



“I Will Love Them Freely”

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 is Hosea a love story between God and His people? Dr. Aaron Schade examines the symbolism of the Bride and Bridegroom and the deep and everlasting love between God and covenant Israel.

Part 2:

Dr. Schade returns to explore the Book of Joel and a clarion call to return to the Lord and be prepared to meet Him.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Aaron Schade
- 01:35 Introduction of Dr. Aaron Schade
- 03:26 How to approach Hosea and Joel
- 04:32 Historical backdrop of Hosea
- 08:31 Meaning of the name Hosea
- 09:52 Marriage and children in Hosea
- 12:06 Metaphor of bride, groom, and betrayal
- 15:00 Israel keeps betraying Jehovah
- 17:24 Where to look when hopeless
- 22:11 Judah doesn't trust in the Lord and the covenant
- 26:57 Don't lose hope
- 28:46 Repent and return
- 29:42 Elder Eyring relates how Hosea changed his life
- 35:54 Reaping what you sow
- 39:41 Morning of forgiveness
- 44:51 Inscription from Sam'al
- 46:25 Making and keeping covenants
- 52:09 End of Part I–Dr. Aaron Schade

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Aaron Schade
- 00:07 The covenant comes with high expectations and returns
- 01:13 How to approach the Book of Joel
- 05:35 Why Joel mentions locusts
- 07:23 Using the Jewish Study Bible
- 09:35 Physical and spiritual devastation
- 14:12 Blowing the trumpet
- 18:50 Does Joel feature restoration of Israel?
- 22:44 Hope amidst horror
- 26:54 God is present through sorrow
- 30:59 How do we abide the Second Coming?
- 38:59 President Nelson encourages us to “Hear Him”
- 42:35 Spiritually understanding Joel
- 47:50 Eclipses in the ancient world
- 52:20 Hosea and Joel contain hope
- 54:36 Dr. Schade shares his personal experience as a Saint and a scholar

- 1:01:26 End of Part II–Dr. Aaron Schade

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Biographical Information:



Aaron Schade is a professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University and teaches courses on religion and ancient Near Eastern languages, history, and archaeology. Schade is the codirector of the Khirbat Ataruz Excavation in Ataruz, Jordan. He completed his graduate studies at the University of Toronto in Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and is a faculty member at the BYU Jerusalem Center

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| Hank Smith: | 00:01 | Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:09 | And I'm John Bytheway. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:11 | 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 another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host. And I am here with my co-host, who is gracious and merciful and slow to anger and of great kindness. John, when I read Joel chapter two, I thought of you, that you are gracious and merciful and slow to anger. I don't think I've ever seen you angry. Have you ever been- |
| John Bytheway: | 00:39 | Really? |
| Hank Smith: | 00:40 | ... angry, John? I would think people would want to know that. I don't think I've ever seen you angry. I've known you for a long time. When was the last time you got angry? Was it like 2006 or something? |
| John Bytheway: | 00:50 | I can be irritable almost daily, but I try not to be angry. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:54 | Okay. I can be irritable. I can be irritating. John, the other one I thought of as I read Joel 2, but I just didn't want to do this because it just says, "Your old men shall dream dreams," and I was going to ask you how your dreams have been lately, but I thought that would be mean. So I went with Joel 2:13. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:13 | I would dream dreams if I slept that well. |

Hank Smith: 01:15 Yeah. That's probably the beauty of old men shall dream dreams. They're like, "Wow, the old men get to sleep."

John Bytheway: 01:22 I think as you get older, you fall asleep when you're not supposed to and you can't sleep when you're trying to.

Hank Smith: 01:27 When you're supposed to. Well, a message from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All right.

01:35 Hey, John, we are in the Books of Hosea and Joel today. Probably not ones that our listeners are very familiar with, and so we wanted to bring someone who knew these books backwards and forwards. So who's here? Who's joining us?

John Bytheway: 01:48 Hank, we mentioned this book when we had Dr. Belnap on, and there's a lot of contributing authors here, but Aaron Schade is one of the main... Would you say compilers of this thing?

Hank Smith: 01:58 Yeah, he's the editor.

John Bytheway: 02:00 Dan Belnap and Aaron Schade were the editors. Aaron is a Professor of Ancient Scripture at BYU, teaches courses on religion and ancient Near Eastern languages, history, and archeology. Now, here's where Aaron's going to help me pronounce. Aaron is the co-director of the Khirbat Ataruz Excavation.

Hank Smith: 02:19 How did he do, Aaron? How did he do there?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 02:22 Yes.

John Bytheway: 02:22 Ataruz, Jordan?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 02:23 Fantastic.

Hank Smith: 02:24 Nice job.

John Bytheway: 02:24 Is it close enough? He completed his graduate studies at the University of Toronto in Near and Middle Eastern civilizations. He's a faculty member at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. His research interests and publications include ancient Northwest Semitic inscriptions, archeology, and the Old Testament. He is married to the former Karla Bertram. They are the parents of Adam, Elizabeth, and David.

02:52 Hank, I love, every time we introduce somebody, to see how broadly these people have been educated. So University of

Toronto in Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. This is great. We're excited for this. Thank you for joining us, Dr. Schade, today. Thank you.

- Dr. Aaron Schade: 03:08 My pleasure. Happy to be here.
- Hank Smith: 03:10 I've got to tell you, John, I've known Aaron for a few years here, and he is brilliant and kind, both. Top of the scale, both brilliant and kind. He's as good as gold. I could call you Dr. Schade, but today, I'm going to call you Aaron, if that's okay.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 03:22 Perfect.
- John Bytheway: 03:23 We become less formal during the podcast.
- Hank Smith: 03:26 Aaron, for our listeners who don't know these books very well, how should we approach them? What do we need to know before we start? How do you usually approach these books?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 03:35 Hosea, for example, is one of those books that just doesn't get a lot of attention. Part of it is just because by verse two through four, you're just scratching your head and you're wondering, "What in the world is going on?" And we start putting God on trial. We try examining him. What are you doing? Why are you asking Hosea to do something like this? Where really, the gist of the book is trying to get us to examine ourselves.
- 04:00 Hosea is a book about love, it's about a relationship with God. It's about one that's trying to get us to examine ourselves and our relationship with Him. So if we can just sort of muscle past the first couple of verses and see them for what they're saying, we start to see that this is a deep love story between us, ancient Israel, and by extension, our relationship to God. I think that that's a good starting point for Hosea. And we can talk a little bit about the imagery behind all of this and what's going on in this marriage that Hosea is asked to engage in from the very start.
- John Bytheway: 04:32 Aaron, give us kind of a quick historical backdrop. I think our listeners are now acquainted with the phrases, the Assyrian captivity and the Babylonian captivity. They know about Isaiah and Jeremiah. Where does Hosea fit with that backdrop?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 04:48 This is mid-eighth century. The book tells us in verse one that this is the word of the Lord that came in the days of Beerli, of Hosea, the son of Beerli, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. Which is very unusual because most of

the kings listed there are from the kingdom of Judah. So there's something about this where the focus of the book is predominantly on Israel, and this is taking us straight into the mid-eighth century where you have the Assyrians that are looming, Tiglath-Pileser will shortly start wreaking havoc on the region. And yes, we have the Isaiahs, the Amoses that are warning us that there is some trouble that's brewing and it's time to do something about that and to turn back to God.

05:33 So these books are trying to get us to think about returning to God. And it's in a time where we're meant to sort of read and reread and rethink what this is all about, because we'll see in chapter one, that this isn't just about the kingdom of Israel. Because he's listing all of these kings from Judah, those take us a century later. So part of what these children in this marriage are supposed to represent is, I think, a series of prophecies that aren't going to happen quickly, but that are going to happen through time. And this is taking place during the times of Jeroboam.

06:07 And if either of you have been to Tel Dan, I think you have, you notice that massive temple complex that's there. I mean, that's the footprint of Jeroboam II. That's the king we're talking about. So this is during a period of just unheard of prosperity in the kingdom of Israel, and they've outcast back in the Elijah stories, the nemesis is the kingdom of Aram, so the Arameans, and the stories of Naaman. And at this point now, the Arameans have been expelled, and essentially, the Israelite kingdom is expanding and the prosperity economically is just off the charts.

Hank Smith: 06:40 Wow.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 06:40 So we're going in now to where they're going to start feeling a little confident and a little loose in their relationship with God, and Hosea is going to have to address that.

Hank Smith: 06:49 Okay. So this is the time where we still have a Northern and Southern Kingdom.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 06:52 Yes.

Hank Smith: 06:53 Northern Kingdom has not been taken yet. But like you said, Assyria is looming.

John Bytheway: 06:59 Yeah, and you used... I have always wondered how to pronounce the king of Assyria. Will you say that again? Tiglath-Pileser? How did you say it?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 07:07 Tiglath-Pileser, yeah. He's just going to wreak havoc in this region. I really love the way a scholar whose name is Ehud Ben Zvi, he described the Book of Hosea as precisely the element of hope against a background of apparent hopelessness that has led to the book's wide use in Jewish liturgy. So even today, during services like Tisha B'Av, Hosea 14 in the Sephardic and Yemenite traditions are read. And during Shabbat Shuvah, which is the Sabbath between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the reading passages from Hosea to again remind people of hope and a future.

John Bytheway: 07:41 Wow.

Hank Smith: 07:42 That's awesome. What a great description, because how many of our listeners can identify with, "I need hope against a background of hopelessness."? I'm sure there are people listening right now who are like, "That's what I need."

John Bytheway: 07:55 Yeah. I remember hearing Victor Ludlow years ago was kind of characterizing these different kingdoms around this period of time, and he called Babylon the commercial, cultural, financial center. But he called Assyria the cruel military superpower. I still remember Tiglath-Pileser as the guy that's leading this military superpower that wreaks havoc, and that Isaiah prophesies that the Northern Kingdom is going to be taken captive by eventually. Did I get that right?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 08:29 Yeah, that's correct.

John Bytheway: 08:31 I did want to ask, because to me, sometimes Old Testament names kind of indicate a mission. What does the name Hosea mean? And I've heard people say Hosea too.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 08:43 Basically, it's rooted in the concept of saving. So ultimately, the book is trying to put forth a redemption template, one that brings encouragement amongst a situation that is admittedly bleak. And it's heading in that direction where after Jeroboam II, the Assyrian intervention will take place. And part of what these children are going to represent in chapter one is a description that's going to lead from a time where there won't be mercy, from a time where God will sow them, to a period where all of those things that are negated are going to be reversed in the next chapter that describe now a condition where we are now once again reunited with God. And that that hope is now moving forward in a very productive way against the backdrop of the exodus tradition, which is described in chapter two and being described now as a way for us to look forward to a future based on the trust that we put in our past.

Hank Smith: 09:41 Aaron, you are blowing me away here.

John Bytheway: 09:43 Yeah, this is great. I love this idea of hope in a backdrop. That's perfect. Way to just frame the whole thing.

Hank Smith: 09:52 Yeah, I think everybody listening just all of a sudden goes, "Yeah, that's me. That's what I need." Let's jump in then. Aaron, you keep talking about a marriage and children. What do you mean?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 10:02 When we get to Hosea 1:2-4, we begin to see this is the word of the Lord by Hosea. And he's told now to "go and take thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord." So immediately now, we're all scratching our head and saying, "What did God just command Hosea to do?"

10:24 I'm not sure that this is meant to be a biographical sketch of Hosea. I can only imagine him coming home and saying, "Hey, honey, guess what I said about you and the kids today when I was out teaching the people?" It's like, "It's the couch for you, and thanks, Dad." Whatever his familial circumstances are... And again, Isaiah is often used as a parallel to this because he names his children different things that prophesy of the future. So I'm not sure that Hosea is trying to get us to beat our head against the wall, trying to figure out what God is doing, but more to use these now to teach a message to say, "What are we as individuals and as people doing in our relationship to God?"

11:04 Because with this, he's starting to talk about name one of these children, Jezreel, which is a geographical place and region that factors in greatly to the Israelite kingdom during the eighth century, but it also has to do with God will sow. So we're starting now to see, and Sperry called this what he thought was a metaphoric description of prophecies and of Hosea's ministry amongst ancient Israel, and so that's how he described it.

11:34 Whatever Hosea's family life was like, it's clear that there are some metaphors going on here. And just to highlight this, Henry B. Eyring in a talk that he gave back in Conference of 1996, he said, "The Book of Hosea, like the writings of Isaiah, uses what seemed to me almost poetic images. The symbols in Hosea are a husband, his bride, her betrayal, and a test of marriage covenants almost beyond comprehension."

12:06 So what seems to be going on here is that the Lord is using sort of these images now, again, whatever Hosea's personal life was

like, it's clear that these images in Hosea chapter one are trying to get us to think now about the unthinkable. And that is, what is it like for a spouse to betray another spouse? And as you start thinking, you'll say, "This is horrific." The toll that that takes on the spouse is the toll that it takes on the children. The toll that it takes on anybody that loves them. And we just sit back horrified at the image, realizing that really, the comparison in the book is now think about how you treat God. Think about how you approach God. Because we're talking now about a spouse who will have undying love and fidelity to you covenantally. Do you have that same love and fidelity to Him?

12:58 So the book, it just takes us into these depths of just self-examination of what is it that I see in my covenants with God. And do I understand how much he actually loves and cares about me? Because these children now, that again, this concept of Jezreel, it has to do with sowing. So you just get this very deliberate type of attempt of God. Destruction is coming at the hand of the Assyrians within a few decades, and we just get now a prophecy that says that God is going to sow. So this concept of the scattering of Israel is going to become something that's very real, but also something very deliberate. Because, of course, when you plant a seed, you hope that eventually something grows from it. So again, the image of all of the horrific events that are on the horizon, the long game for God is what can grow and be accomplished through all of this.

13:49 And ultimately, we now see the series of children that are going to be born. Lo-Ruhamah is going to be the next one. It means not being pitied, not being extended mercy. And that doesn't mean infinitely, it just means essentially that justice has caught up. We're going to see that in chapter two, where for hundreds of years since the Exodus, God has been patiently working with Israel, trying to help them, loving them, giving them opportunities, and we're just getting to a point now where they're denying Him.

14:18 That's the name of the third child, Lo-Ammi, which means not my people. And some people see this as a divorce declaration, but it's really quite different than the actual formula used in the Hebrew Bible. So this isn't so much as a divorce, as much as a separation, and it's a separation that's initiated by the people, not God. So it's clear that God wants the people back, that He cares for them. And ultimately, that this chapter is now trying to set us up for what will follow in the last couple of verses and lead us into chapter two, which is about a restoration, a redemptive paradigm that brings all of these negative things into a positive sphere of blessing God's children.

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| Hank Smith: | 15:00 | So if I'm teaching this at home or if I'm teaching this at church, don't get caught up on the marriage itself or what's happening there. I hear you saying, "That's not the point." Hosea doesn't want us to all of a sudden, "Okay, focus in. Why would God give this calling?" This is just an introduction to a much broader message of this is Israel married to Jehovah, and Israel keeps breaking the covenant, and how would Jehovah feel. |
| Dr. Aaron Schade: | 15:26 | And it's not that those details are unimportant and it's not like we're trying to skirt the issue, it's just that it's frustratingly shallow in providing a biographical sketch. And same thing with chapter three is you just look at it and just an example of when it says, "Go and take you a wife," at the beginning of the first couple of verses here, that deviates from the normal marriage pattern in the Hebrew Bible. So there's some indications that this isn't trying to get us a focal point on the literal marriage between Hosea and his wife, and he probably was married, he may have been married. What this all represents, Gomer, or Gomer, is from a verb that means finished. So just even when we go into this, "Go, take yourself a wife from a people that are almost finished." |
| Hank Smith: | 16:09 | Wow. |
| Dr. Aaron Schade: | 16:10 | It is trying to tell us that time is running out. What I love about Hosea is that it takes the onus off of God, and throughout the book, there are several things that are saying that the people have made decisions against the will of God that are bringing the Assyrians onto their doorstep. So we'll see that Israel has hired her lovers and they have gone to Assyria and they could not heal her. And we just sort of get this impression now that they're looking for answers in places where they'll never find them, when they have this loving God with outstretched arms who's always there trying to welcome them back and who's pleading with them to come back. |
| | 16:48 | I mean, that's how chapter two, which is actually... Hosea chapter one ends in the Hebrew Bible at verse nine, but verses 10, 11, and then chapter two are all about pleading with your mother, which is, again, a conception of what Israel is. And even within the book, there's some passages in here that talk about Israel as a people, as a land, are the ones who are whoring after other gods. And ultimately, that's what I really love about the book is it's trying to say instead of pointing the finger at God as being this mean, angry, menacing, punishing God of the Old Testament, we've never seen him through a more loving and kind light than in the Book of Hosea. |

Hank Smith: 17:24 That's awesome. And I love what you said there, "You're looking for answers in places you will never find them." That's so applicable to today. When we are on a background of hopelessness, we often ourselves go look for answers in places we won't find them. You won't find your answers. I think Jacob says something like that. You spend money on that which hath no worth. You labor for that which cannot satisfy. John, did you want to jump in before we keep going?

John Bytheway: 17:53 Sure. I just love the metaphor of the marriage. I think it continues. In the Book of Mormon class, we were talking about this super strong words for talking about this great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth. And whoa, my parents wouldn't let us use that word when we were little.

18:13 And then all through to the New Testament, here comes the bridegroom. The bridegroom comes, are you ready? I mean, Isaiah talks about the daughters of Zion and how they're wearing all these ornaments and round tires like the moon, and mufflers, and cringing pins and all this. And it really helped me to see that this was a marriage and they were betrothed, and they were trying to attract other lovers. And as you said, Aaron, what could be more hurtful than the betrayal of a spouse? So we're supposed to see, "Yeah, and God, Jehovah is the bridegroom, and how are we behaving as the bride?" So I love the metaphor and that he would use strong words like that, because it's imagining the most hurtful thing possible, I think.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 18:58 It really is trying to get us to understand that God has never given up. Chapter two addresses that quite a bit.

19:05 We mentioned in Hosea 1:4, it talks about Jehu will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And of course, we know that he was anointed to do so by a prophet. And he goes and in the midst of purging the Omri Dynasty, for whatever reason, unknown to any of us, he turns and starts thrashing part of the house of Judah. Ahaziah's in the region at the time for whatever reason. And he turns on the house of Judah and then goes after them and their household, which essentially puts Athaliah, who is the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, on the throne in Judah, and it just wreaks havoc in both kingdoms now.

19:45 Jehu is in this famous inscription from Shalmaneser III, it depicts him bowing down in tribute to the Assyrians. I think we see quite a bit of that in the Book of Hosea, again with this concept of you sold yourselves off to Assyria. And kind of what you were talking about earlier, I think it's Isaiah 50 that talks about, "Where is the bill of thy mother's divorcement? To whom have I

sold you?" And the response is, "I haven't sold you to anybody. You've sold yourselves off to this."

- John Bytheway: 20:15 You sold yourselves.
- Hank Smith: 20:17 You left me.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 20:18 Yeah. That's really, I think, what's happening. Now, and particularly, there is a direct mechanism that's involved in this, and that is that Jehu's taken them into a first stage of vassalage to Assyria. So when you start striking deals with Assyria, it may temporarily work out, but it's not a long-term solution in most cases.
- Hank Smith: 20:36 All of these things are so applicable. I can see. We go to other places for hope, we go to other places for answers. And they may be short term, they may be self-medicating, but they're not long term. They won't last. I'm trying to do the application here, and you're making it so easy. I can just see it as you talk.
- John Bytheway: 20:53 I was thinking of that song from my teenage years, probably not yours, Hank or Aaron, but looking for love in all the wrong places. We're looking in the wrong places for peace and for hope, like Jacob said.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 21:05 And it's interesting because we see in here in chapter 1, verse 7, "I'll have mercy upon the house of Judah." So again, this concept of mercy where we had Lo-Ruhamah to the kingdom of Israel, which not being pitied. But Judah will have mercy. It says, "I'll save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by the bow, nor by the sword, nor by battle or by horses." This seems to be referencing forward to a time where you remember when the Assyrians are camped out on Jerusalem's doorstep under Hezekiah, and ultimately, they do not win that battle with swords, with conflicts. There's a plague of death or something goes through their camp. So this seems to be foreshadowing something of that nature that says, "You know what? God really does have mercy, but you've got to come back to him."
- Hank Smith: 21:49 You've got to choose him. So Israel is going to be destroyed while Judah will last a little bit longer.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 21:55 Until the Babylonians, yeah..
- John Bytheway: 21:57 And Jerusalem will be protected in that battle you're talking about. Which is always interesting because when Lehi is saying,

"No, Jerusalem's going to be destroyed," they could go to their own past and say, "No, it was protected last time."

- Dr. Aaron Schade: 22:11 And they did appeal to that in the Book of Mormon. There is a sense of overconfidence in both the Book of Jeremiah and in the Book of Mormon, that God will protect us. This is his city, this is our place of refuge. And ultimately, we're turned back to again this conception that when you get to the Book of Jeremiah, you're going to see that there's these pro-Babylonian, pro-Egyptian factions, and people are trying to appeal to both for answers when Jeremiah is giving them the directive. The question is who's going to listen, who's going to respond.
- Hank Smith: 22:41 Yeah, this is fantastic. Let's keep going. How do we want to look at chapters two and three, Aaron?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 22:48 Chapter two is interesting because at the end of chapter one, which again, ends in verse nine with the Hebrew Bible. So the paradigm shifts in verses 10 and 11 to what really sounds like language of the Abrahamic Covenant. Your numbers will be as the sand of the sea, and blessings of prosperity that are going to come forth. And you are not my people, and there it shall be said to them, "You're the sons of the living God." So you're going to be gathered together under one head. So this really does have sort of an eschatological feel to it to a point where the house that's been divided under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, at some stage, will be reunited under one head, and that will be God. And that'll take us later into Joel when He comes again and when the earth is reunited under his kingship and everyone acknowledges that. So there's really this great feel to it.
- 23:40 Chapter two shifts to, "Brethren, Ammi. You are my people." So the negation is gone there. So where you were not my people, you are now going to be called my people. And when you were not pitied, now you are Ruhamah. So you are pitied, you are extended mercy, but you've got to plead with your mother, you've got to plead with your people.
- 24:00 So this began. It takes a larger eschatological feel to it. Because this isn't just about one place and one time in one region. This now seems to be shifting to a time where the earth will receive its paradisiacal glory and the parlance of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Because verse three, it takes us back to the Exodus. So it says, "Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst." So this is taking us back to now when Israel became a people through the

Exodus, and God nurtured them and cared for them and loved them and set up a covenant with them.

24:41 And now it says that in verse five, she said, "Nope, I'll go after my lovers." And they often talk about water and wool and flax and oil. And in the Torah, these are all things that are depicted as blessings from God. And in Hosea, he'll say, "I gave you all these things and you never recognized it. And you kept going to these other superpowers, like Assyria, looking to make these alliances that I knew would be trouble. And if you just would've trusted me, I would've provided for these things in the form of blessings." And you just sort of hear God saying, "Just please, just stay with me on this." The Exodus is the backdrop for all of that.

25:18 In verse 15, chapter two, it says, "And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth." So again, it's hearkening back to the Exodus when they crossed, the rivers were parted, they came through in safety. And we always turn to it. Whenever we need answers, we go to the Prince of Egypt. That's the greatest film of all time that shows us how to interpret things. And you remember that cute little girl that gives the song after they cross the waters? Ashira l'Adonai ki gaoh gaah. Essentially it's talking now just about how powerful and merciful and how the Lord has just spectacularly triumphed. So it's now hearkening back to that day of triumph and saying that's also in our future after we go through this period of destruction. And ultimately, verse 18 is talking that. You hear this language of creation, "I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the fowls of the heaven, and with the creeping things." That's creation, Genesis language.

Hank Smith: 26:14 All the way back to Genesis.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 26:15 And basically, creation has been undone through all of this. The message of hope is that all things will be recreated under this one head, and creation will be anew and the earth will receive its paradisiacal glory. And he then says, "I will betroth thee unto me, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God." That's the good news of all of this.

Hank Smith: 26:39 So it starts out with this message of hope. Is the whole book this way, or is it now, "Okay, there will be hope one day at the end. Now let's go through some of the things you've done."? Because as I was reading, I thought we go back and forth between hope and the present of their present infidelity.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 26:57 Yeah, there's no question about it. The first couple of chapters are setting us up to don't give up. Several of the subsequent chapters are we're in for a hard time here, and here are some things that are happening, but don't give up hope.

Hank Smith: 27:09 Because they're going to have to go through this because they chose this.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 27:12 The book does present it in that way that you've gone after these people. My people have gone after other lovers. And again, the idolatry, that's back in chapter two, verse two, where it says, "Let her put away her whoredoms from out of her sight, and adulteries from out of her breasts." That's a really typical iconographic depiction of goddesses in the ancient Near East, is basically this bare-breasted female who's usually suckling a child or feeding people in some way. Nurturing and nursing. And now they're being told, "Come back to God, and Him only, and get rid of some of these other things."

27:50 So that's the Elijah story of, "How long halt you between two opinions?" The literal verb there is to limp. How long are you going to keep limping around back and forth between different gods? I'm here for you. Come back, and I can do all of these things for you again, as I did in the Exodus.

28:07 And Nephi loves this. Nephi's hero is Moses. Everything that's driving him is, "If God can do this for Moses, he can do it for us." We hear it in the Book of Alma 36, "I always keep in remembrance things that God has done for me." And we see it in Mosiah. So there's just something about this concept of never ever forgetting all of the power that God has to enact in our lives, and the love that he does it with.

Hank Smith: 28:29 Man, well said.

John Bytheway: 28:31 I think that the Exodus, it seems to be the central event of the Old Testament everybody else refers back to so often. Maybe I shouldn't say something that bold, but that just occurs to me that they're always talking about that and trying to remember it.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 28:46 That's really the epiphany of chapter two. There's going to come a point where after following her lovers, it says, "I will go and return to my first husband, for there was it better for me than now." So there's the final recognition that just says, "You know what? It was really better for me when I did have God in my life

than when I didn't." That does seem to be a major epiphany in chapter two.

Hank Smith: 29:07 And when I didn't have these other lovers, these other gods, it was better. I'm going to go back.

John Bytheway: 29:14 And I love that repenting and returning are often kind of synonymous. I will return. Repent and return.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 29:20 Yeah, that's the exact meaning. In Hebrew, shuv, it means to go back. So all of this concept of repentance is please go back to God and allow Him to show you the type of love that you've been craving for through all of this, and that he's never ever withdrawn. In fact, is it okay if I read a statement by Elder Eyring?

Hank Smith: 29:42 Please.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 29:42 This was in the General Conference, April 1996. This is a little bit long, but he describes of how these first few chapters of Hosea changed his life as he was teaching this to some seminary students.

Hank Smith: 29:55 Wow.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 29:55 He said, "At that early point in the story, in just two chapters, even my youngest students knew that the husband was a metaphor for Jehovah, Jesus Christ, and they knew that the wife represented his covenant people, Israel, who had gone after strange gods. They understood that the Lord was teaching them, through His metaphor, an important principle. Even though those with whom He has covenanted may be horribly unfaithful to Him, He would not divorce them if they would only turn back to Him with full purpose of heart.

30:26 I knew too that, but even more than that, I felt something. I had a new feeling about what it means to make a covenant with the Lord. All my life, I had heard explanations of covenants as being like a contract, an agreement where one person agrees to do something and the other agrees to do something else in return. For more reasons than I can explain, during those days teaching Hosea, I felt something new, something more powerful. This was not a story about a business deal between partners, nor about business law. This was a love story. This was a story of a marriage covenant bound by steadfast love.

- 31:04 What I felt then, and it has increased over the years, was that the Lord, with whom I am blessed to have made covenants, loves me and you, with a steadfastness about which I continually marvel and which I want with all my heart to emulate."
- 31:19 So Elder Eyring just talks about how Hosea has changed his life and helped him more deeply contemplate what it means to have fidelity to God, but most importantly, what it means for us to experience the full love of God in our lives because of that relationship that we allow Him to develop with us.
- Hank Smith: 31:41 Wow. We'll make sure to link that talk in our show notes. Followhim.co. I'm sure that'll be helpful for people. That was a wonderful thought. I loved how he talked about his students. They picked up on it.
- John Bytheway: 31:52 I just get that impression that we've had before through all these chapters is that the God that we worship is an involved, caring, loving God. He's not detached. He really wants us to be devoted to Him, and wants to bless us in everything. And when we're not, He'll teach us. I love that idea of His desire to be involved with us and with our lives. That gives me hope.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 32:18 I think that that really is a powerful part of the book, because it is filled with some gruesome things that are on the horizon that are coming. But chapter 11, for example, verse three, it says, "I taught Ephraim also to go," and this is highlighting what you were saying, John, about this personal nature of this relationship. I taught them to go. Another word for halak is to walk. So I taught them to walk, taking them by their arms. And we just get this feeling of a very loving, tender relationship of a parent teaching this little child to walk and taking them by the arm and stabilizing them and leading them to safety.
- 32:56 And it says, "But they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." So we start seeing this synonymous parallelism here. "And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and that laid meat into them." So this again, it's hearkening back and we have all these tomb scenes that are reliefs from Egypt of servitude. They always have this yoke that goes across the neck and they're pulling two baskets, and you just get this impression that I took this away from you, and I led you out and I cared for you, I provided for you, and I've always loved you and I just want you to respond covenantally to me in this way that will allow us to have this relationship that thrives.

33:40 And ultimately, now, we start getting this language that just says this was very personal. And ultimately, now, it's just trying to say, "Remember me, because I'll never forget you." And of course, remember those passages in Isaiah that, "You are written upon the palms of my hand. I cannot forget you." The message here is that no matter how hard things get, I will not forget you and I'm always here for you.

Hank Smith: 34:01 But they keep choosing other gods. There's also a sense of love. But for me, there's also this sense of frustration of in this family, some things never change. You're always seeking other gods.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 34:16 This is what is so encouraging to me, because it is easy to read this and just get frustrated. And in verse eight, in chapter 11, you have God who just says, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?" Just hear God posing these rhetorical questions. The answer is, "I won't and I can't. And there's nothing that's ever going to cause me to do that."

Hank Smith: 34:39 I can't give you up.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 34:40 Yeah, I'm your parent, I'm your father, I'm your spouse. I mean, however you look at it through all of these. And the New Testament picks up on this bridegroom image very well of trying to portray the personal nature between this relationship with God.

34:52 What's really cool about Hosea 11:8 is it's drawing upon Deuteronomy 4 and a promise there in verse 31 that says, "Jehovah, your God is merciful. He's a merciful God." And you hear that mercy part come back. So Ruhamah. He says, "I will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers," which he confirmed to them by an oath. Hosea 11:8 seems to be renewing that promise, reminding people that what happened in that covenant code with God has not changed and it's still an option.

Hank Smith: 35:27 Yeah, and you've even got a JST there, that he says, "My heart is turned toward you. My mercies are extended to gather thee."

Dr. Aaron Schade: 35:35 So there's our gathering component of all of this.

Hank Smith: 35:38 They're going to be scattered, but one day, they're going to be gathered. And the Book of Mormon makes it clear, doesn't it? In Jacob chapter five, that I'm scattering you to actually help you. I am not scattering you to punish you, I'm scattering to help you become who I need you to become.

- Dr. Aaron Schade: 35:54 That really is the sowing nature now. So Jezreel, the first name of that child, was again this deliberate attempt to sow, because you hope that something is going to grow from it. And of course, we see that in Hosea, the concept of reaping what you sow. So if you want to sow a celestial life, you need to plant celestial seeds. So there's this concept that's just saying, "Have an awareness of our behavior and our actions and what it is that we're actually trying to accomplish, because you can reap what you sow."
- 36:24 Now, that doesn't mean that everybody's always going to like you if you treat people with love. It doesn't mean they're going to love you back. But at least you're giving a chance for something to grow through all of that. And again, seeds can grow in very different ways. Particularly, learning to love somebody that doesn't love you back can be an extremely powerful lesson in life. That's the story of Jonah and some interesting things there.
- 36:44 But there's this really neat image in Hosea chapter 13 that's talking about, I think, the hope for of all of this. It's in a pretty graphic depiction in Hosea 13:13, where it says, "The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him." So we think of labor pains and how gruesome and how difficult that is for the mother as she's going through trying to give birth. So these things are coming, some difficult times are ahead. And it says, "He is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of breaking forth of children." And the Hebrew, it makes us a little more clear that this is talking about a child that's just stuck there in the womb, in the birth canal, and just so close to life and so close to coming forth into a new light and just sort of stuck there in a place that can be either so close to life or so close to death, and how dangerous that can be in the birth canal if the child can't be delivered.
- 37:43 So again, that's what chapter 14 will take us into now, this period of finding mercy. Chapter 14, verse 3 talks about, "For in thee the fatherless find mercy. I will heal their backsliding, and will love them freely." So you just, again, get this message that eventually, through all of the difficult times, there will be light coming back into our lives. And you just get this wonderful image now of the fatherless will find mercy. I just love that.
- 38:14 In John 14, you remember it when it says that, "I will not leave you comfortless." The Greek actually uses the term that says, "I will not leave you orphans." So it's just, again, this very paternal type of feeling that just says God is very close to us and

endearing to us in our lives if we'll let Him. And even if we don't let Him, He'll keep trying.

- Hank Smith: 38:35 This message of hope against the background of hopelessness is really, really touching to me. I have a thought here from Elder Christofferson. He says, "With God, comfort replaces pain, peace replaces turmoil, and hope replaces sorrow." That seems to be the message of our Latter-day prophets. Turn to God, and He can turn ashes into beauty. "Do not despair," President Hinckley says, "do not give up. Look for the sunlight, look through the clouds."
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 39:03 I love that, look for the sunlight, because we actually have that in Hosea 6, where it says there about, "Return unto the Lord." So it's exactly what you're describing there, Hank, about coming into the sunlight that says, "Come," this chapter 6:1-3. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." And it says in verse two, "After two days he will revive us" in the third day he will raise us up." So this progression from two to three is a literary device that takes us into completely, perfectly three being that numerological symbol of perfection of entirety. He will thoroughly revive us.
- 39:41 And in verse three, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain." So that seeing the light, you remember that talk by Boyd K. Packer of the brilliant morning of forgiveness. It just talks about what it's like to see the sun rise, for that light to come back into our lives. And Hosea is describing exactly what you were talking about there. When the sun pops up over the horizon after a long dark night or even after a lot of dark nights, that all of a sudden now, we are revived and we see the light of day once again.
- John Bytheway: 40:17 There's some really beautiful verses in here. My goodness. Continuing in Hosea 13:14, after the sorrows of a travailing woman, verse 14, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Like you said, a lot of hope in these verses.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 40:43 Yeah, and what better way to portray that? First of all, the use of the verb redeem. So you get the conception now that usually, in ancient Israel, the concept of redeeming is a family member who's doing something to protect the wellbeing of the family. So we now get the-
- John Bytheway: 41:01 The kinsman redeemer.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 41:03 That's right. This is now that the redeemer is doing something for the good of the family to protect the family. And that is, I'm going to pull them out, I'm going to snatch them from death. And death will be saying, "Where are your plagues?" This is a total reversal. It shows the power of God, that He has power over the grave.

41:21 So whatever you encounter... And just because we're trying to do the best we can doesn't spare us from loss. It doesn't mean we won't lose people that are close to us. It doesn't mean that life is going to be easy. But the book is trying to get us to look at the big picture through the eyes of God, and try and just, in some small measure, understand what He's trying to accomplish and trying to draw us closer to Him. And whether that's in life or after death, the hope is is that eventually we'll have this reunification with God that would be something far beyond any peace or hope or happiness that we could ever find in any other source in life.

Hank Smith: 41:58 And also, Aaron, isn't it that these difficulties we pass through are not just punishment, but shaping. So part of the hope is that I haven't given up on you, even though it's going to feel like it. I'm actually shaping you for a future gathering, a future with me.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 42:16 Yeah, that's really always the challenge is do we even recognize what's happening in our lives, and do we see the hand of God in all of that. So that's always been the challenge. And again, we see that over and over again in Hosea. They're going after sources of happiness in places that won't provide it. And all along, God is saying, "I gave you all of that stuff," and that was something...

42:37 This is chapter 7:14, where it says, "They have not cried unto me with their heart." And verse 15 says, "Though I have bound them and strengthened them with their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me." So this is return and come back to me is really that message, and just being able to recognize that God really is trying to be a big part of our lives if we'll let Him. It's inviting us to cry unto Him, because there's some pretty desperate situations. We'll see that in Joel as well. I mean, there'll just be some times of just flat out it's time for everybody to recognize the urgency of all of this and start crying to God for help.

Hank Smith: 43:15 Yeah, I liked what you said, a series on the horizon. If you weren't paying attention before, you're about to be paying attention.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 43:22 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 43:24 I'm looking at Hosea 7:11, "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria." Now here he is right there, and it seems like that was kind of Isaiah to stop making alliances with other nations. God is your ally. God is better than your ally. He's your bridegroom.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 43:48 You're right. And we'll see that in Isaiah as well. Ahaz is going to sort of reject the council of Isaiah when he's saying don't join the Syro-Ephraimite.

John Bytheway: 43:57 Go after Assyria.

Hank Smith: 43:58 I was looking at that Contemporary English Version. Israel is a senseless bird, fluttering back and forth between Egypt and Assyria.

John Bytheway: 44:07 Yeah, I don't think I'd ever seen silly dove before in my life until today.

Hank Smith: 44:12 "Silly and senseless," another version says.

John Bytheway: 44:14 A senseless bird.

Hank Smith: 44:16 Easily deceived.

John Bytheway: 44:17 So that story where Ahaz is given the Immanuel prophecy, which has an immediate, perhaps, and a future fulfillment though, is telling him, "Don't make allies with these countries." But isn't that exactly what he did, make an ally? Tried to make Assyria an ally?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 44:36 Yeah, so again, it doesn't usually work out well in the long run for you know, you throw open your temple treasures and your coffers and say, "Here's something for you, Assyria." It holds the dogs off for a little while, but eventually, they come calling.

44:51 There's actually this really fascinating inscription from an ancient kingdom called Sam'al. It was an Aramean kingdom. It has this beautiful big stele relief with writing on it in a Phoenician dialect. It actually talks about in there that, "I hired the king of Assyria against my enemies, and we just destroyed them," and all of these things. We got these great exchange rates economically, and it's the whole text talking about that. And then you go look in the iconography on the left-hand side of the panel and it has the king dressed in Assyrian garb with all

of the Assyrian gods depicted at the top. And you're just like, "Yeah, that worked out well for you temporarily, but what happens next?"

45:35 They took their treaties and alliances very seriously, but the next king comes along and sometimes all bets are off. Sometimes they honor them, but other times, there's just... You never know what's coming, especially when you have lots of things to offer in the form of resources, geographical benefits, military strategic value all through the Jezreel Valley. And of course, Israel and Judah are always in the crossroads between the superpowers of Egypt and Assyria.

Hank Smith: 46:02 Yeah, don't dance with the devil, right?

John Bytheway: 46:03 Is that Jezreel Valley named because of Hosea's child there?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 46:08 It existed before that, so it's not a cause and effect. It's drawing upon a conception, because essentially, the Jezreel Valley was one of the headquarters of the Israelite kingdom under the Omri Dynasty.

Hank Smith: 46:21 Aaron, are there any other verses in Hosea you wanted to hit before we move to Joel?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 46:25 There's one I really love in Hosea chapter eight, verse 14. It just sort of ties this all back in, and it comes back to this theme, "For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire in his cities, and shall devour the places thereof." And again, we just see all of these places that are designed to be holy, something that's designed to enable individuals to go and enter into covenants with God, and yet, we see that those are going to be torn to the ground, burned to the ground.

47:00 Elder Holland had a really interesting statement. He was quoting George Albert Smith and he says, "We may build temples, erect stately domes, magnificent spires, and grand towers in honor of our religion, but if we fail to live the principles of that religion and to acknowledge God in all of our thoughts, we should fall short of the blessings, which its practical exercise would it ensure."

47:23 So there's just something about this. It's more important to just get through the doors of the chapel or to get through the doors of the temple, that there has to be something where this becomes something ingrained in our heart. Again, we see that

throughout Deuteronomy, that we've got to have a pure heart, that we have to have a heart that is turned to God. And of course, the whole Elijah narratives are crafted around that concept of turning our hearts to God. The Book of Hosea is trying to get us to take seriously the concept of what it means to enter into those covenants with God and to never lose sight of that fidelity to that covenant.

- Hank Smith: 47:58 So they're doing the outward behavior, but it hasn't reached their heart.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 48:02 And again, what's really cool is that in modern day Judaism, sometimes when they're donning the phylacteries that are filled with passages of scriptures to remind us to keep our hearts close to God, some of the passages that they cite are from Hosea chapter two. So again, it's just Hosea has a very profound effect on remembering what it is that God has done for us.
- Hank Smith: 48:22 It seems to me, as we're reading Hosea, that the Lord's message hasn't changed all that much. Having just listened to Conference, I heard a lot of the same messages of turn to God, He's your source of peace, He's your source of joy. Stop going other places. Stop looking for other sources of peace and joy. You're not going to find them. Come back to God. And if you don't, there's consequences to those actions that you have to face.
- John Bytheway: 48:53 And come back to those godly identities. That young single adult talk that President Nelson gave so good, where he emphasized, "I'm a child of God, I'm a child of the covenant, I'm a disciple of Christ." Those identities that involve God instead of earthly, worldly temporary identities.
- Hank Smith: 49:11 I had never seen that verse in verse chapter 11, "I taught Ephraim to walk." That's a touching idea of, "I was holding you as you were just getting started, and now you've turned on me."
- John Bytheway: 49:21 Taking them by their arms. That's what that means? Is that a simpler translation, "I taught you to walk."? In verse three, taking them by their arms.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 49:31 The verb halak, it does mean to go, but it also can mean to go by foot.
- Hank Smith: 49:35 That's just wow. I think Hosea is meant to be felt. Now that I'm reading it, I'm going, "Man, this book is meant to be felt." You're

supposed to feel for Jehovah here, going, "I don't want to do this to him."

- Dr. Aaron Schade: 49:48 I think you're right. It just comes back to that, "I will sow her unto me." So everything that's happening here is with the intent that, "I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them, which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God."
- 50:04 We'll see that language again when you get to Ezekiel 37. And interestingly, it's within the context of a temple that Ezekiel is describing. So it comes back to this theme of covenant and making those in sacred spaces with God.
- 50:19 Jeremiah 31 to 34, we talked a little bit about this concept of the heart changing. Well, Jeremiah 31 talks about receiving a new heart and making a new covenant with God. And interestingly, this is a passage that according to Oliver Cowdery, Moroni, at some point, discussed with the prophet Joseph Smith, as something that was about to come forth, something that was about to be done. So at some point in those conversations with Moroni, Jeremiah 31 and this receiving a new heart was something that was yet to come for the restored church and the covenants that they were going to make in receiving this new heart. So again, this phrase, "They shall be my people, and I shall be their God," usually occurs in covenantal context, sometimes in relation to temples.
- Hank Smith: 51:05 Beautiful.
- John Bytheway: 51:09 Please join us for part two of this podcast.



John Bytheway: 00:00:03 Welcome to part two of this week's podcast.

00:00:07 Hank, you mentioned the book of Hosea is kind of a book to be felt. And I was looking at the first part of the Come Follow Me manual that says, "Israel's covenant with the Lord was meant to be so deep and meaningful that the Lord compared it to a marriage. The covenant, like a marriage included eternal commitment, shared experiences, building a life together, exclusive loyalty, and most of all, wholehearted love. This kind of devotion came with high expectations and tragic consequences for infidelity. Through the prophet Hosea, God describes some of the consequences the Israelites faced for breaking their covenant." I mean, there's strong, wonderful feelings and some really tragic feelings too there. And Aaron mentioned that Jeremiah 31 was quoted to Joseph Smith, and I think one of the first things I thought of when we were going to look at the book of Joel is that Moroni talked about Joel to Joseph Smith as well. And that's what we're going to look at now, is the book of Joel. Let's see, the whole book of Joel.

Hank Smith: 00:01:13 The whole thing, I mean, it's a whole...

John Bytheway: 00:01:17 Which is the whole how many chapters?

Hank Smith: 00:01:19 All three chapters of Joel. All right. So Aaron, how do you want to approach Joel about the same way we did with Hosea? Just kind of give us some background and then maybe jump into those verses where you show us how amazing this is?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:01:33 Sure, you bet.

Hank Smith: 00:01:34 What's the background? What do I need to know going into Joel?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:01:36 We just finished Hosea, so now it's time to leave the easy part and get to the hard part.

- 00:01:42 It's got really an apocalyptic feel to the book. I think an important part of it is also to look at it and realize that this may not be sort of stagnant in one particular place, in one particular time, and that it seems to represent a composite of several different time periods that lead us up to one. All of these different phases of highs and lows, destructions, victories, losses that eventually culminate with the coming of the Redeemer who will put an end to all of the wars and contention. And so for Joel, it's tough to try and pinpoint a historical point in time because we just don't know that much about him as a person. And yet the first couple of verses it just says, "Here ye, ye old men and give ear all ye inhabitants of the land. Had this been in your days or even in the days of your fathers, tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children and their children, another generation."
- 00:02:46 And so you just sort of get the impression that at the very get go that this is about a series of events that is going to take place over a very long time. So there are lots of different references in the book. Most of the references to Judah outnumber those of Israel, but there is a reference to Israel and some have used that to indicate that maybe this is after 722 when the kingdom of Israel is already destroyed. So again, it's hard to pinpoint a lot of the focus is the kingdom of Judah. But ultimately that's kind of how the book begins with verse four, this comparison with the palmer-worm. And so approaching the book sort of invites us to take a look at history from ancient times to future times that will eventually lead us to a paradigm of one who will come in power and redeem and ultimately take charge of everything that has seemed so chaotic throughout the world's history.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:49 You used the term apocalyptic. For our listeners who don't know exactly what that is, can you explain that to them?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:03:55 So it's just again referring to end to day's scenarios because often time individual scholars who are looking at the book of Joel will try and pinpoint a specific place and time for things to happen. And yet this seems to invite us into a broader range than just one particular point, but lead us all the way into a period of time that does talk about the end of day's type of scenario. And that's going to be ushered in in the book of Joel with the figure of the Messiah, the Redeemer, who comes in power and in a way that nobody can really compete with.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:32 Okay, that sounds intense. Let's keep going. What's a palmer-worm?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:04:37 That's the question. In the beginning of these verses they used the term gazam, which means great locust, arbe, young locust, yelich, other locust, hasil. Basically, we don't exactly know what the author is trying to tell us. It's clear that he is using words for locust in Acadian, which is an east semetic language from Mesopotamia. There's over 20 different words for locust. And so it's clear that sometimes we look at this as sort of like the evolution of a butterfly going through different phases, one leading to the other. And it's just hard to tell what the author is trying to do here. So basically it's clear that if this is a mid eighth century text or later, so anywhere in the eighth century, we know that Sargon II is leaving inscriptions that talk about these hymns of prayer, of relief from locust invasions. So anciently we know they're happening.

00:05:34 We know that there's been some modern examples of this happening of just these locusts that come in and devour everything. So again, as we approach this, we look at it and say, "Okay, a locust invasion is something that people are familiar with and they just are notorious for stripping everything and all the resources and just they wreak havoc." And yet part of what this also seems to be saying and how this is sometimes approached is that these locusts also represent different superpowers that are going to come through and just wipe the region clean. And so Joel chapter one verse four is presented at least in the Hebrew as a way that says what is left of A then B ate, what is left of B, C ate. What is left of C, D ate. So by that I mean these different locusts that are being presented here.

Hank Smith: 00:06:29 Yeah.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:06:29 And so some people see this as the Assyrians or the Babylonians followed by Persians, Greco Roman period. And so again, just different authors and people who have approached the subject have looked at just sort of these destructive forces that could have represented a variety of different ancient kingdoms that wreaked havoc in this region leading us all the way up to a point where some people apply this to the Armageddon type scenario. So it is a book that describes war of destruction, of discouragement, but again, it also tries to present a message of hope in the future, and particularly in some of the spiritual gifts and manifestations and endowments of those spiritual gifts that are going to help people recognize and stay close to God through all of these trials.

Hank Smith: 00:07:23 I have a quick question. When you read the book of Joel, do you use KJV? Do you like KJV most on that or are there other?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:07:30 Yeah, there are several resources. I always like the Jewish study Bible. They try and stay kind of literal to the translations where you get into some of these books that are difficult, but the KJV, I mean that's what we use. And so I try and stick with that. But there are other volumes that do a good job of presenting things a little more literally.

John Bytheway: 00:07:49 The footnote in our addition, footnote 4A says, "The invading or conquering armies are compared to four varieties or stages of growth of locusts." And then I was reading in the Living Bible and it says, "After the cutter locust finish eating your crops, the swarmer locust will take what's left, after them will come the hopper locusts and then the stripper locust too."

Hank Smith: 00:08:16 My goodness.

John Bytheway: 00:08:17 And it just sounds so thorough. And then you read the next verses in the living Bible, "Wake up and weep, you drunkards, all the grapes are ruined, all your wine is gone. A vast army of locusts covers the land. It is a terrible army too numerous to count with teeth as sharp as those of lions. They have ruined my vines and strip the bark from the fig trees, leaving trunks and branches white and bare." So it's a happy message.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:08:43 I'm not sure that Joel's trying to give us a lesson in entomology. It's just that these are conceptions that people look at and say, "Oh, I understand locusts can do this." And all of a sudden now it's like we have to worry about these being invading armies because they're going to do the same thing. And we do have comparisons in the Bible and in the ancient near east of texts that tell us that armies, invading armies, are compared to locusts. And you mention the transition there to laying the vine waste and stripping down the fig trees. This is really now turning into a lament. So I mean verse eight in chapter one, "Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth." So again, we're just invited into a paradigm that says, "Oh, I've seen this. I can relate with this. Somebody lamenting for somebody else who meant something special to them."

00:09:35 And what's interesting about all of this is that this focus of disappointment shifts to the temple. So essentially what we seem to be having here is that this devastation caused by these invasions means that there's no longer adequate wine or flour or oil for the twice daily cereal and drink offerings. So this is now beginning to affect the priests whose sole job is to help remind people of their covenants and engage and renew those covenantal type of responsibilities with God on behalf of the

people. And now when these invading armies, again, if that's what this is really about, that they're going to strip all of those resources and now temple worship is going to be at stake.

00:10:18 So part of what this is trying to describe is a physical devastation that affects spiritual development. And ultimately at this point is when they start saying, "Be ye ashamed, oh ye husbandmen; howl, oh ye vine dressers," this is verse 11, "for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field is perished." So at this stage now, this is affecting the priest's livelihood because obviously they get a portion of some of the offerings to help sustain them and their lives. So this is now turned to the temple and this becomes now a lament because of the offerings that are now going to suffer as a result of being stripped geographically in this region.

Hank Smith: 00:11:01 If it is an invading army, then it's Babylon takes the temple.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:11:05 That's right. So this has larger ramifications for everybody.

Hank Smith: 00:11:08 Aaron, when this is coming down, is this why Joel calls for them to fast?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:11:14 It is. So at this point, it's now we've realized that there is an urgency, that there is something that we need to react to, something we need to respond to. And it is at this point, chapter one 13, "Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: and come and lie all night in sackcloth." So this outward gesture that we have to have abject humility, that all is about to be lost. And it talks about for the meat offering and the drink offering is withheld from the house of your God. So everything that they offer in the form of these libations and liquids and grains are about to be lost through all of this. And so the answer is in verse 14, "Sanctify ye a fast, and call a solemn assembly." So that just means a gathering. Call everybody in. Call in anybody who will come. And gather the elders and the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord.

00:12:11 So at this stage, it's a call to come to the temple and again, participate now in a fast and a gathering that's specifically oriented towards pleading to the Lord for help. Because again, all of these commodities that are necessary for temple worship that are usually in the Torah described as the giftings of God in the form of blessings, now all of a sudden we're feeling that this is a form of judgment, that these have been withdrawn for that region. So the book of Joel feels very heavy on judgment and that behaviors matter, that actions matter. And so now this is a

clarion call that it's time to get back to the house of the Lord and unitedly plead for help. And ultimately that's what's happening now in verse 14.

- Hank Smith: 00:12:58 Because in 15, "Alas for the day, for the day of the Lord is at hand. We've got to do something and as destruction from the Almighty, shall it come?"
- John Bytheway: 00:13:06 That looks like it runs all the way through chapter one. What's the transition then to chapter two? Is it any different or is it the same call, blow ye the trumpet in Zion?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:13:16 This is where again we start feeling the larger scope of Joel. Chapter one 19 says, "Oh Lord, to thee will I cry for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field and the beast of the field cry also unto thee and the rivers of water are dried up." So we just get this feeling that all is lost. And of course, fire and devouring are often associated with the power of God, but now in the form of the destruction that's coming at the hands of invading adversaries. And so by the time we now get to chapter two, we're starting to feel like the day of the Lord isn't monolithic, meaning this isn't just something that's happening once, or anticipating one event in a future time, but this is now talking about judgements and sort of these cataclysmic type of scenarios that are surrounded by blessings concurrently through all of this.
- 00:14:12 So we're going to see these different phases in, yeah, blow the trumpet in Zion, we're now introduced to the concept of Zion and blowing the trumpet, you're all familiar with in the New Testament times and the inscription that was found there at the southwest corner of Jerusalem of blow the trumpet because it's not only an invitation to come to the temple in worship, blowing the trumpet can also be an alarm of invading trouble and problems that are coming. And so Zion is now being introduced and it's a very theologically significant concept in the book of Joel. It's mentioned seven times, and so there might be something about that number seven that numerologically is trying to tell us that Zion is a place of perfection, but it's used as a place of refuge, a place of escape. It's also used as a place where God dwells.
- 00:15:05 Sometimes it's used as a place that defines his presence amongst others and just a place where he'll rule from. So all of these are trying to give us these various descriptions of Zion and a place where God's justice will eventually be enacted from. And so the day of the Lord, it serves two purposes in relation to

Zion. It's a negative one for those opposing the will of God, but also a positive one who shelters though. So it really is encapsulating this concept of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

00:15:38 And I think the book is trying to invite us, what will that day look like for you individually? Great, dreadful somewhere in between? But this trumpet blowing now in verse two is trying to help us understand for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. So again, the question is which time period is that referring to? Because not all of us will exist at the time what the book is culminating in and that is the coming of the Lord. But at some point each of us meets our maker and the question is, are we prepared for that? And this seems to be transitioning now to the day of the Lord cometh and it's nigh at hand.

Hank Smith: 00:16:21 So it's multiple fulfillments. You could kind of use the book of Joel in different scenarios and the ultimate scenario is the coming of the Lord.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:16:30 Yes. But that doesn't mean that it's only focused on that one singular event. It's focusing on several different occasions that are supposed to demonstrate the power and judgment of God that culminate with him coming.

Hank Smith: 00:16:45 As I was reading, it feels almost like a book of Revelation type feel to it where you're supposed to go slow and kind of read between the lines and try to figure out what exactly is he talking about here where maybe a contemporary of Joel, this would be easy to understand.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:17:01 That's interesting that you state that because there's this inscription from Deir Alla, which is in modern day Jordan from the eighth century. And you may have heard of Balaam stories and the Balaam prophecies, or Balaam, and he's actually prophesying in there in the eighth century, so possibly contemporaneous whenever Joel lived. But it has a feel that has some similarities to this and describing days of darkness and the celestial heavens being darkened and just looking forward to this scenario of putting an end to sort these cataclysmic type of events that the world will face. So it's interesting that you make that comment that a contemporary may have understood this better because the contemporaries may have been in line with that with some of the inscripational material that we have from that region that understood some of these features of prophecy.

Hank Smith: 00:17:48 Okay. I read the verses and I get that it's a dark terrible time like verse three, "Fire devoureth before them and behind them a flame burneth the land is as the garden of Eden before them and behind them a desolate wilderness. Yea and nothing shall escape them." So it used to be like the garden and now it's going to be desolate in front of them. Did I get that right?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:18:10 It sounds pretty bleak.

Hank Smith: 00:18:11 Yeah.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:18:13 Yeah. And of course now our conception of the Garden of Eden. So we think of this lush area and perhaps we're supposed to be taken back into descriptions of Genesis where all was well, but also that takes us into a paradigm of a fall that is in need of restoration. So there could be something that's harkening in that way, but we're just getting this concept now that there is going to be a desolation. But the theology is that eventually that that will be restored into this Edenic type of state that just has to do with lushness and prosperity.

Hank Smith: 00:18:50 Do we get there in the book of Joel? Do we get to the restoration portions?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:18:54 This is chapter three 16, "The Lord shall roar out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem and the heavens and the earth shall shake, but the Lord will be the hope of his people and strengthen the strength of his children." And eventually it's going to talk about God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain and describe that there won't be any more strangers coming through and that there'll be rivers flowing through the mountains and new wine and milk flowing. So there is hope at the end of all of this that eventually all of this is going to be restored in a place where it says in verse 20 that Judah will dwell forever and Jerusalem from generation to generation. So there does seem to be a reversal of this scenario in the end of days, permanently instead of temporarily.

Hank Smith: 00:19:42 And that's because of the coming of the Messiah?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:19:44 Yes, that is the messianic feel of the book.

John Bytheway: 00:19:47 Let's look at Joel 2:28 because it's such a well-known one among Latter Day Saints I would think.

Hank Smith: 00:19:54 Read that for us, John.

John Bytheway: 00:19:55 "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:20:08 So as we transition from chapter 2, 3 to this fire that devour with everything, this is where we start getting into verse eight, that neither shall one thrust another and they shall walk everyone in his path and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. And we're starting to get into really the nebulous. I don't even know how to begin to comprehend. I understand what it says, but I don't know how to comprehend what it looks like or what it means because at this stage we start seeing now an adversary that basically can't be slain. And so again, we're starting to set up the power of God, the power of his troops, because Lord of hosts, Adonai Tzva'ot literally means Lord of armies.

00:20:53 And so for Joseph Fielding Smith, he looks at this and I think this is in the Old Testament manual where it says in here Joel is not thinking about any earthly army. The Lord's army is not an earthly army. And he says, "But he does have a terrible army and when that army marches it will put an end to the other armies no matter how terrible they may be." And so he says in these closing words I have read to you that he would do this thing and he would drive this terrible army into the wilderness, barren and desolate. He's saying, "You know what, I'm not talking about the United States or England in all of this." He's like, "This is talking about God who actually is coming back." And so for Joseph Fielding Smith, he's starting to see this now as a clarion call that because we are going to face judgment, and of course within the book we have the Valley of Jehoshaphat and Jehoshaphat is a name that means Jehovah will judge.

00:21:50 So it is a book of judgment and it's saying that eventually we are going to encounter an all-powerful God who is merciful, but he also shaphat, so he also judges. And no matter how hard we try and oppose him, eventually there's going to come a point where that's just not even possible. So the history of the world, it's presenting all of these different, I guess time periods where people have opposed God, opposed his people and there's going to come a point when he actually comes again in power that that's going to be futile. And so with all of this, we're just seeing these calls in verse 12 that says, "Therefore also now say at the Lord, turn you everyone even to me with all your heart and with fasting and with weeping and mourning, so rend your heart and not your garments and turn unto the Lord your God for he is gracious and merciful."

- 00:22:44 So in the midst of all of this just horrific type of a scenario, we're still seeing that God is gracious and merciful. So again, it's a self-evaluation that says, "Where do I stand in that equation?" And there's a Joseph Smith translation for 14A that talks about, "Repent for who knows, but he'll return and leave a blessing behind him that you may offer the meat offering." So it's referring back now to being able to restore what was lost in the temple, to now being able to return back and enjoy that covenant. And again the blowing the trumpet, gather and sanctify everybody. But this has to be sincere. So the weeping and mourning and fasting and the rending of the heart, this has to be genuine in these efforts of coming back to God and when they are that God is gracious and merciful. That's the good news behind all of this.
- Hank Smith: 00:23:36 We haven't talked, I don't think on the podcast about rending your garments. What does that mean and why would he say rend your heart instead?
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:23:45 These are images that are trying to get us to understand the broken heart, the contrite spirit, to be in a position that just says, "I'm totally teachable. I'm totally amenable to God. I'm totally willing to listen and allow him." Because honestly now of course the garment had a practical function, but it also could have a covenantal function and the same with the heart. It's the seat of all of our thoughts, our feelings, the desires that we have. How do we submit those to God in a way that is productive and fruitful for us to the point where I can have it genuine change of who I am, not just in an outward appearance, but who I genuinely become. Because verse 18 in chapter two, it takes us back into this concept that I will pity his people. So some people think this is a reference directly to Hosea in this ruhamah type of scenario that God is going to have mercy to those who rend their hearts and are teachable and malleable and who are genuinely trying to enjoy that relationship with him. It's available to them.
- Hank Smith: 00:24:48 So I can rend my garments, that's outward, but rending my heart that's genuine as you said, it's got to be genuine.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:24:54 And we see that in the New Testament says, Beware of the outward appearances and the worship that is mostly external rather than something that has been internalized.
- Hank Smith: 00:25:04 Not necessarily the challenge to just behave, but the challenge to become.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:25:09 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:25:10 There's the song, I Am a Child of God that originally Naomi Randall wrote to teach me all that I must know. And the story I think we've all heard is that President Kimball suggested that be changed to teach me all that I must do. And then President Oaks gave that amazing talk in I want to say October of 2000 called the Challenge to Become that Hank's kind of talking about. And I would love them to, based on that talk, change it again to teach me all that I must be because that's what it sounds like it's talking about here, focusing on becoming, not just doing a checklist, but what are we becoming in the process of all of this?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:25:53 Yeah. And Joel, he is not implying that blessing means the elimination of obstacles in pain, but that God's presence brings people through these events and trials, that he can become a very real part of this injunction. In verse 22, "Be not afraid. Be glad." Verse 23, "Ye children of Zion rejoice in the Lord your God for he hath given you the former rain moderately." So again, there's nothing in the book that's trying to say that we're going to be spared trials in our lives, that ancient Israel was spared trials in their lives. Again, they were always on the crossroads between superpowers who just wanted their resources, who wanted everything that was available there. And these books are trying to get us to understand that again, keeping a covenant doesn't mean a life free of adversity, but there is hope in the future. Hope in a point where Jehoshaphat, where you do stand before your maker and you do so with a clean conscience that says, "I've done everything I can, especially through adversity to stay close to thee."

00:26:57 Because verse 25 says, "And I will restore you the years that the locust has eaten." So at that point it's looking back at history and saying all of these points of suffering and all of these times of restoration. So it's talking about cycles of loss and gain and restoration and hope that part of what I think the book is saying is that for the scoffers, for the scorners, for the ones who have looked back and said, "Where's been your God through all of this?" Just say, "I know exactly where he's been, He's been with me." But look at all these bad things that have happened. It's okay. The promise of a covenantal life, never promised that those would be alleviated or removed completely, but what it did promise was a life in God that gave me peace through all of that suffering and trials. Verse 27 in chapter two says, "And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel and that I am the Lord your God and none else and my people shall never be ashamed."

- 00:27:58 And so again, it's kind of looking back and just sort of inviting us to think that all of those times we look at scripture and say, "Where was God in the people's lives then? Why did he let this happen?" This was never about God losing a love for any of his children. It was about helping them through and loving them more through those difficult times, because there were a series of loss and gain and again, restoration following those difficult times.
- 00:28:25 And whether that's the first temple period, the second temple period, exile, again, this is just, it's listing a time where eventually what lies on the other side of the next tragedy is God. And Zion is being presented now as a place of refuge that says, "This will be the end of all of that pain and suffering and the earth will now recognize its sovereign ruler and that will be the Redeemer of the world." And so I think it's inviting us to put into perspective the history of the world and realize that eventually God will take over this and that is the hope of Israel, that all that was lost will eventually be made right.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:07 I love this idea. I'll restore to you the years that you lost. I thought of this from Elder Wirthlin. He said, "The Lord compensates the faithful for every loss. That which is taken away from those who love the Lord will be added unto them in his own way. While it might not come at the time we desire, the faithful will know that every tear today will eventually be returned a hundred fold with tears of rejoicing and gratitude." That to me feels like verse 25. I will restore to you the years. Like you said, Aaron, I will help you through this. I won't take it away, I won't take away the difficulties, but I will help you through them. Chapter two did have a bit of a change of a tone to it from one side to the other.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:29:54 Yeah. At this stage this is now about trying to figure out how do we abide this. This is chapter 2:11. "The Lord shall utter his voice before his army for his camp is very great, for he is strong, that executed his word for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible and who can abide it?" And that's what we're going to hear in Malachi is how do we actually get through this? How do we abide the day? And Malachi's an interesting one because that's a scripture that's listed in every book of scripture in the cannon of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. So we encounter Malachi and some variations of it in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, in the Doctrine and Covenants, in the Pearl of Great Price. So Moroni was very clear in his conversations with Joseph as well as the Lord's conversations with Joseph that the reason that all of this is

happening in the Restoration and this renewal of the covenant was to prepare people for the coming of the son of God.

00:30:59 And so this question now was vital to people in different eras. How do we abide the day of his coming? And again, whenever we meet our maker, are we prepared for it? And that's when we have sort of these genuine calls to turning back to God and to weep and mourning. Not in this loathing, self-deprecation, but for a sincere desire to connect and be connected via covenant with the one that truly is all powerful, all loving and all kind. Because it's just so easy to forget through our trials that God is in verse 16, gather the people, sanctify the congregation. It says, "Let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber and the bride out of her closet. Let the priest and the ministers weep." All of these are just trying to give us hope through adversity and realize that all of these things that sometimes we just view as abstract art, is something that is going to be a reality that every person who's ever lived on this planet will eventually confront face to face. And that is the bridegroom, the one who's done everything, the creator and be able to enjoy that.

00:32:10 And so all of these are invitations not to fear and the tone of this is really sort of alleviated by the time we get to verse 28. And this is what John was talking about, is now sort of the spiritual endowments that people are going to enjoy as it's introduced by verse 27, "You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel and that I the Lord your God and none else and my people shall never be ashamed."

00:32:37 So it's recognizing the sovereignty of God, which has been something that's been so hard to do because he hasn't physically always been present upon the planet and it's easy to sort of withdraw and say, "Well then this isn't real, that this all just seems so sensational. It's hard to believe in because if he does exist, why doesn't he exist in front of my face right now?" But all of these are trying to invite us to say, "Well you can have that relationship even though his physical presence may not be here now, there will come a time where you experience his presence and everything that comes with great or dreadful, that that's going to be something that then becomes glorious as we're confronted with that."

Hank Smith: 00:33:15 So am I right to say verse 11, "Who can abide it?" And the answer is 12 through almost the rest of the chapter. Who can abide it? Those who rend their heart, not their garments, those who turn to the Lord their God and I'll pour out my spirit on them. They don't need to be afraid. They can be glad. I'll restore the years if you'll turn to me with all your heart, with fasting,

with mourning, rend your heart and not your garments. Is that kind of the feel I should get from chapter two?

- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:33:44 It does feel like that's the answer. And again, interesting, where do you do all of this stuff? At the temple. So there's something about this that's pulling us back in. So everything that we saw that felt like the temple was somehow losing grip and control of the offerings that have been stripped are now coming back into play saying, "Don't be afraid, be glad and rejoice because this will be reversed." And again, we see that at different periods throughout the first temple period, the second temple period and in modern temple periods that this has always been the hope to try and get people back into this mindset of restoration and that concept, I will restore what years the locusts have taken from you.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:27 And that's where then this great prophecy comes in verse 28.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:34:30 That's right.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:31 That I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams. Your young men shall see visions and it goes on saying, "I will show wonders in heaven and the earth. The sun will be turned to darkness, the moon to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come." That's the prophecy we hear from Joseph Smith history.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:34:50 Yes. And that is one of the conversations that Moroni has with Joseph Smith. And it's interesting because this is all inclusive language, this is a drastic turn of events from the Old Testament prophecy because who prophesies? A prophet.
- Hank Smith: 00:35:07 Prophets. Yeah.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:35:07 So all of a sudden now we're in a period of spiritual endowment. And of course this is interesting because we also see this in the book of Acts, in this period of Pentecost. This is now expanding those who are going to be receiving these spiritual gifts. It's men, it's women, it's children, it's boys, it's girls, it's old men. It's all inclusive. And so this is breaking the conception. This is Moses's call that says "Would that all would be prophets unto God." So it's not eliminating the need of a prophet, but it's giving the hope that people from top to bottom across everything, and again servants, handmaids, nobody is excluded from being able to enjoy these spiritual gifts. It's interesting because if you look at several ways that this was

interpreted in the early days of the restoration in the restored church in times and seasons from February 15th, 1842, they're speaking specifically about Joel chapter 2:28-32.

00:36:15 Part of it is they're saying that the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea and all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. The spirit of God is the spirit of knowledge and revelation. And when so generally diffused amongst the saints, it will enable them to know God alike. So one sense in the way that the early church was understanding this was again that this would be an all-inclusive type of spiritual endowment that people could participate in. And again, they were quoting in the times and seasons about people will not be ashamed. So again, all of these feelings, the pointing fingers, the great and spacious building that sort of tries to get us to feel like this is all a big sham, this is all a big hoax. How could you ever know this stuff?

00:37:03 And I think what Joel is saying is that everybody is going to eventually know this stuff and ultimately now, these spiritual endowments are going to be a part of this. So what's also interesting is another way that this is being used in the early church and the restoration John Coral in a Brief History of the Church of Christ of the Latter-day Saints in 1839. They're using it in a way to describe that there still is a need for prophets on behalf of the people. So just because we now can enjoy those personally, those spiritual gifts, they're also saying the apostle Peter in explaining the prophecy of Joel said, "And it shall come to pass in the last day, sayeth God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. And my servants and on my hand maidens, I will pour out and in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy.

00:37:58 Instead, thereof of there being no prophets after Christ. It looked to me as if God meant that there should be many for the assertions are positive, that your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and that this should be in the last days. Now if the last days are passed and gone, then we give up looking for prophets. But if not, then the promise stands good for more prophets." So it's interesting that they're seeing this as all-inclusive and expansive, but also that this doesn't mean that it's a free for all, that there still needs to be a prophet or prophets in place. And interestingly, general conference exhibits that better than anything. Ultimately, that there are prophets involved in all of this that are leading the way in this endeavor as a larger body of the church. It has some similar parallels with what happened on the day of Pentecost. But again, the feel is now that blessings

are available to individuals but it doesn't exclude the need for prophets in general.

John Bytheway: 00:38:59 Well put. I marked the word that I had never marked before in verse 28. I mean let me emphasize it. I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. And that's what you're emphasizing here. And I think that President Nelson has asked us all to learn how do we hear him, that phrase that from the first vision, we all need to learn to hear him and to be guided, to be connected to God that way. But like you said, there still is a prophet, there's a president of the church, there still are keys to administer the kingdom of God on earth, but all of us can learn to hear him. Really like that word all in there. And like you said, men, women, children, all of us.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:39:43 And I think the hope of all of this is that we are thinking about a time when this all comes to pass and verse 32 says, "It shall come to pass that whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance as the Lord has said. And in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." And it's interesting to think as you were describing that John, that this doesn't necessarily just have to include members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I remember a talk that Elder Eyring gave, Elder Eyring like that guy, he's always giving these insights that nobody ever thinks of. His prophetic leadership has just been fantastic. He was giving a talk and he's just saying he was in a land in South America, I think is where, or Central America, I can't remember where he was at.

00:40:33 But ultimately he just said that they were working with government leaders. The church was trying to help some of the physical needs of people in that region. And he just said, "I had this overwhelming powerful feeling that God doesn't always work through nations but he works through good people in those nations." He just said, "At that moment I just felt that the Lord is raised up lots of good people who are trying to bless the lives of the people of their countries and ultimately that he is blessing and revealing in ways that maybe we don't always comprehend, just to benefit humankind. Because sometimes we just get so caught up that the only way that we measure success is by numbers in a certain genre, not recognizing that ultimately sometimes the biggest success is just being able to help somebody through discouragement, through providing for physical needs. Whatever it may be." I mean this is about God's family and each one matters to him. And I think some of these gifts are supposed to be employed to bless not only individual lives but the people over whom they have stewardship.

Hank Smith: 00:41:44 Fantastic. All flesh. Sometimes we as Latter-day saints think we have a corner on some of these things where the Lord would say, "No, no, no, it's much bigger than that." So Aaron, chapter two finishes very hopeful. Does that same feeling go into chapter three?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:42:01 No, not really.

Hank Smith: 00:42:02 Or do we switch? Okay.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:42:07 So I mean we get to chapter three and basically for behold in those days. So again, it seems like something future, whatever that means, it's nebulous. And in that time when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat. So at this stage we're encountering judgment. We don't know where the valley of Jehoshaphat is. Jehoshaphat was a king. He did have some battles against Moabites and Ammonites and some people think that maybe it's there, some people think it's the Kidron Valley. What it's saying is that there's going to come a point where judgment is a very real thing and at this point in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, I will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel whom they have scattered among the nations.

00:42:55 So we're now getting of this larger Apocalyptic type feel where there are more things at play than we may sometimes realize. And yet at the same time, I don't even know how to begin to comprehend what this all looks like. Our family lived in Jerusalem for a few different years and I've tried to figure out what all of these prophecies about the Mount of Olives and mountains cleaving in twain, what all of this stuff looks like. And it's far beyond my comprehension of how this unfolds. I believe in it. I know that these things will happen. I just don't comprehend them fully, because we're just getting into something now that is beyond my experience in life. Spiritually, I'm trying to understand the message when it comes to some of these scenarios that are presented in chapter three just my mind can't grasp what this all looks like, though I believe in them.

Hank Smith: 00:43:54 How is he going to gather all nations to a single valley and plead for Israel? Are these some of the nations that have destroyed them? Because he says they, some of these nations have cast lots for my people. So is this going back to Assyria and Babylon?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:44:09 Yeah, verse four starts to name a few of them. So Tyre and Zidon, so Phoenicians and they are starting to list some of the

traditional adversaries of that region. Verse six talks about the Grecians. So people try and identify what time period is then. Because if we're now talking about Greece, this is taking us into later developments, at least as far as this region. And so it is now starting to list some of these traditional adversaries through time. And verse nine just brings us back to, you have to proclaim this among the Gentiles, prepare a war, wake up the mighty men and let the men of war draw near and let them come up, beat your plow shares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. And let the weak say, I am strong. This is a reversal of Isaiah and Micah. And so you ask yourself, what is the rhetorical purpose of all of this?

00:45:02 What is Joel trying to tell us through all of this? And it seems to be that this is not going to be peaceful. And everything that Isaiah and Micah is trying to do is give us hope that war comes to an end. And now it's like, you know what? You tell everybody they're going to battle because Jehoshaphat. There will be judgment. So that is kind of what's happening here.

Hank Smith: 00:45:25 Wow.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:45:25 And these plow shares are now used for weapons of war. Again, assuming that the reader is familiar with the hopeful prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, this becomes a powerful tool now to say, "You know what? You're going to come to battle against God but it's going to be futile." And I think that this is more of just like sometimes we get caught up in saying these are just physical battles, but perhaps these are also trying to emphasize a spiritual component of all of this that just helps us in verse 12 says, "Be awakened."

00:45:57 So heathen, let the heathen, Goim, in Hebrew it just means let all the nations, let everybody be awakened and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat for there will I sit to judge all the heathens, so again, all the nations roundabout. I think this concept of not being ashamed is just trying to put forth a scenario that just says, "You don't have to be embarrassed for anything about the way that history is unfolded or any time that you think God has been absent from your lives or the lives of people." And I think that all these are trying to say that he has been present. And Hosea again was very powerful in trying to depict that. And this is saying eventually God will come and make all things right that the world put wrong. Just this call to say, "Let's make sure that we're individually investing our lives into covenants that we make and into a paradigm that just says, 'I still believe.' Whatever the world may say, whatever jeerings,

whatever scoffing, whatever lack of belief.'" And it's not that everybody treats believers that way, but it's just hold on.

- Hank Smith: 00:47:04 It is there. Yeah.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:47:06 And these things will... Eventually, everything will be reconciled for good.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:11 Eventually everything will be reconciled for good. I like that. Look at verse 16, "The Lord shall roar out of Zion."
- John Bytheway: 00:47:16 Here's that. I underlined that, Hank, because you talked about roaring the other day.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:22 Yeah. The Lord shall roar out of Zion. He's not a lamb in this scenario.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:28 So shall ye know I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion. I'm just so intrigued as I've been to the holy land that I hadn't really noticed before how much the scriptures talk about not just a people, but a place. They talk about Jerusalem a lot and you having lived there, I bet you have some insight on that too.
- Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:47:50 All of this leads us up to verse 14 where it says, "For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." And of course we get all this, "The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining." We start to try and comprehend, and sometimes that's described as eclipses, lunar eclipses and solar eclipses. And we try and find a mechanism to explain that, how that works and how that's possible. In ancient societies, they were interested in astronomy. But when they looked at these basically in Mesopotamian literature, eclipses were a pretty bad omen. And they were often a sign of judgment. They're looking more of like, "Oh, what is coming? What is about to take place here?" And they see it as a bad omen, at least in Mesopotamian literature. So when all of this stuff is happening, it's trying to say judgment is on the horizon, and these celestial type of events is now leading into what John was talking about.
- 00:48:51 The Lord also shall roar out of Zion. So all of this stuff that grasps our attention in the heavens is now going to be perceived now as the Lord roaring out of Zion. We see this in Joseph Smith Matthew and coming in glory, nobody's going to miss this. This is not going to be something. And Matthew talks about this. You can go look in the nooks and the crannies, but when this happens, everyone is going to see this and nobody's

going to miss this one. And so this roaring out of Zion and this voice out of Jerusalem, but the Lord will be the hope of his people. And I think that's really what the message is through all of this, is not to be bogged down with all of these signs of the times, the things that can be so disconcerting to the point where they weigh us down to inaction, but to just say, "Okay, I got it." But here's my hope and this is my hope.

00:49:50 And this is the strength of the children of Israel. So we always often talk about the children of Israel, and this isn't about a political entity, this isn't about modern politics. It's talking about covenant relationships that are available to anyone and everyone who will come and enjoy those. And because ultimately verse 17 is now saying, "I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain." So John, there's your comment about holiness. So kadosh, it does represent something of the inner sanctuary of the temple or a description of the temple, but it also describes holiness codes about people who are preparing to go into those sacred spaces. So this is about development, it's about personal wellbeing. But the promise in verse 17 is that, "Eventually my mountain will be holy and I will dwell with Zion there. And there are not going to be any more strangers coming through here."

00:50:42 The stranger concept, all of these armies, this is over and God is going to put an end to this once and for all. That's what's leading up to how the book ends. "It shall come to pass in that day." So we keep hearing this future time. "In that day, the mountains shall drop down a new wine and the hills shall flow with milk and the rivers of Judah will flow with water." So again, we're just sort of seeing that. And all of this, the fountains shall come out of the house of the Lord. So these are actually really interesting because these are iconographically depicted in ancient temple scenes where you can see temples and you can see deities in gods and water and rivers are flowing from the gods and from the temples because it symbolizes life, it symbolizes the ability to survive.

00:51:28 The ability to live. Fertility. And all of this now is that we just see the house of the Lord as a place now of survival, of sustenance, of giving, of living waters. And all of this is the hope. And again, I'm not sure we're supposed to just be focusing on one particular place at one particular time. And these could be paradigmatic that way of just these fountains of life that will flow from God when he comes again. And that Judah will dwell forever and Jerusalem from generation to generation. And that is sort of the hope of the book amongst all of these scenes and

the history of the world that have been so tragic. All is finally put right in the end.

Hank Smith: 00:52:11 So judgment is coming, but you don't need to be afraid if you're on the Lord's side of things.

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:52:18 Sounds like... Don't we sing a song about that?

Hank Smith: 00:52:20 Yeah. Aaron, this has been really good. I see both Hosea and Joel have these elements of hope in them. When we first started our interview it was hope against the background of hopelessness. So do you feel like both of these books fit into that description?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:52:39 I do. Joseph Fielding Smith said, "We find in Joel, Zephaniah, Zachariah, they're all proclaiming that in this last day, the day when the sun shall be darkened and the moon turned to blood and the stars fall from heaven, that the nations of the earth would gather against Jerusalem." And again, whatever that looks like, I'm not certain how this all looks, but he says "All of them speak of it. And when that time comes, the Lord is going to come out of his hiding place." And again, I think that that is the hope of all of this. And I do think that these books are trying to help us understand that we just don't give up with all of the scenarios in our lives that may lead us down paths of doubt, that may lead us down paths of wondering whether or not God is concerning, whether he cares, whether he is in a position to help.

00:53:27 I think both of these books, particularly Joel, in a very astounding way, is trying to say, "There is nobody who can confront the Lord and become victorious if they're trying to battle against him." I think by presenting this coming day of not only judgment, but of the greatness of coming, of the one who loves you, the one who cares about you, the one who has never, ever abandoned you, even if you temporarily abandoned him. That is I think, the big hope of all of this.

00:53:56 And I think it encapsulates something that Spencer W. Kimball said and it is, "Let us harken to those we sustain as prophets and seers as if our eternal life depended upon it because it does." I think that that is something that the book continues to encourage us to do, is to keep trusting in the ones that've seen prophecies, the ones that receive revelations, knowing that each of us can receive that personal inspiration in our own life, but not to give up the trust and hope of the prophet and the seers and the revelators who are trying to lead us down, and

that's exactly what Hosea and Joel are doing in their days, is trying to lead people back to God.

Hank Smith: 00:54:36 Aaron, this has been a fantastic day. I mean, I have taken different highlighters throughout. I've got yellow, blue, and red. Because I was marking, here's judgment, here's hope, here's the call to action. Here's what you do. I just feel like I understand Hosea and Joel in ways, well obviously in ways I never have before because I didn't understand them before. So Aaron, I think our listeners would be interested in your journey as both a believing Latter-day Saint and a Bible scholar. How'd that come about and what's that journey been like for you?

Dr. Aaron Schade: 00:55:10 I think that where I began to notice something really different in my life was I was a missionary in Poland. I lived in the old Warsaw Ghetto. I would see things that evoked in me questions that I just simply didn't know the answer to about Judaism, about the Old Testament, about what the people that I was learning to love there in that country, what they had experienced and the various persecutions that they had gone through. So I just sort of determined that when I got home, I would start taking Old Testament classes, I would start taking Hebrew classes, I'd learn about Judaism, Islam, and it just sort of started snowballing just because I wanted to know more because I just felt like I didn't have enough answers to satisfy me. I believed in the gospel, I believed in the church, but there was just something that says, "How do I understand it better? How do I understand it more?"

00:56:06 It just one thing led to another. I just realized that I love studying languages. I loved studying the religious history of different peoples and different groups of people. And so I started learning a little Arabic. I started learning about Islam. Even to this day, I work in Jordan in most summers, and I just love the Jordanians. I love Islam. It is just, I love to watch them pray. Our workers will sometimes stop in the middle of the day and just start praying there on our site. And there's just something that evoked a feeling that there's so many good people that love God and just what God has done for them in their lives. And of course all of the good people around the world that are just living lives and doing things that make such a big difference to so many people, whether they believe in God or not.

00:56:50 But there was just something that drove me to say, "I want to know more." And so I started taking all these classes at school, ended up taking a bunch of ancient Near Eastern studies classes and tried to just say, "You know what? Let's keep moving

forward in all of this." Went to grad school and studied Egyptology, studied the Hebrew Bible, some archeology and just ultimately it just kept leading me forward. And of course, as you go along and you study all this stuff, it's really easy to get caught up in the things that we don't know because there are lots of things that we don't know. And one of my favorite titles of a book is Working with No Data. And it just sort of describes my life. In an excavation, you're digging something up that nobody has seen in 2,800 years and trying to interpret it.

00:57:36 You're trying to reconstruct dead languages that don't preserve what all of the nuances of that language were. It's just always trying to find answers where there are none. And something that always drove me through my graduate studies was that there was always a source that I could turn back to, someplace that I could get the answers that were most important to me. No matter how much I loved my studies, and I did, most of my days started with, I just don't have enough hours in the day to accomplish everything that I need to. Just help me learn what I can in a way that will be meaningful and allow me to accomplish as much as I can to do something good today. That was kind of my journey of faith as I never really felt tempted to disbelief amongst anything that may have been presented to me that that says, "Oh, this is a contradiction in the Bible." There was always an anchor in my life.

00:58:31 I just tried to do my best. I didn't know it at the time, but let God prevail was something that I was trying to do without even knowing it. That concept now that just says, "Don't ever give up on that, don't let go of that." Because we're always going to be presented with ideas that seem contradictory. We're always going to be presented with ideas that seem like they may be a theological knot that we just can't simply untie, but ultimately I trust in an all-knowing omniscient God who does know the answers to all these things. And I'm not going to let trump what I don't know trump what I do know about him and about his love and about his compassion.

00:59:06 So for me, that's always been the anchor in my life, that through my studies, they've only accentuated. And in fact, it's given me a bit of humility. Most people wouldn't describe me as humble, but at least my humility in my approach to God, I realize that he knows so much more than I do. And that's something that has increased my appreciation and love for God. And so that's been something that I've just always tried to make my guiding principle in life, is to realize that though I don't have the answers, I know he does. And those will come in time, whenever he chooses to reveal those.

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| Hank Smith: | 00:59:37 | John Bytheway, how did we get this opportunity to sit at the feet of these scholars? |
| John Bytheway: | 00:59:43 | Yeah. Your journey and your testimony of how much goodness there is out there in the world. I know Hank, you've seen that in the Holy Land and the kindness of people, of Muslims. It's amazing. Just thank you for sharing all of this with us today and that perspective. |
| Dr. Aaron Schade: | 01:00:01 | It's been my pleasure. Thanks for having me on. |
| Hank Smith: | 01:00:03 | It's been beautiful. We want to thank Dr. Aaron Schade for being with us. We want to thank all of you for listening. We also want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. We hope all of you will join us next week because we'll be back with another episode of followHIM. |
| | 01:00:24 | 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. |

WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE LORD WILL
"POUR OUT [HIS] SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH"?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, my friends. Welcome to another FollowHIM Favorites, where we take a single question from each week's lesson and answer it. John, the lesson this week is Hosea and Joel. And I'm going to pull the question right out of the manual. It quotes Joel 2:28 about the Lord pouring out his spirit upon all flesh.
- 00:28 And then they ask this question, what do you think it means that the Lord would pour out his spirit upon all flesh? So John, how would you answer that question? What do you think it means?
- John Bytheway: 00:39 Well, after what you just read, it says, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams. Your young men shall see visions." And Hank, both of us are pretty lucky to be able to hang out with young adults. And even in the 20 something years I've been teaching, they're amazing. And so many of the sisters or return missionaries now coming into the classes, your daughter shall prophesy. I was thinking about when I saw that verse, remember how Nephi says that, "Oh, Isaiah was hard for my people to understand but they're not hard if you have the spirit of prophecy." And thankfully we've got, in the book of Revelation it says, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." And so if you have a testimony of Christ, you're a prophet or a prophetic. Small letter P. And where did you get that testimony? You got it because the Lord poured out his spirit and told you that. And I think he's willing to do more. President Nelson has asked us to learn to hear him I think because he knows the Lord wants to give us more if we'll go ask.
- Hank Smith: 01:46 Yeah. John, I've been super impressed with my students just through the years. The way they follow promptings, some of the insights they give when we're studying the scriptures together. I'll stop and say, "I got to write that down. That is such an impressive insight." And I don't think that they know about themselves that they're part of this promise. That you listening right now, you listening to John and I talk, you, there you, you the person. You're like, "Me?" Yes, you. You are part of this outpouring of the spirit. It's been on you. You're one of these

sons or daughters who is prophesying and dreaming dreams and having visions and it's impressive. You are impressive spiritually speaking. You have gifts that maybe you don't realize.

John Bytheway: 02:33 I remember President Hinckley saying that back when he was young, he said, "Not very many of us were doing very much scripture study." Do you remember that quote? But then he said, "A new generation is arising that are familiar with the word of the Lord." And Hank, I look back at me as a young adult and then look at my students and think they're ahead of where I was. Perhaps because our curriculum has changed in seminary and in everything else, they are so awesome. And it's supposed to be the other way around. But I find I'm taking notes from them and it's just evidence that really is happening, that Joel mentions right there.

Hank Smith: 03:08 Absolutely. We wanted you to come away from this followHIM Favorites at least thinking I am part of this, I am part of something big, I do know my scripture. I served a mission, or I have taught, I have spread the gospel in my own way. And to know that you are part of something big, you're a big part of something big. You're just not part of something big. You are a big part of this. And that you matter so much to the Lord and his plan and his work.

John Bytheway: 03:35 Yeah. Hank, we were in Liberty jail this last summer, not as inmates, just as visitors. And remember looking at those sister missionaries and I was walking away and I just turned back and said, "Do you even understand how unique you are to be here doing this? Do you understand how amazing that is for a young adult to take a couple years out of their life and to do what you are doing?" Well sometimes, like you said, they may not even realize it themselves. But think of that. Think of the uniqueness of saying, "I'm going to go on a mission and teach people about God and being willing to do that and smiling about it." That's so unique. And whether they even feel it, the Lord has poured out his spirit upon them, I think.

Hank Smith: 04:21 Yeah, I'm just so impressed. One of my good friends who I've just seen grow up, her name's Holland Bowler. She's going to open her mission call, John, tonight. And yet another instance of our sons and daughters prophesying and being part of this spirit, being poured out on all flesh. So to Sister Bowler and so many like her, just know that we at followHIM, love you, and we're excited to see what the Lord has in store for you.

04:49 We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. And then come

back next week and join us back here for another followHIM Favorites.