ and His resurrection. Isaiah 53 shows up again and again.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 06:32 But guess what? Psalm 22 shows up even slightly more than Isaiah 53 does. And the whole thing is just saturated with imagery that points the Christian mind to Christ. And let me just say a word about this Old Testament prophecy regarding Christ. It had to have meaning to those who maybe didn't yet fully understand Christ. And so, it can reflect the ancient Israelite suffering and their trauma and their challenges. But then it also points to the perfect Israelite, the great example of what it would mean to be in a covenant relationship with God, Jesus Christ. The Israelite par excellence, we would say, the one who suffers more than all other Israelites, all other covenant people would suffer, and the one who triumphs. And through His triumph, we can understand our own experiences and have hope that they're going to work out. Right?
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 07:32 And so, to read these with the lens of Christ, to read Psalm 22, it just sings. And there's a lot that could be said here. Let's start with verse one. "My God, my God. Why hast thou forsaken me?" We're familiar with this line, of course, because Christ says it from the cross. I did some work with my master's thesis

with Don Perry and others help with a Dead Sea Scrolls fragment that started me with Psalm 22. And then Jack Welch is like, "No. You need to do some more with this." And this opening line that Christ quotes from the cross, we think He's expressing forsakenness. And indeed He is, He's expressing this heart cry. But He's also quoting the opening line to a song. So think of that.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 08:15 If I were to say, "Come, come ye saints," then that has its own meaning, and that would communicate. But what are all of us going to hear? We're going to hear the message of the song. The meaning of the words themselves matter, but we're going to think through, "Oh, all is going to be okay. All is well, all is well." And I haven't said, "All as well," I just said, "Come, come ye saints," and we're going to think, "Okay, continue forward, press forward. It's all going to work out."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 08:40 Well, Christ, even as He was expressing His own feelings and fulfilling this, connecting with this Psalm 22:1, He was also, I believe, comforting those at the cross, because this is going to track through His suffering in very powerful ways, and then it ends triumphantly.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 09:00 So let me just show you some of the ways in which it connects with Christ's ministry. Let's look at verse two, "My God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not, in the night season and am not silent." Now that's parallelism. He's basically saying, "I cry in the day and the night," but there have been those, some of the early Christian fathers said, "Ah, here's an allusion both to the cross and to Gethsemane, where He was at nighttime. And that sort of disappears over time. But early on, they were seeing, "Oh, we've got the dual places of suffering, the cross and His anticipation of the cross and His suffering in Gethsemane."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 09:43 Let's look at verse six. "I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised by the people." So I appreciate Paul Hoskisson has done some great work with this idea of being a worm. "I'm nothing. I'm lower. I'm despised." But then, the reality that the worm gave the Tola'ath, gave the purple, that was the color of royalty. And so, you have this sort of duality there in that verse that refers really well and points to Christ.
- Hank Smith: 10:13 Shon, let's just make sure, for those who don't know what you mean, it's the idea that a crushed snail could create that purple dye.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 10:21 That is exactly right. And it's the word that's being used in the Hebrew is that worm, that snail, that produces that dye. Thank

you, Hank, for making sure I'm communicating well here. Verse 7, "All they that see me laugh me to scorn. They shoot out the hip. They shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him. Let Him deliver him, seeing He delight in him.'" Well immediately, what do we think of?

- John Bytheway: 10:45 They laughed Jesus to scorn.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 10:47 There He is on the cross, and they are saying exactly these things. In fact, the gospels are referring back to, they're actually using the imagery provided by Psalm 22.
- Hank Smith: 10:58 There's no question that the gospel authors saw...
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:02 They're tracking through this. Look at verse...
- John Bytheway: 11:06 Verse 8, too.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:07 Yeah. "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him. Let Him deliver him, seeing He delight in him." Look at verse 14. "I am poured out like water." And think of the imagery from John, the spear goes into His side and then blood mingled with water. "All my bones are out of joint." Think of Christ upon the cross. "My heart is like wax. It is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd." This is verse 15, "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws." And what does Christ say from the cross, of course?
- John Bytheway: 11:42 "I thirst."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 11:43 "I thirst." One of the things He says. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." Now here's one that I really love. Let's skip verse 16 for a moment and we'll come right back to it. Verse 17, "I may tell all my bones," so he's stretched in this uncomfortable position, and maybe this is happening through hunger as well and thirst, but he's stretched out upon the cross, is the imagery that would point to Christ there.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 12:08 Now let's come back to verse 16, "Dogs have compassed me." And this dogs can be an Israelite reference to Gentiles, that he's surrounded by the dogs or the kelevin, the Gentiles. "The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, and then this moment they pierced my hands and my feet." I don't know that there is a more Christ-centered moment anywhere in the Old Testament. We could talk about Isaiah 53, with my apologies to Isaiah, who obviously gives us some beautiful things that point to Christ.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 12:44 Now the fascinating thing with this one is that, and this is why I wrote my master's thesis on this, is that this translation actually comes from the Greek Septuagint. If you look at the Hebrew, the Masoretic Text, it actually has a Yod here instead of a Vav. And those are really easy letters to confuse in Hebrew. One is just a very short tick and the other one's a full line, the Yod and the Vav. And it changes in Hebrew. It basically reads "Like a lion, they are at my hands and my feet." It doesn't make a whole lot of sense. It's ka'-ari instead of ka'aru, but then the Greek Septuagint gives, "They pierced." And then that's what the King James Version gave.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 13:28 So it's this big point of debate. And it came to the point where medieval Jewish Bible purchasers would open to this verse, and they'd say, "Okay, how does that read? Is that ka'ari or ka'aru? Is that they pierced or not?" And if it was ka'ari, then they're like, "Okay, that's a good Jewish Bible. And I can buy that." And then vice versa, it sort of becomes this point of debate, "What's supposed to be there?"
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 13:50 The really fascinating thing as I worked on this is, that there is a small Dead Sea Scrolls fragment from Nahal Hever, and it has the Vav, right? Ka'aru, "They pierced my hands and my feet." And seems to support this, because where did the Septuagint translators get that from? Well, Dead Sea Scrolls has the Vav. And you could see how that would become a point of contention over time that, "Oh, Nope, not ka'aru, ka'ari." And we don't know all the textual history of what happened with that, but a pretty fascinating verse that becomes very Christ-centered. "They pierced my hands and my feet." Was that way too nerdy?
- Hank Smith: 14:31 Not at all. That was really fun.
- John Bytheway: 14:34 This reminds me of Zachariah 12:6, "What are those wounds in your hands?" But if you look at the footnote there, it takes you to Section 45. "What are those wounds in your hands and in your feet?" Section 45 in the Doctrine and Covenants. I want to make that footnote there, that His hands and His feet, the Zachariah 12:6 reference is expanded upon in Section 45, and it matches that, Psalm 22:16.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 15:01 "They pierce my hands and my feet." And then, of course, when the resurrected Christ shows up, "Feel the wounds in my hands and my feet." Now look at verse 18. "They part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture." This is quoted by every single one of the gospel authors. This shows up in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It's one of the few things that is

quoted all the way through. And John even makes a point of sort of seeing those as two separate things. "They are parting my garments," but then there's this other garment or robe that He wears that can't be divided, and so they don't part that one. They cast lots on that one. And He sort of takes the parallelism and says, it's fulfilled in two different ways. What they can divide amongst them, they do. But then there's this thing that can't be divided, and so they're going to cast lots for that.

- John Bytheway: 15:54 Yes. And for those of you using paper scriptures, I'm looking at the footnote at Psalm 22:18 and all of those gospel references, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, references from the gospels. All of them are listed there.
- Hank Smith: 16:08 I remember paper scriptures, John. I remember those. My grandpa had some of those.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 16:12 I remember.
- John Bytheway: 16:13 I can hold mine up. If you want to see them, Hank. There.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 16:16 There's a fascinating thing here that now happens. And we've talked about it a few times. In lament Psalms, you move from this expression of forsakenness. And by the way, I need to say something else, actually, a little tangent here before I move on. And that is that verse 1 has actually caused some consternation amongst Christian commentators saying, "Now, wait." They sort of debated, "What does this mean with the concept of the Trinity? Can God be removed from Himself? Can God forsake Himself?" And they've worked really hard. "Okay. How do we understand what's going on here?" So we actually find a lot of Christian commentary digging in and dealing with that. And we, of course, have our own sacred concepts of what Jesus is going through in the garden and on the cross. And before we conclude here with Psalm 22, I'll maybe just read a couple of powerful statements connected. We'll sort of circle back to verse one, if that's okay.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 17:13 So this is the lament section, and now we move into the plea, the pleading section in verse 19, "Be not that far from me, oh Lord." And if you think of Nephi's Psalm, where he moves into a request. "Don't let me any longer slack at my strength." And there's this plea section, "Deliver my soul from the sword," verse 20. Verse 21, "Save me from the lion's mouth, for thou hast heard me." And this, Hank, before we started, you were talking about, is there cross imagery that we should talk about? And I said, "Oh, there's actually one little thing, "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns." Now, unicorns, of

course don't have two horns if you've watched enough My Little Pony or whatever the case may be, one horn. But this is not unicorns, of course. It's oxen. And the idea of these oxen, if you're thinking of Christian and Christ-centered imagery, he's stretched out between these horns, and you potentially have some cross imagery that could be seen here in verse 21.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 18:18 Now look at what happens when we move to verse 22, because we've been talking about the gospels and how gospel-centric Psalm 22 is, or how Psalm 22-centric the gospels are. But all of a sudden, we are going to start to see a whole new set of connections, low and behold, with Doctrine and Covenants 138, Joseph F. Smith's great revelation of Christ's descent into the spirit world to declare God's name after His atoning sacrifice. And look now, think of what's going on in these terms, as the psalmist is saying, "I will triumph. Even though I'm suffering, I know that God will rescue me."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 19:04 but track through Christ's atoning sacrifice, and now what's going on here in verse 22, "I will declare that name unto my brethren. In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." Well, what congregation is this? And you could say, "Well, for the ancient Israelite, he's come through his trial and now he's promising. You've saved me and I'm going to bear witness to you." But think of Christ then entering into the spirit world, and there's a whole assembly, is the language that Joseph F. Smith used, of those waiting to receive Him. And He bears witness in and amongst that assembly. Look how beautifully that tracks through.
- Hank Smith: 19:43 That's Doctrine and Covenants 138, verse 18, "While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful." It's a perfect fit.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 20:01 And look at how restoration scripture in ways that, I'm not sure who's seen this before, when I was studying this and writing this article, this hit me. And maybe if I got the idea from someone else, I will ask apologies publicly right now. Joseph F. Smith is revealing, decades after Joseph Smith, the descent into the spirit world and what this means. And Psalm 22 tracks that through. He says, "I'm going to be saved." And then he shows up and there's this multitude that's waiting for him. Now let's just keep reading it. What does he say to them? "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him. All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him and fear Him. All ye the seed of Israel, He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted. Neither hath he hid his

face from Him. But when he cried unto Him, he heard." He heard Jesus' cry of forsakenness from the cross. He's heard your cry, those of you who have waited in bondage, the spirit world, waiting to be delivered. And Christ has atoned and has conquered death, and you can be free from the prison.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 21:05 Verse 25, "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation." Hank, I'm so glad you read that. "I will pay my vows before them that fear Him. The meek shall even be satisfied." Those that are waiting, longing for the great redemption that will be worked through in Christ, and then Christ shows up. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied." Hear that little allusion, by the way, as well, that Christ is going to allude back in the Beatitudes, "The meek shall inherit the earth." "The meek shall eat and be satisfied. They shall praise the Lord that seek Him. Your heart shall live forever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nation shall worship before thee."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 21:44 Look at what the psalmist is doing. This is not just one person. This is clearly he's referring to something much larger than that.
- John Bytheway: 21:52 Much bigger.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 21:52 All of the ends of the earth are going to know this. And if we read it through the lens of Doctrine and Covenants 138, "Throughout time and space all will know this message, that Christ is going to declare to those in spirit prison." Let's just finish, verses 29 through 31, "And they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship, all they that go down to the dust, that die shall bow before Him, none can keep alive his own soul. Every tongue will confess and every knee will bow. A seed shall serve Him."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 22:25 And now I want you to think of this moment in Isaiah 53, where he talks about the seed that is preserved, and Abinadi does a lot with that. And look. Low and behold, here's that same theme showing up of Christ's seed. "It shall be accounted to the Lord for generations. They shall come and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this." Well, I don't know if I've done that very well, but the psalm just sings, and it sings Jesus Christ and the great redeeming work that He performed that happened in a specific time and a place, but had impact across time and space and has blessed all.
- Hank Smith: 23:07 Across the veil. Yeah. Shon, I want to add just a second witness to what you've given us here. Our friend, all three of us, our

friend is Dr. John Hilton III. He's so great, they made three of them. He wrote a book called Considering the Cross. He quotes you here on page 152, Shon. He talks about Psalm 22 and the crucifixion. I think everyone should pick up this book, Considering the Cross. He says, "Recognizing the relationship between Psalm 22 and the Savior's death helps us see that the details of the crucifixion were known from the beginning. For me," he says, "this is John. The final part of Psalm 22 is the most powerful. Although it is not quoted in the crucifixion accounts, both Jesus and Matthew may have expected their audience to recall what Psalm 22 says at the end, it ends in triumph. 'All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord.'"

- Hank Smith: 24:08 So Shon, I'm hearing from you and I'm reading Dr. Hilton's book, is there a chance then that when the Savior from the cross says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He is in a way telling His disciples, "I'm winning. This is going to end well."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 24:24 Isn't that beautiful? As the Savior is expressing His own feeling, so that we can know that He understands our own feelings of forsakenness when we feel them. Even as He is giving us that sense that, "I see you. I know you. I meet you where you are." He is also saying, "And in the midst of your suffering, I will triumph and you will triumph." So those at the cross, He's trying to help them understand, "This was foreknown. This was told hundreds of years before. Nothing has gone wrong here. And I will triumph. In fact, what am I going to do? I'm going to descend into the spirit world, and I will offer salvation to all the ends of the earth throughout time and space. That's what is going on here. This is not the end. This is the beginning. And who's going to know it? All of the ends of the earth will know it."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 25:14 So thank you for that little prompt, Hank, because I absolutely believe, and I could be wrong, but if you quote the first line of a hymn to those that knew their Bible, to me, there's very little doubt that that's what He's doing. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 25:29 And you said that. You start with, "Come, come, ye saints." We all know that we're going to make this chorus swell, "All is well, all is well." We know that's where it's going to end up. And so, that's what you're saying. He starts with this. Those who knew Psalm 22, whatever it was back then, knew how this was going to end. That is really great stuff.
- Hank Smith: 25:49 What if I were to say to you, John, "Oh, how lovely was the morning?" You're not going to say, "Oh, he's talking about the

- morning. No, he's talking about a theophany. He's talking about Joseph Smith."
- John Bytheway: 25:59 This isn't just a weather forecast, right?
- Hank Smith: 26:01 I know what you're saying, although the people around, the Romans around, they would not have known what He was saying. I love that.
- John Bytheway: 26:07 The three of us are sitting here talking today because of a day that started with, "Oh, how lovely was the morning."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 26:15 That's a great example. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 26:17 Pretty cool to think about that. A teenage boy said a prayer, and that three of us are sitting here. And it reminds me too, I just want to mention, Abinadi quotes Isaiah 53, that's Mosiah 14, which you mentioned. And he talks about this suffering servant that we believe is Christ, being cut off out of the land of the living, and who will declare his generation? And then Abinadi explained it. "He's going to see His seed, the travail of His soul. He will see His seed." And look at that, verse 30, "A seed shall serve Him. It shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation." There is that generation that He's going to have. I never tied this to that before, but you've really blessed my life today. Shon, thank you.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 27:01 John, and I've got to tell you, it's so fun to read the scriptures together with those who rejoice in the power of the Word. It's just very satisfying.
- Hank Smith: 27:11 It's just almost like Psalm 22. I'm trying to express this, for me was like reaching through the other Standard Works and just touching it. Section 138, Matthew and John, and you're seeing this. John, you love that verse, where the Lord says, "I'll expound all things."
- John Bytheway: 27:25 Yeah. Where Jesus expounded all things in one. The first time I had heard that idea was from Robert Millett, that "When he expounded all things in one," and you're like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa. What? He did what? Where do you get tickets to that?" And that's what we are all trying to do. In our church, we don't have just one book. We've got four. We're trying to put them all together and see them all as one.
- Hank Smith: 27:49 And Shon did that.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 27:51 Let's just do a moment of speculation here on the road to Emmaus, can you imagine Jesus saying, "Hey, let's read... Remember what Jesus said on the cross? My God, my God, why hast... Let's just read that. Let's think about that psalm together." And them going, "Oh, wow. We totally missed what was going on there." And I don't know if Jesus quoted Psalm 22 or not, but certainly the gospel authors did. They certainly saw it. And I like that idea of Jesus saying, "Hey, let's just take Psalm 22."
- John Bytheway: 28:23 Just one example.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 28:24 "I really wish..." Yeah. For example, I really wish Abinadi, he did such a great service for us, as Latter-day Saints, with Isaiah 53. We needed Helaman or somebody like that. "Hey, let me read Psalm 22." But they, of course, the Nephite prophets, they really liked their Isaiah, which is great.
- Hank Smith: 28:40 Yeah. They did. I love that idea, Shon. Jesus is like, "Psalm 22 maybe. How about we start there?"
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 28:46 "Let's look at that one."
- Hank Smith: 28:48 "Let's just look at that one. We've got a long walk ahead of us."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 28:49 I would love us to just put this back in its place, so to speak, as Christians, as Latter-day Saints. It's a crucial place, that Doctrine and Covenants 138. This unique Restoration Scripture connects with it so beautifully and powerfully.
- Hank Smith: 29:07 It's a puzzle piece, where it slides perfectly into place in those verses. That, to me, what a wonderful connection, Section 138.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 29:17 So let me just read if I could, because it's beautiful, it's poignant, a few Latter-day Saint comments about this cry of forsakenness. And they all interpret it, and I fully agree, this is what it means to me as a real historical cry. Jesus is really saying this from the cross. So, Elder Erastus Snow, "It was necessary that the Father should thus measurably forsake His son, leaving Him to his enemies. Otherwise, they never could have fulfilled what had been prophesied concerning Him." The most poignant one that I think we're most familiar with, Elder Holland also does some beautiful things here. But first, Elder Melvin Ballard, "In that hour, I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil, looking upon these dying struggles until even He could not endure it any longer. And so, He bowed His head and hid in some part of

His universe, His great heart almost breaking for the love that He had for His Son."

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 30:09 Now, I've got friends and colleagues who don't love everything. Can God really hide in the corner of a universe? Would He do that? I love this statement by Elder Ballard. I find it very poignant and powerful. I really love what Elder Holland does here, where he says, "The Father watches through the night with His Son." And so, the way I like to think of it, when you have a child that just has to go through something difficult, and they have to do it. You can't take that away from them. They have to walk through that difficult thing, and they have to know that they've had the strength to do it. Maybe it's rare, these moments where you let them experience, but you are there. You are watching, you are loving, you are cheering them on. You are aching with them. And so, Elder Holland's affirmation, "God doesn't leave us alone, but it does feel like we're alone at times." And that is part of this divine process as well. I really appreciate that approach.
- Hank Smith: 31:09 That's really good.
- John Bytheway: 31:11 I just can't get over verse 30. This is Abinadi, "Who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living." Isaiah 53, "But He'll see His seed." And look at verse 30, "His seed shall serve Him and shall be accounted unto to the Lord for a generation."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 31:28 Pull it all together. And I'm really glad, John, that you went and read that from Abinadi for us, so that you could help us make that connection. It's really great.
- John Bytheway: 31:37 It's those two words, a seed and a generation. And I'm curious, the Lord is not in all caps there in verse 30.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 31:45 Well, as we look at the Hebrew there, John, it is Adonai, is what is there, not Jehovah, but the Lord. But clearly referring to this salvific figure, "Posterity will serve him. Future generations will be told about the Lord." And by the way, how satisfying is it to be part of that company? Here we are, three of us sitting together talking about the greatest and truest narrative that has ever been told, and seeing it so beautifully in Psalm 22. And here we are, some of a very small portion of those future generations that have been told about the Lord through Psalm 22 and through the gospels and through the restoration of the gospel. That's pretty satisfying. You talked about tying all things together in one, and it's fun to be a part of that.

- Hank Smith: 32:35 Shon, it's almost as if in my head, I'm seeing two puzzle pieces, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. And you're looking at them going, "I need a connection between these two." And we're yelling out, "It's Mosiah 14 and 15." Right? That can slide right between those two and make a connection that you will be forever grateful for. And then maybe another one with section 138 of the Doctrine and Covenants. That will fit perfectly in this puzzle. "You have Psalm 22, you have Isaiah 53. Let us give you Mosiah 14 and 15 and Doctrine and Covenants 138 and show you the complete puzzle." That's exciting to me.
- John Bytheway: 33:11 I just love that some of the greatest things we've got came out of such circumstances with Abinadi at the threat of his life.
- Hank Smith: 33:21 Yeah. And Joseph F. Smith in terrible circumstances, Christ in terrible circumstances.
- John Bytheway: 33:28 They're asking Abinadi, trying to stump him with an Isaiah verse about how beautiful upon the mountains. And he's like, "What are you teaching these people?" "Love Moses." He's like, "Well, why don't you keep it?" But then he says, "But salvation comes in Christ. How could you have missed this?" And he reads Isaiah 53 to them, right? "How could you have missed this?" That redemption cometh because of Christ at the end of Mosiah 16. And then out of that came Abinadi explaining after Mosiah 14, Mosiah 15. This is, "How will he see His seed?" And I love when he says, he does a past, present, future thing, Abinadi does. "How beautiful upon the mountains have been their feet. How beautiful the mountains are their feet." And then he talks to our future missionaries and how beautiful upon the mountains will be their feet. And he does a past, present, future. And he answers their question, but in the middle, he gives them this amazing thing.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 34:24 Look what you've just tied together in beautiful ways that I don't think I've seen before. Psalm 22, Isaiah 53. So there's Hebrew Bible, there's Old Testament. The gospel authors that are tying that story together. The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Restoration Scripture, Latter-day Prophets. Speaking of seeing eye to eye across time and space, I don't know if that could be more beautifully done than what we called these two twin pillars of Old Testament prophecy. God be thanked for Abinadi. Would we have seen this without it?
- Hank Smith: 34:58 Right. Oh.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 35:00 I love the Book of Mormon.

John Bytheway:	35:02	Good point.
Hank Smith:	35:03	This, ladies and gentlemen, is our idea of a good time, just so you know.
John Bytheway:	35:08	Yeah. Have to go meet at J-Dawgs and make it complete.
Hank Smith:	35:10	I'd rather do this than Disneyland.
John Bytheway:	35:12	It's a lot cheaper.
Hank Smith:	35:15	Shon, I don't want you to leave without doing Psalm 23, because I know how much you love it.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	35:19	Thank you so much. Here's something fascinating. If Psalm 22 has not been appreciated enough, and we would want it to be appreciated significantly more by all of us, let's turn the page. Here is a psalm that has spoken over and over and over again to those in need. And John, you and I were talking about this a little bit before, and I'd love to hear some of the thoughts again that you were sharing about Psalm 23.
John Bytheway:	35:48	Well, first of all, I didn't understand until I saw a couple of documentaries about the King James Bible, just that translating it, it's one thing to get the meaning of it, translate it from Hebrew to English. It's another thing to make it beautiful. Psalm 23 is beautiful. I'm looking at the Living Bible Translation, and I love it. But listen to how different. "Because the Lord is my shepherd, I have everything I need. He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams. He gives me new strength. He helps me do what honors Him the most." And the meaning is there. And like I said, I love that.
John Bytheway:	36:29	But listen to it in Psalms. It's poetry. "I shall not want." I didn't get that when I was a kid. It means I won't lack anything. "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." And I didn't realize that until I was watching some documentary, and they started reading that and going, "Not only is it the meaning, but it's beautiful."
John Bytheway:	36:57	I was reading a book by Sister Chieko Okazaki, who was the General Relief Society President, I want to say in the late eighties, I think. And she told a story, and I love our veterans because my dad was one, and she told a story about a man named Captain James Ray, who was shot down in an F-105 Thunderchief, went to the Hanoi Hilton. I wanted to find this. I

- had to go on eBay to find a copy of the January '96 Guideposts, but I did. Guideposts is a magazine my grandma used to read.
- Hank Smith: 37:36 Remind our listeners what the Hanoi Hilton is.
- John Bytheway: 37:39 Thank you. The Hanoi Hilton was nicknamed sarcastically. It was a terrible prison camp in Vietnam, where a lot of Americans were kept there in that prison who had been shot down and so forth. And this Captain James Ray was there. Just the most interesting thing happened after being tortured and everything, thrown on the floor in this tiny room, the guards going back and forth. They could only talk when the guards couldn't hear that they were talking or they would be punished. But he heard a voice that said, "Hey buddy, what's your name?" And the other man there's name was Bob Purcell. It's so interesting to me, that of all the questions he could have asked him, it wasn't the World Series. It wasn't the Super Bowl. He said, "Do you know any scriptures?"
- John Bytheway: 38:30 And he said, "I know the Lord's Prayer." And the voice whispering underneath said, "Well, everybody knows that. Do you know the 23rd Psalm?" And "Only a little. I began whispering it," he said. "He repeated each line after me. A little later, he whispered back the entire psalm. Other prisoners joined in, sharing verses they knew. Through these contacts, a fellowship grew among us. One night, he said that 'I heard tapping and I didn't know what it was.' And it took him a while to recognize, 'Hey, that's Morse code.' I-W-I-L-L. He started scratching it on the floor. Psalm 121. 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from once cometh my help.'"
- John Bytheway: 39:23 Can you imagine hearing this in prison? And these guys encouraging each other with the psalms. Isn't that something? He said that as they moved to different cells, one of my favorite parts of this, he said, "My first cellmate was Larry Chesley, a Mormon from Idaho." And he said, "Though we had a few differences in our belief, our common denominators were the Bible and Jesus Christ. And we were able to share and write down a great deal of scripture."
- John Bytheway: 39:53 One of my favorite parts of this is that as more prisoners came and they got moved around, they organized a Christmas party. From memory, they recited as best they could, Luke 2. "There went out a creed from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Told the Christmas story. And he said, "A choir. These guys are in prison pajamas, beards. They can't

- shave. Emaciated, sickly. They sang Oh Little Town of Bethlehem."
- Hank Smith: 40:22 John, remind me, wasn't that story in your Christmas book?
- John Bytheway: 40:27 I put it in there. I thought that was a Christmas story to me, when they got together and recited Luke 2 and sang O Little Town of Bethlehem and things. The thing that James Ray said about, "They gave us a Bible, but then they took it. But we had the scriptures written in our hearts and could still find joy from that." So yeah, I wrote a little book called Born This Happy Morning, which is one of my favorite lines from a song ever. "Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning." What a happy morning. And he says, "We noticed our interrogator, one of these officers, peeking in and watching with a "What's going on?" Look." And he said, "That night, after months of asking, they brought us a Bible. The first one we had seen." That was their Christmas present, for them, that he brought them a Bible.
- John Bytheway: 41:22 They would share verses that they remembered on precious pieces of toilet paper and hide them behind bricks in the latrine so that when others could go, they could pull those out and get some encouragement. This is what I love, because they let them have this Bible for a while, and then they came and took it. James Ray says, "From that, we learned the most important lesson. Bible verses on paper aren't one iota as useful as scriptures burned into your mind, where you can draw on them for guidance and comfort." Isn't that great? Of all the things that they could have been strengthened by, it was by the Psalms.
- John Bytheway: 42:02 Listen to this. I'll read it as if you were in a prison camp. "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou prepares the table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."
- John Bytheway: 42:58 That story changed it for me, reading it as a prisoner in a hopeless situation, could read that Psalm and get some hope.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 43:08 That is powerful. So how beautiful is it that we just read Psalm 22, and it's a triumphal ending, where then the name of the

Savior is being declared in the congregation. It's Psalm 22:22. And then turn the page, so to speak, and is there anything that's read more often than Psalm 23? Go to a funeral and your chances are pretty high that someone will be expressing this comforting message found in 23. And where does the power come from? It comes from that which is testified of in Psalm 22.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 43:48 And so, this is what I love about being a Christian, about believing in Christ, is that He comforts me. He meets me. He understands sorrow. And He gives me hope that I will triumph after all things. And that 22 and 23 are next to each other. And by the way, we could continue that. 24 is this sort of temple, "Who's going to ascend into the hill of the Lord?" 24 or "Who shall stand in this holy place?" This is how Hank started everything. "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 44:21 Don Perry does a really nice thing with verse 6 of Psalm 24, if you want to just turn the page there. "This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek thy face, Selah. And Selah, by the way, you'll see that a lot. And we're not exactly sure what that means. There's debate about what it means, but it seems to be some sort of a musical notation like pause the music or sort of continue, now move into this musical rendition, that kind of thing.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 44:49 But Don Perry has noted that the Hebrew there for generation, if it's just pointed a little bit differently and the vowels weren't pointed clearly, they weren't pointed at all. So it could be generation. "This is the generation of those that seek His face." Or it could be, "This is the circle of those that seek Him," that there is a group gathering together in prayer that is seeking after the Lord.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 45:12 And that's the Lord that's revealed in Psalm 22, and who comforts us in Psalm 23. And John, not to embarrass you, and feeling emotional with Psalm 23, but we need this. We need a God who meets us where we are. And may I just testify, give my sense of this. As you're reading this with "Come follow me, seek diligently," these scriptures might save your life someday, knowing them and loving them. There may come a time where you are just ashes, so to speak, emotionally. And you just aren't strong enough to know where to go to get comfort and to get help. And the Psalms may be that which gets you through the dark hours of the night, which were given by an ancient Israelite, who I love for the depth of soul that is expressed here and for this witness of God and God's mercy. And I hope you find something that will be that tether for you, if the time

comes when you desperately needed a tether, you may find it right here in these weeks' readings.

- John Bytheway: 46:25 Well said.
- Hank Smith: 46:25 Sure will. When I read Psalm 23, I hear Nephi, or I should say, when I read Nephi, I hear Psalm 23. Some of this language just seems to sneak into the way Nephi talks. Now there's no way of knowing, Shon's told us, when to know when these are written. So, did Nephi have access to this? It sure seems like it to me. Listen to Psalm 23:2, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Doesn't that sound like Nephi saying, "The Liahona led us to the more fertile parts of the wilderness?" In fact, the next phrase is, "He leadeth me beside the still waters." Nephi had the ocean water stilled for him. "He restores my soul. He leads me in the path of righteousness." That's 2 Nephi 4, where Nephi himself says, "Oh Lord, will thou not shut the gates of thy righteousness before me, that I may walk in the path of the low valley."
- Hank Smith: 47:25 Here in verse four, "Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." And Nephi says, "Why do I fear because of my enemies?" Psalm 23:5 says, "Thou prepares the table before me in the presence of mine enemies." I just feel like Nephi has done what you said, Shon. He's read it so closely, I think it's saved his life in his darkest moment.
- John Bytheway: 47:48 You need to write an article on that. It's fascinating.
- Hank Smith: 47:51 Isn't that? As I was reading, I was like, "Man, Nephi, no wonder he is a psalmist. He probably had them memorized."
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 47:58 I second John's little ping there, by the way. I totally agree.
- Hank Smith: 48:02 Shon, what a fantastic day going through these first psalms. Wow. I've just been so touched. I think our listeners would be interested in your journey as an Old Testament scholar and a believing Latter-day Saint. How have those come together for you? And tell us your feelings about the Old Testament. I just love to get you talking about the Old Testament.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 48:26 So honestly, it's a great question. I think that today has really modeled why I care about the Hebrew Bible, why I care about the Old Testament so much. And I have to say, I think it was early on, learning just how much Joseph Smith loved Hebrew and how much he loved and gained inspiration and revelation from reading the Old Testament, that also pointed me in that

direction. But to see the great interconnectedness of the teachings of the prophets over time is so deeply satisfying. And it's only available if we actually study that which is ancient, to see how it creates this reservoir of imagery and prophecy and teachings and concepts that then connect with modern day prophets and how they sort of connect, as I've said, probably too many times now, across time and space. How beautiful is it to see those messages interweave and support each other, and for a Latter-day Saint reader to recognize God is God. And the God of the Hebrew Bible is the God of the restoration. And they are one.

- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 49:44 And President Nelson, what a prophetic voice he has as someone who is giving us what we need right now, and over and over and over again, uses things from the Old Testament, from Old Testament prophets, to help us understand why what we're doing today is so important.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 50:02 And so, to go back and understand the foundations, and I hope that I, along with all of us, somebody from the church office building told me there was actually a time this year when the Old Testament got more hits on the internet, on the church's website than the Book of Mormon. And you might think that's a travesty, but I think "Yay. People are reading the Old Testament." Because if you read the Old Testament, then you understand the Book of Mormon-
- John Bytheway: 50:31 Much better.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 50:31 If you understand the Book of Mormon, you understand the Old Testament. And it all folds together into this grand witness of what God has been trying to accomplish from the beginning to the end. And even though there's differences in the ancient world, and we don't want to overly minimize those, to see the grand unity of the message is something that Joseph Smith cared very much about, and that really resonates in my soul as someone who believes deeply in the ministry and the mission of the Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Hank Smith: 51:02 Awesome. We loved having you here, Shon. Thank you for being here. John Bytheway.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 51:07 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 51:07 How did we get this lucky again? Do you remember how we...

- John Bytheway: 51:10 Well, I was honestly sitting here thinking that I'm blessed to be here. This is the kind of stuff that gets me fired up. And I'm so grateful for my wife, because when I go tell her, she'll be excited about this. "Look at this Psalm 22." And so thank you, Shon. It's been a good day.
- Hank Smith: 51:28 It's been a very good day.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 51:28 You are dear friends. And I, driving over here, I just thought, "Wow, they are gluttons for punishment. That's what this is all about. They have really taken 'good people need to suffer' to heart." This is a joy for me. Thank you.
- Hank Smith: 51:43 If that's what suffering is, I'll take it. This isn't the last time we've seen Shon Hopkin on FollowHIM. So Shon, we'll say goodbye for now, just for now.
- Dr. Shon Hopkin: 51:54 Very good. I look forward to next time.
- Hank Smith: 51:56 We want to thank you for joining us today. 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 come back next week. We're going to take on some more Psalms on FollowHIM.
- Hank Smith: 52:11 We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

WHY DO WE SING SO MUCH IN CHURCH?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 My friends, welcome to followHIM Favorites. This year we are taking on a single question from each lesson. John, the lesson for this week is basically the first third of the Psalms, Psalms 1-50. I don't know how many people realize it, but Psalms are hymns, they're songs. And so the question may come up this week, why do we sing so much? Why is music so important to the church and religion? John, if someone asked you, "Dad or Brother Bytheway, or Bishop Bytheway, why do we sing so much? Why is music almost a part of everything we do?" What would you say?
- John Bytheway: 00:45 One school of thought is that we sing so that the late people can come in and find a seat before the real meeting starts. Okay, that's the... And we still have a lot that aren't here now. Let's have a special musical number. Now, let's have a really special musical number.
- John Bytheway: 01:04 I used to wonder that myself and then you start noticing in the Scriptures how often they sang, that Jesus or they sang a hymn before the Passover. So the question became, "Well, it must be important because Jesus did it. Why did Jesus do it?" And so many of these Psalms that we've looked at are talking about the greatness of God and teaching us how to reverence Him and to honor Him. I guess it's an inviting the Spirit type of a thing. Not all music does that. That's a whole nother discussion. Isn't it, Hank? But the music that invites the Spirit of the Lord to come, because boy, once we have the Spirit of the Lord then our meeting's going to be wonderful and successful. That's probably the short answer is, we know the Lord wants us to but it's an invitation to the Spirit.
- Hank Smith: 01:52 Yeah. The Lord commands us to pray always. That's pretty hard to do, to pray always until you hear that singing is a form of prayer. That's section 25 of the Doctrine and Covenants. "The song of the righteous is a prayer unto me and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads."
- John Bytheway: 02:10 Yeah.

- Hank Smith: 02:11 If we can keep the songs of the restoration, the hymns in our head, that's part of praying always. And to me that's a pretty cool way to pray always, is to be singing these hymns.
- John Bytheway: 02:24 Hank, just recently I was reading in the Saints book some story about the expulsion from Jackson County and it was a sister, a pioneer.
- Hank Smith: 02:34 Amanda Barnes Smith, I think you're thinking of.
- John Bytheway: 02:37 The words of a hymn came to her mind.
- Hank Smith: 02:40 How Firm a Foundation, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 02:42 The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose. And this comes to her mind on, You will not be forsaken. And that was power to her in that moment and built up her faith and her courage. That's just another reason. Because maybe when you really need it, some of the truth that are sung in these songs will come back to you and give you a little bit of power to endure, to go on.
- Hank Smith: 03:06 Yeah. Like a memorized scripture, a memorized hymn can be a good friend to give you a boost of spiritual strength when you need it. President Monson said, "If you love the Lord, if you love His doctrine, you'll love the hymns. And when you love them, you sing them." Elder Oaks said, "The singing of the hymns is one of the best ways to learn the doctrine of the Gospel and is a glorious way to worship." This article from the 2012 Ensign says, "As we sing the hymns and fill our hearts and minds with the heavenly influence."
- Hank Smith: 03:38 Now think of that, that the singing of the hymns is a heavenly influence. Don't we want that for our children and our grandchildren? John, we find ourselves drawing closer to the Lord and striving to keep His commandments. It's difficult to do something that you know is wrong, John, when you're singing one of the hymns of the restoration. It might even force a temptation away to sing a hymn.
- John Bytheway: 04:00 Yeah. In fact, I think that's a really good point. I remember one of my kids or someone on their mission and I was like, "Listen to the music you're allowed to listen to. Put on some hymns that'll lift your spirit, that will change the spirit in the room, absolutely. You'll feel differently and then sing along."

- Hank Smith: 04:20 And I think also one last reason is, it's very unifying when you've got a congregation, a ward, or a branch, or even a stake, or even the whole church at general conference singing the same hymn. There's something about the song of the saints that reaches maybe a little bit further than we feel we can on our own into the heavens. We hope that if you're listening to this little followHIM Favorites that you will start belting those hymns a little bit louder. Put your phone down and get your hymn book out. Maybe your hymn book is on your phone, but sing the hymns with your ward, and with your stake, and with your family and see if it doesn't change your mind and soften your heart.
- John Bytheway: 05:03 Just something occurs to me the way you said that, Hank, is that most of the time when we go to a meeting, in most of the meeting, we are a spectator. But when we take the sacrament and when we sing the hymns, we are part of the meeting, we're participating. When you said it was unifying, I thought, "Yeah, all of us do that."
- John Bytheway: 05:22 And then one funny story when I was on my mission, I was sitting on the stand for some reason with my mission president and saying something to my companion about something that was going to happen in the meeting during a hymn. And President Smith leaned over and said, "Elder, Bytheway, section 25 says that the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me. You wouldn't think of talking during a prayer, would you?"
- Hank Smith: 05:44 Prayer.
- John Bytheway: 05:44 I said, "No, sorry, president." And I'll never forget that it's rude to talk during someone's prayer. Well, the hymns are a prayer, so participate.
- Hank Smith: 05:55 The song of the righteous is a prayer. I love it. Well, join us next week for another followHIM Favorites and come find us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. This week we're with Dr. Shon Hopkin discussing the Psalms. He's an expert and you're going to want to hear it. And we'll see you next week for another followHIM Favorites.