



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 Wednesday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

Ever wondered what makes someone a Saint? Join Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt delves into the beginning of the Book of Mosiah and sheds light on living covenants, the responsibilities of Christians, and gratitude.

Part 2:

Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt continues to teach about Mosiah 2-3, how to cast off the natural man, and how covenants allow the Saints to have the Holy Ghost at all times.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt
- 00:42 What to expect in this episode
- 01:28 Introduction of Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt
- 02:13 King Benjamin, kings, and the Heavenly King
- 05:25 Mormon and 4 Nephi
- 06:41 Joseph and Benjamin and becoming a saint
- 10:00 Mormon’s voice and discipleship
- 15:00 Lehi to King Benjamin timeline
- 21:31 Words of Mormon
- 22:47 Evan Schmutz BYU Devotional “Can You Imagine?”
- 24:45 Mosiah 1:1-9 - Covenant parents and responsibilities
- 28:26 Mosiah 1:7 - profit in the scriptures
- 30:43 Mosiah 1:2, Alma 17:2 - anchor yourself in the scriptures
- 34:17 Elder Holland: Your children are matches to be lit
- 38:31 Divine roles and Grant Hardy on Mormon
- 41:00 Mosiah 1:11 - Names the people
- 42:33 Mosiah 2:1 - Gather at the temple
- 45:40 Mosiah 2:6 - Which direction does your tent face?
- 48:12 Dr. Platt shares a story about her daughter cutting out temple name slips
- 49:03 Mosiah 2:9, 27-29 - Benjamin’s voice
- 52:03 Mosiah 2:12-13 Suffering
- 55:05 Mosiah 2:16 - Inverting the two commandments
- 59:46 Mosiah 2:20 - Gratitude and President Nelson
- 01:02:47 Mosiah 2:17 - Service
- 01:05:10 End of Part 1 - Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II–Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt
- 00:07 Taking care of ourselves
- 03:40 Hank shares a story about ministering
- 06:25 Mosiah 2:19, 32, 39 - An enemy to God
- 07:21 Mosiah 2:36-7 - Open rebellion
- 08:25 Mosiah 2:41 - What are commandments?
- 10:28 Formal authority vs moral authority
- 12:40 Happiness comes from relationship with God
- 13:25 Mosiah 3:2-22 - An angel speaks to Benjamin
- 14:49 President Nelson and the temple and spiritual foundation
- 16:28 Mosiah 3:3 - Benjamin and Abinadi

- 18:27 Benjamin as type of Christ
- 21:28 Mosiah 3:11, 15, 18 - Blood and sanctification
- 23:07 Mosiah 3:7 - Gethsemane and blood from every pore
- 27:26 Dr. Platt shares a personal story about infertility
- 31:39 Mosiah 3:17-19 - Only Jesus is the source of salvation
- 37:26 2 Nephi 2:16 - Natural man
- 44:09 How do we yield to the Spirit?
- 46:57 Elder Bednar: The heart of a covenant is having His Spirit with us
- 48:38 Dr. Platt shares her testimony of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon
- 54:03 End of Part II– Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt

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Biographical Information:



Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt earned a PhD from Arizona State University in educational psychology, focusing on lifespan developmental psychology of women in ritual contexts. Her passion to learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ from the ground up has taken her around the world, from the rural villages of Ethiopia to the floors of Primary classrooms. Her happy place is in the temple.

She was a seminary and institute instructor for ten years prior to joining the religious education faculty at Brigham Young University and now teaches at BYU- Idaho. She is an author and public speaker, having presented for BYU Women's Conference, Education Week and Deseret Book's Time Out for Women events. She currently serves as the Relief Society President in her stake.

With fifty years worth of collective dating experience, she and her husband Jed met and married at the age of 41. They love life in Rexburg, Idaho with an 8-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son.

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Profit from a Prophet



GUEST: JENNIFER B. PLATT

- Hank Smith: 00:00:03 Hello everyone, welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith, I'm your host. I'm here with my co-host, John Bytheway, who is filled with love towards God and all men. We're also here with our guest Dr. Jennifer Platt. John, we're in Mosiah 1-3 today. I know you're looking forward to this, you're a fan of King Benjamin. What are you hoping for today? Where are we going to go?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:28 This is really funny, Hank, but back in 1998 I bought this book about King Benjamin's Speech. See that? Now I'm going to turn so you can see the spine of this book.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:38 Wow.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:39 Okay. For those of you who can't see, this is a 660-page book about King Benjamin's Speech, which is three, four chapters. There's about 10 pages of commentary for every verse here, so I'm excited to see how we're going to do this in a couple of hours.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:54 Yeah. Pages and pages and books and books have been and could be written on this speech. Like I said, John, we're joined by Dr. Platt, but to us, she's Jennifer. Jen, what are we looking forward to today? Where are we going to go?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:01:09 What I hope we can talk about today is what discipleship looks like. What does it look like to really take on the name of Jesus Christ? And the way that King Benjamin models it for us and then invites us to become a disciple to follow Jesus.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:26 Become a saint, right?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:01:28 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:28 You can become a saint. Awesome. John, Jen is not new to our show, but she might be new to some of our listeners. Can you give us her bio?

John Bytheway: 00:01:37 Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt is a wife, mother, sister, daughter, friend, and teacher, and above all, a follower of Jesus Christ. Currently, Jennifer and her family live in Rexburg, where she's a religious educator at Brigham Young University-Idaho. When she has a few spare minutes, you might find her reading a good book, cooking or taking a nap. I like that last part. That's great, man, we've had Jennifer before and we're really glad to have you back today.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:02:04 Thanks, guys.

Hank Smith: 00:02:06 We love you and we hope you're enjoying life up in Rexburg.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:02:09 It's the Rexburg.

Hank Smith: 00:02:13 It's the Rexburg. It's right there next to Iceberg. Jen, I want to kick this off with the Come, Follow Me manual. Great opening paragraph here for our lesson, Filled with Love towards God and All Men. When you hear the word king, you might think of crowns, servants, and thrones. In Mosiah 1-3, you will read about a different kind of king. Rather than living off the labors of his people, King Benjamin labored with his own hands. Instead of having others serve him, he served his people with all the might, mind, and strength, which the Lord had granted unto him. This king did not want his people to worship him, rather he taught them to worship their Heavenly King, Jesus Christ. King Benjamin understood that it is the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who came down from heaven and went forth amongst men, that salvation might come under the children of men even through faith on His name. So Jen, with that, how do you want to start these three chapters?

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:03:09 My immediate response just listening to you with that is what would it look like if every one of us had that kind of a priority? We're meant to be kings and queens, and that's the promise of exaltation. And I wonder how today we'll even go differently if the three of us were to say, "Let's just keep that focus." What does it look like for me to become who God intends for me to be exalted and saved? That's the framework here. As much as the book is thick, isn't it amazing to think that the plan is simple, and that we can wrap our heads around it? I spend a lot of time thinking about, I think it's something you're both really good at, how to be relevant and relatable. And that's who King Benjamin is for us, relevant and relatable.

00:04:01 And I hope that people don't look at us and to say, I can never be Jen or John or Hank, and so I give up. But rather that the Holy Ghost will help us to see there are things I can do to

engage in God's work to become who He wants me to be. But before we jump in, don't you think it's important that we talk about we're on the big plates now, we're no longer in a small plate narrative. We're going to make some new friends. One of my great passions in the Book of Mormon is to make friends with the voices or the men that are talking to us. We had the Words of Mormon last week, but here's Mormon, and Mormon is going to be this narrator, this voice that's going to talk to us throughout the whole rest of the text.

00:04:49 How do we get familiar with him? How do we start to get to know who he is and what his message is for us? I remember when I was working on my dissertation, super overwhelmed trying to weed through all of this material and distill it down to a couple of hundred pages. I was in Mormon, in the Book of Mormon studying at that time and totally overwhelmed by him. And what he was able and capable to do in giving us the most essential truth. Shall we start there and talk about where we're at with the plates?

Hank Smith: 00:05:25 Yes, absolutely. I think this is crucial to know. I'll ask my children. Who wrote Mosiah? Well, Mosiah who wrote Alma? Oh, Alma. Who wrote 3 Nephi? Nephi, the third guys. Who wrote Mosiah? Mormon. Who wrote Alma? Mormon. Who wrote Helaman? Mormon. Who wrote 3 Nephi? Mormon. Who wrote Fourth Nephi? Mormon. He's such a good writer. We almost forget he's there.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:05:51 Yeah, the other shift that's important in this, okay, so for the rest of the Book of Mormon, for the most part, you'll talk about that later, but for a good couple months we're engaging with Mormon, make friends with him, get to know his voice, get to know his purpose, get to know what he's concerned with. When Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon, he appears to have started with the Book of Lehi. That's what was called the 116 pages that we know were lost. We can read about it in section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Martin Harris is working with him. His wife wants to know what's going on. He takes the record at the petition of the Lord. Finally, you can go ahead and take the pages, show it to the select group. The pages disappear.

00:06:41 Joseph, how did he describe it? What did he say? I have lost my soul. I've lost my soul. With that, he's lost this work for a little period of time. It appears that he picked it up at Mosiah. He started again here with Mosiah, and you guys what I've thought about with this is what a balm and what a gift that of all the things for Joseph at a time of such loss and desperation,

disappointment, fear, anxiety, God says, "I got you, brother." Not only did I sort this out for you, which we can read in Section 10 of the Doctrine of Covenants that there was a provision made for this, but I have a message for you. You'll be saved and it's going to work out.

- Hank Smith: 00:07:33 That's fantastic. I've never thought of that. Jen, when he comes back, he sits back down with the text, what does he start with? And it's this sermon from King Benjamin. You can become a saint.
- John Bytheway: 00:07:45 When people start reading the book of Mosiah and it starts out and there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla among all the people who belonged to King Benjamin, all of a sudden this is third person. It's not King Benjamin talking, that's when they'll say, oh, we've got a narrator and that's our Abridger Mormon coming in. I love what you said there about Joseph translating this. One of my former professors, Joseph Fielding McConkie reminded us that when Joseph was translating, he was learning the gospel. He called the Book of Mormon, Gospel 101, the Doctrine of Christ and Faith in Christ, repentance, baptism, gift of Holy Ghost and all of that, and Joseph McConkie's opinion was.
- 00:08:27 And then when he started doing what we call the JST, that was like graduate school and much of the Doctrine and Covenants came while working on the translation of that. I think that's a wonderful idea to remember that Joseph is learning as he's going here. That's a great insight. He gets back after that severe repentance he must have gone through and starts with King Benjamin.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:08:51 To me it's such a balm. That's the way God works with all of us. Joseph for us is such a mentor in saying, yeah, we each have a work to do, but we're not left to our own to accomplish it and in that desperate need. I'll tell you, Hank, it was funny because the morning you texted me for this, I had the thought I'm going to hear from Hank, and I didn't expect it that day and then my next thought was, I hope it's King Benjamin. I don't know if I'll be able today to adequately articulate the kind of mentor that Benjamin has been to me. He is a friend and I trust him. It's like Joseph, there have been so many times where I've thought, I need that support, I need that help and I need a soft place to land. The thing of it is that Benjamin isn't always soft. He is so clear, "Here's the promise, but here's the consequence," and I guess that appeals to me too, though because I know where I stand. What a treasure for Joseph in that experience.

Hank Smith: 00:10:00 Jen and John, I'm going to walk through something here, and I want you to both jump in, but if I were to lay this out, the Book of Mormon began with Mormon almost four centuries after Christ has appeared to the Nephites. He sits down with a library of records, and he's going to make a condensed summary of the history of his people. He starts with, "I assume Lehi gets all the way to King Benjamin." Then he says, in words of Mormon, which we looked at last week, "I found these plates," meaning first, second, Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jeremiah. He said, "I liked what I saw there. I'm going to put them in my record. Now let's continue with the abridgment. Let's continue with Mosiah. This summary I've been writing."

00:10:55 Yet for the reader, they've never heard from Mormon unless you read the title page, you don't even know who he is, and he starts with, "Oh, and now I, Mormon, being about to deliver the record up to my son." If you're a first time reader, you're going, who are you? I've never heard from you, and then also do you think that perhaps in what I assume is called the Book of Lehi, Mormon's Abridgment, that he talked about, that he may be introduced this project and who he is and why he's doing it?

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:11:28 I think it's a great theory. I mean, don't you find yourself asking a lot of questions about what was on the record of Lehi's?

John Bytheway: 00:11:35 I think one of the things that all of us love about the book Mormon is these little helpful statements like, "And thus we see," and that's clearly the abridger jumping in and saying, here's why I included this part. I think one of the reasons we appreciate Mormon, not only does he tell us what we need to know, but then he tells us why we need to know it.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:11:58 Do you ever wonder if he was intentional in saying, "I'm trying to be a little bit invisible"? I'm not trying to draw attention to myself. If we have a focus today on discipleship, that's really a mark of a disciple is they try to be invisible, that I don't want to make this about me. How quickly can I show you Christ? And is that plain in the messaging? Because I'm thinking about that. When did I have the experience with him? It's when I got to Mormon. And I'm tracking his life and I'm saying he starts at 15 even before then, but that we watch his age and I create this timeline. Look how deep in the text I am before I'm really thinking about him for the first time that I'm remembering. There is a mark of discipleship that it's saying this isn't about me.

John Bytheway: 00:12:50 It's fun that this year the youth theme is 3 Nephi 5-13, and 3 Nephi 5-12 is I think the first time when Mormon jumps in and

tells us who he is. 3 Nephi 5-12 says, "And behold, I am called Mormon being called after the land of Mormon, the land in which Alma did establish the church among his people." Yea, the first church which was established among them after their transgression and then the verse that is the youth theme this year, "Behold, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, the son of God. I have been called of him to declare his word among his people that they might have everlasting life." If I'm not mistaken, that's the first time he jumps in and says, "Here's who you've been listening to all this time."

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:13:34 When I was young adult, I was in a YSA ward where a Brother Steve Peterson was on the high council. And every time Brother Peterson stood up, he would hold on to the edge of the pulpit and look at all of us and make us feel like what's he doing? And then he would say that, "I am a disciple of Jesus Christ." It was so impressionable to me, and then we watched him suffer. We watched him struggle with cancer and pass. And in that to say he's going to be okay, but to picture what it looks like, to be able to see the people in our lives that really model it and then to make Mormon so real. Hank, that was a great insight. It's a good question you're asking.

Hank Smith: 00:14:18 I love what you're teaching us here of how devastating this must have been for everyone and then we pick up with King Benjamin. Jen, I've never thought about that, but I love it. John, you said we don't really hear from him until 3 Nephi, and I think it was Grant Hardy in his book, understanding the book Mormon who said, you really have to get to know Mormon indirectly because you don't really know who he is until we get to his own book. You kind of pick up on it as you go.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:14:49 There's wisdom in slowing down and saying, who is this? And maybe we can work together today to say let's make sure we're drawing out who's speaking because we're also going to get the words of an angel.

John Bytheway: 00:15:00 It might be helpful to figure out where we are. So Lehi, Sariah, Ishmael, Zoram, the families, they arrive, let's call it the Land of Our First Inheritance. After a while, Nephi says, "We got to go." And they call it the Land of Nephi. Second Nephi 5 is when they get there, and then it's King Mosiah the First, Mosiah 1, who again says, "We've got to go," leads them to a place which was already called Zarahemla and there were already people there. Then King Mosiah has a son who is King Benjamin, and that's kind of where we're coming in, right?

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:15:44 Absolutely, and I think even still knowing that you've talked about this, but to go backward and talk about who the people are. Then around verse 12, Amaleki is talking about Mosiah the King, they're fleeing. This too, is important. This is such a powerful theme of the Book of Mormon, this people trying to escape contention. They've fled, and then you get to verse 15.

Hank Smith: 00:16:12 Omni 15, I've petitioned the church to get the book of Omni changed to the Book of Amaleki. He does most of the writing.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:16:20 Omni 115, Mosiah is going to meet this new group of people. They're the people from Zedekiah. This is going to be parallel, what is it, 2 King's 25 roughly. Mosiah discovered them in 16, and at that time that Mosiah discovered them, they had become exceedingly numerous, nevertheless. So there's another word that we pay attention, break word. They had had many wars and serious contentions and had fallen by the sword from time to time. Who do you think they're fighting with? Are there other people on the land?

Hank Smith: 00:16:58 Yeah, I mean, with Sherem it said there came a man among them.

John Bytheway: 00:17:02 He wasn't on the ship.

Hank Smith: 00:17:04 There's other people here.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:17:06 Who are they fighting with? And certainly, I mean we see it with Lehi's family, they're fighting with each other. I always get intrigued with that one. The part that matters to us in this is that their language had become corrupted and they brought no records with them, and they denied the being of their creator. We need scripture. If we want to know Jesus, we need scripture. And Mosiah, nor the people of Mosiah could understand them. They could not understand them.

John Bytheway: 00:17:34 Yeah, that's what I love about this. They came from the same place at approximately the same time. We learned having records can be a stabilizing influence on a language because the language had changed and they couldn't even talk to each other. They had to teach them the language, and the people of Zarahemla became a part of the people of Mosiah and his people, and they taught each other their language.

Hank Smith: 00:18:01 There's a tendency, I think, for people to automatically jump to, oh, these must be the Jaredites. These are the people who came from the tower. No, no, no. These people came from

Jerusalem about the same time as John said, as Lehi's family, they're part of the scattering of Israel.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:18:18 What matters here is that Mosiah worked to unite the people. This is in verse 19. They've merged together, and the Mulekites pay attention to the Mulekites. It's not the end of the Mulekites for us, but that they've united together. And then what happens? Verse 23, Benjamin's introduced. King Mosiah who's brought two groups together, has a son named Benjamin. And Benjamin, if you look in verse 24, he had seen serious war and bloodshed. This is also so stunning to think about who he is that he could become such a Christ type when he had literally fought with the sword of Laban. Yet he knew to temper himself. He knew his purpose, and he was Christ-focused. That to me is a miracle of overcoming the natural man.
- John Bytheway: 00:19:16 That's Mormon, too. I made a chart once of all the different times when Mormon went to war from age about 15 to age about 73, and yet he's the one telling us that, "I commend you to seek this Jesus." And he saw war most of his life. There's a couple of decade breaks in there if I remember my chart correctly, but he was a warrior all of his life and yet was a disciple of Christ. And now I'm thinking right now because of what you've taught us that your King Benjamin was a good example. How if King Benjamin could do this, maybe Mormon's thinking, I can do this. I cannot become hardened by what I've seen in my life because I can be like King Benjamin.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:20:00 And those layered perspectives are so important as you're getting to know Mormon to think that all of these men were his tutors. And I think that's the challenge and the invitation of mortality to be able to say, "In this moment, in this day, I'm going to choose to be a disciple of Christ, a peacemaker, a follower." It's really remarkable.
- Hank Smith: 00:20:24 Before we jump into Mosiah 1, of all the books that Mormon wrote, Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, they all have a little bit of a heading that was written by Mormon. The chapter headings of course, were put in by Orson Pratt, but the little synopsis at the beginning of a book that came with the plates, but yet Mosiah doesn't have one. So, John, if a student asked you why doesn't Mosiah have one of those headings, what would you say?
- John Bytheway: 00:20:55 The scholars, when I say the scholars, I mean, all those people that are smarter than I am, which is like a huge, massive group of humanity. They believe that maybe after the Book of Lehi, there was maybe a chapter or two that was also lost of the Book

of Mosiah or maybe starting in Mosiah chapter three or something, not really chapter one. So that's what smart people have said. It does kind of start a little abruptly. It doesn't really, and now there's no more contention. You're like, wait, what do you mean? Wait, I'm missing something. So that's the conventional answer. What do you guys think?

- Hank Smith: 00:21:31 Yeah, I love it. I think you're right on there, and that's fascinating to see that perhaps Joseph and Martin lost up to Mosiah 1 or 1. Let's keep going.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:21:42 Let's just keep going. It's interesting to think about taking words of Mormon starting in verse 12 and saying, in my scriptures, I've got this red arrow saying this could connect into Mosiah in a natural flow because we are again introduced to Benjamin.
- Hank Smith: 00:22:00 So perhaps, Jen, the last 12 to 18 of words of Mormon were actually the end of chapter two maybe of Messiah. You can see it between verses 11 and 12, that 11 could be the end of words of Mormon and 12 picks up kind of in the middle of the story. I love it. I love it. It makes the story of Joseph and Martin all that more real of going, oh man, that must've been so difficult. All that work.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:22:28 So difficult. God be thanked for Joseph Smith every day, praise to the man, grateful for his work in bringing us this text.
- Hank Smith: 00:22:39 So speaking of smart people, John, let's follow Jen through these chapters of Mosiah.
- John Bytheway: 00:22:45 Yeah, I know one and we've got her on the program.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:22:47 Yeah, you guys are nice. Well, takes one to know one. Let's jump in and look at this. A couple weeks ago, February, in the middle of February, there was a devotional at BYU by Evan Schmutz. I want to tell you what happened. When I heard this devotional, he cited a statement, I'm going to share this with you because I want it to be something we think about as we work through Mosiah 1 through 3. He took a quote from President Nelson's talk called the Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation. And in that talk, President Nelson asked us to regularly to find a time. He says, "I invite you to set a regular time to rehearse in your mind the covenants you have made." In doing that, what he said is that he does it daily. And he got me thinking. I thought, well, okay, could I even articulate what covenants that I've made?

00:23:48 I needed to get back into the temple and do a bit of a study and I have made this list. Here are the covenants that I have made. You guys, I have made this a practice that every morning in prayer and meditation, just reciting, these are the covenants that I've made. What would thou have me focus on today? What can I do? A lot of that has to do with what the day's going to bring and how it's going to unfold. But more times than not, the prompt comes, take my name. When we're looking at King Benjamin, I hope we'd all consider that in my life, what does it look like to live my covenants and to take the name of Jesus Christ? I have found that to be a sweet reporting every night, forgive the emotion, because I feel like it's been one of the most transforming experiences for me.

00:24:45 Not much else matters. I just want to live my covenants. So when we look at King Benjamin, Mormon starts out and introduces us to him in verse one, but then he also tells us that he has three sons, and the names of the sons and the things he does in his divine role as a father. That to me is the mark of a covenant man or covenant woman. How do I magnify the divine roles? I would bracket the first eight verses, pay attention to the language here that's parental or familial. We've got three sons. Verse three says, my sons. Verse four, he's remembering his father, Lehi and his children and their children will come up again.

00:25:39 And I'm going to go kind of swiftly here, but then I'm going to ask you this question, what's the priority for this father with his sons? Again, in verse five, my sons and our fathers. Verse six, all my sons, seven, my sons, and nine, teaching his sons. If this was all we had in Holy Writ ever spoken about how to fulfill your divine role as a father, what does Mormon want us to know about the way Benjamin pursued it? What's in there?

Hank Smith: 00:26:13 Before John gives us his amazing answer, I thought of something as you were talking about this, Jen, that you went right into Benjamin's role as a father. And I think of in the church today, in the world today, the fatherlessness is growing. It's rampant, right, and leads to all sorts of problems. So I wonder if the Lord in his infinite foreknowledge said, "I need to mold some fathers into this book because so many of my future readers are not going to have fathers."

00:26:47 For those who didn't grow up with a father in the home or for those right now who are single moms who are raising children, there can be some fathers for them in this book. I have two sisters who are single mothers, and Jen, you are close friends with Jennifer, my sister, but I can see a single mom like my

sister saying, "I need some father figures here." A single mom is incredible, unbelievable filling both roles, and can then maybe get some help from some of these fathers in the book. Now, John, did that give you enough time to come up with a fantastic answer for Jen's question? What are you seeing here?

- John Bytheway: 00:27:27 What is he saying? My sons remember this. Remember that we have the plates of Nephi, we know of their surety. We have them before our eyes. That's nice to come right after the people in Zarahemla that didn't have any records. Now that you have them before your eyes, verse seven, search them diligently that you may profit, thereby, not skim or skip or read, but search. And then so that you can know the promises. Jen, you just reminded us about covenants. I love that insight. I've just underlined that.
- 00:27:59 What is a dad supposed to do for all those, like you said, Hank, I love to tell my young adult students, you make an observation like that, but say your story's still being written. When you move forward with your family, you can read this and be inspired by it and be taught by it because your story's still being written. So what will you do differently because you saw this? You've got the scriptures before you search them, the promises in them, know what those promises are.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:26 Jen, I saw verse seven, he's pointing them to the records six and seven, pointing them to the scriptures. I won't always be with you, but these will be searched them diligently that you can profit thereby. And that's not the usual profit in the scriptures, right? P-R-O-F-I-T, that if you'll invest in the scriptures, you can profit from the scriptures
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:28:51 And diligently 1828 Dictionary tells us it's with steady application and care. Let's play with something for a minute here. This idea of diligently searching the record, that phrase kept resonating with me. Remember, okay, so when you go to Mosiah 26, 1-2, Benjamin's going to come up again, he's going to be referenced in the text and in this, remember what happens? We're told in 26, 1-2, many of the rising generation, they didn't understand him because they were little children, and they did not believe the tradition of their fathers, and they did not believe what had been said concerning the resurrection of the dead.
- 00:29:35 Neither did they believe concerning the coming of Christ. Now, because of their unbelief, they could not understand the word of God and their hearts were hardened. I got thinking about that going, who would've been there. And not a lot of time has

passed it could be Benjamin's, grandsons because what's going to come next? Alma and the sons of Mosiah are going to be naughty and here...

- Hank Smith: 00:30:03 That's a very nice word.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:30:06 Here they are being so bad. What are they, the vilest of sinners?
- Hank Smith: 00:30:11 Yeah, I was going to say you said naughty. Mormon says the vilest of all sinners. Same thing.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:30:16 Note that I didn't write the book. But the vilest of sinners and in this then it's including his grandchildren, so we're talking in a family lens. He's gone by now, but what happens when the sons of Mosiah and Alma are reunited? Do you remember? What do they say when they're reunited? It's Alma 17?
- Hank Smith: 00:30:42 I think it is. Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:30:43 Okay, verse two, and look for the phrase and how I'm trying to pair these up. And let me be very transparent with the intent of saying, please don't give up on scripture study in the home. Because we're going to watch this great big arc that here's this father in his divine role saying, "Anchor yourselves in the scriptures." And we're going to see a next generation. Alma 17:2 and watch for the phrase.
- John Bytheway: 00:31:13 Now, these sons of Mosiah were with Alma at the time the angel first appeared unto him. Therefore Alma did rejoice exceedingly to see his brethren. And what added more to his joy, they were still his brethren in the Lord, yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently that they might know the word of God. They did exactly what grandpa said.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:31:40 Exactly what grandpa said, with a detour along the way, but that's the mortal path. That's going to happen in a lot of our lives. And my kids are still really little. I've got a little control over this situation, but I bet you both could say something to what it's like to parent young adults and the hope you have for who they'll be and how the scriptures protect them.
- Hank Smith: 00:32:06 Jen, I think you're right on here. I have a daughter up by you, and BYU Idaho. I think you've met her a couple of times. And here's a girl that goes through difficult things and loves the scriptures. Loves the scriptures. It's not because of me, maybe

because of my wife, but as she's grown up, she's developed a love for not just scripture reading, but the strength that she can find in scripture.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:32:32 Our son turned eight this year was baptized, and last May not quite a year ago, he came to my husband and I, and we'd been saying, how can we help you prepare for your baptism? And he said, "I would like to read the Book of Mormon with you." We started on the last day of school, last May, and we've yet to miss a day. This kid, he's driving it. He's the one. "Even if it's one verse, mom, we can't miss a day." He helped pace it. He wanted to finish it on his birthday in December, and his baptism was so beautiful because he was prepared. He was ready. And of course, it was so great that we're doing Come, Follow Me with the Book of Mormon. It makes it a little bit easier to be immersed in that every day. He has fallen in love.

00:33:26 And as a result I'm experiencing it so differently watching him, but I'm anxious. What's it going to be like? How are we going to keep him tethered in this way? What sorts of things have you experienced or tried to implement or observed that helps keep your family engaged in the Book of Mormon and that gives them protection? And then my second question, not just your observations but also your educators of young adults. How do we light that fire for them that they want it? If you could give a couple little tips there because here's this idea, divine role of parent, and if this is Benjamin's priority and focus, what can we do to help other people to try some things?

Hank Smith: 00:34:17 I saw this quote recently from Elder Holland, and I may have mentioned this before, John, that I was really touched by where he said, "See your students," and I would say, see your children as well, "as not containers to be filled but matches to be lit." And I thought that is a different way of teaching. When I teach my classes or I'm trying to teach at home, I think, okay, you need this information. Are you becoming more competent? Which has its place? But if I saw my four boys who we have at home now, saw them as little matches right there and thought, what could I say? What stories could I tell? What excitement could I drum up that would light the flame? That little quote from Elder Holland, I hope will change the way I talk about scriptures with my children.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:35:05 Hank, we literally used that quote this morning in a meeting. He talks about being pyros but not maniacs. He says become a pyro and it really does get you thinking about. He knows who he's talking to, I guess.

John Bytheway: 00:35:22 I love that particularly young people relate more to example than to principles. I get excited about a principle, but with young people, an example is more relatable. When I can talk about the determination of a Nephi or the quick to observe of a Mormon or the tenacity of a Captain Moroni, you know what I mean? Then there's these character traits, and they can maybe relate more to I want to be like a Nephi or a Jacob or a Mormon or a Moroni. Thankfully, it's not hard for me to get fired up about this. I don't have to pretend enthusiasm for the Book of Mormon because it's there.

00:36:07 One of the things I always try to avoid is you should do this, you should. If I can be excited enough and tell the story with my own enthusiasm, the spirit supplies the I should blank, blank, blank. I should be that. I love that. I never thought of that, and they'll supply that themselves and then you're not. You should. You should. You're just saying, wow, look at these people. Look how fascinating. Look how amazing, look how valiant. Let's just look at them for a minute. They'll supply and the spirit of the Lord will supply the rest. That's what I like to do. I never like to do you should.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:36:49 Benjamin's showing us it's worth the effort and it's sustainable. Even if it's a couple of verses a day, I am so grateful for the Come, Follow Me curriculum and the writers and the work that they're doing to help us spend a little bit of time looking at themes or the main ideas of what's being taught. Don't give up.

Hank Smith: 00:37:10 We talked about our children there. I don't want anyone listening to think that this is how it always is, that we have children who weep over the scriptures every day and you're thinking, what am I doing wrong? You are not doing anything wrong. I promise you there have been many days, the majority of days where I think are they learning anything?

John Bytheway: 00:37:30 Anything, yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:37:33 Anything happening. So I don't want any listener to go, oh, what's wrong with me? Why are my children not responding like that? Neither are ours. Just like yours, they have their good days.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:37:45 And to even say if someone's listening, they're making some effort for themselves, find a way to talk about it. What we're talking about, I heard a story today and you can fit it in natural normal ways that our kids are our greatest investigators. Please don't give up.

John Bytheway: 00:38:01 There are examples like that in the Book of Mormon. You just gave us one, the four sons of Mosiah and Alma, vilest of sinners, but then all of a sudden it's, hey, I remember my father to have taught the people concerning and this comes back.

Hank Smith: 00:38:16 It comes back.

John Bytheway: 00:38:17 And that all gives us some hope that keep throwing it out there. Keep putting it out there even if it looks like they're not listening. Something may take root and one day they may grab onto it like Alma the younger did.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:38:31 And then that transitions us that we can now say he's focused on his divine roles, and I really like the Book of Mormon film for this one. Have you seen this one that the church produced? Where in this particular film as he's up on the tower, it shows flashes of him where he'll teach the people, and then it shows him younger with his children and they've got the plates and he's teaching from the plates. It was really sweet to see that that was his divine role, that's his priority and where he's going. It builds case for his character and who he is and why we can trust him as a mentor and a friend.

Hank Smith: 00:39:14 Before we jump from chapter one to chapter two, I'm going to read again from Grant Hardy who I read from earlier. He said, "Everything that follows," he's talking about between words of Mormon and Mosiah, "everything that follows is interpreted from the perspective of Mormon who lived hundreds of years after these events occurred. Careful readers which we want to be must constantly ask why would Mormon choose to include this? What might he have omitted?" I've noticed, I'm sure both of you have that a couple of times Mormon is going to say, "I can't write a hundredth part of what I have to work from." As I get into this sermon of King Benjamin, I should be thinking to myself, Mormon saw this as critical to the project, his overall project. And theoretically he turned down 99 other stories or sermons he could have told for this one. To me, that makes me a little more attentive, a little more careful going into this sermon.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:40:19 And what did he see about us in our day that we needed that?

John Bytheway: 00:40:21 President Benson, he said, "If they saw our day and chose those things, which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, why did the Lord inspire Mormon or Moroni to include that in their records? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?" If we take them literally I

cannot include a hundredth part thing. This book could have been 53,100 pages long. And instead it's 531, so if we can't see it, we need to keep looking.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:40:53 And it bolsters our faith to know that God does have a plan of happiness and that the Book of Mormon is part of that, and that it's going to help us get to the tree. Before we jump into chapter two, he's brought his sons together and said, "It's time for me to give an accounting of my time as the king and to confer the kingdom to you, Mosiah, and then to give a new name." That's in verse 11. The other thing as we're looking at this is to pay attention to who the people are. These are good people. John, will you read 11?

John Bytheway: 00:41:28 Mosiah 1, 11, "And moreover, I shall give this people a name that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people which the Lord God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem. And this I do because they have been a diligent people in keeping the commandments of the Lord. And I give unto them a name that never shall be blotted out except it be through transgression."

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:41:49 Awesome. They're going to get a new name. They're diligent people who've been keeping the commandments. Both of those provide themes for us that we need to pay attention for the rest of our time together. How is name used and referenced and how frequently he talks about keeping the commandments? There's a correlation. My obedience to the commandments is a direct correlation to the way I bear the name of Jesus Christ. Over and over we're going to see those two come up. He's going to bring his sons. He's given him the records, the Sword of Laban, the ball or the director and he says, now let's get the people together and stir them up in remembrance and let's gather them at the temple.

00:42:33 Let's jump to chapter two. He's asked them together at the temple, I love in verse one that they might go up to the temple. They're a ritual ascent, come and go to the house of the Lord. There's a lot of people that have written and suggested ideas of could this be a traditional ceremony they're participating in. But we don't know enough to know if it's more than just a peace offering that they're making. That they're coming up to the temple and they're going to, in verse three, offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. I think we sometimes forget that they're living the law of Moses because it appears to be higher and holier, but they're still under the law of Moses. Christ hasn't come yet.

- 00:43:21 They're going to make a burnt offering and there are even elements of the peace offering that show up in verse four where they're offering thanks, and part of that thanks is deliverance being brought out of the land, delivered out of the hands of their enemies with a trusted leader and teacher that's been appointed to them, a just man to be their king. I'm in the middle of verse four, who had established peace in the land of Zarahemla and who had taught them to keep the commandments of God that they might rejoice and be filled with love toward God and all men. It actually sounds like the sacrament, doesn't it? They're going up and they're saying, "We're grateful for the deliverance that we've been passed over from sin," and they've made these offerings.
- 00:44:08 Additionally, they've gathered as families and this is where I would say go watch the video, go watch the movie, get some popcorn. In fact, I think it would be fun to pitch a tent with your family and watch the movie and see what your kids observe. The colors are beautiful and there are all kinds of ages represented in looking at that. They've gathered with their wives, their sons, and their daughters, and they're sitting from the eldest down to the youngest, every family being separate one to another. They've pitched their tents to the temple. There are so many places and so many directions we could go and I was geeking out and having fun at finding how many parallels there are with King Benjamin and President Nelson and seeing the same focus, the same emphasis.
- 00:44:54 There are hallmarks of God's leaders that we can trust him and see and go from there. The other provision he's made is that he's got scribes, which is important because it gave us such a solid document about what happened in the speech. The number of people that are writing that down and running it back so that those that weren't within earshot, they'll go and they'll share it with them. Now we've got all of these different records that the various scribes have kept and that's in verse eight that he caused that the words which he spake should be written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice. He's like you, Hank, he wants everyone to be included.
- John Bytheway: 00:45:40 I have always loved verse six about having your tent with the door towards the temple. For the moms and dads out there trying to teach their kids, it's a fun metaphor. Where is your tent door pitched? Another way to ask it, where's the most well-worn furniture in the house? What is it facing? It might be facing the TV or something and depending on what you watch, maybe that's good. Maybe that's not so good. I make a footnote

there to Genesis 13. Let me read verse six first, "They pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple." And then I make a footnote to Genesis 13, 12-13 and listen to the contrast verse 12, "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent towards Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord." Exceedingly nice contrast to say, where's your tent door pitched? What's it facing?

- Hank Smith: 00:46:42 Look at the future of those people. Lot ends up in Sodom. He faces Sodom. He ends up living in Sodom. These people are facing the temple in just a couple of chapters they're going to end up making sacred covenants with the Lord. It does matter which way your-
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:46:57 It does matter.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:58 ... tent faces.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:46:59 It's a good start to pitch our tents. I can walk to the temple in five minutes. My children can look out the window at the temple, and they see it from our home and that's good. It's really good. And I drive past it several times a day, but am I going inside? Am I thinking about my covenants? Am I really trying to connect myself to God in that way? To always have that recommend and think about it and to live my covenants.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:30 Elder Ronald A. Rasband, this was back in your April 2006 general conference, he talked about this verse and he said, "I love the imagery of these verses. Figuratively speaking brethren, are the doors of our homes pitched towards the temples we so love? Do we attend as often as we can? Showing our children through our example, the importance of these sacred and special places?" As recorded in Mosiah, families receive the word of the Lord through their prophet with enthusiasm and commitment. And then as you said, Hank, the people were so moved by King Benjamin's teachings that they entered into a new covenant to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. But it started because they were pitched toward the temple. So it's a nice little metaphor that I think kids can understand.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:48:12 It's a great metaphor. You got me thinking for a number of years as I go to the temple, when I print my names, I have my daughter cut the names out for me. She started from the time she could use scissors. I have her cut the name and then I've showed her how to look it up in FamilySearch how are we related to her. And I'm trying to connect her that we're doing

this for people, and that these people are our people. How can I get her thinking? And it's fun. She's 10 now and she's saying, "How many names do you think I can go do baptisms for the dead?" And I'm like, "Oh, it's so easy to get the names anymore. Let's just get you to the temple." That's just another way that we can be really intentional in saying how do we engage our family in the work if they're little like my kids or if they're older and we get them to the temple.

- Hank Smith: 00:49:01 Fantastic.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:49:03 Now we're going to switch voices. We've had Mormon talking to us, and then we'll see in verse nine, pay attention to this language here, and these are the words which he speak, the he's Benjamin, and cause to be written saying, colon, and we could mark it there and say, okay, we've got a new voice. This is Benjamin speaking. In doing this, in this reading in particular, I have been very drawn to Benjamin and one his accounting, but also the way he becomes a type of Christ. I am certain that wasn't his intention, that he wasn't saying, "Hey, look at me, I'm like Jesus." Might negate it, but the fact that he, in so much of his language, is showing us the way the atonement of Jesus Christ is working in his life.
- 00:49:56 The other thing I noticed is how frequently he says I, that I, I, I, over and over in describing himself, he's working here to give an accounting. But also it's important to note that that accounting has to do with verses 27 and 28. Let's read the verses with the intent of saying, look at this accounting he's given to us, and in doing it he's showing us what it looks like to really draw the Savior into your life. Hank, would you read this time, 27, 28 for us?
- Hank Smith: 00:50:32 Mosiah 2:27, "Therefore, as I said unto you that I had served you walking with a clear conscience before God. Even so I at this time have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless and that your blood should not come upon me when I shall stand to be judged of God, of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you. I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might rid my garments of your blood. At this period of time when I'm about to go down to my grave that I might go down in peace and my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God."
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:51:12 It's beautiful, isn't it? He's talking about the blood. I've got to make sure that I can rid myself of your blood. He's focusing on another role that I've talked about him in his divine role as a

father, but now in his role as a king, as a servant leader and saying, "I am free. I've done everything I knew how to do. I'm making an accounting." But I also think because of the use of the word blood, he's saying, "This is how the atonement of Jesus Christ is working in my life and the way that I have relied upon him in the work that I've done." So when we go backward, then at the start of his speech, I think it's fun to consider here he is talking about himself as a king, but what about the king of kings? And that we picture in that way and then even some of the language that he uses.

00:52:03 I was struck in verse 12 and 13 that he talks about suffering three times. And when we get over to chapter three and we talk about Jesus Christ, these words given to us from an angel, let me turn one more page, we're going to have in chapter three verse seven suffer two times. "One of the marks of a disciple is we're willing to suffer, and that we do go through suffering. In his case, I have suffered to spend my days in your service even up to this time and have not sought gold nor silver, nor any manner of riches of you. Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons nor that ye should make slaves one of another."

00:52:48 Does that make you wonder what he was familiar with, what could have been going on around them that he would've even have known to say that or did he learn it from the brass plates? I'm intrigued with what he's describing here in this really sad state for people. Then further in the verse, "Not even have I suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord in all things which he hath commanded you."

John Bytheway: 00:53:18 King Benjamin here is giving a review of his administration. And if you were a king, how would you want your reign to be remembered? He's telling them it seems that a government by the people we're going to learn with the reign of the judges. How fascinating that the book Mormon talks about those. The reign of the judges makes the people accountable where the government by a king kind of makes the king accountable, and he explains this when they transition to reign of the judges in Mosiah 29. And he's leading us somewhere with all of this. I haven't done this. I haven't caused you to be laden with taxes. I haven't confined you in dungeons, and then why am I telling you this? And he gets to that. In one of the most repeated King Benjamin's speech verses in verse 17.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:54:05 You've got me thinking because they're just a generation away from changing that it is in chapter 29 where his son says, "My

boys don't want this kingdom, and it's time for us to switch the government." Benjamin's going to be referenced again in the Book of Mormon. If we could have kings like Benjamin in a couple of weeks we'll see Noah complete contrast of a king, and to look at this and to say, this man worked hard to step out of the world to overcome the world and find rest. He was a peacemaker. What's the pattern? It's serving God, applying the atonement of Jesus Christ in our lives. Sometimes I'm guilty of relying on someone in leadership to serve or decide when we've all made the same covenant. What would it look like if we were each to say, okay, I've made the same covenants that you've made. Let's all work hard.

00:55:05 What if every member of our ward worked as hard as the Relief Society president and the Bishop and the Elder's Quorum president? What would that ward look like? Why don't we pick up in 16? He's told us he's not boasting, "Because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service. I do not desire to boast, for I have only been in the service of God." Elder Christopherson taught this. I think it was BYU where he invited us to not invert the two great commandments. It's loving God first and then loving others. What do you think? What's the danger of inverting those two and saying, "I'm loving everyone and then I'll love God"? What's your observation as a danger in inverting the two great commandments?

Hank Smith: 00:55:52 Having that first commandment come first, I love God, offers a way to view that second commandment. One, it gives us boundaries and freedom. When we know where the boundaries are, now we can have freedom to live within those bounds that the Lord has set. So when I love God, I love everything that comes from God including his commandments. So how do I love others then? By helping them see the beauty of keeping the commandments. If I invert those, then I kind of want to squeeze God into the bounds I create for, hey, this is what it means to love others.

John Bytheway: 00:56:34 Beautifully said. I love that. I love to tell my students those commandments are not multiple choice. It's love both, but the sequence, I love that you said it that way, Hank, there's boundaries. Describe how God loves us. He loves us so much that sometimes he says, "I love you like this. I love you." Sometimes He says, "I love you like this, thou shalt not," which is an expression of love. I love that the Doctrine and Covenants says search these commandments and it means the revelations, but I like to take another meaning. Search these commandments for they are true and faithful. The

commandments are true and they are an expression of love. So I love the way you said that, Hank.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:57:18 It's complicated. I can see you so I can love you, and I'm interacting with you and you're familiar. Motherhood has been one of the greatest joys of my life. They're little. They're 10 and eight, but I have to check myself all the time of what's my motive. And am I worried about the children liking me, thinking I'm cool? My daughter said that to me the other day. She goes, "Are you telling me that you and daddy, you're representing Heavenly father and Heavenly mother in my life?" Yeah. That's really our role. And as we love them will show our love to you the way they would, we hope. Which then leads us to this verse that I tell you these things. This is Mosiah 2:17, "I tell you these things that you may learn wisdom, that you may learn that when you're in the service of your fellow beings, you're only in the service of your God."
- 00:58:19 If I really want to be like him, I'm going to learn to serve people. I love taking Mosiah 2 and Mosiah 2. There are so many verses we can just pair up that this is now the pattern of Christ, that when the angel comes, we've got witnesses now. And the angel is going to describe Christ and this is who he is. But when we study Jesus, when he comes in 3 Nephi over and over, what does he say? "I've come to do the will of the Father. I love God and so I love you." There's the order always for us.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:58 Jen, King Benjamin seems to take what I call the Ammon model sort of, which is I will serve you and I'll win your heart. But the purpose of me winning your heart is to turn your heart to the real king. Ammon says, "I'm going to win their hearts. Basically I'm going to convert them to me so I can convert them to the Lord." And maybe what King Benjamin's saying here is, "I know that you love me and I'm grateful that you love me. Now, here is what made me what I am." So I don't see his I's, right? He does say I, I, I, and I think they're saying, "Yes, you. We love you." And then he's saying, "Okay, now I'm going to point you to someone else who can actually save you."
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 00:59:46 Absolutely. And in the pointing it's to be grateful. And his transition is, let me show you who God is, and if you could be so grateful, this idea of in verse 20 of Mosiah 2, if you should render all the thanks and praise, which your whole soul has power to possess to that God who has created you and has kept and preserved you, and it's cause that you should rejoice and is granted that you should live in peace one with another, I say unto you that if you should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day by lending

you breath, that you may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another. I say if ye should serve him with all your whole soul, yet ye would be an unprofitable servant. That your consecration, that your acknowledgment of your nothingness, which he's about to talk to us about, it's still not enough.

01:00:50 He's not trying to say you're never going to be good enough. It's just saying the only way you're really going to be satisfied is if you're grateful in it. And this breath idea, do you remember when President Nelson in the April 2019 talked to the brother and talked about Metanoee? Do you remember this? He talked about meta was to change, noee was your mind, your knowledge, your spirit, your breath. He said, "Change even the way you breathe." And learning to be able to breathe with gratitude. If you've ever had trouble breathing or your lungs have hurt, you know how it feels to have clear lungs. Even the way you breathe, repentance will change even the way you breathe. And how do we then draw gratitude into even the way I breathe?

John Bytheway: 01:01:43 I love the way that we've talked about that King Benjamin says, "Okay, if I have done this," in verse 19, "then how you ought to thank your heavenly king?" I've got in my mind Bob Millett teaching this and saying, "You can never put God in your debt. Even if you were to do 20 and 21, you would still be unprofitable servants." I'm laughing because I saw this mug. I sent this picture to my kids and it has this picture of Jesus on it and his arms are out. He says, "You are all disappointments." You can't ever get to where you're a profitable servant. And this is where King Benjamin, I guess, is making that switch. If I deserve any thanks at all, and then he shifts it, then how you ought to thank God.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 01:02:38 Yeah. How do we learn to do it though? We talk about it, but what's the real practical day-to-day I'm learning to be grateful.

Hank Smith: 01:02:47 Maybe it comes back to verse 17. When you are in the service of your fellow beings, you are only in the service of your God. If I realize the moment I serve, the moment I do something God has asked me to, he immediately blesses me, right? I'm like, well, stop it. I want to get some headway. Stop blessing me so I can get ahead of you a little bit. Maybe he's saying, look, just keep serving your fellow beings. Just keep serving your fellow beings. That's the way you're going to show me how grateful you are. And the more you serve them, the more grateful you will be. When you serve, you change.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 01:03:25 I like that. And that he's going to give us later in the speech in Mosiah 4, when you do things in wisdom in order. It doesn't mean that I need to wear my life out in the sense that I don't have time to take care of myself or things that way, but just this service mindedness. Elder Renlund has given a couple of talks in a row about covenant making and keeping. He gave one at BYU a couple years ago and the one with the road, covenant path, like a road. And then he gave one here at BYU Idaho talking about covenants, how we're strengthened, the more covenants we make, the more power.

01:04:08 And then he did it at BYU on March 5th. And in that, again, this idea of we're doing it because we want to bind ourselves to God. We want to be connected in such a way that I have the power I need. Like Nephi talks about in 1 Nephi 14, this power that I can withstand what's happening in the world. My motivation for service is my love for God. And in the meantime, I learned to love other people. And yes, he does immediately bless us.



God Sure Has a Lot of Enemies

GUEST: JENNIFER B. PLATT



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt, Mosiah chapters one through three.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 Jen, you said something earlier about part of serving others is taking care of ourselves. This was Elder Ballard years ago. He said, "Water cannot be drawn from an empty well." And if you're not setting aside time for what replenishes you, you will have less and less to give to others, even to your children. When we take care of ourselves, we are still serving others, because we are creating energy that we can give then in more service, so it doesn't do anyone any good to wear my life out and not take care of myself, because I'm not going to be able to serve if I wear the machine out.
- John Bytheway: 00:49 We run past that verse pretty fast because we're all used to it. People for millennia have tried to figure out how to best serve God. And King Benjamin just in one phrase answers it, because one school of thought is, "Man, let's get away from all this wicked world. Let's go build a big fortress in the mountains somewhere, take our sacred books with us, and just get away from all this wickedness." Yeah, but we can't serve our brothers and sisters if we're not among them. It's kind of like, what did Jesus say? "I pray not to take them out of the world, but to keep them from evil." So got to be a light to the world and be salt of the earth, but not remove ourselves from them, and just one little sentence goes by so fast. You want to know how to serve God? Serve each other.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 01:35 Yep. And that takes a lot of work. I spend a lot of time listening to Relief Society Presidents asking me, "How are we going to get people to minister to each other?" It seems to be the question, and it's a matter of learning to care about people, paying attention to them, listening to them, hearing what matters to them, and being responsive and showing up. Just in this week, I've had two friends randomly call and say, "Jen, I'm calling to ask how I can lighten your load." They didn't know I had a whole lot going on. They weren't aware of my circumstances and the overwhelm that I was in.

02:17 But to get that phone call, the first was last Saturday, the phone call was, "I want to know why the Holy Ghost is keeping you on my mind and that I'm not going to be satisfied until I talk to you. What can I do to lighten your load? What can I take?" I had been sorting through some things that I was trying to figure out how to delegate, and her name had come to my mind, but I thought I didn't want to burden her. She said, "Consider it taken care of and done." The other friend, same thing, "Okay, I know you've got some things going on with some assignments both at work and church and this. I'm here to take that from you, and don't worry again about it."

02:57 It means everything. It means everything that they would say, "I see her and I see that things are happening for her. I have a little bit of time, and I want to take that for her." That's what it looks like. It's knowing each other. It's being aware of each other. It's watching and observing and then making phone calls. It's the reason we need to know how to receive revelation so that we can say, "I know what the Holy Ghost feels like and I'm going to be so quick to respond when the prompt comes to say, how can I help? What can I do?" And I think part of that is having the courage to say, "Thank you. This is what you can do for me."

Hank Smith:

03:40 Over a decade ago, my sweet wife was pregnant with twins on bed rest. We had three little kids who were running around. She wanted to be up and doing and moving, but her doctor said, "If we're going to do this right, and these twins are going to be born healthy, you're going to have to stay in bed, stay on the couch." One day she told me that she just wanted a little bit of chocolate. "Give me a little bit of chocolate. I'll go back and lay down on the couch." So she got up, she had her little five minutes off the couch to get something done, grab something to eat, and she could not find any chocolate anywhere. She used to hide it around the house, so then she would find it and be like, "Oh, wow, a little treat." And I had not been replenishing the secret chocolate supply while she'd been on bed rest.

04:24 I didn't even know it existed. She just kind of broke down. It wasn't that she was concerned about the chocolate, it was just kind of the last thing, "I'm really tired." Then she gets a text on her phone. Our neighbor, Janine Lewis, everybody needs a Janine Lewis in their life, send her a little message that said, "Hey, Sarah, I was thinking about you today and I left a little something for you on your doorstep." Now, by the way, John, you and I know if a boy texts a boy and says, "I left a little

something for you on your doorstep," that is not a good text to receive.

- John Bytheway: 04:56 I'm afraid to open the door.
- Hank Smith: 04:57 Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 04:58 Really?
- John Bytheway: 04:58 And go, "Okay, I better put on a helmet or something."
- Hank Smith: 05:01 Yeah. I do not know.
- John Bytheway: 05:02 And goggles before I open the door.
- Hank Smith: 05:04 But when Janine Lewis texts her, Sarah goes over to the door and there on our doorstep was a little miniature chocolate pie. My wife took it inside and said, "Thank the Lord for Janine Lewis, for listening to that quiet prompting." It wasn't a miracle, it wasn't earth-shattering, but you're right, Jen. When people come to our aid in those difficult times and when we allow people to come to our aid, because you could have said to your friends, "I'm fine. Don't worry about me, I'm good." But you opened up and said, "You know what? Actually I could use some help with this particular thing." We bear one another's burdens that they may be light.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 05:46 We thank them and we let them do it, and that for me has taken some work to be able to say, "Yes, will you do X, Y, and Z?"
- John Bytheway: 05:55 I met somebody at a conference once. She showed me her phone and she said, "This comes up every morning." And it was a question, who needs me today? Which I thought, "Wow." It wasn't, does anyone need me today? It was, okay, who? And that could be as simple as a text, maybe a chocolate pie, putting herself in that frame of mind the Lord could use her then to find somebody.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 06:17 Eyes to see.
- Hank Smith: 06:19 And Jen, isn't the opposite in verse 32, he says, "Beware contention"?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 06:24 Yep.

Hank Smith: 06:25 It's almost the exact opposite. "Serve each other and beware contention with each other, because you'll list to obey the evil spirit."

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 06:34 That's exactly what Benjamin does here, is he says, "Let me show you the opposite." This is what the absolute opposite's going to look like, and it's going to lead you in verse 39 to a final doom to endure a never-ending torment. In essence, what he's done in, I would say, where'd you start is 32, 32 to 39 roughly is he saying these are the qualities of the natural man. This is what an enemy to God looks like. So when we get into Mosiah 3:19 and we may be saying, "Wait, that's confusing language. What does it mean to be an enemy to God?" It means we're contentious. We listen to Satan. We're not repenting. We're rejecting truth. We're rebellious.

07:21 I love the phrase in 36, "Ye do withdraw yourself from the spirit of the Lord." You did this. You chose to withdraw from the Holy Ghost, and you've given no place in you to guide you in wisdom's path. Do you think that's the original covenant path? "That ye may be blessed, prospered and preserved." You're in open rebellion, verse 37, and there's the phrase that got my attention. "You've becometh an enemy to all righteousness." Pair it up with Mosiah 3:19 when we're trying to understand what does it mean to be an enemy to God? Well, there you have it. It's these attributes, these characteristics. It's this idea of self-consuming and focused inward, contentious.

Hank Smith: 08:09 Yeah, you're right, Jen. He says it again in Mosiah 2:38. If you don't repent and die as an enemy to God, when he brings it up in Mosiah 3:19, that famous, famous verse-

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 08:20 That's right.

Hank Smith: 08:21 ... we've already read what it means in chapter two to be an enemy to God.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 08:25 That's right. The language is consistent and the angel is bringing this message in chapter three, but Benjamin is very clear to say, "I want to show you what this means. This is what it looks like to be in opposition to God, to be an enemy to Him." And that for us then to be able to say, "How do I remedy it? How quickly can I repent and say I want to turn my heart?" It's all selfish. It's all selfish and self-consumed, and it's an awful situation that he's described, but he doesn't leave us there. In verse 41, "I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God."

09:10 And so what are the commandments? Love God, love His children. Keep your covenants and you will be happy. You'll be blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual. And if they hold out faithful to the end, they're received into heaven that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. Oh, remember, remember. And that word, President Kimball used to say that the most important word is remember. Why? Because it's at the heart of covenant living. The heart of covenant living is to remember. Remember my relationship to God and what He's asked me to do to bless His children so that I can be changed and sanctified, overcome the natural man or the fallen state, and become sanctified, a queen, a queen or a king where I'm in an exalted state.

John Bytheway: 10:03 Verse 41 seems to be a look-at-the-fruits type of verse. I'm just remembering Elder Holland saying, "The notable miracle has occurred in the lives of millions of Latter-day Saints," and then he went, "That cannot be denied." You look around and you see people and they're not absent of trials, but you see people in a blessed and happy state in the midst of the ups and downs that all of us have. I like that verse a lot.

Hank Smith: 10:28 Both of you probably remember an older book, The Anatomy of Peace by the Arbinger Institute, and it talked about leadership. It made a, and I think King Benjamin exemplifies this, it made a distinction between formal authority, meaning you have to follow me because you have to because I'm the dad or I'm the boss or I pay the check, so you have to do what I say versus moral authority, which is people follow you because they want to, because you've earned a sense of trust in their life. And where do we come from as a parent or as a leader? Do we come from formal authority, where we kind of lean on the idea that people do what we say because they have to? Or do we take the time to earn moral authority in people's lives where people follow because they want to? I can give you an easy example.

11:30 I remember once doing the dishes, big pile of dishes, and there's my daughter on the couch on her phone and I said, "Do you want to come help me with these dishes?" And like every good child, she said, "No." I should have thought about my moral authority. Instead, where did I go? I went right to my formal authority. I made a new rule. Have you ever made a new rule? I don't know if either of you have ever made a new rule on the spot as a parent, but I said, "Hey, guess what? New rule, she who does not help with the dishes does not keep her phone." And she, "All right." And she came over and helped, although she didn't do it with as much enthusiasm as I'd hoped. Why? Because I was banking on my formal authority.

12:11 Benjamin could say, "You do what I say because I'm king. You do what I say because I'm king." But he doesn't. They do it. Benjamin asks because they want to. As I see this, consider the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. He might even be talking about himself and his people, because all of the moral authority he's earned has turned into this blessed and happy state instead of this controlling state.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 12:40 And isn't it cool? You've got me thinking with that, Hank, that he operationalizes happiness for us. What is our expectation of what happiness should look like or feel like? That it's not necessarily... And if you mark and go through and look at his life and the things that he's done and experienced, that the happiness came from the relationship with God, and it wasn't about the things that the world may say, "This will make you happy and this is what you should expect happiness to look like," but rather your truest happiness in this form. So we have to say, "Where do I fit in the plan and how do I feel about God and what do I need to understand about Him, His nature and His character that I even want that?"

Hank Smith: 13:25 And that's where chapter three comes in.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 13:28 That's where chapter three comes in. Shall we?

Hank Smith: 13:30 Let's go there.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 13:31 Chapter three, we're now a third voice. We see in verse two that Benjamin says, "The things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God. And he said unto me," colon, we mark it again. We've got a new voice, and that the angel's going to talk to us. He's going to go all the way to verse 22.

Hank Smith: 13:59 This is like quote inception here.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:01 Yes.

Hank Smith: 14:01 We have Mormon who's quoting Benjamin who's quoting the angel.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:05 That's right. We've got some layers going here, and he's telling us that this is glad tidings of great joy, which we can expect Jesus to follow, because Jesus and joy are synonymous, but it's a phrase that's used elsewhere in introducing Jesus Christ and that the Lord has heard thy prayers in verse four. What do you think Benjamin was praying about, and how do we learn to pray

in that way, that the answers that come to us are a result of the types of prayers that we're offering?

- Hank Smith: 14:42 Well, I'm going to write that in. What was he praying for? This was an answer to some prayer.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:49 Yeah. Do you remember during COVID when President Nelson prayed for us? It was on an appointed time and he prayed. And I remember the feeling of trust and confidence and hope, because I'd heard him pray for us. But what must Benjamin have been praying for and about? I want to witness, though, the reality of angels and that this is something that's promised to us. President Nelson has said this to us, going back to the temple and your spiritual foundation from October 2021.
- 15:26 He said, "I plead with you to seek prayerfully and consistently to understand temple covenants and ordinances. Spiritual doors will open. You will learn how to part the veil between heaven and earth, how to ask for God's angels to attend you, and how better to receive direction from heaven. Your diligent efforts to do so will reinforce and strengthen your spiritual foundation." Isn't that awesome? Those promises of as I learn my covenants, which this is all about, that I will have, in part, the ability to ask for angels to attend to me. And I'm not sure it's going to happen like this. I've not had that experience, but I witness the reality of angels.
- Hank Smith: 16:16 Have either of you ever laughed between verses two and three, that the angel says, "Awake." And Benjamin says, "I awoke and stood up." And then the angel says, "Awake."
- John Bytheway: 16:26 Awake.
- Hank Smith: 16:28 He's almost like one of my children, "Wake up." And so they get out of bed. "No, seriously, wake up." Oh, yeah. I want to read to you both something that our friend John Hilton wrote. He says, "When we visit the textual connections between Abinadi and King Benjamin, an interesting possibility arises. Most of the connections between the two discourses," we haven't got to Abinadi yet, "come not between King Benjamin's words, but from the words of the angel who spoke to King Benjamin. In Mosiah 3:3, King Benjamin states, an angel said unto me, and then commences a lengthy quote. The strongest connections between King Benjamin's discourse and Abinadi's discourse occur when Abinadi's words are not compared with Benjamin's but Benjamin's quotation of the angel."

17:19 And then he asks this fun question, "Could Abinadi have been the angel who spoke to King Benjamin? While such an assertion must be extremely tentative," he's being really safe there, "it is interesting to note Abinadi had passed away before King Benjamin speaks. There is a clear textual connection between their words, and Abinadi and King Benjamin do not appear to have any contact." Then he goes on. He says, "There are other possible explanations for the connections, but it's interesting to reflect on whether Abinadi could have been that angelic minister." Isn't that kind of a fun thing to think about? I know he says we've got to be extremely tentative, but I think it can be a fun connection when we go read the words of Abinadi.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 18:07 It's not uncommon for the Lord to use angels to mentor those who need that kind of help. Angel Moroni was the last writer and keeper of the Book of Mormon and the perfect mentor for Joseph Smith, among many other angels that mentored Joseph Smith.

Hank Smith: 18:22 Jen, what do you see as the crucial points of this angelic visit?

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 18:27 Oh, my. It's Jesus, right? That absolutely it's Jesus. For us to be able to say, "Let's take the way King Benjamin has described himself, and he's now become a type of Jesus Christ, that we have similar language and descriptions of the Lord omnipotent who reigneth." This is verse five, "Who was and is from all eternity to all eternity shall come down from heaven among the children of men." And that's the same as Nephi, talking about the condescension of God, "To dwell in a tabernacle of clay and shall go forth among men working mighty miracles." And then these such as, and Benjamin doesn't say he does these things, but he's serving. He's bettering people's lives, and he's bringing them to Jesus and the miracles, healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.

19:24 I don't know about you. I've had vision trouble my whole life from the time I was seven years old, and to think about that idea of restored sight, but I'm not even blind, and what God can do through His son for us to cure and to heal, casting out devils and evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men. You want to get the natural man out of you, come to Jesus, and He will draw that evil spirit out. I mentioned earlier that Benjamin talked about suffering, and now in verse seven, "And lo, he shall suffer temptations and pain of body, hunger, thirst and fatigue, even more than man can suffer." We can't comprehend this. There's not a Fast Sunday that comes close to what he's been through, "Except it be unto death, for behold

blood cometh from every pore. So great shall be His anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of His people."

20:28 We want to pay attention to blood. We've talked a little bit about blood, but that this angel is going to talk a little bit more about blood. And I want us to take a minute if we can. Let's go over to the Bible Dictionary and the word blood with this idea of trying to understand why was blood significant, especially in the law of Moses. If we could go down a handful of lines after the quotation of Acts 15:20 through 29, the sentence begins, "The atoning power." "The atoning power of a sacrifice was in the blood because it was regarded as containing the life of the animal and because the sacrifice was a type of the great sacrifice, who is Jesus Christ. The scripture says that almost all that are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission." That's from Hebrew nine.

21:28 "Jesus worked out a perfect atonement by the shedding of His blood. Joseph Smith, as having many other prophets, sealed His testimony with His blood, that the righteous might be honored and the wicked might be condemned. Often a covenant was sealed with blood." When we think again about the sacrament and the water, that it's an emblem of His blood, that we are indeed bought with a price, redeemed, sanctified through the blood of the lamb. Angel is very careful to draw our attention to blood. You'll notice again in verse 11, "For behold, and also His blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned."

22:25 So we've got another group brought up, and then we're going to get blood again in verse 15 towards the bottom, talking about the law of Moses availeth nothing except it were through the atonement of His blood. And then in 16, "For behold, as in Adam or by nature they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins." The end of 18, talking about salvation, "Is and is to come, and in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord omnipotent." Here we've got the blood of Jesus Christ sacrificing to save us.

John Bytheway: 23:07 Mosiah 3:7, "Blood cometh from every pore." There is, correct me if I'm wrong, only three places where it speaks of that. Only Luke in the gospels, of blood coming from every pore in Gethsemane, here in King Benjamin's speech given him by an angel, and section 19 in first person where Jesus describes it. But I like that it connects blood to the atonement, when I see the sacrament table and remembrance of His body and His blood. I think, and I hope I'm not drawing too careful of

distinctions, because of Jesus's, we will all live again, be resurrected with our bodies. Because of His blood, we can have eternal life, immortality and eternal life, like Moses 1:39 says, His body and His blood.

- Hank Smith: 23:59 Jen, I love this question, because John, do you remember our episode with Phil Allred, who's a good friend of Jen's, last year in the book of Hebrews? If I remember the writer said, "The blood of the bull and the goat can't get rid of sin." Jen, you said these people are still living the law of Moses. This would be a great connection for them, for him to say over and over it's the blood of Jesus Christ that saves you, not the blood of the sacrifice. They're pointing in a certain direction.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 24:34 Yeah, absolutely, you're right. But it amplifies why it matters to take His name. That's what's next is taking His name as saying, "I accept this blood. I accept this offering even to talk about this, that I just feel so much reverence that one person, one individual would do such a thing." In verse eight of Mosiah, "He shall be called Jesus Christ." Let's do a little thought experiment with names and watch the names that are going to come here, and even consider what's in a name. I married at 41, and I'd been Jennifer Brinkerhoff for 41 years, and I liked that name. Met Jed and I took his name, but that wasn't easy for me. We talked about it. And he said, "Well, do you want to hyphenate?" Brinkerhoff Platt's a mouthful. We thought about Platterhoff. Actually, our names go awesome together. You take Jennifer and Jed and it's Jennifer Platterhoff. We're meant to be one. Isn't that so good?
- Hank Smith: 25:40 Jennifer Platterhoff.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 25:41 Jennifer Platterhoff.
- Hank Smith: 25:42 We're going to put that on the title of this episode.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 25:44 You're welcome to, because he influences everything I do. But I think that that union is such a type of how to really experience the Atonement. And to put our names together and that it's kind of a funny thing, but that now I've learned what it means to be a Platt. I know that Platt's are loyal. I know that Platt's show up, that they're dedicated and they love to serve, and I'm honored to take his name. I love that guy. And to think about that we get to share this life, but now Jesus is saying, "Take my name," and that our sealing is in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that their names ratify it so that we can have that experience.

Hank Smith: 26:30 I wanted to ask you something since you're a mom. You've pointed out the word blood comes up in Mosiah three. Well, in Mosiah five, King Benjamin's going to say you're going to be called the children of Christ, His sons and His daughters. For this day, He has spiritually begotten you or spiritually given birth to you. Perhaps this might be the reason Benjamin chose this name because the Lord, like a mother, I think the book of Moses does this, gives His blood to give life. You're born into this world by water, blood, and spirit. I want you born again by water, blood, and spirit. You've just talked about your relationship with Jed. Talk about your relationship with your children and how Christ gave His blood to give this new birth.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 27:26 All my life, all I've ever wanted was to be a mother. My desire was always centered on that and delayed, delayed, delayed, delayed, delayed. We married at 41, I was pregnant immediately, and we lost that pregnancy, and pregnant again and lost that pregnancy. And you try and say, "Awesome, my body at 41 and 42 can get pregnant," but at the same time you're going, Not awesome." Because of my age, they would do some testing and different things. We discovered just a simple blood clotting mutation that is resolved with a baby aspirin, but it was blood. It was blood that my body thought this is a foreign entity, I am to reject it. Most of my pregnancy with our daughter, our firstborn, was anxious.

28:19 I went to the doctor shortly after we discovered she was a she. I went in and told the doctor, "I'm still afraid. Is this viable? Are we going to keep this pregnancy?" And he said to me, he said, "I'm going to say something to you that I typically don't say to patients, no man physiologically will ever experience the atonement of Jesus Christ the way you will in carrying this child. Remember Him." Hank, what an inspired question you've asked, right? She then became a type for me. Every movement, everything was remember Him. For me, it was such an opportunity to stay focused on Him. Well, at 37 weeks we went in for a routine checkup and they said, "You need to have a baby or a stroke."

Hank Smith: 29:13 Did you say, "I'll take baby"? Were you like...

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 29:16 Here's the thing, I was supposed to have a baby shower that night. Can we have a party first? And the doc said, "I think you maybe should have the baby." So we had the baby. And I remember she came emergency C-section. There's that moment where I couldn't feel anything anymore, and I was in a bit of shock of going, "I can't feel anything shoulder down. This scares me." But within minutes we have the most exquisite human.

This child continues to mentor me and tutor me and be such a strength to me. Her natural gift is wisdom and she is so good. She's not afraid to correct me. She's not afraid to give her opinions. And then 23 months later we had our son. That boy is pure as gold, and I think it's God's gift to an old mom to say, "Let's give you some really wise old souls that you can enjoy and invest in," but I'll never be the same.

30:21 My body is altered. It's completely different. And let's talk about blood. My blood pressure will never be normal again because of my body and what it went through as an old lady. They came at nearly 43 and 45. So my blood pressure is now different, and I have to watch that carefully. I hope I'm not too personal to all of you, but to think about blood being a part of that variable, I have a heart palpitation now and feel my heart. It's very... I hear my heart, it's the source of blood. And I've made a choice to say I know part of it's anxiety, but I'm going to let that remind me to remember Him and to think about the source of the blood, that we can make those kinds of decisions, that we can say, "I'm dealing with something that's uncomfortable. I'm dealing with something that's medically unexplainable. They don't know what's the matter with me. It is what it is. So what am I going to do with it? I'm going to remember Him." Thank you for asking.

Hank Smith: 31:31 Here is someone offering their own blood so someone else can have life. What else do you want to do in three, Jen?

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 31:39 Okay, in three, let's make sure we've got His names, that He is, in verse eight, "He shall be called Jesus Christ, the son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the creator of all things from the beginning." And then his mother's name, that her name is Mary. And we only get her a few times too. So blood and Mary only come up a few more times, that He's the source of salvation. Let's go over to verse 17, "And I say unto you that there shall be no other name given nor any other way, nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord omnipotent." He is the source of salvation. He is the only way. By covenant, we take his name and we change. We change our nature and our character. We can't not read verse 19. We probably could recite it in unison, but would one of you read that for us?

John Bytheway: 32:41 Okay. Mosiah 3:19, "For the natural man is an enemy to God and has been from the fall of Adam and will be forever and ever unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and puteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which

the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father."

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 33:14 There is so much in here, and I know that you have studied and talked about the fall of Adam and what that means and the necessity of it, that for us to really navigate the plan of happiness, I'm sure pre-mortality was glorious, but it wasn't enough. We wanted a body. And with that body, we fell. Adam fell. I fell, and I came into a mortal realm that's going to place me in a position where it may not feel natural to obey and to follow and to keep the commandments, but if I will put off the natural man and yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, I can become a saint. There are so many possibilities for us to explore. I would have us consider, what does it really feel like to experience the Holy Ghost? Is He familiar to me so that when He speaks, I can yield that I will slow down and say, "Okay, I'm listening. What is it you want me to do?"
- 34:23 And it's putting off that list from the last chapter of contention and rebellion and disobedience and not willing to repent. It's overcoming the world. It's mastering the body. It's being able to say, "I want to live the doctrine of Christ, and I want to become as a child." And Benjamin's going to do something masterful with this teaching of an angel, and tell us, as you've said, you'll become children of Christ, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict. Let's talk about inflict for a minute. President Holland gave a talk called A Saint Through the Atonement of Christ the Lord. This was at BYU in 2022, January 2022, and I want to share something he teaches us here.
- 35:21 Here's what President Holland says, "You can sail on, King Benjamin said, if you will be childlike, submissive, meek, humble, and full of love. I think the only commentary needed for this verse might be regarding the line suggesting God inflicts trials and burdens upon us. In English, the word inflict, which comes from the Latin infligir, has at least two meanings. One is to strike or dash against and the other is to beat down. But those definitions are not applicable to God or His angels. No. The proper definition of the word as King Benjamin used it is to allow something that must be born or suffered. Allowing something is a different matter. God can and will do that if it is ultimately for our good. I am going to say it again. God does not now, nor will he ever do to you a destructive, malicious, unfair thing ever.
- 36:28 "It is not in what Peter called the divine nature to even be able to do so by definition, and in fact, God is perfectly and

thoroughly always and forever good and everything he does is for our good. I promise you that God does not lie awake nights trying to figure out ways to disappoint us or harm us or crush our dreams or our faith. Often, we see that word inflict in there and we want to surrender and we want to turn God's plan of happiness into Satan's plan of happiness, that God's controlling my life and He's determining what's going to happen. That's what Satan wanted to have happen, to control us, that we could all be saved. Instead, He's allowing us to have the experiences that we need to have to become saints, consecrated disciples of Jesus Christ."

- John Bytheway: 37:26 This is one of those verses you just read it and think, "Okay, a farm boy made this up." I like to define with my students or try to, we try to talk about it together. What do you think the natural man is? And sometimes we come up with that's the do what comes naturally. Instead of boundaries, you're just thinking, "If I just did whatever I felt like, what would I do?" And I don't know if you guys have a better definition. I remember Sister Wendy Watson Nelson gave a talk years ago at Women's Conference called You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman, which was the title of a song.
- 38:03 And she talked about if you did what the natural woman wanted. I like this line, "Unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit." And when I saw that word, enticings, it's not forced, but we're enticed by both sides, and I have in my margin that awesome chapter, Second Nephi two, I have verse 16, "The Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore man could not act for himself, save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other. The natural man gives way to one enticing, but if we will give way to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, that is putting off the natural man." That's how I'm seeing it. Do you think I'm getting that right?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 38:47 Yeah, I think so. But that it always comes down to what I want to choose.
- John Bytheway: 38:52 Yeah, and that's the Second Nephi two thing. This is why there has to be an opposition in all things, so that we're put in a position to choose which enticings we're going to follow.
- Hank Smith: 39:02 This verse seems to fit really well with the teachings of Paul. He talked about this tug-of-war between the flesh and the spirit. This is Galatians five, "So I say walk by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. The flesh desires that which is contrary to the spirit and the spirit which is contrary to the flesh, after conflict with each other. The acts of the flesh are

obvious. Sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, rage, selfishness, dissension and factions, envy, drunkenness and the like. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." And then he says what King Benjamin says, it's just a little harsher. He says to put off the natural man. That's what King Benjamin says. Paul says to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires. A little more graphic, but the idea is I've got two sides of me, and one has to control the other. I get to choose which one is in control.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 40:22 It's why the spirit matters so much. It's really prioritizing the most important thing we do is feeling and following the Spirit. Last year I had a confrontation with a friend. It was not pretty. We both reacted poorly. It wasn't easy to make peace. In fact, it went on for a long time. We were both in pain over it. And one day I was out walking and just trying to sort through some things and I, through the Holy Ghost, had the thought come, "I need to take care of this before he's gone." I heard the prompt. I responded and I did the work. I spent some time with trusted friends and just said, "I need to figure out how to forgive and how to move on and to make peace." And we started to do the work together, and he was that Fall diagnosed with a terminal illness and will be buried tomorrow. He's gone.
- 41:29 And I literally watched my friend shed the natural man, that he got to where all that mattered was God. And he even said that to me eventually, saying, "There's just no room for contention." That at the point that when he knew this was the end, it didn't matter, this confrontation that we had had. And to think how else could I have known except for the Holy Ghost to say, "Take care of this. Don't delay. Be a peacemaker and repent. Repent and make it right." But to literally see someone change and transform, that this is the whole purpose of mortality, and I haven't quite figured out how to navigate it without something major, that it feels like when there's something major going on that it's easier to go, "Oh, I'll repent," or, "I'll make peace with you." I want to learn to navigate life with so much joy and love that these little things just maybe don't matter so much and that I want to leave people feeling love from him and for him.
- 42:51 That's what Benjamin's done for us. That's what an angel has done for us, and we're not even finished. You guys get to keep going with this, but what a glorious thing mortality is, that we get this chance to become kings and queens, that we get this chance to practice with each other, Elder Maxwell called it clinical material, and that you and I brushing up against each

other, I don't know what's going on for you, but if I can just give compassion and love and kindness, meekness, humility, and treat you like I would a child, I think it might all work out in the end.

- Hank Smith: 43:36 Elder Holland said, "I am grateful to know that in spite of my imperfections, at least God is perfect. That at last He is, for example, able to love His enemies because too often, due to the natural man and woman in us, you and I are sometimes that enemy." He says, "I am grateful that God is merciful and a peacemaker, because I need mercy and the world needs peace."
- John Bytheway: 44:06 I think that was just beautiful and amazing.
- Hank Smith: 44:09 Jen, thanks for being so vulnerable with that story. I think everyone listening could say, "That's me too. I don't want to be this natural man, natural woman." And Latter-day Saints are not of the belief of the depravity of men and women, but we do believe that we have natural appetites and passions. And the Lord has said, "Keep those in bounds or there's going to be difficulty in your life." Jen, if I'm sitting folding laundry or on my commute or I've even heard some people say, "Hey, I listened to you and John while I'm skiing or snowboarding," let's say anyone out there is listening going, "I am that way too. I want to put off the natural man. I want to yield to the Spirit and become all these things." What would you say, Jen? How does someone start? I think Elder Holland's right. The Lord doesn't see you as an enemy but does want you to become a saint. How would you help someone?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 45:06 The first is come to know God, His nature, and His character. That's one of our biggest problems. We maybe misunderstand who He is and His love for us. When I come to know Him, I want to understand His plan of happiness. I'd love to invite people, including myself, to consider the gaps. When it comes to the plan of happiness, we're never going to plumb the depths and have it mastered. So today maybe the gap is trying to understand what it means to be fallen or this complexity of the natural world versus the world to come and what we're promised in that world. Put some energy in that. I had a young man ask me this week, he says, "I want to learn how to feel the Holy Ghost more." And I said, "What if you reversed it? What if you wanted to learn to pay attention to when you don't feel the Holy Ghost?"
- 46:06 And he said, "What would I do? What would that look like?" I said, "Well, if you're doing something and you feel that nudge

or feeling, don't do that, don't say that, then pay attention to that." Because at the heart of the covenant and Elder Bednar has taught us this, at the heart of the covenant is to always have His spirit to be with us, and I'm taking that at face value. I'm trusting that to be real and true. If I feel a withdrawal, then what changed? And I can quickly repent of that. That may sometimes be easier to do for some of us, to look at the opposite, to be able to say instead of, "I'll never be a saint. I'll never be good enough." Well, today what can I do? What's the one thing that I can do to feel the Holy Ghost or recognize his withdrawal?

46:57

I love to get out my patriarchal blessing and identify the gifts that I've been blessed with and focus on those gifts, and I like to look for evidence of it in the day. How did I really amplify that God-given gift to celebrate that and acknowledge it and to show gratitude in my nothingness that, "Look what you've given me, and thank you for letting me experience that today." I think that's the process of putting off the natural man even for five minutes a day to say, "For five minutes today, I'm going to do something a little bit differently." And watch how five minutes can change. It's the 1% better, from our friend Brother Dunn, that just the five minutes a day can make such a difference in the way that I see myself and my relationship with God.

Hank Smith:

47:47

CS Lewis said, "This type of renovation, this changing from the natural man to a saint is precisely what Christianity is about. This world is the great sculptor's shop. We are the statues, and there is a rumor going around the shop that some of us are someday going to come to life." And maybe that's tying this together, Jen, with the blood of Christ, I can go from the natural man, which is kind of a dead life, through His blood, I can now come alive. Jen, before we let you go, as we've been studying this book this year, we are finding more and more treasures, which were always right here. They were right here in front of us the whole time, hidden in plain sight. Will you tell our listeners how you feel about the book and what the book's done for you?

Dr. Jennifer Platt:

48:42

I don't have a first memory of falling in love with the Book of Mormon. I can't tell you a time or a place or a date. I remember studying it my whole life. My parents were really careful that that was a consistency that we could count on, but I know what it feels like when I don't read the Book of Mormon. Like I was talking earlier about that opposite, and there's always a void if I've not given it the time or energy. For me, I've fallen in love as I'm watching my children fall in love, and it's come to mean something different that it has saved me for decades. I've taken

a missionary blue copy of the Book of Mormon and I'll write a theme or an attribute on the spine, and I'll study the Book of Mormon that year with that in mind, and I've got a whole shelf of them.

49:34 Those have all prepared me for the next thing, that I've always been ready for the next thing, because I have studied the Book of Mormon. As a mother to watch my children to start to love the Book of Mormon, it's everything. And it means more than it's ever meant. I feel like we're starting to really see and claim the blessings that prophets have given to us for generations. I love the Book of Mormon. I know that it is true. I know that a man will come nearer to Christ than any other book than from the Book of Mormon, and I know that God lives and that this is His church and His work, and what a privilege. I just am so grateful to consider myself a disciple of Jesus Christ. And the Book of Mormon has tutored and mentored me in that, and I witness those to you, all of you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hank Smith: 50:38 Amen. This has been a fantastic day. I feel like King Benjamin has become 3D. The crowd that is gathered around Benjamin gets bigger and bigger with each person who reads the Book of Mormon. It's an ever-expanding audience. Jen, I think you've done that for us today. You've put us in the audience.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 51:01 Oh, my pleasure. Thank you both.

Hank Smith: 51:03 We love having you. We want to thank Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt for being with us today. Jen, it was absolutely wonderful. We also want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and every episode we remember our founder Steve Sorensen. We hope you join us next week. We have more King Benjamin coming up on followHIM.

51:30 Before you skip to the next episode, I have some important information. This episode's transcript and show notes are available on our website, followhim.co, that's followhim.co. On our website, you'll also find our two books, Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and Finding Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Both books are full of short and powerful quotes and insights. From all our episodes from the Old and New Testaments. The digital copies of these books are absolutely free. You can watch the podcast on YouTube. Also, our Facebook and Instagram accounts have videos and extras you won't find anywhere else. If you'd like to know how you can help us, if you could subscribe to, rate, review, and comment on

the podcast, that will make us easier to find. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, and Annabelle Sorensen.

President Russell M. Nelson: 52:25

Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to Him. Follow Him.

AN ANTI-ACNE ANGEL



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello, my friends. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. You know the drill. John and I are sharing a single lesson to go with each week's lesson. John, we're in Mosiah 1-3 today, King Benjamin, you've told me you have a great story.
- John Bytheway: 00:14 Yeah, I do. We all love Mosiah 2:17, "When you're in the service of your fellow beings, you're only in the service of your God."
- 00:21 There's a President Spencer W. Kimball quotation that fits nicely with this, and you know it, Hank, I know you do, and we've heard it on the podcast. "God does notice us and he watches over us, but it is usually through another person that he meets our needs."
- 00:37 Right. It's usually not through thunder and lightning or an angel or a visitation or something. It's usually another person. Here I was, Hank, I was serving in my mission in the Philippines. I was excited because as a teenager I had, shall we say, an active complexion. I had a lot of acne. I don't see it now as much. It was hard and it was, it made me self-conscious. Hank, there were days I stayed home from school. I didn't want to go to school as a sixteen-year-old.
- 01:04 Anyway, I was excited to go to the Philippines because I thought, oh, it'll probably be really sunny and for some reason having a bit of a tan seemed to help. I got there and it actually got worse. There's a condition I've heard of called Tropical Acne. I think maybe I had that.
- Hank Smith: 01:21 That'd be a terrible drink, Tropical Acne.
- John Bytheway: 01:24 Yeah, it sounds horrible. I'd never buy Shasta Tropical Acne flavor.
- 01:28 One day I remember it was getting bad to the point that I could tell people weren't looking me in the eye. They were looking at my face and-

Hank Smith:	01:38	They're scanning.
John Bytheway:	01:39	Looks kind of like a constellation right there. I was already kind of self-conscious. That's just the truth. I remember one night just, "Heavenly Father, maybe this isn't that important to you, but this is bad. People aren't listening to me. We get done with the lesson and they want to talk about something for my face instead of the lesson." Literally happened. Take these leaves and smash them up, and they're giving me home remedies.
Hank Smith:	02:06	Thank you.
John Bytheway:	02:07	Yeah, thanks so much. "What did you think about the Book of Mormon?"
	02:10	"It's affecting the work and I need this to clear up and it would help me, everything." It was amazing, Hank because true story, next Zone conference, my memory is very soon after, I've got to go check my mission journal. Sister Strohmeier walks up to me at Zone conference.
	02:28	The first thing she said was, "Elder Bytheway, I want you to take these pills, break up the powder and some rubbing alcohol, rub it on your skin the morning and the evening. Just do this. Okay?"
Hank Smith:	02:41	Just do this.
John Bytheway:	02:43	Okay, and so I did. Hank, when you watch my movie in heaven, you'll see this event cleared up my face in three days. To this day, I think of Sister Strohmeier as somebody that just had the courage to walk up and say, "I want to help you with this," and she did.
Hank Smith:	03:03	Yup, I love it.
John Bytheway:	03:05	It is usually through another person, and one day I'll rise up and call Sister Strohmeier blessed because she helped me through that very self-conscious time on my mission.
Hank Smith:	03:16	You got sent your own acne angel there.
John Bytheway:	03:19	I mean, I don't think she'd ever been to medical school, but she just wanted to help me.
Hank Smith:	03:25	That's awesome. When you're in the service of your fellow beings, you are in the service of God.

03:31

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