



“I Will Declare What He Hath Done for My Soul”

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:

Can music be the soul's most earnest expression? Dr. Eric Huntsman explores the form, application, and the power inherent in the Book of Psalms and worship through poetry and music.

Part 2:

Dr. Eric Huntsman continues to share his testimony of the Savior through the Psalms, music, and the value of song in personal and corporate worship.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Eric Huntsman
- 01:35 Introduction of Dr. Eric Huntsman
- 07:03 Dr. Huntsman shares his history with the Psalms
- 09:03 Psalms are human response to the word of God
- 11:45 Pandemic blessings
- 14:42 How the Book of Psalms are constructed, poetic forms, and assemblage
- 19:45 The purpose of the colon in the Psalms
- 21:50 Poetry, song, and emotions
- 25:04 The Penitential Psalm, Royal Psalms, Cursing Psalms, and Wisdom Psalms
- 30:43 Psalm 51
- 35:54 Parallels in the Book of Mormon
- 37:03 Psalm 55
- 41:49 Midday prayer
- 43:44 Psalm 62
- 46:40 Psalm 42
- 51:36 The Power of corporate worship
- 57:55 End of Part I–Dr. Eric Huntsman

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Eric Huntsman
- 00:07 Psalm 68 is in praise of the warrior God of Israel
- 01:40 Psalm 72 is possible Messianic psalm
- 03:14 Psalm 78 is a historical psalm
- 05:49 Psalm 84 is a pilgrimage psalm
- 09:57 The modern temple is a place of safety and revelation
- 11:53 Dr. Huntsman shares a personal story of using his mother’s scriptures
- 16:21 Psalms regarding worship
- 20:44 Psalms help us understand Nephi
- 22:33 Dr. Huntsman shares his personal experience being in the the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square
- 31:12 Dr. Huntsman shares his journey of faith and scholarship
- 49:07 End of Part II–Dr. Eric Huntsman

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Biographical Information:



Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, but raised in upstate New York, western Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. Married N. Elaine Scott in 1993. They have two children, Rachel (1997) and Samuel (2003).

Received B.A. in Classical Greek and Latin from Brigham Young University, August 1990; M.A. Ancient History, University of Pennsylvania, May 1992; and Ph.D. Ancient History, University of Pennsylvania, Dec 1997. Joined the faculty at BYU full-time in 1994 as an Instructor of Classics, becoming an Assistant Professor of Classics and Ancient History in 1997. Transferred to the College of Religious Education, becoming an Assistant Professor of Ancient Scripture in 2003 and an Associate Professor in 2008. He was appointed as the coordinator of the Ancient Near Eastern Studies program in August 2012 after spending a year teaching at the BYU Jerusalem Center and was then promoted to full professor in 2015.

In Classics he specialized in Roman imperial history and did work on imperial women, particularly Livia Drusilla, the emperor Augustus' wife. His publications in religious studies and related fields include two BYU Studies articles on Josephus; "Christ Before the Romans" in *From the Last Supper Through the Resurrection: The Savior's Final Hours* (Deseret Book, 2003); "Galilee and the Call of the Twelve Apostles" in *From Bethlehem to the Sermon on the Mount* (Deseret Book, 2005); "Teaching through Exegesis: Helping Students Ask Questions of the Text" (*Religious Educator*, 6.1, 2005); and "The Bread of Life Sermon," in *From the Transfiguration through the Triumphal Entry* (Deseret Book, 2006), and additional articles on John and the New Testament. Together with colleagues Richard Holzafpel and Thomas Wayment, he has co-authored *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament: An Illustrated Reference for Latter-day Saints* (Deseret Book, 2006).

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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.
Hank Smith:	00:10	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:13	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:15	As together, we follow Him.
Hank Smith:	00:20	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith and I am here with my co-host who teaches transgressors God's ways. I'm the transgressor, John, and you have taught me very much in God's ways. So, thank you.
John Bytheway:	00:39	And vice versa, Hank. Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:42	John, that phrase actually comes from one of my favorite Psalms, Psalm 51. In order to study Psalms this week, we had to bring on somebody who really understands this stuff more than you and I do. So tell our audience who's with us.
John Bytheway:	00:59	Yeah, I'm very excited to have Dr. Eric Huntsman with us today. And for those of you who are watching, you can see he's in a little different setting. Do you want to tell us just where you are right now, Dr. Huntsman?
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	01:12	I am in Jerusalem. So I am for the next two and a half years, the academic director of the BYU Jerusalem Center. And I have an office that's about three times as big as my Provo office, with one wall of windows overlooking the old city. It doesn't get better than that.

John Bytheway: 01:27 The first time I ever went there, one of the first things we did was go to sacrament meeting and I can remember singing There Is a Green Hill Far Away and going, "Well, actually it's not that far."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:39 Yeah. Yeah. We call it a brown hill nigh at hand is what we say here, because it's only green two months a year. So it's usually brown and it's nigh at hand, rather than far away.

John Bytheway: 01:49 Oh, sounds great. It's just fun to be able to tell people where you are.

Hank Smith: 01:53 John, I think this is our first international FollowHIM episode. We did have Dr. Bowen out in Hawaii, but this is some serious distance.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 02:04 Right now. I can hear outside my window. I can hear the call to prayer from our neighborhood mosque. So I really am in the Middle East.

Hank Smith: 02:12 That is fantastic.

John Bytheway: 02:13 That is so wonderful that we can even do this. That's so cool. Well, Brother Huntsman, I'm going to read a short bio from the back of one of my favorite books, The Miracles of Jesus. It's a beautiful book too. It's full color, gorgeous illustrated.

John Bytheway: 02:28 Eric D. Huntsman is a professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University. His background after graduating from BYU in classical Greek and Latin, earned a PhD in ancient history from the University of Pennsylvania, joined the BYU faculty in 1994, author of a number of books from Deseret Book. In fact, I noticed this might be the most recent, Becoming the Beloved Disciple: Coming Unto Christ Through the Gospel of John. Is that your most recent?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 02:54 Yep. Yep. And we have another one. I worked with a colleague, Trevan Hatch. We've got an update of my God So Loved the World, the Easter book coming out in February of '23, called Greater Love Hath No Man: A Latter-Day Saint Guide to Celebrating the Easter Season. It's going to be oversized, heavily illustrated, 380 pages. It's my magnum opus. It's everything I really ... I can die after that book comes out because it's all Jesus, his entire last week in great detail.

John Bytheway: 03:22 Oh, and I love the emphasis on Easter. We all know without Easter, there would be no Christmas, Easter ought to be bigger

than Christmas. So I'm looking forward to that, because this one's just beautiful.

- John Bytheway: 03:33 Brother Huntsman served a full-time mission to Thailand, Bangkok mission. He's been a bishop. He's served as an ordinance worker in the temple. And here's why some of you might recognize him because he sings in the Tabernacle Choir. I always love it when they're panning people. And I could say, "Oh, there's Eric right there." Eric always has a beautiful testimony expression on his face when he sings. He and his wife, Elaine Scott Huntsman are the parents of two children.
- John Bytheway: 03:59 There's another thing I wanted to mention. He gave one of those BYU speeches. You can go to speeches.byu.edu and find this. It was called Hard Sayings and Safe Spaces and the subtitle, Making Room For Struggles As Well As Faith. And that was in August, of 2018. Do you remember that, Hank?
- Hank Smith: 04:20 Absolutely. I was listening to that live when Eric gave it. And Eric being a good friend, I knew that he was speaking from the deep within his soul. I think it should be required reading or required watching for every Latter-day Saint.
- John Bytheway: 04:35 Yeah, that was Hard Sayings and Safe Spaces, and then the subtitle, Making Room For Struggles As Well As Faith. And if you go to speeches.byu.edu, you can search by date, or by author. Just find Eric Huntsman and you can-
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 04:52 If you search Eric Huntsman on YouTube and put Eric Huntsman devotion, it will come up. Except I just need to forewarn everyone. The thumbnail is terrible. I'm lifting my hands in the middle of a preaching thing. But I often say sermons are better seen and heard and not read.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:08 Sometimes our testimony really comes out in our voice. It was a subject that was ... I wrestled with it. I prayed about it. I wrote it. I rewrote it. I had lots of people read it. I just felt so constrained by the Spirit. That was important without ... I think the line I used at the beginning of the end, "without diluting our doctrine or compromising our standards if we hold firm to the standards of the church and we support the doctrine." But we just need to love more fully. And there are people who find themselves in marginalized communities who are hurting. And it's just about ministering to the one as the Savior would. I just put my heart into it because I felt so constrained by the Spirit to offer that.

Hank Smith: 05:46 Yeah. Eric, so glad you did it. And I hope that all of our listeners either just pause the podcast right now, go listen, or make a note to go listen to that this week. It's a life-changer.

Hank Smith: 05:59 Eric, today we are our second week in the Book of Psalms. We just interviewed Dr. Hopkins. Now we want to hand it over to another expert. Let's hand this over to you. You've been studying the Bible your whole life.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 06:13 Yeah, you're in good hands with Shon because Shon does Hebrew Bible and he's done a lot of work on some of the Psalms, particularly Psalm 22 as your listeners from last week know.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 06:22 Just the disclaimer is, my emphasis is Greek New Testament. So I study and write about the Gospels, particularly the Gospel of John the most. When I got interested in Near Eastern studies and started teaching at Jerusalem Center, I have very basic working biblical Hebrew and modern Hebrew, enough to get me in trouble. But it allows me at least to follow the commentaries and appreciate at least the literary beauty of the Hebrew Bible, of the Christian Old Testament better. But I was glad ...

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 06:47 Hank, you talked to me about this before I left Provo. When you said there was possibly, there'd be a Psalms episode open. I'd like to share a few things about the literary form and the poetic form of the Psalms before we get started in this, week's Come Follow Me assignment. But I want everyone to know up front, I had been attracted to the Psalms long before I knew a word of Greek or Hebrew or Latin. It was as a young man.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 07:10 I grew up in Pennsylvania for most of my growing up and my friends were ... They were Catholic and Presbyterian, great people, had a lot of fun. I moved to Jackson, Tennessee when I was in the middle of my junior year of high school. And I think that's probably where I picked up my preaching style to be honest. So for a year and a half, all my friends were evangelical. And they were trying to save me of course. They didn't necessarily think I was going to heaven as a Latter-day Saint, but I really, really fell in love with the Bible.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 07:34 I had studied Book of Mormon my whole life. My mother taught me the Book of Mormon as a Latter-day Saint, raised in the church. But I fell in love with the Bible, particularly the New Testament, but I also discovered the Psalms.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 07:43 I used to go to this Christian youth organization called Young Life. And we would meet on Wednesday or Thursday evenings. And they would often read a Psalm before they would sing a song and have a prayer. And that was new to me, right? That's not from our tradition. And I've since gotten very interested involved in interfaith activities.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:00 I almost have my own pew in St. Mary's Episcopal in Provo because I like to go there for holidays. And they use the Psalms as how they worship. So when I was at a very formative place in my life, testimony developing, settling into whether I was going on a mission, becoming an adult, I was exposed to the Psalms. And since then I've seen what a wonderful tool they are for worship for some of our Christian friends of other denominations. So when you asked me to do the Psalms, I was absolutely thrilled.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:29 There's a commentary I read once, to describe the three parts of what our Jewish friends call the Hebrew Bible, their Bible, the Tanakh, which is an acronym for Torah, which is the law or teaching, Nevi'im, which is the prophets, and then Ketuvim, which is the writings and the Psalms of the writing.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:45 But I was reading a commentary once it said, Torah is revelation, prophecy is proclamation, the Psalms are response. And so it shows how people respond when they have the word of the Lord proclaimed to them, written as it was in the law of Moses or in our canonized scripture, when it's proclaimed, as it was by the ancient prophets or as it is prophets and apostles today, or as this Holy Spirit speaks to us. But the Psalms represent the very human response to the word of God.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 09:15 When I started the Book of Mormon ... I have a special needs son that we'll talk about. But as I read the Book of Mormon with my son, Samuel, and we're starting over again, and Nephi's large in stature and he's so righteous and he gets revelation. And I realized most of us are Sams, we're not Nephis. And that's just fine because Sam believed in the words of his brother Nephi.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 09:34 Well, my son is named Samuel and he likes to go by Sam. When I say that to my family, "You know what? I'm a Sam," when he was little, my son used to always say, "No, I'm Sam." The reality is we can all be Sam. That's one of those few moments where we can get a little connection with what's going on.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 09:50 One of the other ones ... Sorry, I know this is Old Testament year, but as a Latter-day Saint an occupational hazard is we're

always thinking Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 4, that wonderful so-called Psalm of Nephi. If you're fed up with Nephi's Laman & Lemuel were occasionally know-it all's always doing everything right. When he pours out his heart and he's mourning the loss of his father and his rejection by his brothers, he swings in the pendulum.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 10:12 I've got a Psalm I selected for our discussion today, which one commentator called an emotional roller coaster. Because the Psalmist is going from joy to sorrow, to excitement, to discouragement. And that's what Nephi does in 2 Nephi 4. So that's a very long-winded introduction to what I hope, hope, hope your listeners and Latter-day Saints everywhere as they're doing Come Follow Me will find a new love for the Book of Psalms and perhaps find some new ways to incorporate it into their daily worship.
- Hank Smith: 10:39 I love that introduction. Just a little bit of experience I've had in Psalms. It's usually something when I go to the temple and I have some time in the chapel just before, I usually open up the Book of Psalms. I don't know why, but it's always appealed to me in that sacred setting.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 10:54 Either you or the Spirit's redirecting what I was going to do. And I still want to do a little of the academic background, but I think the application is so much more important at this point.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 11:02 I'm like you. And the Psalms have become such a tool in my toolbox, that I use it as I'm waiting for sacrament to start. I was an ordinance worker in the Provo temple for 19 years before my shift started while I was in between veils. I use it sometimes in the evening when I'm trying to wind down or in the morning when I'm trying to get up and I found my prayers aren't centered. I wrote a book some years ago called *Worship: Adding Depth to Your Devotion* and I talked about this wonderful Jewish concept called Kavanah, which is the idea of truly orienting yourself to God. It comes from the Hebrew verb, which means to direct.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 11:36 And our prayers are just words if they're not truly directed to God. Our hymns are just music if they're not singing praise to God. Well, my problem is a lot of times I'll kneel down for my prayers and I'm not thinking about God. And I've gotten the point now in my personal prayer life, I'll play a little music to set the tone and then I'll turn everything off and I will read a Psalm or two aloud. And then I will sit in sacred silence for a bit, till I feel the spirit and then I can pray. So the Psalms can be so

useful in our personal worship, even though as a community, we don't do them as part of our sacrament, et cetera.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:09 One other thing that I picked up during the pandemic, and we always talk about how hard those two years were, but I like to talk about pandemic blessings. One of the pandemic blessings for me was I was able to get back to my personal worship life better than I ever had before, because I wasn't going everywhere.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:25 I wasn't doing choir practice. I wasn't doing temple shifts. I wasn't going to campus. And so I decided I would start each day with the word of God. And not the way I'm predisposed to do it.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:33 I mean, you know this about me, Hank, from work. I mean, I'm what they call an exegetical scholar. I look at the original meaning to the original audience of text, but I'm also an expository teacher and preacher. How does that apply to us? But my scriptures, they're always marked and I'm looking at notes and commentators. And some years ago, I was prompted to shut all my commentaries and dictionaries and marked scriptures and sit down in the morning with a blank pair of scriptures and just read as long as I wanted, a verse, two verses, a whole chapter.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 13:05 And during the pandemic, I revisited that. I read a book about a medieval practice called *Lectio Divina*, which is sacred reading and how reading scripture can be prayer. And I came up with this idea. It's not always the Psalms. Sometimes it's from the Book of Mormon. Often it's from the gospels. But in the morning, I will just read and find a verse or two that are simple to memorize, meaningful to me. And I'll just repeat it a few times until I know it. And then when I go to the gym, it's like between every set, I repeat it, and then when I'm doing cardio or when I'm driving to work or in this case, walking up the stairs from my apartment to work. And I try to repeat that single verse throughout the course of the day.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 13:44 It's a way of centering and feeling the Spirit. And the Psalms are probably my go-to source for my *Lectio*, my reading for that day. My phrase, my mantra, I guess some people would call it, probably 70% or 80% of the time is a song.
- John Bytheway: 13:58 I'm really glad we're talking about this. I think, and maybe this is just a guess, that this is an area that's ... Can I say this? That's sometimes skipped because, oh, these are just songs that people sang or whatever. But there's beautiful application and doctrine in there. And one of the things I was thinking this

morning preparing was there's a verse in Luke 24, where Jesus speaks about things that are spoken of him in the law and in the prophets and in the Psalms. And that's, I think the only place where he adds that, but I love that. Oh, listen, you can find things about Christ in the Psalms. Don't skip over that sort of thing. So I'm glad you're saying this. I think I'm already feeling more motivated about them and I hope our listeners are too.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 14:42 Well. If you don't mind, I just want to go back and just do a little bit of the nuts and bolts of the Psalms and how they're constructed and what the poetic forms are and how it was assembled. And then we'll look at the particular block of the Psalms, about a third of them. We're going to look at about 51 through 100 today, which is from the Come Follow Me week for August 15th.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 15:02 First of all, the word psalm is a Greek word. Psalms in Greek means, a song of praise. Strictly it means, an instrumental strong. And that's because there's a Greek verb, psalmo, which means to sing with the lyre. Now, whether or not David actually wrote any or most of these isn't the issue. But certainly, David, this image of this shepherd poet strumming his lyre and singing to the Lord is one I think a lot of us have in our minds. And so, we get this sense, at least from the Greek translation of the title, that these were songs, as John mentioned, that were sung in one way or another.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 15:32 Now in Hebrew, Tellihim just means songs of praise. But it's kind of fighting words when I hear people say, "Oh, those are just songs." As a musician, I'm not a soloist, I'm a choral singer, sometimes music can carry the meaning of something to us really strongly. I mean, think about lyrics of popular songs and we learn them more easily than we learn other things. And the music somehow adds the feeling behind the words. And we have that song, Prayer is the Most Sincere Desire, in that book on worship I wrote, I did a chapter on music. And I said that, if prayer is the soul's most sincere desire, then music is perhaps its most earnest expression. It's the way we can really carry our feeling into the words.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:13 It's attributed to St. Augustine, whether he actually said it or not is debated, but he often said, "He who sings prays twice." And we do have this in our worship tradition, our hymn singing. We always open and close meetings with song, with hymns. We always sing before we have the sacrament. And that's because it is a way of carrying our collective worship and prayer to God.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:36 In the Jewish tradition there's the sense that the Hazzan or Cantor, the guy who chants or sings in service, that he carried the prayers of the congregation to heaven on the melody of his voice. And so, the song is kind of the vehicle. Now, we don't sing these Psalms usually, but as a choral singer, there are a few we'll mention today, a lot of them have been set to music. But it's interesting to understand the poetic form, which we don't always get the way they're laid out in our normal Bibles, particularly our King James Bible. The King James Bible, like most standard scriptures is set in tiny paragraphs, each verse is its own paragraph. But if you were to get a study Bible, sometimes they will set them out in verse so that you can actually see within a single verse of the Psalms, it has two, sometimes three lines. And that's because that's really critical for understanding how the Psalms were experienced and how they're conveying their message.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:31 I will often ask students, "What is poetry?" And they kind of hem and haw, they might give some examples. But I think we can accurately at least describe, if not define poetry in a very short sentence. Poetry is concentrated, creative, evocative use of language. And let me explain that. Poetry can say more in four or five words than pros can in a paragraph, it's concentrated. Creative, it's expressing things not in your day to day speech. In English, frequently poetry has rhymes scheme, not always. In Greek and Latin, it's always a metrical issue. It's about long and short patterns of long short measures or beats, syllables, long and short syllables. In Hebrew poetry, there is some rhythm and there's occasionally some rhyme, but the most important poetic tool for Hebrew poetry, and this will be useful, not just for the Psalms. A lot of the later prophets, Isaiah is very poetic as well. If you understand how Hebrew poetry works, you can kind of dissect and understand the text a little bit better.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 18:32 The most common feature of Hebrew poetry is something called, parallelism. Where a thought or line is expressed and then it's re-expressed a second and sometimes a third line. And so, you have the first line and then the next line restates that in a slightly different way, that's called synonymous parallelism. Sometimes it's contrasting, it'll express something and express the opposite. Sometimes it's what we call climactic or synthetic parallelism, where it just builds, builds, builds.
- Hank Smith: 19:01 As you just said that I thought of Isaiah, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." He says it again, "Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." So that's an example of that parallelism, right?

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 19:14 Yeah. That's the antithetical parallelism, where it's contrasting. Sometimes it'll be synonymous. I think of Psalm 2:1, "Why do the heathen rage and why do the people imagine a vain thing?" The one I really like is a little bit more complicated, it's when you have something that builds upon itself. And here I'm going to pull from 2 Nephi 33:6. He says, "I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus; for he hath redeemed my soul from hell." So plainness is what Nephi likes, but of all the plain things, he really likes truth, but of all the truth things, he really likes Jesus. And why? Because he redeemed my soul from hell.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 19:54 And in our edition, since almost all of us, some of you may have study Bibles, but since most of us will be using our LDS Edition, the King James Bible, you'll sometimes notice in the middle of a verse, a colon, right? So, we're going to look at Psalm 51 in a moment that says, "Have mercy upon me oh God, according to that loving kindness:" So that's the first line. "According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." That's the restatement. And when I visit with my friends at the Episcopal church, they actually sometimes will read Psalms together and the worship leader will sing the first, will say the first line and then the congregation will say the next half verse after the colon.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 20:33 So when I do these, just for my own use at home before prayer, or when I'm just trying to feel close to the spirit, I will often very intentionally read it half verse by half verse. Pause as I suspect the original Hebrew Psalmist would have. He would've expressed a statement and in our editions it's up to the colon and then he would've re-expressed it or contrasted it or built upon it. And that's because repetition is how people learn. And so if that idea, whether it's in the Psalms or whether it's in Isaiah or one of the other poetic books of the Old Testament. And we sometimes lose that. And that's why, even though it is kind of getting off in the weeds and we're being a little Bible studies geek here, I think it's really useful to know a little bit about the poetry.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 21:17 And let me just say one more thing before we see how it really reaches us individually and as our manual suggests it does. One of the reasons people like poetry is because it's so... Remember I said concentrated and creative use of language, that's as far as we got, but it's the evocative part. It's able to bring to the surface or distill out of us or summon out of us feelings, whether they be emotional feelings, as a lot of love poetry does, or spiritual feelings. And that's what I love about the Psalms, is they're able to pull out of me the feelings of my heart.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 21:51 What's that passage in Romans 8 where Paul says, "We do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." I think that's what Paul says in Romans 8. Sometimes we cannot express in words what our heart and soul is really feeling. And the spirit can kind of step in for that, but sometimes the words of someone else, a Psalmist can do that.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 22:12 And this particular batch, when I first was looking through it, a lot of the great, so-called messianic Psalms, that really point clearly to Christ, are in the group that Brother Hopkins had last week. And some of the more famous ones are in the second one. I promise I found some fun ones in this section. These were a little bit more personal. I mean, we can still see, trusting in God, God saving us. We can see some illusions of the Savior. But really, the block of reading for this week, is really about us, about our experiences, our joy, our sorrow, our discouragement, our heartaches and our need for God.
- Hank Smith: 22:48 That's awesome.
- John Bytheway: 22:48 I really like what you said about, the Psalms are kind of a response and it's our feelings, as you just said, the first paragraph in the Come Follow Me manual says, "The writers of the Psalms share deeply personal feelings in their poetry. They wrote about feeling discouraged, afraid and remorseful. At times, they even seem to feel abandoned by God. Some Psalms carry a tone of frustration or desperation. If you've ever had feelings like these, reading the Psalms can help you know you aren't the only one." That's the same boat therapy, right Hank? "You can also find Psalms that can encourage you when you're having such feelings, because the Psalmist also praised the Lord for his goodness, marveled at his power and rejoiced in his mercy." So, I love that idea that these are a response and that we can identify with these different feelings just described.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 23:44 One of the things that's hard sometimes for people using the Psalms. I mean, there's some, go-to Psalms, the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd." I mean, there are some that are almost into our culture that we know. We almost feel like, "Wow, can I really read aloud something where someone thinks the Lord has abandoned him? That's not what I want from the scripture." And then there are some, a handful of Psalms that are called imprecations, where he is actually saying, "I curse my enemy and may he bite the dust." And it's like, "We're supposed to love our enemies." But part of that I think, is simply to recognize the human experience. And if you understand kind of the context, this is someone who's frustrated, whether David

wrote them or not, a lot of times they're set in David's experience. So you know, Saul's trying to kill him. "My enemy, may he stop chasing after me.", that kind of thing.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 24:28 What I actually have done, although I've mentioned, I like to read the scriptures, a blank set of scriptures, so they can speak new to me each time, in my working set of scriptures that I use. I actually went through and I kind of color coded the things that were pure praise in my scriptures, orange are my praising God and prayer colors. And so, I could mark parts of the Psalms, that if I just need to pick me up where I'm looking for my Lectio that day to read, I can just look to that. The other thing I've done is, I've often labeled each Psalm by the type it is. So if you don't mind, I'll just kind of list what some biblical scholars, the categories they've divided the Psalms into.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 25:04 The first one we're going to look at in moment is Psalm 51, is what's called a penitential Psalm. Someone who's not just discouraged or upset, this is someone who has sinned, someone who needs forgiveness. So penitential Psalms are when a sinner and we're all sinners, are seeking forgiveness from the Lord. There are Psalms that are complaints and lamentations. Now lamentation we get, we're supposed to mourn with those who mourn. We're supposed to take our disappointments to the Lord. I don't think most of us have a problem... Grieve for the loss of those whom we love.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 25:33 Complaints are borderline. Should we really be complaining? "God, why did you leave me hanging here?" But what's interesting is, sometimes complaint Psalms are followed by Psalms of trust. And that's the thing is, you have to read them in context. So even though one Psalm of seven, eight verses is like, "Gosh, all that guy's doing is complaining, he's even cursing his enemies." We don't know how all of these were composed and when they were composed, but there was some thought put to how they were assembled. And so, a complaint Psalm will often be followed by a thanksgiving Psalm, which is praise in response for blessings.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 26:08 There are some Psalms that I label hymns. A thanksgiving Psalm, is praise of God in response for his blessing us. A hymn is descriptive praise that's not dependent upon anything the Lord has done for us. It's just praising God because he is good. It's just praising God because he's the source of life, it's because he's mighty. So, I've labeled those so I can kind of see the distinction and that's good for me because a lot of times my prayers, if I'm praising God, it's really thanking him for stuff he's

done for me, it's not always just the, "hallowed be thy name.", praising him because he is holy.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 26:46 There are Royal Psalms. Now as Christians, we see most of these as messianic Psalms. These were Psalms that were composed for a King's coronation or his wedding, or when he came back victorious from battle. And the Kings of Israel were called upon to be types and anticipations of Christ. And that's why so many of them do speak of Christ. There are temple liturgy Psalms, and Hank you mentioned sometimes waiting for a session, opening the Psalms. This is when I got into a pattern of reading Psalms before my temple shift. And in fact, I'm going to just quickly, quickly turn to one. This is one I always like.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 27:20 Once President Bacon, who was president of the temple years ago, he caught me running to the temple because I was going to be late for my shift. And he said, "Brother, we don't run in the temple or on the grounds." So, I try to get myself a little bit of extra time to prepare. But there's one Psalm, I always... And I'm sorry if I get a little verklempt, as we say here in Yiddish, a little emotional. Because as much as I love being here, the one thing I'm really missing is the temple. The temple is somewhere I am once or twice a week at home and we don't have one here. But this is a line from Psalm 27:4 that speaks to me. And I'll try to say it in the parallelism so you can hear the phrases.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 27:55 "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord; and to inquire in his temple." And by the way, our translation inquire could be rendered meditate. And I always like to repeat that to myself as I'm walking in the temple, sometimes we're not supposed to add anything to the ordinances, but sometimes I slip off my shoes past the recommend desk.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 28:24 I think of the voice from the burning bush saying to Moses, "Moses put off the shoes from off thy feet for the ground on which thou stands is holy." It's a verse like this from Psalm 27:4 that can get me in such a mode of worship that I feel like Moses, I can feel the holiness of the Lord's house. I want to take off my shoes, I want to put on my whites. And so, there are Psalms that are called temple and liturgy Psalms. They were Psalms that were literally sung in the temple while the sacrifices were being offered, while the incense was being burned.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 28:57 And then there are some Psalms that we call wisdom Psalms, I mentioned the cursing Psalms. So I've kind of labeled mine, so that I kind of know what mode that Psalm is in. And as I said,

I've marked them in such a way that I can skip the cursings or the complaints, if my purpose for reading the Psalm that day is the praise God, I'll just read the orange verses, that kind of thing. But kind of knowing the background and the different uses. Probably the original ones were figures like David, who as a shepherd or as someone chased by the king or someone who was a king himself or someone who sinned himself, they were written by individuals for their own worship, that they were adopted by the community and they become what we call corporate worship. Which is like us singing a sacrament hymn. Trying to unify ourselves and praise and reflection upon Christ and sacrifice before we celebrate the sacrament of the Lords supper.

Hank Smith: 29:51

Wow. Eric, as you were talking about temple Psalms, it reminded me of Jacob inviting the people to the temple,

Hank Smith: 30:03

And what he says, he says, "I don't want to give the speech I have prepared." He's saying, "This is what we usually come up for." He says, "It supposes me that they, those who are coming to listen, who aren't transgressing, have come up hither to the temple to hear the pleasing word of God, the word which healeth the wounded soul." It comes to mind as you're describing these Psalms, that they're the words which heal the souls, the wounded souls. And how many people listening have wounded souls in some way or another? And here's the "medicine of the scripture," as Tyndale called it, right?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 30:44

Well, our Come Follow Me assignment for this week's drive was Psalm 49. But if you don't mind, I'm going to start with Psalm 51. It's one of the more poignant and powerful ones, and talk about a wounded soul. And I just want to point out a thing or two about the way the text is laid out before we read some verses from this. Under Psalm 51, I've written, "a lament or penitential Psalm." And we have the italicized chapter summary, which was added by the Scripts Committee later. But Psalms are interesting because about 70% of the time before the first verse there's something in small font, which is called a title. And it will say things "to so and so" or "Psalm by so and so," and sometimes there's some funky things in there. Some words we don't always know, and I'll point a couple of those out. But this one says "the chief musician," another way of rendering that is to the choir master because there was a Levitical choir that stood in the court of the priest and sang, as we mentioned, as sacrifices were being performed, says a Psalm of David.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 31:40 Now there's debate in biblical scholarship whether all of those attributed both to David were by him. I've seen some, contraries call them a Psalm about David, or a Psalm treating David, because what happened is David was such an important figure in Israelite history and national consciousness that his experiences were ones people could associate with. So this one says, "when Nathan the prophet came unto Him after he had gone into Bathsheba." So after he had both committed adultery and conspired to murder Uriah, the Hittite. And the way the text, second Samuel, tells us how it happened, Nathan came in, and you know the story of the parable that you lamb, thou art the man, that kind of thing. But what we have here, whether David originated the Psalm or not, is by having that title, everyone's already thinking about David's experience. And we know how serious that was. But it's not just David's experience.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 32:32 Now. We haven't all committed adultery and conspired to murder. But we've lied. We've cheated. We've been unkind. We've been lazy. I mean, we all have things. This Psalm, by the way, for our friends in more liturgical traditions, our Catholic friends, Episcopalians, Lutherans, this is one of the big Psalms for Lent. So on Ash Wednesday, this Psalm is often read as they're getting ready for Easter. They're trying to repent and prepare for celebrating the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus. And I'll just read a few verses here. Verses one, two, and the first half of three. Have mercy upon me, oh God, according to thy loving kindness. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. You see the parallels in there? Wash me from mine iniquity, cleanse me from my sin.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 33:24 I acknowledge my transgressions before me. Verse 10. I use this as my little mantra just a week ago. Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. So he's sinned, he's doing his best to repent, but what he knows is he can't be forgiven on his own and he needs to be, as you said, healed and changed. Create in me a clean heart. Renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take not the holy spirit from me. The mood starts to rise as he knows there's some hope. This is a verse, not just for singers, but for preachers of the gospel. This is verse 15. Oh, Lord open now my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 34:14 I've done this a couple times before I've taught a class. My tradition after our rehearsal Sunday morning, after Lloyd, our friend Lloyd, would get up and say we're starting in 10 seconds. If you need to cough, please cough now. And we're getting ready for the overture music. The spoken word. I'd always

repeat this to myself. Lord, open thou my lips, that my mouth shall show forth thy praise. So David who's been in the darkness, now is in a place where he can move the sorrow to praise. So that's, I think, just a wonderful example of how a Psalm can be used.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 34:53 This is one of my go-tos before sacrament meeting. It's not always that I've sinned grievously that week. Why have I come to the board? Right? I've come to renew the covenants. And why do I need to renew the covenants? Because I haven't kept them as well as I could have. And to be able to say, as my prayer before sacrament meeting, create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit in me, and then also say, Hey, I'm about to sing a hymn, open thou my lips that I can praise thee. That's just kind of a hint of how a Psalm like this can be used. Even within our tradition.
- Hank Smith: 35:24 I love that Eric. I was looking at verse 13. Please do this. Please forgive me. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways. Sinner shall be converted onto thee.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 35:34 We learned from our experiences. I think of that, particularly in the family context, I don't want my children to make all the mistakes that I've made. And sometimes when they have, and I've had to have that real serious father, child talk, I've learned myself by making this kind of mistake. Let me teach you, or at least share with you, John, is there something that Psalm you like? 51?
- John Bytheway: 35:54 Well, I'm just noticing things that we would find, like in the Book of Mormon, when the Savior appeared to the righteous Nephites and Lamanites. He said, kind of, I'm the great and last sacrifice, so don't bring that anymore. Bring verse 17. You are the sacrifice. Bring a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And that's verse 17. The sacrifices of God are broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. Oh God thou wilt not despise.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 36:21 By the way, a broken heart and the contrite spirit, that's an example of climactic parallelism. And we have the image of a broken heart. The words in both the Greek translation of Psalms and the Hebrew for contrite means crushed. It's not just a heart broken in two, you're then crushed and pulverized. And you're dust, and God, but then God recreates, right. We were made from the dust the first time. And that's why that verse, I mentioned verse 10, create in me a clean heart, renew a right spirit. We have to let ourselves be completely crushed. We have to go through the cycle and then he will create something new.

John Bytheway: 36:55 Yeah. And I like that, because we're not the creator. We can't create a clean heart in our, we have to rely on the creator to do that. I like that.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 37:03 Another Psalm, if we can move on a few chapters, Psalm 55 is an individual prayer. It was a Psalm that's portrayed as a prayer of David. Just a little bit on the title on this one. It says, once again, to the chief musician. So this is a Psalm that may have been someone's individual prayer. Might have been David's. But it had been adopted into the temple. We have our tabernacle choir, well you have to imagine a Levitical temple choir. Okay. So the choir leader would be reading, probably antiphonal singing. One half would sing part of it, and the other half would sing the other. It says on Neginoth, and, what is that? We're not sure, but it probably means on a stringed instrument. Not only do they have Levitical temple singers, they have Levitical temple players. We have an orchestra at temple square. I mean, they would've had musicians who would've raised their lyres at that point.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 37:52 Maschil comes from a Hebrew word, probably meaning enlightened or wise. This Psalm is like a proverb. You're going to gain wisdom by hearing this or singing this. And then once again, it's a Psalm, quote unquote, of David, either composed by him in the first instance or one that calls into mind the kind of experiences that great Israelite leader had.

Hank Smith: 38:12 So let me make sure our listeners understand. So I'm going up to the temple. I get there. And as the sacrifices are being performed, the incense is being lit, I'm going to be hearing some music?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 38:24 Absolutely.

Hank Smith: 38:25 I don't think that's something that everyone puts together. That's...

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 38:28 One of my go-tos is from the new international commentary in the Old Testament series. It's the volume on the Book of Psalms by DeClaisse-Wallford, Jacobson, and Tanner. Anyway, there's a part where they described ancient temple worship as a multisensory experience. There's a line in Chronicles where I think Hezekiah is setting the temple in order. And these commentators said, you have to imagine you're seeing the sacrifices and the ritual gestures of the priest. You're hearing the singing, you're smelling the roasting meat and the incense. It's a full sensory worshipful experience. I don't know if any of your listeners are familiar with the Chichester's Psalms by

Bernstein. It was an attempt to kind of recreate these Psalms for modern audience. So they're actually done in Hebrew, with timpani, harp, and one other instrument, very spare accompaniment, and Bernstein tried to set it with kind of Middle Eastern feel.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 39:25 So we were on choir tour some years ago. While we were in New York, we have sacrament meeting usually as a choir and orchestra in the hotel we're staying at. But right afterwards, my buddy, Andy Ensworth and I sneaked out because there was an Episcopal church nearby where we were staying that's called Smokey Barts, Saint Bartholomew's, but it's a high church.
- Hank Smith: 39:43 Smokey Barts?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 39:43 Smokey because they have all the incense. Right. And as chance had it, we went in and they had the Chichester Psalms as part of that morning service. So there we were, there's this Episcopalian priest in robes, right. Burning incense. And then we have these drums and this harp and people singing in Hebrew. I thought, I'm in Solomon's temple. That's exactly where I am. And, I know our temples aren't like that exactly. But, we see sacred gestures, we hear sacred words, and we may not necessarily smell and taste things, but the imagery is there.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 40:18 I think of Adam and Eve tasting the fruit. And I think of the bitterness of the fall, and then the sweetness of redemption. So I'm not actually tasting something, but those images are there. For me, the temple is as much as an experience as it is something that I do. And once again, the Psalms that kind of keyed me into that, as I learned more about how they were used anciently.
- Hank Smith: 40:41 That was absolutely interesting.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 40:43 Okay. So let's go back to Psalm 55, this emotional rollercoaster David or a fellow like David is praying to God when he feels like he needs help. I'm just going to read around. I'll tell you the verses I'm in. Verse one and the first half of two. Give ear to my prayer, oh God, and hide not thy self for my supplication. Attend unto me and hear me. This reminds me of Joseph Smith, where is the pavilion that covers thy hiding place.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 41:04 So this is a time when the worshiper, David, the Psalmist, is feeling like God's not listening. Jump down to six. Oh that I had wings like a dove. Then I would fly away and be at rest. Because the intervening verses, three, four, five. He's upset. He's being

oppressed. He's pained. Fearfulness has overwhelmed him. And then verse 11, I mark this in dark gray, because this is not a happy verse for me. Wickedness is in the midst there of a deceit and guile, they don't depart the streets, but finally he turns the corner, just like the psalm of Nephi turns the corner, right, in second Nephi four. Verse 16. As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. And verse 17 is one of these Lectio I talk about, one of my personal mantras I use sometimes. Evening and morn at noon, will I pray and cry aloud. And he shall hear my voice.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 41:57 Remember the ancient Israelite day and the modern Jewish day begins at sunset the previous day, right? So evening is the first prayer. And then you awake in the morning and you pray. And then you pray in the afternoon. Just a side note about this in terms of personal practice, how I try to practice our religion. I think most of us do our morning and evening prayers. They may not always be good. We're rushed in the morning. We're all in bed, getting on our knees, praying, run, and maybe we wait too long in the evening and we're kneeling by our bed. We're about to pass out. We're so exhausted. But the prayer, I think a lot of us misses the midday one. And maybe you can wrap it into blessing your food, your lunch, but some years ago I decided that I'd find a time at one or two or three in the afternoon. I'd close my office door and I'd close all my books. And I'd find some time for midday prayer.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 42:46 If you're praying for help for the day in the morning, and you're reviewing your day with the Lord and thanking Him for the blessings of the evening, why not in the middle of it? When you're in the middle of the challenges that need the help. And you're in the middle of the joys and you've got the gratitude. This Psalm says that we can turn from feeling abandoned and overwhelmed by our enemies. We can call upon God and He'll save us. Why? Because we're going to call upon Him evening, morning, and noon. All times of the day. He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me. And then 22, this should sound familiar, it's worked into one of our hymns. Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain me. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.
- Hank Smith: 43:30 Wow, you're right Eric. This is stuff you feel. The power is in, not just reading, it's in, oh wow, trying to get into the emotion of the writer. Evening, morning, and at noon.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 43:44 Let's just do one that's just a hymn. Not necessarily because of something God's done for us, but just because He's God. Let's turn to Psalm 62, I've labeled this as hymn of praise or a

declaration of testimony. Again, it's written to the chief musician. So regardless of its origin, it was later incorporated into Israelite liturgy at the temple. To Jeduthun. And I had forgotten who that was. I had to look that up. He, with another fellow called Heman, and that's not He-Man the cartoon figure. Jeduthun and Heman were responsible for the soundings of the trumpets and the cymbals. So we mentioned that some of these, you take up the lyre, you strum it, and you sing, but there were some Psalms, and this is what Bernstein's Chichester Psalm does. Sometimes they start banging the cymbals and they blow off the trumpets. Okay. So this is a song of praise and they're going to go for it.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:34 Once again, I'll jump around some, but this is 62. Let's do verses one and two. Truly my soul waved upon God. From Him, cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense. Then let's do five through seven. My soul weighed upon God. What my soul weighed that only upon God for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense and I shall not be moved.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 45:03 In God is my salvation and my glory, the rock of my strength and my refuge is in God. To Jeduthun. At that point, Jeduthun and Heman probably got their cymbals and their trumpets and started blowing them. Our God is a mighty God. Look how it ends, verses 11 and 12, "God has spoken once, twice. I've heard this, that power belongeth to God. Also unto thee, oh Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work." We could use a little bit more of this in our services, I think. We could use a little bit more unvarnished praise, you think so?

Hank Smith: 45:34 Oh man, I almost want you to give me an, "Amen." That's almost the idea. Give me an, "Amen."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 45:39 I'm laughing when you say that because a lot of times with students on site here in the holy land, I'll do the archeology and the history and then we read the scripture, and sometimes I'll even pray with them. And I'll look at them afterwards and say, "Can I have an amen?" They all go, "Amen." People think we're a Baptist group. We're a bunch of Latter-day Saints. Our neighbor, Psalm 63. This is a Psalm of complete trust, is how I have labeled it, a Psalm about David when he was in the wilderness. For those who've been in the holy land, I want you to think about down there by Masada and Qumran, Wadi Qelt on the way down to the Jordan valley, nothing, dirt rocks hot, okay? And you have to have that context to understand the imagery of these first few verses.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 46:19 "Oh God, thou art my God. Early will I seek thee. My soul thirsteth for thee." He's in the desert. There's no water. "My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." And he's in exile. He's running from Saul. "To see thy power and thy glory, so as I've seen thee in the sanctuary." He's away from the tabernacle. He can't worship there because he's on the run. So he's not only missing the water, he's not only missing the food in wilderness. He's missing the house of the Lord. "But because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus I will bless thee while I live. I will lift up my hands in thy name." I'm going to back up to Psalm 42, because this is one of my fast Saturday ... It's Saturday here in the holy land. Or fast Sunday Psalms, just a memory from back in '96, '97. When I was a young bishop and I was with my priest quorum, like many bishops, just trying to keep the young men occupied, I had one of those bishop drawers of candy. If they'd answer questions, listen to the teacher, you'd throw candy at them. Of course couldn't do that on fast Sunday, right? And so they would always moan and groan. And I'd say, "Listen, let's talk about what fasting is. This isn't just ritual starvation. There's a reason for it.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 47:32 If you can just go back to Psalm 42 for a moment, it says, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks," this is H-A-R-T, right? It's not the heart in your body. This is a deer. "As the deer panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, oh God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" And what I try to do, I tried to teach those boys all those years ago, and I still have to remind myself, is my spirit is as hungry and thirsty for God and the Holy Spirit as my body is for food and water, that Fast Sunday. And back to Psalm 63, this image of David in the wilderness and wanting the water and wanting to be in the presence of God, can we apply these to our lives now? Absolutely, absolutely.
- Hank Smith: 48:23 Eric, you're right. When I go out there with groups, it is so hot and so dry. And this idea of, I thirst, kind of like Enos, my soul hungered. My soul is thirsting for something. Psalm 63, by the way, Eric, is mentioned specifically in the Come Follow Me manual. The heading says, "The Lord will help me in my time of urgent need." Several Psalms describe, in vivid language, what it's like to feel distant from God and to desperately need his help. And then it says to look to Psalm 63 for what that might feel like.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 49:05 While we're kind of feeling the wave of the spirit here, let's do another worship Psalm. This is 66. Once again, to the chief

musicians, whenever you see to the chief musician, think temple courts, or think sacrament meeting, or think 22,000 people singing in general conference. You have to think of music as worship in a corporate setting. "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands. Sing forth the honor of his name. Make his praise glorious. Say unto God how terrible art thou in thy works." And of course you have to do a little unpacking for a modern audience. When it says that God is terrible, it's the idea of he's filling you with the fear of the Lord in the sense of you're awestruck by him. When you say our God is an awesome God, it's a God that fills us with awe.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 49:53

Now, if you're not right with God, it will feel like terror. It will be fear. But if you're right with him, it'll be, wow. "Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves. All the earth shall worship thee and shall sing unto thee. They shall sing to thy name." Then we have a word people aren't sure what it means, Selah. It might have been like repeat al coda, maybe sing that again up to that point. It may be lift up your instruments. "Come and see the works of God. He is terrible," or awesome, "in his doing towards the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land." They're thinking the red sea. We can think the Jordan river. We can think any number of things. They went through the flood on foot. They rejoiced in him. He ruled by his power forever and his eyes behold the nations, verse eight. "Oh, bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of this praise to be heard."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 50:47

And then verse 13, "I will go into thy house with burnt offerings." Or we would say we would go and perform temple ordinances. Or we would go in and share the sacrament. "I will pay thee my vows." In the final two verses, 19 and 20, "But barely God hath heard me. He hath attended the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God who have not turned away my prayer nor his mercy from me." Now, I mentioned that this is corporate worship, but when I've had a day and I don't feel like praying, what did Brigham Young say keep praying until you feel like praying. But this is the kind of Psalm I'll sometimes read aloud. If I'm not feeling close to the Lord, I'm not feeling worshipful, I'm not feeling it, I read something like this aloud and it gets me in that mode. And then I can kneel down and offer my own prayer, if that makes any sense.

Hank Smith: 51:36

Yeah, and it seems to me, Eric, like reading the hymn book versus singing the hymn book. There's just so much power in uniting your voice with the saints around you. There's something about the song of the saints, isn't there?

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 51:51 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 51:51 I bet you felt that being in The Tabernacle Choir. Just when all of you are singing these same words together, is there just a wow factor in that corporate song?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 52:02 Sometimes we feel like we're being joined by choirs from the other side of the veil. We have instances of this. I just started Book of Mormon over again yesterday. Opening vision of Father Lehi is the 1 Nephi 1. He sees numerous concourses of angels in the attitude of praising God. And when the myriad of angels were singing at the birth of Jesus Christ, that's on all sides of the veil, past, present, future, here, there, everywhere. And what's the book of Revelation full of? Full of images, beasts as well as angels, and saints in white robes singing.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 52:34 Worship is not just an Earth thing. It's not just an in-time thing. It's a forever and eternity and everywhere thing. And this raises an interesting question, if we can just pause for a moment and kind of reflect on this. Sometimes outsiders hear us talking about worshipping God's, like, what kind of megalomaniac deity do you have? Why does he need to be worshiped? Now, we control that a little because of the fatherhood of God, that we see a personal relationship with him. I didn't praise my dad every time I turned around to talk to him, so there must be something.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 53:07 In my book on worship that I wrote some years ago, the point I made, I tried to come up with a working definition of worship. And I said, a worshipful act, whether it be an ordinance or a prayer or singing or reading the scriptures or preaching, or being in a holy place or celebrating sacred time, worship is an experience with God that transforms the worshiper. If you're not in the presence of God, you don't feel his presence. See, that's why I read the Psalms until I feel the spirit before I pray.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 53:36 If you don't feel that you're in the presence of God or singing to God or performing a ritual, an ordinance in front of God, it's not transforming you. I don't think God wants us to worship him and praise him because he needs his ego stroked. It's because he knows it changes us. It makes us turn away from our own ego and our own strength, so called, even our own weaknesses, our own failings and look to something higher and better that we aspire to. Does that make any sense?
- Hank Smith: 54:06 Yeah, worshipping transforms the worshiper. That's what I wrote in my scriptures here.

- John Bytheway: 54:11 Right. I think that's true of prayer as well. We change during a prayer. I can think of, when Alma prays for the Zoramites, how he starts out with, "How can I behold this gross wickedness?" And by the end, he's saying, "Behold, oh Lord, their souls are precious. And many of them are our brethren." And then he seems to soften in the act of prayer, changes him.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 54:33 Well, that's what I was mentioning about some of these complaint Psalms that are followed by a Psalm of trust. Get the complaints out, you get the winding out. I think even in the Bible dictionary, doesn't it say that prayer is not trying to change the mind of God, it's trying to bring the mind of the prayer into harmony with God's. I think some of these Psalms, including the cursing Psalms and the complaint Psalms, they provide a template. If you can't be honest with God, who knows everything about you, who can you be honest with?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 55:01 Of all the people to put on a show for, God is not it. And yet we do. And I think what the Psalms are showing us is be honest with God. Say, "God, I'm upset. God, I'm hurt. God, I want him to fail. God, I want her to love me." And get out of your system and work through it. And the spirit will lead you along, and then you'll suddenly change. And if Brigham Young said, "Keep praying until you feel like praying," I say, "Keep praying until you get the garbage out." Get all the hard and negative and wrong feelings out that God already knows you have. Just admit it.
- Hank Smith: 55:35 Just talk to him about it.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 55:37 Just talk to God. And back to the fatherhood image of God, my dad died in 2004, and the last 10 years of his life were good. We had a good relationship. Kind of distant growing up, no fault of either one of ours. He grew up on a ranch in a different generation. He just, he wasn't me. I was open and gregarious, and he was quiet and reserved. If I could redo anything my years with my earthly dad, I wouldn't have waited for him to talk to me. I would've stopped feeling upset that dad didn't open up to me or dad didn't ask about me. I would've just talked to him anyway. He's gone now, and I'd do anything to talk to him. I would've asked him about work. I never did that as a kid. "Dad, how was work? Dad, what do you do at work? I don't even know."
- Hank Smith: 56:24 Yeah, what do you do?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 56:25 Our prayer should be that way too. If he's our father, we should really talk to him. And I think the Psalms are giving us the

template for that. We can talk to him about the good, bad and the ugly.

Hank Smith: 56:37 Yeah, if you're going to complain, complain. He's God. He knows it. He knows your heart anyway. It's okay. I love that, Eric. It's okay to just be honest. If you hate something, tell him.

John Bytheway: 56:55 Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:02 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:07 So, I had taken a few notes this afternoon. There are three psalms I had planned to talk about, but we've gotten a little long-winded here. I'm just going to describe them rather than read from them.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:14 Psalm 68, I have written, is a praise of a warrior God of Israel. And it really interested me at one point, because this is one of the oldest pieces of poetry in the Bible, some scholars think. But what it is, it's looking at Yahweh or Jehovah. And you've got to imagine the earliest Israelites, they're escaping from Egypt, and it's the soldiers of Pharaoh, then it's the Amalekites, and then it's the Jebusites, and their God led them to battle.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:38 So anyway, it's kind of a fun one. It's a Psalm of David, again, written to the Chief Musician. It was incorporated in their liturgy, but describes this mighty God who defeats His enemies, He descended on Sinai, He battled for his people. But if there's a verse I'm going to read from this, this is Psalm 68 again, this mighty warrior God, there's some stuff about widows and things in here. He's a tender, loving God. Verse five, a father to the fatherless, a judge of widows. God is in His holy habitations. God setteth the solitary in families.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:09 Wow. So many of our sisters and brothers in the church who aren't in the kind of families they want or in the relationships they want or are single. Isn't that interesting? He setteth the solitary in families, the family of God. He bringeth out those which are bound with chains, but the rebellious dwell on the dry land. It's kind of like my thing about not diluting the doctrine or revising our standards. The rebellious are going to be in that dry land. He's got the water, He's got the help, but if we don't come to Him, it won't be there.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:40 Psalm 72 is another one I had made a note on. This was the only one of the royal or possibly messianic psalms that I found a clear example of in our reading for this week. As I said, there

were quite a few that Brother Hopkin was reading. This is called a Psalm for Solomon. And so, it is describing Solomon when he became king. Now Solomon, of course, was the son of David, but Jesus is the ultimate son of David, so we can probably see here allusions to Christ. He's to be a righteous king. And the King's son will deliver the poor and the needy. So, just the first couple verses get-

- Hank Smith: 02:15 What verse is that?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 02:16 This is Psalm 72. So, just starting in verse one, give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness under the king's son. Now, so here, it's God the Father. We're asking God the Father to give the king, in our view, Christ, righteousness so that He can judge righteously as Solomon did.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 02:32 He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment, verse two. Verse four, He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They that fear thee are they who stand in awe of thee as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 02:51 It's crafted or it's put in the setting of Solomon becoming king. And we remember some of those stories about Solomon praying for wisdom and not riches, but he got both. And he did judge wisely, but all of the kings who were supposed to be types, anticipations of Christ fall short, right? So that's why I think this is one where we can see some messianic anticipation.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 03:12 Psalm 78, I never planned to read with you, because it is so long. It is a historical psalm, just for those of you who want to review your Exodus and Numbers. Psalm 78 goes through the entire history of the children of Israel as they're wandering the wilderness.
- Hank Smith: 03:29 Oh, wow.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 03:29 And it focuses on their murmuring and their rebelliousness. I mentioned that I sometimes color-code my scriptures, and all the bad things are always in dark gray or black. So it's kind of an object lesson of the disobedience of Israel at pivotal points in their history. This is not one I turn to when I need an uplift. It's not one I turn to at night as I'm trying to say my evening prayers. But you have to read the whole corpus; all 150 psalms are in there for a reason.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 03:58 If I were to try to find an application for this, I think of Alma the Younger. Is it in Alma five, where he's talking to people in Zarahemla? And he keeps saying, "Look at your fathers. Remember the captivity of your fathers, God delivered them." And there's something for that. Even within our lives, it doesn't need to be our own fathers and grandfathers we need to remember. The prototypes, if you will, or object lessons of rebelliousness can be ourselves in our own lives. Look back at periods in our lives when we weren't as faithful. How will that encourage us to be better now?
- Hank Smith: 04:27 There's a lot of, they were not faithful. They were not there when they were stubborn. They were rebellious. They turned away from God. They believed not. They trusted not. It's good to remember that it didn't turn out well for them, for that original generation.
- John Bytheway: 04:45 What a wonderful idea; to put your journal to music and to take those lessons from history, put them to music where you won't forget them. Kids, we seem to be forgetting some stuff here. We're going to sing Psalm 78. And you can remind that kind of, let's try not to make those same mistakes again, type of thing.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:03 Yeah. I often wondered about that line: The Lord, when we repent, He forgives us and He forgets. And we don't forget. We need to forgive ourselves, but we don't always forget. That's because we need to learn from the mistakes we've made and have that memory, not always a happy one, serve as an encouragement not to turn back to that kind of behavior.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:23 I have a few final psalms I wanted to share with you that are, once again, a temple psalm, a pilgrimage psalm, and then a couple psalms of praise, some of which have been set to music, and they remind me of singing with my 360 closest friends back in Salt Lake.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:39 Psalm 84. I was surprised, to be honest, that this wasn't listed as one of the possibilities in the Come Follow Me manual. They did 77 to 78, and then jumped to 85 and 86. Please, don't forget Psalm 84, anybody. This is a temple or pilgrimage song where the singer praises the house of the Lord. And I just want to share a few verses from this.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:59 The words are going to sound familiar, and some of you will know a slightly different version. That's because this is in Brahms's famous German Requiem, where it's not, How Amiable Are Thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts? It's, How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place, O Lord of Hosts? Any singers out there, if

you love that movement from Brahms, it's from this psalm. But we'll go ahead and read it as it is in our King James Version.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 06:21 How amiable or lovable are thy tabernacles, thy dwelling places, O Lord of Hosts? My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh cry out for the living of God. And then it talks about how a sparrow finds a nest in the altar. Blessed are they, then moving to verse four, are they that dwell in thy house. They will be ever praising thee, is how Brahms does it. They will still be praising thee. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee and whose heart are thy ways.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 06:51 There's another verse in here. I remember years ago, when I was first getting interested in antiquity, I was not succeeding as a chemistry pre-med major, and so I was thinking about changing to ancient studies. I took a Pearl of Great Price from Hugh Nibley, and someone asked, and they said, "Brother Nibley, why were you never a stake president or a general authority?" And he said, "I'd rather be a doorkeeper of the house of the Lord than foremost of the tents of the wicked." I thought, what are you saying? All the years later did I realize he was quoting Psalm 84.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 07:19 I've mentioned how much I used to love being an ordinance worker in the Provo Temple. And people say, "What's your favorite thing to do in the temple?" I can't even tell you which one. I love all of them. But believe it or not, one of my favorite posts was Recommend Desk. And brothers don't do that much now because sisters get to do that a lot. I loved welcoming people to the temple. I loved smiling. I used to get after the old brethren I'd work with, say, "Stop looking so grumpy. Stop taking that recommend and looking at it like there's something wrong." You shouldn't be daunting figures at the doorway of the house of God. It should be, "Welcome to the temple! We're glad you're here!" Right?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 07:53 So anyway, this was my go-to verse. Every time I went up to my shift at the Recommend Desk, verse 10, a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Because doorkeeper sounds like a pretty minor duty. I remember one of my first times working in the temple, they put me up at laundry. I'm like, what? Folding socks? Anything in the house of the Lord can be a joy if you allow yourself to feel the spirit to it.
- Hank Smith: 08:21 Eric, as you've been talking about missing the temple because you're there in Jerusalem, and correct me if I'm wrong, where's the nearest temple to you?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:31 Well, it will be Dubai.

Hank Smith: 08:32 It will be Dubai.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:32 But right now, it's Kyiv, and that's not an option, so it's Rome.

Hank Smith: 08:38 And so, here in Provo, you know how many temples we have right around us. And I felt that. And I felt the idea of, I want to hear the music of the organ again in the temple. I think COVID maybe took a lot of us out of our routine of going to the temple, because you got to make an appointment, and so often there's no appointments to pick up.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:59 See, and I was so spoiled because I was under 60 and I was vaccinated. I got called back to work in the temple months before most people were.

Hank Smith: 09:06 Oh, wow.

John Bytheway: 09:06 Oh, wow.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 09:06 So I had a pass every week, yeah.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 09:09 Some of the most beautiful experiences I've had is when I officiated an endowment for five people: a missionary, his mom and dad, his sister and her husband. Five people, just them. A COVID blessing.

John Bytheway: 09:25 Yeah. The one by oneness of the gospel. When we took our daughter, Natalie, to get her endowment before she went to her mission in Tucson and Tahiti, I think it was President Burton at the temple, he looked at us and said, "We opened the temple for one person today. The lights, the AC, everything for your daughter today." That was a beautiful moment for all of us, to get that sense of, the Lord cares for us one at a time.

Hank Smith: 09:57 To those listening who are thinking, you're kind of like me, like, "Yeah, I have gotten out of the routine of getting into the temple." This is October 2021, General Conference, President Nelson: "If you don't yet love to attend the temple", he says, "go more often, not less. Let the Lord, through his spirit, teach and inspire you there. I promise you," here we have a prophet of God, "I promise you that over time, the temple will become a place of safety, solace, and revelation."

Hank Smith: 10:33 He said, "To each of you who has made temple covenants, I plead with you to seek prayerfully and consistently to

understand temple covenants and ordinances. Spiritual doors will open. You will learn how to part the veil between heaven and earth, how to ask for God's angels to attend you, and how to better receive direction from heaven. Your diligent efforts to do so will reinforce and strengthen your spiritual foundation." Wow. What promises.

- Hank Smith: 11:07 And the psalms, Eric, the way you described the psalms happening at the temple, here they are. All of a sudden, it made me thirst for the temple again, like you do there in the Holy Land.
- John Bytheway: 11:20 My dad also passed away in 2004, and I'm using his Old Testament today, and it's so fun to see what he marked. He marked a lot of stuff, but every once in a while, he put a star. He has a star next to: I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tent of wickedness.
- John Bytheway: 11:38 And then that next verse, he colored all in: The Lord God is a son and shield. The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing, this is all colored in, will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. It's fun to benefit, kind of get an insight into my dad when I see what he marked.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 11:53 If we can do a little digression here for a moment. I told a story one year, it was right after my mom died. My mom and I were really close, and I suffered, oh, I suffered. Six months later, my wife finally said, "Go see someone. You're not handling this very well."
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:09 I remember one morning, I was just so sad. I got up and I pulled out my Book of Mormon, I pulled out commentary and pulled out my colored pencils, and I just didn't do it. I couldn't do it. And I looked in my study, and in my study, I had this, it was kind of gaudy, this bright yellow chair, overstuffed chair of my grandmother's, that used to be in her study. So I went and I sat in Nana's chair. And then I looked, and they were in my mother's scriptures.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:35 When she was so sick at the end, she went down to 98 pounds. I used to carry mom in my arms into dialysis three mornings a week, and I'd carry her in and they'd set her up on dialysis. And she had these green, oversized scriptures. They were actually Nana's, they were my grandmother's first. Mom would read what she could, so sick.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 12:55 So I was sitting in Nana's chair, and I look over and see mom's scriptures, and I take them out,

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 13:03 and I opened them. It was just like what you were saying, John. I saw some passages that she had marked, and suddenly I felt like Nana was hugging me and Mama was reaching out to me. I kid you not, I heard Mama's voice. She said, "Son, I love you too. You're going to be all right." That was the turning point after six months of-

Hank Smith: 13:24 Wow.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 13:24 ... really serious depression. It was because of that visual cue and the feeling of my grandmother's chair, and the view of my mother's Scriptures, because I could imagine what she was thinking when she was reading them and the few things she was strong enough to mark.

Hank Smith: 13:39 Eric, that's absolutely beautiful, really.

John Bytheway: 13:41 That is. Amen to that. I've had so much fun looking at my dad's Scriptures and seeing his notes in the margins. When I was first called to be a bishop, I went to the cemetery just to sit by my dad. I'm finding so much in here that he seems to be saying to me by what he marked and Post-Its in the front covers with lists of different verses. My dad was a convert and just devoured the Scriptures and loved them.

John Bytheway: 14:26 Your story means a lot to me because I will take pictures of verses now and text them to my siblings to say, "Look what Dad marked, and look what he said about this." That has been a totally unexpected dimension to Scriptures, to take my dad's Scriptures and look at them. I'm glad you said that, Eric.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 14:45 I'm grateful to you. You've just helped me understand a line of my patriarchal blessing. I have a line in my patriarchal blessing which said I should be grateful for the inheritance which is mine in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I've always interpreted that, the blessings I get if I keep my covenants, and you've just given me a key that lets me see another interpretation.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 15:05 My inheritance in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the faithfulness of my mother and my dad's faithfulness and my grandmother's love. It's generations. For our listeners who don't have family in the church or ancestors in the church, guess what? Abraham and Sarah are your grandparents, and the prophets and the

figures in the Scriptures can be your sisters and your brothers and your parents.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 15:31 You've helped me, John, understand a line that's meant something to me, but I've never seen it this way before. We can literally inherit the faith and the excitement and the love of those who've gone before, whether they're our literal ancestors or they're our scriptural ancestors. Thank you.
- John Bytheway: 15:48 Your hearing your mother's voice there reminds me, because I sent a text to my siblings about, "Look at what Dad said right here," because when I read it, I hear him talking. That's a lot of fun to think, "Hey, he's still involved. I'm still his son. He's still my dad and going to help me get through this life this time." Thank you for that.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:13 The fun tag-teaming, because you just said hear him, your dad, but what has President Nelson said? Hear Him, the Lord.
- John Bytheway: 16:19 Yeah. I'm hearing my other father.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:22 Right. Some people say, "Are you a theologian?" I say, "No, I'm an exegete. I study text." I'm a practitioner. I'm not the one who sits around and theologizes, if that's a verb. I practice the Gospel.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:37 I try to worship, and these are some lines I like to incorporate in my morning worship. This is from Psalms 95 and 96. I'm going to read several verses, but there are three verses that I actually use every morning before my morning prayers. Let me set it up.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:54 O come, let us sing unto the Lord. Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. For the Lord..." Of course, the Lord in small caps is Yahweh, Jehovah. "For Jehovah is a great god, and a great king of all gods. In His hands are the deep places of the earth. The strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land."
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:21 These two verses are the ones that I frequently use in the morning.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:25 "O come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before Jehovah, our maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of his Hand."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:38 Then flipping over to Psalm 96, verse 9. "O worship the Lord, O worship Jehovah, in the beauty of holiness. Fear before Him..." Perhaps better rendered, "Stand in awe of Him, all the earth."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:52 I love that line. It appears a few other times earlier in the collection of the Psalms. "Worship in the beauty of holiness." I'm still learning what that means. Whether it be singing with other people who share my faith, or praying alone or in a group, or standing in holy places, or celebrating sacred time like Holy Week or Easter, all of these things are beautiful, these times that we feel the Spirit and, as I said back to my work in definition of worship, where we're being transformed. That's what the beauty of holiness is. He calls us to be holy. It's His holiness He imputes to us, but as it transforms us, that's beautiful. The final one, and this went slightly beyond what the assignment was for this week, but it wasn't in next week's assignment and I just felt like it'd be a shame not to do this. My wife says, "This Church of Huntsman is so complicated, because before we have Thanksgiving dinner, we've got to read some Scriptures. We've got to sing a song. Then, of course, there's Dad's prayer that never ends." My family hears this one a lot because this is a true thanksgiving psalm, 100. A lot of my choir friends will remember this text because we sing it in various musical settings.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 19:01 "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, unto Jehovah, all ye lands. Serve the Lord, serve Jehovah, with gladness. Come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord He is God." Once again, wow, Jehovah is God. The Word made flesh is God.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 19:17 "It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful unto Him and bless His name. For the Lord, for Jehovah, is good. His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endureth to all generations."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 19:40 If I had my students here, I'd say, "Give me an Amen," and I'd hope I'd get an Amen-

John Bytheway: 19:45 Amen. Hank, I know you love the Book of Jacob, right?

Hank Smith: 19:49 Yes.

John Bytheway: 19:50 In Psalm 95, I was like, "Man, I have heard that phrase before." Look at the end of verse 7. "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart." That is Jacob 6:6.

Hank Smith:	20:02	Oh, wow.
John Bytheway:	20:03	The footnote folks didn't put it in there, but Jacob must have known the Psalms.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	20:10	Or Jacob and this psalmist knew the same source. We don't know.
John Bytheway:	20:13	Yeah, exactly. Right. Then Jacob says, "For why will ye die? But here, harden not your heart as in the day of provocation," going back to an event in the Exodus. Anyway, I just thought, "Whoa, I've heard that phrase before."
Hank Smith:	20:26	That our Book of Mormon authors were familiar with these words.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	20:30	Well, Jacob is the most poetic of the Book of Mormon authors. It talks about how Nephi says, "I haven't taught my children the ways of the Jews," but Nephi and Jacob were taught by Lehi. Jacob is as poetic as they come.
Hank Smith:	20:44	Eric, as you were reading some of these Psalms, it helped me better understand Nephi's world and why he would even break into a psalm like he does, because this is part of his world.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	20:53	It also helps understand the Isaiah passages better. When you get a big stretch like 12-24 in 2 Nephi, we always have a hard time dragging Sam through those. When you remember that they are also poetic... Sometimes we're striving so hard to understand what's that representing and what's that prophesying about, and we don't just take it for the beauty it is, and that maybe, for Nephi, part of it was just the beauty of Isaiah.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	21:18	See, we're not used to that. Sometimes I think we overdo "we're here to learn and grow, and we're going to learn something from this." I often will tell students, "Inspiration is not just what the Scriptures say; it's how they say it."
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	21:31	Hugh Nibley used to always say, "I learn something new at the temple every time I go." I thought, "My gosh, I go all the time, and I'm not learning something every time I go." Then I started to be generous with myself, and I said, "But I feel something every time."
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	21:41	I got out of this mode that I always need to be learning something or getting something out of something in some kind

of tangible or quantifiable way. It's okay to just read the Scriptures and feel the Spirit, even if you don't have a particular message from them. I think sometimes we almost set ourselves up for frustration. We become almost too utilitarian.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 22:01 This is what I'm talking about, being a practitioner of the Gospel. I think sometimes we almost become too utilitarian. "What is it going to do for me? How is this going to better me?" Well, maybe it's just going to transform you because you're going to help you feel God.
- John Bytheway: 22:14 Yeah. Those people were uprooted from the land of their inheritance, and maybe for Nephi, it was, "This reminds me of home. This reminds me of familiar places in my youth and when we grew up and when we heard these words," and it was something to hang onto home with when he repeated Isaiah. I don't know.
- Hank Smith: 22:33 This is awesome. Eric, I want to ask you two questions, because I think our listeners would be interested. This first question, I think people are like, "He's in the choir. What's that like?" Just tell them what it's like a little bit practically, going to practice and getting there for conference.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 22:47 There are the very practical parts. My brother-in-law, once when I was telling him how often I practice, he goes, "You meet that often?" We always have the choir general conference. He thought we got together a few weeks before general conference and we sang conference. Didn't realize it was every Thursday, 7:00 to 9:30, and it was every Sunday morning starting at 7:30, earlier by the time we change, sometimes after broadcast until 12:00, Tuesday nights before conference and concerts and tapings. There's a lot of practice.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 23:14 Dr. Wilberg always says, "It's just like anything else in the Gospel," Mack will say. He says, "We have to do our part. If we prepare ourselves as well as we can, musically and spiritually, then God will make up the difference." That's why the choir sometimes can perform beyond expectation.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 23:33 To have a group that large is not a choral director's dream. Mack will often say, "The collective IQ of a group goes down the bigger it gets," because it's just hard to work with that many people. What you really want is a nice chamber choir, 30 excellent singers, that you can stand next together and feel each other. We perform beyond expectation of what we should, and the orchestra the same thing.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 23:56 Let me just shout out to my friends in the orchestra. The orchestra joined full-time the choir in '99, about the same time as Brother Wilberg came. Brother Barlow was there, as well, at that time. It changed things. It really did. We will do these things periodically with the Utah Symphony. I love performing with them. We always have to stretch a little farther.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 24:16 We had a situation, though, where we did one number Saturday night with the Utah Symphony, and then we did it for the broadcast Sunday morning with our orchestra at Temple Square. Maybe our orchestra wasn't as good technically, but later I watched that broadcast and I watched some of my friends, Meredith Campbell, the first violinist. I said to my wife, "They play with the Spirit. We're urged to sing with the Spirit, and I see my friends in the orchestra playing on the strings or with the trumpets or the flutes, or whatever instruments, and they're doing it with the same joy and spirit and conviction we are."
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 24:52 The technical part is lots of rehearsing, sometimes getting, not yelled at, but rebuked by our conductor. People who come and watch those rehearsals on Thursday night, they're always shocked because Brother Wilberg and Brother Murphy have to work us. As a choral singer, you don't take it personally. You're just trying to get a better product.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 25:10 There is such a joy in singing. When I sing in church, I'm way too loud. I admit it. You've heard me sing in department meetings. I'm way too loud. I don't do that in the choir because you have to blend. There's something about sacrificing your ego and your individuality and being a small cog in a really big machine.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 25:33 My favorite times in the choir is when I don't hear myself, but I hear not just my fellow baritones, but I hear the second tenors and the sopranos over there, and the harmonies. It all comes together.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 25:43 That's why those passages I mentioned, like at the end of 1 Nephi when Lehi sees the numerous concourses of angels, a little bit of what heaven is like. You're not all the same. I think Elder Holland used the image of the choir once and talked about the different voice parts. We're not all the same, we're not singing the same part, but we're still one.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 26:03 See, that's the amazing thing and that's one of the joys I get. Another shout out, Craig Jessup, a former music director of the Tabernacle Choir is a dear friend. Craig would often say the week before conference ... We do Tuesday rehearsal, Thursday

rehearsal and conferences that weekend. He'd say, "Here's your assignment. This is what you need to get ready for conference." He said, "You need to fast one day this week, you need to go to the temple one day. You need to perform an anonymous act of service this week, and you need to right a wrong or heal a relationship." And he would say, "Actually, our greatest preparation's not musical, it's spiritual."

- Hank Smith: 26:36 Wow.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 26:37 I don't want to just trumpet this. We don't want to have an elite group. Soon after I joined the choir, to be honest, I went down to Cedar City where my family's from. We went to Nana's in the Cedar 2nd ward she always wanted me to sing with her choir and we sang Battle Hymn of the Republic. It was July 4th weekend. And I told my wife afterwards, I said, "We didn't sing it anything like Tabernacle Choir sings it." But I felt as much spirit and love with those people who are my parents, friends and neighbors and cousins.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 27:06 So this happens with choirs and orchestras of any size, anywhere, and it doesn't have to be musical either. Think of your best missionary companion, when you work together as a team and you sacrifice your ego and you felt unified. Think of when your marriage is the way it should be, when your family's the way it should be, when a war's the way it should be, when a department should be ... I mean, we're not any better any worse than other departments on campus. We all have different points of views and attitudes. And sometimes it feels like we're going like this ... And I just want to be a choir. That's why sometimes I don't do very well department saying because I want to be in a choir, not in department. I want to be somewhere where we just harmonize and are unified automatically. But, academia is not that for a reason. We are trying to explore different points of views and way different ideas and do critical judgment. I think choir is my life preserver in an academic life. Let's put it that way.
- Hank Smith: 28:01 That's beautiful.
- John Bytheway: 28:02 One of my favorite quotations for marriages, but it just applies, is harmony is being different together.
- Hank Smith: 28:11 That's the ideas that all of us can unite.
- John Bytheway: 28:14 Dissonance is something else, but harmony is being different together.

Hank Smith:	28:19	And man, when you're sitting there listening to that choir, even just at home during general conference, it moves you.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	28:26	I have several Tabernacle Choir playlists. I always have music and not just choir music, I have all kinds of music playing here in my office. I've not been very successful at watching the broadcast on YouTube. I've watched a few and it just ... separation anxiety. There's something about seeing that performance and seeing my friends in that loft ...
John Bytheway:	28:48	Oh, man.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	28:49	But you know, there's a lot to that. We feel that way when we're homesick and that's the way we feel about our heavenly home. We just don't know it because of the veil of forgetfulness. I read those Psalms, 42 and 63 about yearning for God. We're yearning for our heavenly home as much as I'm yearning to be singing with my 360 best friends. To have that unity, that joy, to be with people you love. Missing our family at home, our daughter and son-in-law. We are just counting the days till they get here for Christmas, they're going to come over for Christmas.
John Bytheway:	29:17	Oh, wow.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	29:18	But that's life. And I think we have these little experiences in life which teach us about our souls. And what we don't know in a conscious level our spirits are feeling, missing our heavenly parents, missing those who've gone before, those who haven't come yet.
Hank Smith:	29:33	There is something inside each of us.
John Bytheway:	29:35	Yeah. A longing for home. I grew up because my mom was in the choir, listening to LPs, or records. Somebody might know what that means.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	29:45	Long play as opposed to-
John Bytheway:	29:47	Yeah, right. All my life every Sunday morning was the choir and more. And so on my mission, some missionaries were just discovering the choir. For me, it just made me homesick.
Dr. Eric Huntsman:	29:59	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	30:00	You can hear your mom almost, isn't it?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 30:03 Yeah. Well, I've been on every CD since Consider the Lillies. So I've been singing since 2003. I hardly listen to any of them, but I am not on there somewhere. But anyway ...

John Bytheway: 30:16 I'll relabel mine Eric Huntsman and the choir. I'll label those.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 30:20 That's exactly what Brother Wilberg doesn't want it to be like. No voice sticks out. I've had once or twice where I was called out by Mac or Ryan. So I try to harmonize and and be in it, but sometimes I get excited. Shortly after I was called as Bishop, and this was years before I was in the choir, this sweet lady came up to me afterwards. She said, "Bishop, you sing too loud." And I was just broken. So the next two or three weeks I hardly sang, I just mumbled. And Elaine came up to me and she said, "Eric, you look so miserable. That's how you worship, just sing." So when I'm in a choir I blend as best I can. But when I sing in church preparation meeting, department meetings, I'm just going to let it rip. It's how it excites me, you heard me with the songs, it's worship. It's my way of being close to God.

Hank Smith: 31:12 I love that, Eric. And we should do that more in this church. Sing. Sing the way you want to sing. Don't worry about what people are thinking today. Go ahead. I love that. I think that's a great takeaway from the book of Psalms. Sing, worship the Lord. I love walking into a chapel that's ... The Song of the Saints, let's hear it. Eric, this has been just a fantastic day going through the book of Psalms with you. I've really just enjoyed feeling these scriptures more than anything else. I think our listeners would be interested in your journey, both as a Bible scholar, a father, and a Latter-day Saint. That's a lot of intertwining pieces and parts. What's that journey been like for you?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 31:57 Started out, I was raised to be a doctor, a lawyer. Those were pretty much ... My dad grew up on a ranch, first person in his family ever in all generations to go to college. He just had these dreams for me. And calculus and I just did not agree. So I did two semesters chemistry, 111, 112 and it was just all I could do to pull out Bs. But that's like, "Oh, B's not bad." I was studying 12 hours per class to get a B. And it was just clear it wasn't going to get better. So I came back my sophomore year for a semester and I knew I wasn't majoring in chemistry. I was trying to make the mission decision. And so I just signed up for American heritage, biology and physical science. I thought, "Well, I don't know what I'm going to study. I'm just going to do all my GEs." The most boring semester imaginable.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 32:42 So I looked in the honors catalog and I mentioned I took Pearl of Great Price from Hugh Nibley who was emeritus faculty,

because it was a big name that sounded interesting. Wilford Griggs, I don't know if you knew Wilfred. He was in ancient scripture for a long time. He had been my honors history of civ teacher my freshman year, and the honors catalog had a seven credit class. It was five credits of honors accelerated Greek, two credits of New Testament. Now here's the dirty secret. I did not like BYU religion classes, I thought they were kind of cheesy. And I thought, "Well, this will get rid of a religion class." I liked Dr. Griggs and wow, who knows Greek. And so I went ahead and did that-

- Hank Smith: 33:17 Seven credit class on Greek-
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 33:19 Five credits of honors Greek, two credit New Testament.
- Hank Smith: 33:23 Oh, my word.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 33:25 We learned enough Greek to work through the gospel of John. In retrospect, not well, John's what I specialize in now, but we could kind of translate it. And we had an oral final at the end. So he had us translate chapters 19 through 21 of John on our own, come to the final. And he would just ask, "Sarah, translate chapter 19, verses 20 through 28." And you'd read aloud in Greek and translate it. He could tell by your translation whether you knew the forms and functions of the verbs and were parsing correctly. He might ask some grammatical questions. And I had done well with class, I'll admit it. But he never called on me, didn't call me, didn't call me. Everyone had gone and we had like an hour left in the three hour session. So he says, "Well, Eric," he said, "Why don't you translate John 21?" I said, "What verses?" He said, "John 21." So I translated that entire chapter and when we were done and I thought, "Wow, okay."
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 34:16 And he said, "Why don't you come with me to my office?" And we walked to the old JSB and he said, "I don't usually try to convince people to go into academia because becoming an academic's like taking a vow of poverty, and I know you want to be professional." He said, "I remember you from the history of civ class, you're a good writer. You're a good researcher. You did well at Greek. I think you have what it takes." By this time I had decided to go on a mission. From the time I talked to my Bishop til the time I had my call was two weeks. That's how fast.
- John Bytheway: 34:46 Wow.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 34:47 I was walking home one day. My Bishop had an office on campus. I stopped in, all my friends were gone. I'd heard about

people putting their papers, I had no idea what that meant. I sat down with him and said, "What's up with these papers?" He pulled out a set and I didn't even know what he was doing. We filled them out together. He just asked me, "Where were you born? What's your birthday?" We filled out the papers. He said, "I have a friend who's a doctor and I have another friend who's a dentist." This was Monday. He said, "I can get you in on Thursday and Friday." He said, "Member of the stake presidency works at the church office building, so go see your stake president on Sunday. His council will carry them up on Monday." I had my call the next Thursday. My parents didn't even know I was thinking about a mission. So I called my folks. My dad gets on the line and I said, "Get mom on the line."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 35:30

I said, "You're hereby called to serve a mission" My mother begins to ball, because of course, that was her dream for me to go on a mission and I'd been rebellious. So all I was thinking about was going to Thailand at that point. And so Dr. Griggs said ... Wilford said, "Just see me when you come home." So I came home and double majored in Greek and Latin. Loved it. Loved the ancient world. Loved mythology, loved Roman history, loved everything. Forgot about John, believe it or not. And so I went to the University of Pennsylvania, got my PhD. Master's in classics, PhD in ancient history. And I came back and taught classics initially. So from 1994 or 2003, I was in the college of humanities. I wasn't in religion. And I loved it, but there was something still calling me. Tom Wayman and Richard Holtz asked me to write a chapter in a book they were doing on the Savior's final 24 hours.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 36:18

And I wrote this chapter on the Roman trial of Jesus. I read all 1,608 pages of Raymond Brown's Death of Messiah, and I read all this stuff. The night before it was due, I had a writer's block. I thought, "What am I going to do?" I just started flipping through the Book of Mormon to give myself a break. And I kept finding all these passages of Nephi and Jacob. They curse him and they spit upon him and they scourge him. I realize I could combine the gospel with Roman history and Greek language and scholarship. So I went and talked to Andy Skinner and applied for job in ancient scriptures, so in 2003 I changed. Never taught seminary, never taught institute, had no idea how to be a religion professor. I was ready for New Testament. But Dan Judd was the department chair at the time, he gave me two sections of 211 and three of 121.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 37:06

He said, "Everyone cuts their teeth on Book of Mormon in this department." I had no idea how to teach the Book of Mormon. I mean, I had studied all this stuff on biblical exegesis, then I did

this ho-hum Book of Mormon class. I was putting my syllabus together and I could not sleep. And the spirit said, "Why is the Book of Mormon not as important to you as the Bible?" And I thought, "I should be treating the Book of Mormon as seriously as I am the New Testament." And so that's when I started to craft my particular approach to exegesis and exposition. Studying it as a text, but applying it. Bringing the spirit, trying to balance. Sometimes there are these arguments about devotional writing, or academic writing? I'm not an either or kind of guy, I'm a both man. I don't know why you can't do both.

John Bytheway: 37:47

Yeah. Dr. Huntsman, you used a term exegesis. I remember hearing that for the very first time and hearing the name Jesus in it. But it's not, it's with a G. Can you explain what exegesis and eisegesis are?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 38:01

That's one of those million dollar words we Bible studies geeks use. So that's great, let's explain it. Exegesis comes from a Greek word meaning to lead out the meaning of the text. And so it's the kind of systematic analysis of a text. We ask historical, literary and theological questions to try to recreate as best we can what the original meaning of the text would be to its original audience.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 38:24

So it's letting the text speak for itself. Now the opposite of it sometimes is described as eisegesis. In Greek, we would say eisegesis. Exegesis is leading the meaning out, eisegesis is putting the meaning in. Department meanings ... You know me as one on slightly the academic side, it's probably how you know me. But you got to see my heart today, right? I really feel both. And so for me, it's great to be able to bring my love of history and language, not just Greek, Latin and Hebrew ... But English King James, New Revised Standard, I don't care what the language is, because the word of God is in any of those languages.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 39:03

But I mentioned this before, the inspiration is not just in what is said, but how it's said. So all those years being a classicist and teaching literature, that's why I'm drawn to the Psalms. I can appreciate scripture's literature as well as scripture, if that makes any sense. So in my teaching, I just try to do both. And I drag the students to the more academic part, I think, by sheer force of personality. Because I'm excited about it and this is neat and, "Look at it." But I've also found if the students have confidence that they know I'm a believer and they know I have faith and that they feel the Spirit, even when I'm talking about exegesis, they'll give that part of it a chance. My feeling is why not do everything with the scriptures you can, everything you

can. I know you need to make choices in a given class and the time you have.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 39:48 But let me move from that question to the other question you want me to address. So here I am a quote-unquote, "scholar" of the scriptures, professor, teaching. I have this daughter who's just brilliant. My daughter, Rachel, was an ancient near eastern studies major. She focused on New Testament Greek minored in Hebrew. She was just a little me. From the earliest age.
- Hank Smith: 40:10 Just like her dad.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 40:11 And then six years later, we have a son cute, smiled, wonderful, didn't talk a lot. But then when he was three and a half, he stopped talking, stopped smiling, wouldn't let us hold him, and he was diagnosed with autism. And it completely changed our world. Because guess what? I'm not going to do exegesis with Sam. We couldn't even do our Christmas traditions the way we love to do them because the sounds. Just our whole world changed. There's so many blessings I've had because of Sam. One is it's brought me back to the basics because I teach Sam the basics.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 40:48 But we kept up with seminary. He couldn't do released-time seminary. So I did home study with him and we did The Book of Mormon pretty much on schedule. And we got through the Doctrine & Covenants pretty much on schedule. It took us three years to do the Old Testament. And by this point, I didn't care. Wasn't worried about seminary graduation. And we finished the Old Testament during COVID. And now we're doing the New Testament three or four days a week, half a chapter of The Gospels a week, a day, lesson, whenever we meet.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 41:20 But guess what? I'm doing it with him in the Holy Land and where I'm taking him to the places where those things happened. But Sam gave me A, the gift of teaching the gospel and the scriptures simply. Simply. And boy, that little guy, he's a big guy now, he's 6' 3", my gentle giant, he is a sweet spirit. I ordained him an Elder the week before we came here. And his first blessing is, well he gave me a blessing two days before we came here. Blesses the sacrament every week here at the Jerusalem Center. He's a service volunteer. He does the linen exchanges and he helps the humanitarian service projects. Having him here is a blessing because it's keeping me rooted in the simple. So Sam has autism because of a genetic throw of the dice. We didn't do anything. He didn't do anything. It just happened. But he's probably not going to marry and have children. I remember shortly after his diagnosis, I was working

my Thursday temple shift. I was endowment corner at the time so would... We called it loading rooms. We'd get a session started in that room, then we'd have a few minutes we'd go get another company to go into another room. And in between I just was crying and I said, "Heavenly Father..." I said, "All these righteous desires I had for my son to serve a mission, full-time proselytizing mission and marry in the temple, be a father. They're not going to happen. Why is this happening to my son?" And kicker, I said, "He's my only son."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 42:48

Now this was the Thursday before Easter. The next day was Good Friday. And an audible voice came to me, John and Hank, said, "What about my only son?" I learned something as I reflected on that. I later wrote about this in one of my books. I said we spend so much time saying we want to be more like Jesus. But then when the Lord allows us to have the hardships and the challenges... Notice I didn't say he gave them to us. Some he may give, but sometimes he just allows them. There is this woman I used to love on the Evangelize the World Network. It's the Catholic network. Her name was Mother Angelica. And she would describe God's determining will in God's permissive will. Sometimes he just permits things to happen. He permitted Sam to have autism. We pray that we will be more like Jesus, but then when the hardships and the sorrows come, we're like, "No, not me, Lord, take it back."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 43:36

So Sam taught me a lot about accepting the will of the Lord. And it also broke my heart open for people whose lives would not be typical. He wasn't going to have a typical life. He might not have typical relationships. But I knew how much God loved him. And I knew how much I loved him. I had an experience in the choir. We were singing a tour in California. I talk about this in my devotional. And the day of a concert, in the afternoon rehearsal we'll have what's called a soundcheck at the venue. And we'll often bring local groups in to sing with us for the soundcheck. It's their chance to sing with members of the Tabernacle Choir.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:15

We were in San Francisco and we had the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus come for our soundcheck. And to their credit, my friends in the choir were warm and loving, "Sit by us. We're so glad to have you." No judgment. Treating them well. And I have a very good friend, and I've told his story, he's given me permission to tell his story. I saw him when we were eating dinner in between the soundcheck and the performance and he just looked so sad and I went and put my arm around him, I said, "Alex...", I said, "What do you think about today?" He said, "I think it was great that you all were so nice to the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. But here I am a covenant keeping,

homosexual man in the church and I'm still under a rock. How are people treating me?"

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 45:02 What started with my son's autism and then having some different insights, having conversations with people from different racial communities and then seeing the heartache of some of our LGBTQ+ friends, it just made me look at it differently. And I'll actually come back to my precocious daughter. I tell the story in the devotional about reading 1 Corinthians with my daughter. I used to take her to the bus stop in my Jeep and we'd read our scripture in the morning while we waited for the bus to come. And we were reading one of those hard passages in Paul. And my little girl, my princess, my precocious wonderful little me looked at me, 14 years old, she goes, "Daddy, why doesn't Heavenly Father like girls as much as boys?"
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 45:42 Any way I can, without compromising our standards or diluting our doctrine, if I have a chance to speak up for those who are marginalized in any way, it's because of what Sammy taught me. Because his life isn't what I thought it could or should have been. But we're actually coming to realize that's exactly what Heavenly Father wanted it to be. You should see how he's blessing the lives of the students here right now. We have 84 new brothers and sisters for Sam. He's had better social experiences and interactions in the last two months than he's had his entire life. But how much are they learning from him?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 46:23 We had a minor COVID outbreak in the center and Sam and Lynn got it. The first day he came up to the oasis cafeteria after he got out of isolation, he was still wearing his mask, the students gave him an ovation, "Sam you're back." It's teaching them how to love and care for someone. I don't even know how we got here, Hank, except you led me down the trail, the path of tears here. But I guess I'm a tenderhearted guy. I can be pretty hardcore academic, but I really do love the Lord. I do love people. Sure love my Sam. It's given me a feeling for how much God loves the world. How much he loved his son, Jesus Christ, but how much he loved you and how much he loved me. That's not academics talking. That's what I talk about being a practitioner for the gospel. That's what life and experience and the Spirit teaches us. And that's why I'm still in. I'm in because of what I know, but also because of what I felt and what I've experienced.
- Hank Smith: 47:28 So good. So good, Eric.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 47:30 All right. Well, thanks for having me.

Hank Smith: 47:33 Wow, Eric, thank you for being here today. Dr. Eric Huntsman. What a great day. We've talked about things that we haven't been able to talk about on the podcast before. And I think that is crucial to a lot of our listeners. John, what a good day.

John Bytheway: 47:50 Yeah, I love this idea of these are a response. It's such a nice way to look at, what you called it, the writings. We've got the law, the prophets, the writings, and us responding to the Lord and to worship. And the list that you gave us was really valuable. Thank you.

Hank Smith: 48:07 Yeah. Psalm 62:8, "Trust in him at all times." Beautiful. We want to thank Dr. Eric Huntsman for being with us today. What a blessing and I'm sure we'll be seeing him again, especially when we study the New Testament next year. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And we hope all of you will join us next week. We're coming back with another lesson on Psalms from FollowHIM.

Hank Smith: 48:37 We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Nielsen, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

DOES THE MUSIC I LISTEN TO MATTER?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, everyone. Welcome to another FollowHIM Favorites. If you've been following us this year, you know that for FollowHIM Favorites, we've been taking one question from each week's lesson. John, this week's lesson is on Psalms 50 through 100, basically those center 50 of Psalms. The question this week comes from a teenager in my own home, who says, "It doesn't matter the music I listen to." John, does the music I listen to matter?
- John Bytheway: 00:36 Let me say it like this. Do the books I read matter?
- Hank Smith: 00:40 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:40 Of course. Well, music is a message. It's a message, and sometimes it conveys a feeling. So can a book. Do the books I read matter? Are some books better than other books? Are some books more inspiring than other books? Do some books bring the Spirit more than other books? Yes. Well, there you go. Music will have a message, and there's even some evidence that some music can bring out the best in people. I think it's true that some music can bring out not the best in people.
- John Bytheway: 01:07 My daughter did a science fair experiment where she had four mice in one place and four mice in another. One was listening to Mozart 24/7. The other were listening to just heavy metal 24/7. Then she ran them through a maze at the end of every day and timed them. Hank, it was crazy.
- Hank Smith: 01:25 Wow.
- John Bytheway: 01:25 Have I ever showed you the pictures of this?
- John Bytheway: 01:27 But that's not why Ashley won the science fair. You know why she won? At the end of the experiment, she put a long, hollow tube and gave the mice a choice. I was so curious. I thought maybe, for variety, they will just swap. "I've been hearing Mozart all week. I want to go to heavy metal," or vice versa.

John Bytheway: 01:48 I came down the stairs that morning, I lifted up the cage of the Mozart mice, and counted, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight." All of them were in there. I said to the mice... I asked them why, and they said, "Well, we objected to the lyrics." No, they couldn't hear the lyrics.

John Bytheway: 02:08 Do what you want with that. That fascinated me. Why would they choose one over the other? Because it's more than just the message. There is something else. There is a spirit in music.

John Bytheway: 02:17 That's why I think For the Strength of Youth talks about that. You've got to pay attention to how you feel with certain music. Isn't that right?

Hank Smith: 02:26 I'm glad you bring that up. The Strength of Youth pamphlet says, "Music can enrich your life. It can edify and inspire you and help you draw closer to Heavenly Father. It has a profound effect on your mind, spirit, and behavior, so choose carefully the music you listen to."

Hank Smith: 02:43 John, I once wrote a book on happiness that sold dozens of copies, mostly to my mother, but I learned something. It was about music. They had two groups of people. One group of people, randomly chosen, got an hour-long massage every day for 90 days. The other randomly chosen group of people had to listen to one hour of what they said was uplifting music every day for 90 days. Then they came back and they took a happiness survey.

Hank Smith: 03:11 Now, who do you think would be happier? You would think an hour-long massage every day, but it was the music that showed decreased anxiety, decreased depression, and increased happiness, all because they deliberately chose their music to be uplifting. I'm with the mice on this one, John, that there is a powerful influence that comes from the music we choose to listen to.

John Bytheway: 03:34 Yeah. I think if you're going to say, "The music I listen to doesn't matter," you probably also have to say, "The books I read don't matter" or "The movies I watch don't matter." No, it all matters. It all matters.

John Bytheway: 03:44 We have a wonderful little phrase at the end of the 13th Article of Faith, "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, of good report, we seek after these things." Well, why do we do that? Because it blesses our life. It's uplifting. Ultimately, I like the advice in For the Strength of Youth. Pay attention, because you'll be able to

see what is lifting your spirit and what isn't, just like movies and books.

Hank Smith: 04:09 Choose carefully. Our challenge to you this week is to choose more carefully and deliberately the music you listen to, and see if it doesn't have an effect on the way you feel spiritually and how close you feel to God.

Hank Smith: 04:20 Well, we hope you'll join us next week for another FollowHIM Favorites. Come join us on our full podcast. It's called FollowHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. This week, we're with Dr. Eric Huntsman, who is walking us through some of these Psalms. You're going to love it, so come join us there, and join us next week for another FollowHIM Favorites.