



“A New Spirit Will I Put within You”

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:

How does Ezekiel teach about the nature of God? Dr. Jan Martin explores themes of mercy, repentance, and mercy while she examines Ezekiel’s message to the Israelites.

Part 2:

Dr. Jan Martin continues to discuss the gathering of Israel and how the Lord gives his children a new life, even freedom from the captivity of sin.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Jan Martin
- 00:53 Introduction of Dr. Jan Martin
- 04:00 Background to Ezekiel
- 06:23 Ezekiel goes into exile
- 07:12 Ezekiel’s purposes
- 10:42 Apocalyptic scripture
- 12:12 Ezekiel’s prophetic call
- 15:41 Description of a bow or rainbow
- 18:24 The Lord’s pattern of prophetic calls
- 19:54 What happens when a nation rebels
- 22:52 Ezekiel is to be as strong as diamond
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- 26:10 Watchman in a tower
- 32:00 The Lord hasn’t forgotten any group
- 34:09 Destruction and judgment for covenant breakers
- 37:10 Parable of the eagles
- 40:23 The effects of sin on future generations
- 44:51 Holland’s “Remember Lot’s Wife”
- 48:28 The nature of God
- 51:56 End of Part I–Dr. Jan Martin
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Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Jan Martin
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- 03:36 Ezekiel told not to forget his role
- 05:53 Agency and accountability
- 08:09 Confirmation that Jerusalem has been destroyed
- 11:02 Reminders to act
- 14:14 The Lord sends good leaders
- 18:21 Destruction of Edom
- 21:57 The First Coming and Second Coming
- 23:43 Dry bones
- 30:02 Stick of Judah and Stick of Ephraim
- 34:31 Ezekiel 47 and the temple
- 38:32 Dr. Martin’s journey as a scholar and a Latter-day Saint
- 44:09 End of Part II–Dr. Jan Martin

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Biographical Information:



Born: San Diego, CA

Raised: Albuquerque, NM and Holladay, UT; graduated from Skyline High School

Mission for LDS Church: Richmond, Virginia

Married to: Jared Martin

Bachelor's Degree: Brigham Young University: Physical Education K-12 Teaching with a minor in German Teaching (1994)

Master's Degrees: Brigham Young University: Exercise Physiology (1997); University of York, UK: Early Modern History (2008)

PhD: University of York, UK: Sixteenth-century English Bible Translation; focus on early English reformers (2011)

Previous career: Taught as adjunct faculty at BYU in the Physical Education Department (1997-2001); Taught for LDS Seminaries & Institutes for 5 years: 1 year at Timpview High School (2002-2003), 3 years at Spanish Fork High School (2003-2006), 1 year at Provo High (2006-2007)

Classes taught for BYU Religious Education: Book of Mormon, New Testament

Miles Coverdale, and John Frith; King James translation of the Bible; development of the language of English theology

Publications:

“The King James Translation of the New Testament,” in Lincoln Blumell (ed.) *New Testament History, Culture, and Society: A Background to the Texts of the New Testament* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 2019), 658 – 690.

“Theological Value of the King James Language in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 27 (September 2018) 88–124.

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“Cuthbert Tunstal, Thomas More, John Fisher, and the Burning of William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament,’

Languages: German

Other interests and hobbies: I enjoy an active lifestyle and participate regularly in many different sports with my husband: racquetball, tennis, pickleball, cycling, volleyball, weight lifting, and kayaking. We also enjoy taking walks and hiking all over the beautiful state of Utah whenever we have a chance. My husband is from England and that means we often return across the pond to visit family and enjoy the beautiful English countryside. I love teaching and researching and really enjoy becoming more knowledgeable so that I might assist the wonderful students that come through BYU.

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to Follow Him. A weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:11	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 FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host. I am here with my book eating co-host, John Bytheway. John, I was reading Ezekiel and he ate a book and I said, that reminds me of John. You go through books like crazy, don't you? You're a book reader.
John Bytheway:	00:40	I have a lot of books. My kids are like, "Dad have you read all these?" Well. I've skimmed a lot of them, but thanks.
Hank Smith:	00:48	John, Book of Ezekiel today. We needed a brilliant mind to join us. Who is here?
John Bytheway:	00:53	We got one. We are so happy to welcome Dr. Jan Martin with us today. She was born in San Diego, raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Holladay, Utah. Graduated from Skyline High School, go Eagles. She served a mission for the church in Richmond, Virginia. Married Jared Martin. She has a bachelor's degree from BYU in Physical Education, K through 12 with a minor in German teaching. That's cool. A master's degree in Exercise Physiology. And my favorite, a PhD from the University of York in the UK in 16th century English Bible translation, with a focus on early English reformers. And she has taught in the BYU Physical Education department, taught for LDS seminaries and institutes for five years at Timpview High School. Three

years at Spanish Fork, a year at Provo High. And her research interests include early translations of the Bible, early English reformers such as Tyndale, William Tyndale, Miles Coverdale, John Frith, King James translation of the Bible, the development of the language of English theology.

- John Bytheway: 02:04 So we're excited to have her. Something I want our listeners to know about Hank. We want our listeners to know about a book called *And They Shall Grow Together*, the Bible in the Book of Mormon and it's published by Religious Study Center and Deseret Book. And Dr. Martin has an article called *The Prophet Nephi and the covenantal Nature of Cutoff Cursed Skin of Blackness and Loathsome*. And it was very well received at Education Week. She presented some of this material. I'm so excited for all of us to read that and get a better understanding of what's going on there. So thank you so much for joining us, Dr. Martin, and welcome.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 02:45 You're welcome. Thank you. It's nice to be here. Excited.
- Hank Smith: 02:48 John, I got to tell you, I've known Jan for quite a few years and she is as good as she is. Brilliant. She's just kind to the core. She really is. Just one of the kindest people. And I'll throw in something that I want our listeners to go find. I have all my students listen to this. It's on the *Why Religion* podcast, which is a friend of our podcast. And it's episode 30 with Dr. Martin and it's the *Theology of King James language*. It changed my view on how the Book of Mormon was written and why it was written the way it was. I have all my students listen to it. It really is good stuff. I think I've told you how many times, how much I love that episode.
- John Bytheway: 03:24 Say the title of that again.
- Hank Smith: 03:26 The *Theology of King James Language*.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 03:29 In the Book of Mormon. Probably the rest. I was just going to say, I'm really glad that's helpful. That's why we do what we do. My research, I hope, helps people make that connection between the Book of Mormon Language and the Bible and do a better deeper job of it.
- Hank Smith: 03:42 There were so many aha moments for me when I was listening to that. I think I was cleaning the garage or something and I was like, "Wow, wow." People just thought I loved cleaning the garage. I think my neighbors. He must be finding some treasures in there.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 03:59 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 04:00 Jan this week, this is our one lesson in the Book of Ezekiel. We're not going to be able to cover every chapter, but let's start out by asking you, what would you want our listeners to know before they go in? Going into this book.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 04:12 Well, I mean Ezekiel comes in a time of a lot of turmoil in Jerusalem. And so I think that's what I would want people to know is that you get more out of his book when you understand what's going on behind the scenes and that he's addressing what's happening. And there's about a 25 year period for Jerusalem that's pretty horrible. And you have people attacking you and you have all these sieges and you have all these questions about is Jerusalem really going to be destroyed? And what's God doing here? And how come he's not helping us? And what about other wicked nations around us?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 04:47 Ezekiel really speaks to a troubled time. And so for us to understand the troubled time behind there is really helpful in pulling apart some of the interesting things he has to say. Some of those interesting images that he uses. He's a very visual prophet and as you read the chapters, you see that he does a lot of interesting visual aids and he's teaching with these kind of, to us maybe even strange visual aids. But once you understand what's going on in the background and what the Lord is speaking to him about, then it makes Ezekiel so much richer. So I just want them to know the background.

Hank Smith: 05:29 Okay. We're looking about the same time that Lehi is leaving Jerusalem. Is it Ezekiel comes on the scene just after, do you think? Or about the same time?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 05:37 Yeah, so Lehi leaves Jerusalem from about 600 BC and Ezekiel is caught up in stuff between about 601, 605, 597. And so he's just a contemporary of Lehi. He's right in the middle of the things that Lehi leaves. Lehi leaves Jerusalem, so he misses a lot of what follows but Ezekiel doesn't miss it. And he's dragged away from Jerusalem as a captive and he's living what Lehi knew was coming but departed and didn't have to be a part of. And so it's quite fun to see the different experiences that prophets are having there.

Hank Smith: 06:16 Yeah, because we're used to going with the family out into the wilderness this time we watch them leave and we stay here. We stay in Jerusalem.

- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 06:23 Yeah. And then we go with Ezekiel as someone who's taken captive and dragged away. And so Lehi leaves on his own free will. He's commanded by God to go and so we watch him go into the wilderness, but he at least has some say in that. Ezekiel, on the other hand, is taken captive and dragged out of Jerusalem to an unfamiliar location and is then asked to help those people settle there and establish themselves. And then he's the prophet who's going to help answer their questions about why are we here? What are we doing here? And then what's happening back at home? Of course they'd be interested in what's going on back at home. So he's kind of that link.
- Hank Smith: 07:04 Awesome. That makes perfect sense. It's nice to see where the Book of Mormon fits in right there. So Jan, how do you want to go about this? How do you want to jump into this book?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 07:12 Well, how about we just do a little bit of an overview of Ezekiel's purposes. I think sometimes when we understand the purpose of a book of scripture from the beginning, then we can jump in and see a little bit more. And so in my experience with Ezekiel, when you have a group of exiles that have been violently taken captive, dragged away against their will, they're living in a strange country. Trying to figure out, should I establish myself here or not? Are we just going to go back soon? What's going on in Jerusalem? And so Ezekiel gets to answer some pretty important questions. And so one of those is, is Jerusalem going to be destroyed? Because these people have come out of an environment where there are false prophets who've said Jerusalem is not going to be destroyed. So you actually have Jeremiah who's there in Jerusalem, Lehi, who had been there. All saying it was going to be, and yet you have a contingency of others who are saying it's not.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 08:11 So you have people maybe just being a little confused. Who do I follow here? And then you get taken captive and dragged away. And so is this meaning that Jerusalem's going to be destroyed or is this temporary? And so that's an important question and Ezekiel answers it definitively with a yes, over and over and over. You read the whole Book of Ezekiel. That's pretty much the common theme of yes. But then you have the next follow up question of, well why aren't we the covenant people? Why are we being destroyed? And so he answers that as well over and over and over. As you read through the chapters, they give really great detail. The Lord is not holding back. He explains in very clear language what's the problem and why you're being destroyed. And then of course the next question would be, well, if we are wicked, everyone around us is. So why aren't they being destroyed?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 09:09 And so another big theme that you see in the Book of Ezekiel as some of those chapters that Come Follow Me skips is chapters addressed to particular other nations and what's going to happen to them. And so the people of Israel have that question answered, well this doesn't seem very fair. What's happening to everyone else who's wicked? And the Lord teaches very clearly that wickedness is never swept under the rug for anybody. Everybody eventually is going to get the consequences. And so now that you've got this idea of destruction for you and everyone around you, then of course another good question is, well, weren't we the covenant people? And what happens to covenants in times of destruction? What does that mean? And Ezekiel addresses that as well.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 10:02 The covenant is eternal. The covenant is going to last but we have to have a repentance and we have to have a repentant people to help us here. And so when you go back and put Lehi into this context, well that's what Lehi represents is a family that did keep their covenants that's trying to do the right thing and they're led away and you watch what happens to them answering their questions about how do we function as a covenant people in a new land? It's really cool the overview of what these people are probably occupied with and how the Lord is addressing those things.

Hank Smith: 10:36 Fantastic.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 10:37 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 10:38 That was a great overview. I love that.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 10:42 So I think Ezekiel is fantastic, but you do have to understand what's going on there so you don't come away going, these are weird. This is a weird chapter. What's happening?

Hank Smith: 10:51 Is it apocalyptic in nature? John, I've heard you talk about that. Type of scripture that is apocalyptic.

John Bytheway: 10:58 Like a genre that's apocalyptic?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 11:00 I think there's an element of maybe some apocalyptic just because apocalyptic in Greek means to unveil or reveal. And so certainly the Lord is unveiling and revealing a certain amount of information. But I wouldn't compare, say Ezekiel's visions to Nephi's ones in the first part of Nephi, where he sees this tremendous amount of history and he goes from his day all the way to our day. Ezekiel's not always seeing as much of that, but

when you get to his temple chapters and things, I would say there's some unveiling and revealing there for the future for this temple that they're going to have. So I'd give him a little bit, but maybe not as much as some of the other prophets that cover a lot more ground in their visions.

- Hank Smith: 11:47 That was perfect, Jan. What do you want to do next?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 11:50 Okay, well do you guys have any favorite chapters that you like? Any themes that you feel like we should talk about that stand out?
- John Bytheway: 11:58 I actually like something in 18.
- Hank Smith: 12:01 Well Jan, why don't we go back to Ezekiel chapter one and just work our way through it, knowing full well we cannot cover every chapter and verse. Just maybe let you pick out some highlights for us.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 12:12 Okay. One of the nice things about chapter one, and we do get this frequently in the scriptures where you get to see a prophetic call. So we have Lehi's prophetic call in the Book of Mormon, we have Moses's, we have Isaiah's, we have all sorts of people that we can look at when they have this revelatory experience. It's really fun to compare the experiences. And so that's what chapter one is, is Ezekiel's call to be a prophet. You learn a little bit about him that he was a priest back in Jerusalem. We assume that he was serving in the temple, we don't know that, but his later chapters indicate with the knowledge that he's got of the temple, that he probably was a temple priest. But we can speculate about that a little, but it seems likely. So you get his background and then you just watch him just thrown into this vision that I believe is very difficult for him to articulate.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 13:07 And so the King James version of this is difficult. And so sometimes when readers come to a chapter like this, it's always helpful to find another translation and open it up a little and kind of compare. Because for example in verse four it says, "I looked and beheld a whirlwind." A modern translation might call that a windstorm or something a little more relatable to us. And then when you see him in a great cloud and a fire unfolding itself, well that could probably be translated a little better as lightning. So it's helpful for something like this to maybe use an additional translation. King James can be a little awkward through here.

Hank Smith: 13:48 That does help. Well I send my students off into Bible Hub. I know some of other professors use the Blue Letter Bible where you can kind of look and see all the different translations.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 13:58 Yes. And so he just kind of gets these really fantastic images of these creatures. We kind of can relate to the ones in the Book of Revelation that come there. He's just, in my opinion, just seeing some really glorified things that are very hard to put into words. And I think he's trying his best to articulate spiritual experiences with modern language that just doesn't do it justice.

Hank Smith: 14:23 Yeah. And then gets translated out of his language into English.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 14:26 So yes, into English and King James English can be challenging as we know and so it requires us to work a little with it. But my favorite part of the vision is you work your way through all of the fantastic creatures and all the wings we learn from D&C Section 77, that we have wings tends to represent the power to move and to act and to do things. And so modern revelation can really help us with some of these images and help us realize that it's symbolic, that we're just learning some principles of the way that the Lord works. And not necessarily need to take it all literally in that sense.

Hank Smith: 15:02 Got it.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:02 I don't know what you guys make of chapter one.

Hank Smith: 15:04 It does seem kind of crazy.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:09 Yeah, we got wheels, we've got all sorts.

John Bytheway: 15:12 Four faces.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:14 One of the things that stands out to me is there seems to be quite a lot of unity going on with these creatures and how they work together. And even if we don't always know the purpose of everything that Ezekiel sees, I think the concept of unity and organization that the Lord works with those things is evident.

Hank Smith: 15:33 And it seems that Ezekiel's kind of awestruck by a lot of this. He's trying to find words for the celestial.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:41 Yeah. And when you jump over and just look at verse 28 and the King James has the appearance of the bow. We would probably say rainbow to help us out a little with that. You just watch him

trying to describe this was the appearance of the likeness, of the glory of the Lord. With his BC vocabulary, how do you even articulate. Like when you read Joseph Smith's vision, he felt like the very trees were going to light on fire because it was so glorified. I'm sure that's an inadequate way to even describe what Joseph saw, but he is doing the best he can. And so you're using rainbows and you're finding the brightest, most colorful, amazing things you can find. And you're trying to say this was the appearance and the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face.

- Hank Smith: 16:31 Whatever he saw, it was amazing.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 16:34 Yeah, he's humbled and he's recognizing that God is greater and grander than himself and this is a time for humbly learning and I like that.
- Hank Smith: 16:44 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 16:46 He could have just said what some prophets have, it was just beyond description and the chapter would've been a lot shorter, right?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 16:52 Yes, it would've. And probably easier for us. I think there's a few things to take away from that when God does have these revelatory experiences with prophets, there's lots of glory involved. There's lots of things that are hard to articulate and that the feeling and the awe is really evident and that sometimes you cannot express it with words. And we need to remember that. Spiritual experiences, you can't always share adequately.
- Hank Smith: 17:20 Yeah, you can't. There's just not words.
- John Bytheway: 17:23 You know what I like about that is the first Corinthians 2:9 is it, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him." It's like I'm not going to describe it, I'm just going to tell you, "You can't imagine it." It's better than anything you can imagine. But here's Ezekiel saying, I'll try to describe it.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 17:41 And he does and some prophets do, like one of my favorite chapters is Isaiah. When he gets his call and he's given us all those really brilliant descriptions of the temple and the seraphim and the glory of the Lord and things. And he tries to do it too. And you just get that sense that this is the best I can do but it doesn't do it justice.

Hank Smith: 18:00 3 Nephi 17:17, "No tongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man. Neither can the hearts have been conceive so great in marvelous things. We both saw and heard Jesus speak. No one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us under the Father." So I like what you said, he's doing his best to describe what he saw.

John Bytheway: 18:24 Yeah.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 18:24 We have these patterns of prophetic calls, we can go and match them all up. That's actually a really fun study time, if people are looking for something interesting to study. Just go and pull out all of the different prophetic calls and scripture and go and look at them and compare them. And you see the Lord's patterns, you see the way he works and you see the difficulty in expressing them and the effort that goes in of trying to tell them. Fun times, chapter one.

Hank Smith: 18:50 So he sees and he bows down and then he hears a voice. Is that right?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 18:54 Yes.

Hank Smith: 18:55 That chapter break is kind of hard because you think, oh, it's a new story, but it's not a new story.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 19:00 Yes. And as we know as scripture, they didn't have chapter breaks like this. And a lot of these chapters were added, especially in 1600's. When we're translating Bibles, we do add a lot of verses and chapters and things for the first time. And so it's unfortunate sometimes that they break it up like that. So we can just move the chapter heading out of the way and just let it keep going so we don't lose the full flow.

Hank Smith: 19:23 I have a tendency to do a memory wipe at the chapter break.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 19:28 Yeah. And so then we start chapter two and we're lost.

Hank Smith: 19:34 Yeah. If we don't remember where we were.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 19:34 Yeah. And so he sees all this stuff and then he gets this voice and then suddenly this beautiful again illustration of the way the Lord talks, "Son of man stand upon thy feet. And I will speak unto thee," and here we go.

Hank Smith: 19:49 This is awesome. This is stand up and listen.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 19:54 And then he gets his call. All the prophets get this call. I look at verse three of chapter two, "Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me even unto this very day." So this question of, what's happening with Jerusalem, why is this happening? And suddenly the Lord is very clear. This is a rebellious nation. I'm helping you learn what happens when we rebel.

Hank Smith: 20:23 That one's not hard to understand.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 20:27 Uh, no.

John Bytheway: 20:27 The Lord's pretty clear.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 20:28 So I also like the admonition in verse six to Ezekiel, "Be not afraid of the people you're going to teach. Neither be afraid of their words." Because he's coming into an environment that they have other false prophets, they have other voices to listen to. And they're going to push back against what Ezekiel's saying and he needs to be prepared for that. And I love the visual again, "Though, briars and thorns be with thee and thou just dwell amongst scorpions. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks." This is going to be a hard assignment, Ezekiel. I'm going to put you amongst the people who are going to respond largely negatively to what you have to say. And I need you to be firm and courageous with that.

Hank Smith: 21:14 Wow. Scorpions. I would be afraid.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 21:17 Yeah. I'll just briefly tell you. One evening at home and we to this day still have no idea how this scorpion got where he got. But I went out of our living room into the hallway to go to the kitchen and right in the middle of the hall is a scorpion.

Hank Smith: 21:32 Oh.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 21:32 Just in my hallway. And he's got his little tail up and he can see me and he's got his little things up and he goes into, this kind of-

Hank Smith: 21:40 He's ready for battle.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 21:41 ... Attack mode. And I'm kind of like, wow. Wow. But that's a nice visual for when I share the word of God sometimes that's people's response. They get all ready for a battle and they're going to sting me or attack me. And my husband and I are trying to decide how to get rid of this scorpion in a safe manner. Take

him outside. And when you've had an experience with a scorpion, suddenly you're like, Yeah, this is a good description. Like I'm 20 times bigger than the scorpion, but I'm like, wait. You don't want to step over it. Don't want to go around it. What are we going to do with this? But what a great visual for Ezekiel as you start this mission I'm going to give you, just be prepared for the pushback because you're going to get it.

Hank Smith:	22:28	And thou dost dwell among scorpions. How'd you like that in your patriarchal blessing?
John Bytheway:	22:32	Yeah.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	22:32	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	22:34	And look at that. I love that phrase. "Nor be dismayed at their looks." I mean-
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	22:39	Yes.
John Bytheway:	22:39	How do you look upon somebody that is telling you what you don't want to hear?
Hank Smith:	22:45	Oh.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	22:45	Yep.
John Bytheway:	22:47	I mean what would we call that? They're giving you crusties or they're glaring at you. They're, ooh.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	22:52	And their words as well. Usually the looks and the words go together. There's probably insults, there's probably profanity. I think we know this, that we live in a world of a lot of contention and people reacting negatively to things. Poor Ezekiel. And so as we're on that topic, if you jump over just the column to chapter three and you start looking at verse eight and nine. You see the Lord's advice, "I've told you not to be afraid, but I'm also going to help you." And so then again this imagery, "I've made thy face strong against their faces," those looks. "And thy forehead strong against their foreheads." And then my favorite, "And as adamant." So in our tongue that would be diamonds. That's the hardest structure of something. So "As adamant, harder than flint, I have made thy forehead. Fear them not neither be dismayed at their looks." There it is again. "Though they be a rebellious house."
Hank Smith:	23:51	He's really gearing him up.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 23:54 This is a tough assignment, a really tough assignment. And I think the language shows that it is, and poor Ezekiel. Do you want to be him? I'm not sure we do. But prophets have to stand up to peer pressure because they get a lot of it. That's what he's getting is all this negative peer pressure from people that don't like what he's saying.

Hank Smith: 24:12 Yeah. So the Lord says, I'm going to make you as tough as them. I'm going to make you as unyielding as they are. I like it.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:19 Yeah. And I need you to be because I think something that President Nelson said once when he came to BYU I think in 2017, and he gave that talk, The Love and Law of the Lord, I think. But he said, "It is not loving, not to tell the truth."

Hank Smith: 24:38 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 24:38 Right.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:39 And that's what prophets have to be able to do. They have to be able to firmly and lovingly stand against false ideas and not cave. And you saw President Nelson doing that then and you saw him do it recently with the most recent YSA devotional that he did, of it's really important about the choices you're making. And he's firmly standing against all the pushback that he gets.

Hank Smith: 25:04 Yeah. But he would see it as unloving to back down.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 25:08 Yes.

John Bytheway: 25:09 Yeah. I love that you said that the most loving thing you can do is teach the truth.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 25:15 And not apologize and we need to teach it nicely and compassionately and things. But that firmness, that adamant harder than flint, that's what we have to do.

Hank Smith: 25:26 I like that.

John Bytheway: 25:27 And I don't know, I think that comes through the last YSA thing was awesome. Just yesterday I was asking my students, "Okay, what are those three identities again?" President Nelson asked you to remember. So they remember the talk, I'm a child of God, I'm a child of the covenant. I'm a disciple of Christ. And didn't you feel that he was loving at the same time he was being adamant?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 25:50 Absolutely. Yeah. Just very firm, appropriately firm. And helping us reorient so that our eternal life that we're choosing will be what we want it to be. And we have to be firm about that.

Hank Smith: 26:02 In verse 17, he tells him, "I have made you a watchman onto the house of Israel." So this is your assignment, this is your job.

John Bytheway: 26:10 Let's spend some more time on verse 17. Yeah. This is a common metaphor for a prophet, is a watchman on a tower. When I teach the war chapters in the Book of Mormon, I love to, so okay, they made the ditch, then they put a work of timbers on it and then they put a frame of pickets on it and then they put a tower on it. But then they put a watchman in the tower. And what can a watchman do that those down below on frame of picket maintenance cannot do? They can see afar off. They can give you warning. I love that verse. "I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me." And I think, correct me if I'm wrong, that's the first time we hear that metaphor. I read President Boyd K. Packer's biography years ago and I think it was called A Watchman on the Tower. It's a great metaphor for a prophet because they can see far off.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 27:07 And I love what follows. Like there's so much logic in chapter three here as we start this conversation about watchmen. And he goes on in verse 18 to say, "When I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die and thou givest him not warning nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life. The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand."

Hank Smith: 27:33 Wow.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 27:34 So this is President Nelson and all the prophets we have today, they understand this. And so they recognize that if I don't pass on the warning from the Lord and stand firm in what the Lord is saying, then you're going to go and do what you're going to do. But I'm partially accountable for those choices because I didn't tell you. Then 19, "But if thou warn this wicked and he turned not from his wicked way, nor from his wicked way, but he shall die in his iniquity. But thou hast delivered thy soul."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 28:10 Can't you just imagine Jacob, in the Book of Mormon does this, I stand up and shake my garments of your blood. I think King Benjamin has a similar approach to this as well. This is the thing about prophets and watchmen is, what good is a watchman if he doesn't pass on the warning? And then everyone who dies in the conflict that follows the lack of warning is now partially

there because of his failure to do his job. So just really, really great logic. Really simple of why we're so grateful for prophets and their courage to stand up to the peer pressure to change things.

- Hank Smith: 28:48 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 28:48 And trust that they have a different view than we do. They have a different assignment. They are up there on that tower and they can see things. And we've talked about this on the podcast before Hank, long time ago. Prophets talking about the family and then the proclamation coming out and most of us going, huh.
- Hank Smith: 29:07 It was 1995. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 29:09 Or well yeah, that's nice. And now going, whoa, we really are seeing everything. They saw it coming a long time ago.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 29:17 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 29:18 I think so too, John.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 29:20 Yeah. And I love when you jump over to verse 21, it starts talking about righteous people now listening to the warnings and things and the accountability there. But look what he says. "Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man that the righteous sin not and he doeth not sin, he shall surely live," which is what we want. Because he is warned. And then also thou hast delivered thy soul. So prophets have responsibility for their own souls, but they have responsibility for the souls of the children of men. And they need to deliver those warnings. And as they do, people are saved by that.
- Hank Smith: 29:52 Maybe a young person might be thinking to themselves, why don't the prophets back off on this a little bit? They're getting a lot of pushback. Why don't they back off? And these chapters help you see there's an expectation they know is from the Lord that they be adamant about certain things.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 30:06 Mm-hmm.
- John Bytheway: 30:07 That is so interesting, that adamant is the word that we use. But you say it was a diamond. And the footnote says that too.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 30:14 Yes it does.

John Bytheway: 30:15 To be, I was adamant about that. I was hard as a diamond on that. That's interesting.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 30:22 And 16th century language, they didn't really use the word, diamond. They used the word adamant back then. And we've changed that. We have diamond is more common. So when we read adamant, we tend to read it in a modern setting. But this is a reference to that diamond material. And so that just really helps you appreciate what prophets have to do. You have to be firm and hard about the truth and then just keep giving those warnings and then let people choose.

John Bytheway: 30:49 I really like those verses put side by side. "If you warn the wicked and he turn not," in verse 19, "Shall die in his iniquity. But thou hast delivered thy soul." Because you did what you were asked to do. Verse 21, "If the righteous hear, he shall live and you still have delivered thy soul." Because you told, you did what you were asked to do. Come what may type of a thing.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 31:11 And I don't know about you guys, but any time you've gone and done the right thing in any capacity where you have stewardship, you always feel that confirming recognition that you did your bit. And whatever people choose to do after that is no longer up to you because you've taught them or whatever. But there's a really nice feeling of I did that and I am not accountable for them now. And there's something powerful in that.

John Bytheway: 31:37 It reminds me of Moroni chapter 10. "And then the Lord will say, Did I not declare unto you my words which were written by this man?" And there's yeah, I told you.

Hank Smith: 31:47 Yeah.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 31:49 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 31:50 There's that question, "You heard this, didn't you? What did you do with it? I did declare my words unto you," which were written by this man and it's clearly talking to those who have had a chance to read the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 32:00 Yeah. Well and one thing I just wanted to have us go back one page and just have a look at verse 11 really quick. Just to remind us who our audience is because we sometimes forget our audience as we're going along. But he says, "And go get thee to them of the captivity." So we've taken several thousand Jewish people out of Jerusalem and we've transplanted them over in

Babylon. And what this tells me is that the Lord is concerned about everybody and will send messengers to everybody, even small captive populations in the middle of nowhere. You just have to really appreciate how interested God is in people. And one of my favorite things to do when I introduce the Book of Mormon when you're looking at Lehi, is to show the number of prophets who are contemporary with Lehi and where they're preaching.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 32:50

And so you bring up Ezekiel, you bring up Daniel, bring up Jeremiah, you can bring up Zephaniah and some of the other smaller prophets that were around there somewhere. And suddenly the students go, "Oh my goodness, in the mouth of two or three witnesses," like, there's more than two or three? And they're spread out. And the Lord is working with people wherever he can work with them. And so another message is prophets are available to people and the Lord is interested in them everywhere.

Hank Smith: 33:21

I like that, Jen. It's not that you've got carried away, so now I'm done with you. It's you're carried away and I'm still going to try to teach you even in your captivity.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 33:30

Yes. So you've got Daniel in the court at Babylon, you have Ezekiel out on the banks with the captives out on the suburban area and then you've got everyone back in Jerusalem with some Jeremiah and some people there. And then you have Lehi taking a family through somewhere else. And you just see all of these prophets at different places, but they're sharing the same message and they're doing the watchman on the tower for their group of people.

John Bytheway: 33:53

That's awesome. Love it.

Hank Smith: 33:55

Now the Come Follow Me manual has this jump quite a bit.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 33:57

Let's look and see. Now I know John, you wanted to do 18, which I think is a fabulous chapter. But if there's ones in between that you want to have a look at.

John Bytheway: 34:06

Could you give us your summary of what happens?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 34:09

Okay, so we've had some fun looking at the call and the watchmen on the tower, but let's speed up a little bit and let's jump through some of the rest of the chapters a little more quickly. Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7. You just get a lot of recitation of the destruction and the judgment that's coming to the wicked.

These aren't happy chapters. In fact, on one of them I've written, this is a very sad chapter, lots of repetition about the people receiving recompense for the wickedness. And so there's just this kind of, why are we going through this? And the Lord just keeps repeatedly telling them this is why, is because of your choices of not keeping the covenant, you're not doing the things I've asked you to do. And so we hit that. By the time you hit chapter 10, I just want to point out it hearkens back to chapter one because they start using the same symbols in there.

- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 35:00 So there's this nice little break. We've had all of the consequences and now we're going to have another kind of little fantastic vision for just a second. And then he carries on with more prophecy. He talks specifically about what's going to happen to people in Jerusalem, Zedekiah, those kinds of things. And then we're ready to hit our teen chapters and carry on with a few more analogies. And this is where you start getting the visual aids that he uses.
- Hank Smith: 35:30 Okay.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 35:30 To teach. And so we've got eagles, we've got vines, we've got all sorts of lovely analogies going on.
- Hank Smith: 35:39 Yeah, I see that Chapter 15, Jerusalem as a useless vine. Shall be burned-
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 35:43 Yes. I mean it doesn't get any bolder than that. A useless vine. I mean this is an agrarian society and they know about useless plants. So we don't want those, aren't helpful.
- John Bytheway: 35:56 We talked to Terry Ball about Isaiah's parable of the vineyard type of a thing that he does. And it says it brought forth wild grapes. But Terry Ball gave us the Hebrew wrote was beushim, which means worthless, stinking things.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 36:11 Worthless.
- Hank Smith: 36:15 In these chapters, Jan, a young person might get the idea of man God is really mean. But I think what he's trying to say is, look, this is the natural consequence of not keeping the covenant. This is what happens when you don't keep the covenant.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 36:29 Yeah. And I think we learn here that God works with natural consequences the majority of the time. He doesn't need to come and punish people because he just lets the law work. He

just lets the consequences come and they inevitably do because they're eternal laws and they just work. And so yeah, it's hard to have people thinking negatively of God here when this is just about people's choices. And they've been warned and they kept choosing and you reap what you sow. And that's what's happening.

- Hank Smith: 37:02 How many wrong way signs can you put up and someone's just flying by them. It's not the sign's fault that you kept going that there's an accident coming up.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 37:10 Yeah. One thing that's kind of fun when you hit chapter 17, this one's an odd chapter, it's got this weird parable about these eagles. But when you actually know the political context behind them, you actually see the Lord commentating on Zedekiah's decision to use Egypt as his ally against Babylon. And he's turning traitor to Babylon. And so it's just funny to see with the prophets, they will comment on current events and make comments. And this is a real current event, chapter 17, with the changing of Zedekiah and his loyalties. But that ends up leading to the final destruction of Jerusalem is because he made that choice. But the Lord even comments on that, on just a political thing and helping the people in exile understand what's going on back home and why those things are going on when you don't have satellites and you don't have news. And you don't have a way to get online and see what's going on. It's really just fun to watch the Lord speaking to the current events and chapter seventeen's a big one there.
- John Bytheway: 38:14 And I think when I try to teach Isaiah, because Isaiah as an advisor to Kings, it seems his main theme was don't ally yourselves with other nations. Let God be your ally. Let God be your king. But they always seem to not listen to his advice. And we'll maybe we'll ally with Assyria, maybe we'll ally with Egypt, maybe we'll... And we see that thing happening here I guess.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:39 Over and over again. Yes. And you see that.
- John Bytheway: 38:41 I think God is a good ally. Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:44 I do too. Yeah. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 38:45 That's probably better than Egypt.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:50 I think contextually as well. Because just a hundred years earlier, the northern kingdom of Israel had been destroyed and the border of Assyria when they come and take over the

northern kingdom is only five miles from Jerusalem. And so these people have seen what you just said, John, about allying with the Lord. That's why they weren't destroyed the southern kingdom because Hezekiah allied with the Lord if you remember. And then this miraculous thing happens with the Assyrian army waking up and they're all, well they don't really wake up but they're all dead.

- John Bytheway: 39:18 Wake up dead. It's what it sounds like. It's when they got woke, what does it say when they rose in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 39:25 It's like such a funny way they word it. But that was a big message that you need to ally yourself with God and that's what protects them. But here we are again just a hundred years later teaching the same lesson, that you still didn't get it. You had a big miracle in those generations back there. And now we are here and we shouldn't be worrying about these worldly allies. We need to make the Lord our ally. And they haven't.
- John Bytheway: 39:51 First of all, I love 18 because of this strange little phrase in Ezekiel 18 verse two. Well verse one, "The word of the Lord came unto me again saying what mean ye that you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel saying the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." And this idea of can something that my parents eat affect me? Is that what he's saying there?
- Hank Smith: 40:22 I think so.
- John Bytheway: 40:23 Do my parents' decisions, can they have an effect on future generations? I ate sour grapes and my children's teeth are set on edge.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 40:33 And I would say yes because that's essentially what you see in the Book of Mormon with Laman and Lemuel's choices about the covenant and not following the prophet and everything that happens to the kids is a direct result of their choices. Now obviously the Lord is merciful to us under those circumstances because he understands that it's not fully up to us. But yes, that principle of what I do affects other people, particularly my children. And I need to be wise about the decisions I make because they reap the rewards of those or the consequences of those.
- John Bytheway: 41:07 And the thought gets rounded out later on in the chapter in verse 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not

bear the iniquity of the father. Neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." So there's kind of an... "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins," and I love that turn and repent are such good synonyms. "That he hath committed and keep all my statutes and do that which is lawful and right. He shall surely live and he shall not die." Now this verse was tremendously helpful to me with something I struggled with. "All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live."

- John Bytheway: 41:50 And the reason that was really helpful to me is because, and maybe you guys understood this all along and everybody else in the church, but when the Doctrine and Covenants and other places say, "I shall remember them no more," I always thought, how can God forget something that we still remember? Can God forget anything? And I decided it must be poetic when God says, "I will remember them no more." And this is the text that helped me. Oh maybe it's the idea they will not be remembered at the judgment. And Ezekiel helped me with that language.
- Hank Smith: 42:26 It will not be mentioned.
- John Bytheway: 42:27 They will not be mentioned unto him. God is not going to not know things that we know. That's what used to bother me as a kid. But here it says no, it will not be mentioned. I thought, oh that's it. It won't be brought up at the judgment. It will not be remembered at the judgment is the way I made sense of that.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 42:47 Well and I agree with you because I think one of the things that's important to help students is recognize that our past makes us who we are in the present. So we can't divorce ourselves from our past, but we need to learn to remember our past with peace and not keep bringing up the past. That's what the atonement can help us do, is feel forgiven of our past but remember it appropriately and then we don't have to keep bringing it up and beating ourselves with it every time something happens in the present or the future. And I think all of you would agree that when we're in relationships or family relationships, but especially a spousal relationship, we don't always want our spouse bringing up everything that happened in the past when we've apologized and when we've made it right.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 43:32 But sometimes that happens in some people's marriages. They can never let what you apologize for or get past it. And so you're constantly being held hostage by a mistake that you've

more than made right. And more than moved on from. And you can understand how frustrating that is. And we're being promised that the Lord is not that type of partner.

- John Bytheway: 43:54 Wow.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 43:54 He doesn't keep bringing up the past and holding it against us. He won't bring it up anymore because we made it right and it doesn't need to be brought up anymore. And how comforting is that? I just...
- John Bytheway: 44:08 I love that. And I love that phrase, "Remember our past with peace." So in Alma 36 when we've got Alma telling his son, Helaman, all about his own repentance, I mean Alma 36, that great chiasmus chapter, but I put on my test with my students, It doesn't say I could remember my sins no more. But he says, I could remember my pains no more. And you've just given me a phrase to use. I could remember my past with peace. I remembered what I did. I'm telling you about it. But it didn't hurt anymore. I was harrowed up by the memory of it no more. And what a great phrase. Thank you for that. I can remember my past with peace. That's beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 44:51 Let me read to you both something that Elder Holland said. This is January of 2009. The talk is called Remember Lot's Wife. Very similar to what you're saying here, Jan of the way you look back like Lot's wife. Elder Holland says, "Let people repent, Let people grow. Believe that people can change and improve. Is that faith? Yes. Is that hope? Yes. Is that charity? Yes. Above all it is charity. The pure love of Christ. If something is buried in the past, leave it buried. Don't keep going back with your little sand pail and beach shovel to dig it up, wave it around and then throw it at someone saying, 'Hey, do you remember this?' Splat. Well guess what? That is probably going to result in some ugly morsel being dug up out of your landfill with the reply, 'Yeah, I remember it. Do you remember this?' Splat.
- Hank Smith: 45:38 And soon enough everyone comes out of the exchange dirty and muddy, unhappy and hurt. When what God, our father in Heaven pleads for is cleanliness and kindness and happiness and healing. Such dwelling on past lives, including past mistakes is just not right. It is not the gospel of Jesus Christ." That fits right in with that verse. Learn to think of your past with peace. Man Jan, that's going to be a highlight for me from Ezekiel 18.
- John Bytheway: 46:06 Oh man, I'm putting that in my Alma 36 lesson plan because Alma could do that. He still remembered what he'd been through. So he's remembering his past. But it's not, I always

harrowed up no more by the memory of my sins. It's so fun in that chapter, sorry to keep going but at first he's like, "I wish I were extinct. I wish I could be destroyed. Both soul and body." And then the opposite, "I my soul, that long to be there with God." Being with God felt comfortable instead of, I would like the rocks and mountains to fall on me.

- Hank Smith: 46:44 It's quite a change.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 46:46 One of the best things for us is to be able to talk about our past with people in this way and not have it bring back all that pain and be able to say, "Well these are the things I learned from it, but I can talk about it without feeling any guilt or shame."
- Hank Smith: 47:01 The shame. Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 47:03 And I can just really use it to teach on appropriate occasions when I need to share things like that. But I think we can all relate to the relief that comes when people around us don't remember our past with the animosity and they can just let us move on.
- Hank Smith: 47:21 Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 47:22 I really appreciate that.
- John Bytheway: 47:24 Let people repent, let people change. As Hank said that Elder Holland said. But then I love verse 23. We sometimes maybe get this impression of an Old Testament God that is just really enjoying punishing people and sending plagues. And this verse 23, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God and not that he should return from his ways and live." And then verse 32, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth say the Lord God. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." And I'm looking in my dad's verses. So I just got a note from the spirit world from my dad here. Not really, but I'm thinking of him. Because he's got see second Nephi 26, 24 through 28 and four times in a row the Lord's like, Has he said to any depart from me? Has he said to any depart from the synagogue? Has he said to any do not partake of my salvation? I'm paraphrasing, but I remember that chapter that, look, he's constantly inviting. Just come. That's a good footnote, dad. Thank you.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 48:28 Yeah, that's so great. Part of our need when we're studying the Old Testament is to understand the culture and the context, but not miss these really precious glimpses of the character of God. Because sometimes we read about all these destructions and

things and then come away with the wrong idea. But God is not enjoying this. He doesn't want these consequences, which is why he sent a prophet, which is why he sent the warnings, which is why he works so hard to make sure our prophets are adamant about the warnings that they give. Because he doesn't want any of this to happen to us. But sometimes we have to learn the hard way.

- John Bytheway: 49:08 Maybe this is the wrong metaphor to use right now, but he's not like a university professor. But the idea of he's not saying, "How many can I flunk in this class? I'm going to make this class so hard. Only a few of you are going to make it and I'm going to enjoy that." Present company excepted of course. But do you know what I mean? That idea of I'm going to weed out everybody here and here's the Lord saying, "I would like to invite all of you to come and partake." That's the second Nephi 26 thing.
- Hank Smith: 49:40 Yeah. That seems to be the invitation in verse 31. Ezekiel 18:31, "Let me make you a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O House of Israel?" When this is available to you? I can give you this new life. That reminds me of Paul, the newness of life.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 49:57 And I think I was just thinking of Jacob as well. Doesn't he have that same question? Why will you die?
- John Bytheway: 50:01 Why will you die?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 50:04 Yeah. When he's addressing his people about their iniquities, just that really plain question, why are you doing this? I don't want this.
- John Bytheway: 50:14 The Book of Mormon makes it such a no brainer. Let's see. Should I choose captivity and death or happiness and eternal life? Ooh, I don't know. Give me a minute. That's a hard one. I got to think about that for a minute.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 50:26 If you will hear his voice harden on your hearts for why will ye die? And how cool is that? Because Ezekiel's a priest, Jacob's a priest. I mean you just can get that connection because the animal sacrifices they do, they understand death quite well. And why are we choosing to do that when we could choose something else?
- John Bytheway: 50:44 That was Jacob 6:6?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 50:45 Yeah. Jacob 6:6. That same question.

John Bytheway:	50:48	Awesome. Well see. It was good to look at chapter 18.
Hank Smith:	50:52	Yeah, I'm glad we stopped there.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	50:54	Okay, so where do you guys want to go now?
John Bytheway:	50:56	Oh, look at that. Verse 16 that uses the same phrase. "None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him," in 33:16.
John Bytheway:	51:08	Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:02 Welcome to part two of Dr. Jan Martin, The Book of Ezekiel.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 00:07 Okay, so we've had some fun in chapter 18 and we've had this theme of the Lord being sad when people sin, when they reap the consequences of those sins. He doesn't take pleasure in sin. What's interesting is as you carry on with chapters 19 through about 32, you start seeing the Lord talking about the other nations that are around Jerusalem. That question that we talked about at the beginning, well, if these other nations are wicked, why are they not having consequences? The Lord starts talking about Judah, of course, He starts with them again. But then He starts talking about Tyre, and He starts talking about Egypt, and some of the other nations around, and what's going to happen to them, that they're all going to reap consequences for their wickedness in the future.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin 00:55 But the interesting thing is, is that the Lord is not happy about any of this. And so I just love that we carry on that understanding that God doesn't want this for His kids and His children no matter what nation they belong to. And then we get this incredible lamentation for Egypt in chapter 32, which you can see of, "I just don't want this. This isn't what I want for the human family." And then we hit chapter 33, which is such a fabulous chapter. So we can just go right over there and jump in to that one.
- Hank Smith: 01:26 That long bridge reminds me of Enoch. Why are you weeping? Why does God weep?
- John Bytheway: 01:33 It's poetry, isn't it, Hank? And shed forth their tears as rain upon the mountains. It's like, wow. That's-
- Hank Smith: 01:39 Yeah. And in Moses 7, Enoch says to the Lord, "How is it that thou canst weep seeing that thou art holy from all eternity to all eternity?" And he goes on and says, "You've made all this. It's amazing. Why do you weep?" In verse 32, the Lord said unto Enoch, "Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto

man his agency; and I gave them a commandment, that they should love one another, they should choose me their Father; but they are without affection, and they hate their own blood." And then He goes on later, "Wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?" Is that the message, Jan, of those chapters?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 02:22 Yes. And I was just going to put one in 32:18 just to go along with what you said. Look what He tells Ezekiel, "Son of man wail for the multitude of Egypt." There's that theme of sorrowing and lamenting and crying over people's choices and what's happened. There is no pleasure for the Lord in this. This isn't what He wants for His people.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 02:44 Well, what's fun about it is we just did that great stuff on the watchman in the tower back and now we hit 33. And if you look at your chapter heading, that's the very first word that appears. But the verse that starts it is verse 6. And we go back to this. "If the watchman see the sword coming and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned, if the sword come ..." Then suddenly you're back to Ezekiel, the watchman on the tower. If you look at verse 7, "I have set thee a watchman unto the House of Israel. So hear my word and warn them from me." So fun. We just had our little bridge of all the lamentations and worrying about it, but now we're back to let's try and prevent this. Let's get the warnings going. And you're still that person that I need you on the tower. But chapter 33 is fantastic. So I'm happy for you guys to jump in with any verses that you like, especially there's just lots to like about chapter 33.

Hank Smith: 03:36 I like how He's mentioning again to Ezekiel, "Don't forget your role with all that you've seen. Do not forget your role."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 03:43 We could start with looking at verse 10 just because we've had this theme of what is repentance like? And He says, "Oh, thou son of man speak unto the House of Israel. Thus you speak saying, 'If our transgressions and our sins be upon us and we pine away in them, how should we then live?'" So again, repentance is about coming to grips with the past about making the past something we can make right and be at peace with. But a lot of us do pine away in our sins for way too long, and carry them on, but we can't live like that. And then you get this again, the same theme in verse 11 "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." I've provided you this atonement. I want you to use it. I want you to utilize it. Please just use it. Why will you die? There's that question again right there at the end of verse 11.

Hank Smith:	04:34	So pine away is that like we're rotting? Is that like it's so heavy we're rotting away?
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	04:39	When you see people, I can relate to this a little more from maybe the dating perspective. When you like someone that doesn't like you back, and you keep pining away for them, this unrequited love that you have. You just kind of hang about in your room, and you never come out and you're sad, and you're just pining away after something that you can't solve or can't have. And so that's what comes to me is just an inability to move on beyond accepting the truth of the fact that this person is never going to requite back how you feel. So you kind of need to move on from there. But we struggle with that.
Hank Smith:	05:14	With our sins. Oh come on, our sins, it's going to give me happiness, it's going to give me happiness. My sins are going to give me happiness. And finally you got to let go of that fantasy. And the Lord's going, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.
John Bytheway:	05:29	Never going to work though.
Hank Smith:	05:31	Keep going Jan. Keep walking us through this chapter.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	05:35	Okay, we've kind of had some of these themes previously. When you start looking in verse 12, He's giving him a direction to keep telling the people about what righteousness does, how wickedness works. And so kind of these same themes. And it's just funny to think about sometimes how hard it is for us to get this message. When I do good things, good consequences come. And when I don't do good things, negative consequences come. And the Lord just kind of walks you through that again, and you just see the logic, the simplicity of choice, and accountability, and agency, and how we can function in that a little more healthily. But it's just some commentary to me on why we struggle so much to get that. But we do.
Hank Smith:	06:16	It's a simple lesson but it is a difficult one to learn.
Dr. Jan J. Martin:	06:21	Yeah. But as we grow and develop, I think we get a little bit wiser, and maybe we can be making better choices and not always keep going around in these kind of cycles there.
John Bytheway:	06:31	I'm looking in verse 21 and thinking, look at the calendar they're keeping. In the 12th year of our captivity, the 10th month, the fifth day. I mean we're marking our time as exiles. One that had

escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me saying, "The city is smitten."

- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 06:48 You have to imagine what this is like for Ezekiel though. Because remember he's been told he's going to have pushback. He's had plenty of pushback. And now you have somebody coming from the destruction who's telling them that it actually happened. And so just imagine that setting with the people who didn't believe him, the people who did, and how Ezekiel might be feeling when the confirmation comes. And you see verse 22, "The hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening, Afore," that means before, "he that was escaped came, and had opened my mouth until he came to me in the morning, and my mouth was opened and I was no more dumb." So here we go. I've been communing with the Lord, the destruction happened, and now we have this person coming and confirming it. And then he gets to tell some more things from 23 on. But you just have to go, what a moment for Ezekiel to receive that confirmation that everything he had been saying was right in reality, and what that might have done to the group there.
- Hank Smith: 07:47 Yeah, the shock of that news, Jerusalem actually fell. Is it Lehi in the Book of Mormon who says, "It's been told to me too."
- John Bytheway: 07:56 Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 07:57 Yeah. Second Nephi chapter 1 is where he says that, doesn't it? Well he may say it earlier than that actually as well, but there's certainly one in 2 Nephi 1.
- Hank Smith: 08:05 Yeah, he got word of it too. Yeah. Let's keep going.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 08:09 Okay, so one thing to point out in the final bits of chapter 33, jump down, look at verse 27. We now have a confirmation that the homeland has been destroyed and now we are living in captivity. And he says, "Say thou thus unto them, thus saith the Lord God, 'As I live surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword and him that is in the open field will I give to thee the beast to be devoured.'" And he goes on with this consequences that this kind of thing will keep happening as long as you're wicked. So can we use what happened to Jerusalem? Can you learn from what happened over there? And let's have you captives turn this around, and make sure that where you're living and where you're establishing yourself that you can start keeping your covenants and moving forward. And we really need to learn how to learn from other people.

Hank Smith: 09:04 Yeah. And that's the one thing about consequences too, is they don't stop when you're like, "Hey, I've had enough." They just keep coming.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 09:11 Yeah, this is tragic. Of course they're going to be upset about the loss of Jerusalem, but we need to internalize that message and say, "Okay, if I don't want this to happen to me, what can I do differently than that?" Now sadly, when you look down at verse 31, he's talking, "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people and they hear thy words ..." But look at the problem. "But they will not do them. For with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."

Hank Smith: 09:44 Oh man, that is an incriminating verse.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 09:49 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 09:50 I love verse 32. "And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument, for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

Hank Smith: 10:01 Oh King Benjamin, "If you believe all these things, see that you do them."

John Bytheway: 10:05 "See that you do them."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 10:06 "See that you do them."

Hank Smith: 10:08 Yeah.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 10:08 Yeah. So what a great commentary on, we all have good intentions, and we all have desires to do things, but part of what we are judged on isn't just our desires, it's our works. And there's both of those factors there. And I'm really glad that we have all these professions of goodness and want to do these things, but the proof is in the behavior, and we need to just live and change. And as you're changing and you're acting them out, that's really who you are.

Hank Smith: 10:37 "They hear thy words but they will not do them." That's a verse that hits you. Because I've done that. I've done that many times. Heard it and gone, "That is a good thing to do." And then I never did it.

John Bytheway: 10:49 I never went out and did it.

Hank Smith: 10:50 Yeah, we just got through conference and how many of us heard all these great words and thought, "Those are good things to do," and then went right back to what we were doing before? Yeah.

John Bytheway: 11:02 You know what I loved in one of our recent episodes, Hank, was that reminder that when President Monson gave that last talk and pled with everybody to read the Book of Mormon, who went out and did it? President Nelson.

Hank Smith: 11:16 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 11:17 There's pictures of him out on his patio just with his books all out on the table there studying, and took that very seriously. He heard the words and he did them.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 11:26 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 11:27 Oh that can be an encouraging verse as well, not just, I don't have to feel so much guilt. I can also say, "You know what? He's right. I'm going to do it." And then get started doing something. Oh man, I'm glad you pointed those verses out. That's rough.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 11:41 They're so beautiful. I mean there's just beauty in the picture of this and the language of it. And then just the ending of chapter 33, "When this cometh to pass, lo, it will come. Then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them." I mean you would think they'd already know that because of what happened to Jerusalem, and all of his words came about. But those kinds of evidences don't generally bring about conversion, they're just kind of a nice little thing. But it's that doing and the applying that helps you really understand that there's a prophet amongst you. Because he's told you, you've tried it, you found out for yourself that this was true. And suddenly you have that strengthening confirmation that he is indeed a prophet. Not just because of the signs and things like what Ezekiel's having happen here.

Hank Smith: 12:30 Yeah. I can't think of a section that we've read so far today that fits our day than these 30 to 33. I mean they talk like, "Let's all get together. It'll be wonderful. I pray we'll hear the Word of the Lord." And they hear it but they don't do it. Man, that is an incriminating verse. But it is, like I said before, it can be encouraging because there is time.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 12:56 Let's get to work. Let's be determined. And with general conference and things that they say, let's pick one thing. What if

we just picked one of those things, and tried it, and worked on it? Sometimes you leave conference with being a little bit overwhelmed by all the good things. But if we just picked one thing, it's like in that previous general conference we had about the percentage of just changing the small things, the aggregate percentages that we can have. If we just picked one thing to do differently, what would happen over time to us? We'd slowly aggregate improvement.

- John Bytheway: 13:28 Yeah. What was that? The aggregate of marginal gains or something?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 13:31 There we go. I couldn't think of the rest of it. I'm like, "Come on. What's the phrase?"
- John Bytheway: 13:35 The bicyclist that did tiny little things. Elder Dunn I think.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 13:39 Yeah, Elder Dunn. So we have a fun chapter that follows 33. 34 is a fascinating one because if you look at verse 2, we're now going to have the Lord talking specifically to the shepherds of Israel, not just to people in general. But this is the leadership, the people who should have protected the flock. And so you can just wander down through 3, 4, 5, and you just see they've not done what shepherds do. They've not helped. They weren't acting like Ezekiel being the watchman and helping in the way that they should have.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 14:14 Then you jump over to verse 7, and again, "Therefore you shepherds hear the Word of the Lord." You get it again in 9. "Hear the Word of the Lord." Verse 10, "Behold I'm against the shepherds." Well why? And you learn, "I'm going to require my flock at their hand and cause them to cease feeding the flock." Why? Because they didn't do it. But the good news is for us, the end of verse 10, "I will deliver my flock from their mouth." So the Lord is very interested in making sure we have good leaders, and He's capable of making sure that that happens. But what a commentary on anyone who has leadership responsibilities.
- John Bytheway: 14:55 Yeah, I want to make sure I understand. So He's speaking to shepherds of Israel. They are political leaders? They are religious leaders? They are both?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:03 Yes. I'd say all of the above. The downfall of Jerusalem didn't just happen because of one of those aspects. It happened because of all of that. We have religious leaders who aren't doing things, the political leaders who aren't doing things. And even parents can be in this group of shepherds over their

children. The people just aren't leading the way that they need to lead. And anyone who has responsibility over others, I say, could fall into this category here.

- Hank Smith: 15:30 Yeah. He says, "You eat the fat, you clothe with the wool." So you're taking all the perks of your leadership, but you're not helping the diseased, you're not strengthening any of them that are sick.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:42 You kill them that are fed. I mean that's pretty bold. And so you've not healed, you're not taking care of the sick ones.
- Hank Smith: 15:49 You're not going after the wandering ones.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 15:52 No. You've just been so focused on your own self, that you've lost sight of what the purpose of leadership is. And it's not about you, it's about them.
- Hank Smith: 15:57 Yeah. You do that in exact contrast to John 10 where the Savior says, "I know my sheep, I love my sheep. I lay down my life for my sheep." Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 16:09 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 16:09 Right? But not ... The hireling runs away, but I'm the good shepherd.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 16:14 Yeah. So to start the fun bit, just start looking at verse 11, and look at what the Lord says about Himself. "For thus saith the Lord God, 'Behold, I, even I will both search out my sheep and seek them out.'" And then you get these beautiful verses of all the things He is going to do. 13, "I'll bring them out from the people, and gather them out from the countries, and I'll bring them to their own land and I'll feed them." And then 14, "I'll feed them in good pasture." And in 15, "I'll feed my flock and cause them ..." I mean, wow, what a contrast to what we've seen the previous shepherds doing. And now He's going to take it over and bring things around, and teach us what a good shepherd really does. So that's really fun.
- Hank Smith: 16:59 That is, "I will feed them in the good pasture on the high mountains." I'm circling all the "I's" here. "I will feed my flock."
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 17:06 And it just makes me think of verses where He says, "I can do my own work."
- Hank Smith: 17:11 Yeah, yeah.

John Bytheway: 17:12 So yeah, I mean I'm thinking of 23rd Psalm too. "Leadeth me beside still waters, good pastures."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 17:18 Yeah. And you jump over to verse 22, some really beautiful imagery, "I will save my flock and they shall no more be a prey."

Hank Smith: 17:27 Be a good leader. If you have stewardship over anyone, this is an indictment to make sure you're doing your role, you're doing your job.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 17:35 And then if you jump over and look at verse 28, you'll see, "And they shall no more be a prey," there's that word again, "to the heathen. And neither shall the beast of the land devour them. But they shall dwell safely and none shall make them afraid." So we kind of live in a day where lots of people have lots of different kinds of fears, and lots of concerns about different parts of life. But how nice to be there where we don't have to worry about that anymore.

Hank Smith: 18:03 Yeah, we're in very safe hands. Right?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 18:06 So really fun things. I like chapter 34 too. It's a good one.

Hank Smith: 18:10 It's a little more uplifting than the previous few.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 18:15 The previous ones. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 18:15 Ezekiel got some good things to share with us. Jan, there's a dozen or so more chapters. What should we highlight?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 18:21 Well for me, I particularly like 36 and 37. We just looked at 34, but 35 is really about, again, a destruction of another nation. It's the destruction of Edom. And so again, we can just kind of see that as part of our other recognitions that other people will receive consequences for that. But 36 goes back to why has Israel been scattered? And then 37's kind of a fun, I think, a dual prophecy chapter. There's lots of stuff that could apply to their people at the time, but also the second coming. And you can really see the uniting of different scriptural records there in 37. And then we will eventually get to the prophecy of the temple. So about chapter 40 all the way through the end is really all about this future temple. But it would be fun if we spent some time looking at chapter 47.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 19:13 So if we want to jump over to 36 for just a second and kind of see if there's things in there. Okay, so let's have a look at 36. A couple of verses that stand out to me. Verse 6, Ezekiel gives a

really bold commandment there to prophesy concerning the land of Israel. "Say unto the mountains, unto the hills, unto the river, unto the valley." So lovely imagery of who I'm going to be speaking to. And then we have the Lord kind of saying, "I have spoken with the consequences in my jealousy and in my fury." And hopefully people understand that God's jealousy and anger, or jealousy is about covenants. It's not about any other kind of jealousy. And His fury is manifested in just natural consequences. And the Lord's kind of explaining verse 7, "I've lifted up my hand and here's all the things that are happening to the people around you, and to you." So the wicked, and all of that.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 20:08

But we've kind of had a lot of that. So if we want to turn our page over, I'd just like to focus on the positive things. We know about the scattering, we know about the destruction by this time. We've had lots of that. But the cool thing is starting in verse 21, "But I had pity for mine holy name, which the House of Israel hath profaned among the heathen whither they went. Therefore say unto the House of Israel, thus saith the Lord God, 'I do not this for your sakes of House of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake.'" So the Lord is interested in preparing a way for the Son of God to come to provide Him with a place to be born, and a place to preach. And so He's going to do this amazing thing. And you start watching 23, 24, 25, 26 of what He's going to do to prepare a place for this covenant to continue, and for the Messiah to be born into there.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 21:06

And I just love phrases like at the end of verse 23, "When I shall be sanctified in you, when I shall take you from among the heathen, gather you out of all countries, I will bring you unto your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness and from all your idols. And I will cleanse you, and a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. Taking away that stony heart and give you a heart of flesh." Like, wow, what language? But that's the process of sanctification, of being redeemed. And this is what the Lord enjoys doing, His work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality eternal life of man. But that involves repentance, and changing, and sanctifying. So I love that part in chapter 36.

Hank Smith: 21:57

And Jan, this does feel like a dual prophecy that I'm preparing a way for the Messiah to come, but also for in the end days, the gathering of Israel.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 22:06

And because we have the first coming and the second coming of the Messiah, I think you could see both of them here. Got to get

Him to come the first time in order for Him to come the second time. But either way you can see it applies to both circumstances.

- Hank Smith: 22:19 I will gather you out of all countries. Yeah. That's a comforting message to these people, I'm sure.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 22:27 I hope so. Because they've had a rough time of it. This is rough living through all of this. And we do need messages of hope. And that's a real message of hope that the atonement is available, it encompasses all things, and we can move past all things. Be changed.
- Hank Smith: 22:42 Yeah. And it sounds like they'll look back and they'll loathe their sins. They'll be changed to where they'll ... He says in verse 31, "You'll remember your evil ways and you'll look back and you'll see what I see."
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 22:55 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 22:56 Tell us about 37, the dry bones.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 22:59 Well one of the things that this just strikes me, if you look at verse 2. So he's looking in this valley, and he sees there were very many in the open valley, and lo they," the bones, "were very dry." And something I had just written in my margin as I've been thinking about these people and these bones was, I just wrote, "No hope." That's really kind of a great way to describe people that don't have any hope. You're just kind of dried out, and there's no vitality anymore. And so what a fun question. "And He said unto me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' And I answered, 'Oh Lord God, thou knowest.'" Like what's-
- John Bytheway: 23:41 Yeah. What are you asking me for?
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 23:43 Yeah, I don't know. You're God. But then look what He has him do. And again, the Savior does this often where He'll let other people perform the miracles, or make the prophecies. He doesn't always do everything Himself. "But He said unto me, 'Prophecy upon these bones and say unto them, "Oh, you dry bones hear the Word of the Lord.'" So if you connect the fact that they're very dry, and they have no hope, well what is the solution to having no hope? Hear the Word of the Lord, and then the Lord can cause these breath to enter, and that vitality restored. And you just see this cool resurrection of these dry bones returning.

Hank Smith: 24:23 The sinews, and flesh, and the skin.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:25 Yeah. And ye shall live. Like what better imagery about what the Lord offers us than that?

Hank Smith: 24:33 Yeah. And that, I think how many of our listeners are going through things where they feel like they have dry bones?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:39 Yes.

Hank Smith: 24:40 No hope.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:41 Nothing's ever going to be better.

Hank Smith: 24:43 And I'll bring it all back. That's beautiful.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 24:47 We live in a dry climate in Utah. I think we all know about dry. I happen to be one that always has dry skin, and dry mouth, and dry lips. And just living up here in this kind of harsh, high elevation, dry desert environment. And so I can relate very well to just what's it like to feel moisturized and vital again. And there's the word of the Lord. And Ezekiel gets to do it. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 25:10 Yeah. He gets to take part in it. A valley of bones comes to life. I wanted to mention with this great story in Ezekiel 37, a talk from Elder Uchtdorf called The Infinite Power of Hope. I hope everyone will go look at this. We'll have a link to it on our show notes, followhim.co. But man, this is a beautiful talk about hope, and how you've mentioned, Jan, that these dry bones can kind of represent someone without hope. President Uchtdorf says, "The adversary uses despair to bind hearts and minds in suffocating darkness. Despair drains from us all that is vibrant, and joyful, and leaves behind the empty remnants of what life was meant to be. Despair kills ambition, it advances sickness, pollutes the soul, and deadens the heart." This fits exactly doesn't it? "Despair can seem like a staircase that leads only and forever downward. Hope, on the other hand is like the beam of sunlight rising up and above the horizon of our present circumstances. It pierces the darkness with a brilliant dawn. It encourages and inspires us to place our trust in the loving care of an eternal heavenly Father who has prepared a way for those who seek for eternal truth in a world of relativism, confusion and fear." He then talks about what hope is. He says, "Never surrender, never allow despair to overcome your spirit. Embrace and rely upon the hope of Israel, for the love of the Son of God pierces all darkness, softens all sorrow, and gladdens every heart." That's the infinite power of hope from

Elder Uchtdorf. And it kind of fits this story of these dry bones coming to life.

- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 26:57 It does. And I just want to point out verse 11, as you're talking about that, and make this connection with their loss of hope. He says, "The bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold they say our bones are dried and our hope is lost. We are cut off for our parts." And so your quote from Elder Uchtdorf of how do we restore hope when we feel that way? The whole House of Israel is kind of feeling that way.
- Hank Smith: 27:24 Yeah.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 27:25 Such a great image, this valley of dry bones. And how are we going to get back from this, and turn to the Lord and get focused on his Word again? And let's get that life breathing back into you.
- Hank Smith: 27:36 I love the Lord asked Ezekiel the question, "Hey, you think we could bring this back?" He's like "... If you say so."
- John Bytheway: 27:46 Yeah, I have a question. When you take a people captive and you bring them to your place in Babylon, what do you have them do? Okay, farm land here and we'll tax you. Were they slaves, servants? Are they contributing to the national economy? Why would they take them there and keep them alive? Do they ...
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 28:02 Well they are. So this group that goes out into the river bottoms, I suppose, is going to be used to help with the agriculture. And yes, they would be seen as slaves in that sense, second class citizens. But they're contributing to the economy. Also, when we take Daniel's people over into Babylon's culture and court, you see them being put to work. They're being wise men, they're being used. So the point of taking these people is to take the best of a conquered nation and bring all those resources and utilize them yourself. They're not going to be just on their own autonomous and doing whatever they want. They're certainly going to be having to respond to the conquering nation. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 28:44 And they're not just held in a prison either? They're, "Okay now get to work, and we'll tax you. And grow some stuff and we'll eat it."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 28:53 Yeah, we're going to try and assimilate you as best we can into producing for us, so we can utilize your talents and your abilities for the benefit of our nation.

Hank Smith: 29:00 Yeah. And by taking you out of your own land, you're much less likely to rebel because you don't know the area.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 29:04 So Nebuchadnezzar took, what, three different groups of captives, I believe, back, and took the best of everybody. He left all the poor people behind. So he's taken the working class, the upper class, the middle class, and is utilizing them for his benefit.

John Bytheway: 29:18 Yeah. And that's why Isaiah says, "Spades shall rule over them." Because nobody who could either start a revolt, or was very capable of leadership was left behind.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 29:29 That's really great that you're thinking about those Isaiah chapters, because once you leave everyone back in Jerusalem, you don't bring any of the upper class or the educated or anything, you take all of those and leave everyone behind. And so then who do you have to lead you? You're really in a tough spot by that point in their society.

Hank Smith: 29:44 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 29:45 Yeah, it sounded awful. Some of those chapters we were reading before, "They'll go find them, they'll hunt them down in the caves, and they'll die of pestilence." Back in 33:27. I was like, "Ugh, what a verse."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 29:55 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 29:55 Anyway.

Hank Smith: 29:58 This chapter of hope leads right into our famous missionary verses, right?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 30:02 Yeah. So we have the two stick chapter verses there, bringing in these two records. Now we obviously have to be careful contextually about understanding how those people would've understood those verses, as well as a modern interpretation. Because we tend to go Bible, Book of Mormon, but they don't have any of those things. And so they're not going to see it like that. And so a more contextual understanding is this plea to accept the messages of the prophets of the north. So Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, combined with those of the South, Micah,

Jeremiah, Habakkuk. So for them the house of Judah is the southern kingdom, and then the stick of Ephraim would be the northern kingdom. And we need to be careful and not overly do the application that we do today with Bible, Book of Mormon, because they just don't have those books. But they do have northern and southern. So this is that kind of unity that's been missing between the two kingdoms for a long time since they split.

- John Bytheway: 31:00 A national reunification of the northern and the southern kingdom, is one level of this.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 31:06 Yes. And then unifying all of their records between the different prophets that they have, and being willing to accept the Word. So that's how they would've understood it. But there's nothing wrong with the way that we understand it, but we just need to be careful and distinguish the two different understandings.
- Hank Smith: 31:21 Yeah. Much like we did with Isaiah. Look at the different levels.
- John Bytheway: 31:25 There could be multiple fulfillments and applications.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 31:29 Yeah. We love that. And how fun that the solution to the lack of hope is turning back to the Word of the Lord. And then that verse 16 of what type of the Word of the Lord are we talking about here? All of the words that have been available to both kingdoms is where you're going to find the rejuvenation and this hope, for them. For us, of course, we have a lot more books of scripture and that kind of thing.
- Hank Smith: 31:52 Yeah. So on the first level it's the reunification of this northern and southern kingdom. And then the second level is going to be books of scripture for Judah, the Bible, for Ephraim, the Book of Mormon. Join them to one, and they'll become one in thine hand.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 32:08 So your modern day point two. So I'd say first point, uniting the kingdom. Second point, uniting those kingdom scriptures. And then for us, we're going to bring in all the other Bible, Book of Mormon stuff after that.
- John Bytheway: 32:20 Well I think that's one of the reasons prophets are so skilled, and particularly Isaiah that we look at and say great are the words of Isaiah, is because he was able to make a prophecy with multiple fulfillments, with a current one and a future one at the same time. So Ezekiel is no exception to that. He's doing the same thing.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 32:38 Yeah. And so if you jump over and look at verse 22, you see some really specifics there. "I will make them one nation," which is what we're hoping for in the land, and hasn't been there for hundreds of years now, "upon the mountain of Israel. And one king shall be king to them all." Which hasn't happened for a long time. "And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms anymore at all." So, yeah, for them the yearning for the days where they were a unified kingdom, where there was one king. That's been around for a long time, and something that needs to be healed. And so it's fun to see the Lord addressing that.

Hank Smith: 33:17 Yeah. And hopefully their one king is the Lord.

John Bytheway: 33:20 Yeah, got to stop thinking the Assyrians, or the Egyptians, or whoever's your strongest ally,

Hank Smith: 33:26 Saul, David, or Solomon.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 33:29 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 33:29 Make your king the Lord. Because I remember, right, when they first chose a king didn't the Lord tell Samuel, "They have rejected me" Not you, "They've rejected me."

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 33:38 Yeah. And then you get verse 24 with this, "David, my servant shall be king over them." But this is that kind of genealogical line of David, which Christ comes through. What a way to revitalize these dry bones by pushing them to the future and looking at things that they really have desired for a long time, and haven't had. So a nice message to us. Let's look at our promises. Let's keep focusing on the things the Lord has promised for the future. It can really revitalize you and give you some hope.

Hank Smith: 34:08 Yeah, go back to your patriarchal blessing.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 34:11 Not forget the promises and things that are coming.

Hank Smith: 34:13 What did Elder Uchtdorf say once? "You can't understand the valleys of life, the pits of life until you're in the mountains of future experience. And you can look back and you can see." He's trying to give him a view from the future, that one day you'll look back and you'll see all of this the way I see it.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 34:31 Yeah. And so then the chapters that follow these ones, we have some discussion about the battles before the second coming.

God mentioned Armageddon, all of those. And then we suddenly hit chapter 40, which is, let's start on this temple. And so we get so much detail about the structure, the size, the rooms, the layout. You just go chapter after chapter through this temple. The fun one for us to talk about will be in chapter 47.

- Hank Smith: 34:59 Well their temple was destroyed. So this chapter 40, laying out this brand new temple, this would be fun to read because they know their temple is gone.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 35:07 Yeah. And their temple symbolized the presence of God amongst them. To have God leave ... Ezekiel even talks about that in some of those previous chapters, that the temple is no longer the House of the Lord, because they've defiled it, He's gone. And therefore it's burned to the ground. And then to give them the hope of a new one where God can come back and dwell is quite exciting for those poor dry bones. Let's get some hope going.
- Hank Smith: 35:36 Those poor dry bones.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 35:39 Okay, so you have Ezekiel, he's coming out on verse 1 in chapter 47 to the door of the house. So he gets to look out the front, "And the waters issued out." And so this water goes out eastward. And then you watch Ezekiel kind of interacting with the levels of this water. End of verse 3, it starts with his ankles. And then you have it coming to his knees. And then it goes to his loins. And then in verse 5, you're now swimming in a river that could not be passed over any other way. And then you get this great question, "Son of man has thou seen this?" And then he's like, "Well yeah." And brings him out into the return of the brink of the river.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 36:25 And then you see this in verse 8, they go out to the east country down into the desert, into the sea, and the waters are healed. That saltiness of everything is healed. "Everything liveth and moveth." So we have just had all those dry bones, we just watched everything become revitalized. And now we're talking about water, which is what makes everything vivid and green, and not dry. And the healing that this living water brings. And the Word of God is often described as living water.
- Hank Smith: 36:56 Yeah. Jesus himself said in John-

John Bytheway: 36:58 John 8. And it's interesting that it's fresh water, so it's living water. And the Dead Sea is not fresh water, it's what needs to be healed. It's like below sea level, right? The Dead Sea?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 37:09 Yes.

John Bytheway: 37:10 So that is a Latter-Day prophecy that the Dead Sea will be healed. This is a Latter-Day occurrence that waters will come out from under the temple like a spring or something.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 37:21 Yeah. Some really cool things to think about. In Utah, in the west out here, we're in the middle of a terrible drought. And so we can kind of relate to this shrinking of reservoirs and shrinking of seas. And the Great Salt Lake especially is on its way out, really. And that's very similar to the Dead Sea and the salty content. But when the water departs, the salt is all left, and you still have a desert and you still have a place. So it's fascinating to me that he's not just describing the healing of the sea, but the desert around it, and everything about it, that it needs this healing. It's fun to think about what that water is. I mean there's so many things you could choose. The Word of God, or covenants, or temple relationships, and the eternal families, and the way God heals things. But I don't know that you can find any better imagery than you find in Ezekiel with a lot of this. It's just powerful.

Hank Smith: 38:15 Yeah. That out of the temple will come healing. It'll cover the earth, and it'll heal anything it touches.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:21 Yeah. So we love that chapter.

John Bytheway: 38:24 Yeah. For it to come out from under the temple is pretty cool.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:28 Look to the temple when you're looking for that hope.

Hank Smith: 38:32 I like that Jan. Look to the temple for that hope. Jan, Dr. Martin, what a great day going through Ezekiel. How fun. I really see this book differently now. I think our listeners would be interested in your story as both a Bible scholar and a believing Latter Day Saint. What's that journey been like for you?

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 38:52 I think I've had a very unique journey. I know that when you read my bio before, it's kind of funny because there's this physical education, exercise, physiology side to my life, which was my first bachelor's, and my first master's. But then I switched over, did a second master's in early modern history, and then now Bible translation. So I have a broad academic set

of experience that goes from physiology, to history, to scripture. And so I feel like I've had an opportunity to be quite educated in a wide variety of important things.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 39:26 What happens with education is it gives you a chance to look at the details of things. One of my very favorite classes as an undergrad was anatomy. Because I was looking at the human body under every little tiny bit of it. I got to see every muscle, every bone, everything. And that was a spiritual experience because I learned that this body of ours is way too organized to have been an accident. So for me it was a testifying experience.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 39:53 But the same thing happens as I've gone into history, and gone into scripture, and how we translate scripture, and how we got our English scriptures. Especially because I look at words. I'm a kind of a word nut. And I look at a word like adamant and I'm like, "Well what does that mean? And where did it come from? And how did it get in the scriptures? And what is its theological meaning?" And suddenly I'm minutely looking at something. But when you start following it back, you just have these spiritual experiences that are helping you recognize where the Lord's hand is in all of this, and that none of this history, none of this Bible translation was accidental. And that the Lord is behind it in motivating it. And so my journey has been quite fascinating academically. But on every level of it, I have found my testimony being strengthened by the detail, and the small things, and the stuff that is just too organized, and too well planned to be coincidental.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 40:49 And so for me, it doesn't always happen that way. Plenty of academics go in different directions with their faith. But for me it's been revealing, it's been confirming. My education has strengthened me. It has done everything positive. But I've looked at it that way, and allowed that to happen. There's been a choice for me.

Dr. Jan J. Martin: 41:09 So it's been a fun journey. I've learned lots and it's been great. Some people out there know that I did not get married in my 20s, like a lot of Latter Day Saints do. I got married in my 40s, which is a little bit more unusual. And even in that journey of trusting the Lord's promises, of getting through 23 years of dating, which is a torture on its own self trying to date for that long of a time. Again, even those experiences have taught me that the Lord is in the details, that he had a plan for me, that I could trust Him, that His promises were real, and that I could move forward with hope. And even when circumstances didn't match what I was expecting, He had it covered, and He got me, and He had me in His hands, and I was okay. And so even those

journeys have strengthened my testimony. So I have a very strong testimony of God, and my education and my personal experiences have just confirmed Him as a reality for me.

- Hank Smith: 42:08 Awesome. John, what a fun day.
- John Bytheway: 42:10 Yeah. Changed the book of Ezekiel for me. And boy, I've got some great notes here. Remember our past with peace. That is an adamant for me. That's a gem. That's a diamond.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 42:22 Awesome.
- John Bytheway: 42:23 Thank you for sharing that. And I'm also eager to get a copy of, *And They Shall Grow Together: The Bible in the Book of Mormon*. I think our listeners will be blessed by that too.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 42:34 Yeah, there's lots of great scholarship in there to help us understand the connection between the Bible, Book of Mormon. And I hope I contribute something very helpful to 2 Nephi 5. Which can be a troubling chapter, so it's worth your time.
- Hank Smith: 42:47 Well, thank you Dr. Jan Martin for being here. I'm sure this isn't the last time we'll see you.
- Dr. Jan J. Martin: 42:51 Hope not. I'd love to come again another time. Love it.
- John Bytheway: 42:54 Let's do.
- Hank Smith: 42:55 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 have another episode of FollowHIM.
- John Bytheway: 43:09 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 LORD REALLY WANT TO FORGIVE ME?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello my friends. Welcome to another FollowHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with the incredible John Bytheway. If you've been following FollowHIM Favorites this year, you know that we take a single question from each week's lesson. John, the lesson we're on this week is Ezekiel, the whole book. The whole book of Ezekiel, and there's a point in the manual where it makes a very simple statement. It said, "The Lord wants to forgive." And then it points us to a couple of verses in Ezekiel, like Ezekiel 33, where the Lord says, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Turn ye turn ye from your evil ways." And it also points us to Ezekiel 36, right in the middle, verse 26.
- Hank Smith: 00:43 He says, "I can give you a new heart and a new spirit. I will put my spirit in you." And going back to the manual, the Lord wants to forgive. So John, the question is, does the Lord really want to forgive us? It says it right here in the manual that he does. He says it, but how do I convince a young person, a young single adult, someone that the Lord does want to forgive you?
- John Bytheway: 01:06 Wow, such a good question. It's so hard to miss in the scriptures. I don't think the Lord would invite us to repent unless he intended to forgive. Every time he asks us to repent, it's I want to forgive you, but you just need to ask, and acknowledge that and I want to forgive you. I think the fact that the sacrament table is there every week is evidence that he wants to forgive us. Anybody reading the scriptures will see the Lord is inviting us to repent. The first principles of the gospel, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ second, what?
- Hank Smith: 01:42 Repentance. If it's the second thing talked about, I'm pretty sure he assumed we were going to need it.
- John Bytheway: 01:49 Right. And I remember last year, Hank, when we were studying the Doctrine and Covenants, seeing just a sermon in a sentence, five words, Section 64 I think. "I the Lord forgive sins," that's what he does. And that's one of those verses to write in your heart and to let you know what he's like, what God is like. He is a forgiving God.

Hank Smith: 02:11 In fact John, Joseph Smith thought that God's chief characteristic not one of his chief characteristics, not one of many, but his one chief characteristic is mercy, that God is merciful. And when we go to him and in sincerity, ask for forgiveness, I think he is quick to forgive. I think Elder Holland called it a satanic sucker punch to think that it takes eons and eons to be forgiven of your sins. No, you can repent as quickly as you can sincerely pray. That quick to be forgiven of your sins. The Lord wants to forgive you. He wants to be able to bless us. Now, he says, "I can't save you in your sins, but I can save you from your sins, and I want to save you from your sins."

John Bytheway: 02:56 And Hank, we're both dads of children. And one of the things that, boy I learned so quickly, you have a child come to you with their lower lip quivering, and "Dad, I made a mistake. I spilled something, I did something wrong." I'll tell you, it melts your heart. You are so eager to, "Oh, it's okay." It's so eager to forgive in that moment. Now somebody tries to hide something from you, it's a little different. But when a child comes and says, "Dad, I did something stupid. I made a mistake." You don't even care what it is at that point, you're so eager to forgive. And I think that being a dad taught me a lot about what you just called his chief attribute there.

Hank Smith: 03:38 And John, I think we need to remember that the Lord likes to forgive over and over and over again because sometimes, as we've talked about previously, we backslide, we go back to our sins and we think I repented once but now that I've gone back to it, he doesn't want to forgive me. No, He wants to forgive those sins too, the ones that you accidentally fall back into. So, even if you're returning to a sin over and over and over, and you want to get out of it, keep going to the Lord for forgiveness. It doesn't mean you're not repenting. You're just repenting relentlessly. And he is forgiving delightfully along the way, and eventually you're going to get to where you want to be.

John Bytheway: 04:17 I think if the Lord counsels us to forgive seven times 70, then that teaches us that he is equally forgiving again and again and again. And I think that sometimes we sin, we make a mistake. We're not wanting to, but we sin again. But I love to remember that he is forgiving. He asks us to forgive seven times 70. He's probably really good at that trait he's asking us to have.

Hank Smith: 04:46 Yeah. I noticed last year in the Doctrine and Covenants, how often he said, "Your sins are forgiven you." He just wanted to put that in there.

John Bytheway: 04:52 To the same people.

Hank Smith:	04:53	Yeah. No matter what question they ask, he's like, by the way, have I told you you're forgiven today? You're forgiven of your sins.
John Bytheway:	05:00	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	05:00	And it's that idea, John, that if we are sincerely wanting to be like him, which I'm sure that our audience is thinking, Yes, that's what I truly want. I truly want to be like him. I just make so many mistakes. Then you just keep trying and he'll keep forgiving, and eventually you're going to get to where you want to be. It's going to happen for you. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. We're with Dr. Jan Martin, covering the book of Ezekiel. You're going to love her and you're going to love the lessons she brings out. So, come find us wherever you get your podcast, or find us on YouTube and then come join us next week for another FollowHIM Favorites.