



“They Were Called the People of God”

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:

What is our part in building God's kingdom? Dr. Jenet Erickson delves into the profound question of how we can contribute to building the kingdom of God. She explores Alma's solitude as a leader, the blessings of family life, and the transformative power of conversion through covenants and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Part 2:

Dr. Erickson powerfully teaches Jesus' ability to redeem His people through testimonies and the commandment to remember the Lord's redemptive power evident in our lives.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part I - Dr. Jenet Erickson
- 01:31 What to expect from this episode?
- 05:11 Dr. Jenet Erickson's bio
- 06:18 *Come, Follow Me* manual
- 08:56 The importance of history
- 11:22 Mosiah 25:11- Concern for the Lamanites
- 15:27 The Lord will redeem our family
- 21:06 The gift of the Book of Moses
- 24:49 God is the surgeon, we are assistants
- 26:11 The Church prevails when independent of the State
- 30:48 The Atonement as communal power
- 32:11 The data about daily and marriage in society
- 33:39 Mosiah 25:15 - Teachers preaching repentance and faith
- 36:01 Mosiah 25:14-16 - Remember the Lord
- 38:29 Mosiah 25:23 - Taking His name upon us
- 40:10 Mosiah 25:21 - One church, one doctrine of Christ
- 43:00 Mosiah 26:1 - A rising generation of unbelievers
- 44:14 Mosiah 26:12-15 - Alma's character
- 48:01 Mosiah 26:24-28 - Eschaton
- 52:52 Trust and faith
- 54:48 Mosiah 26:22-23 God's in charge
- 58:08 Mosiah 26:37 - Alma leads by revelation
- 01:02:48 - Covenant language and the name of Christ
- 01:05:32 End of Part 1 - Dr. Jenet Erickson

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II—Dr. Jenet Erickson
- 00:07 Mosiah 27 - Political theology of the Book of Mormon
- 01:58 Mosiah 27:8 Alma the Younger as wicked man
- 03:19 Mosiah 27:14-16 The Lord won't allow His Church to be destroyed
- 06:55 Mosiah 27:22 Go and remember
- 10:13 Conversion and deliverance
- 13:58 Mosiah 27:27-30 - The Lord manifests Himself to all
- 20:59 Soil and Living Water
- 25:16 Mosiah 28 - God redeems His children
- 29:39 Missionaries and faith of their parents
- 30:50 Mosiah 28:3 Motives
- 33:51: Dr. Erickson's faith and confidence in the Book of Mormon
- 38:36 End of Part II— Dr. Jenet Erickson

References:

“Alma Testifies He Has Been Born of God: Mosiah 27; Alma 36.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Accessed May 20, 2024.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/media/video/2020-03-0330-alma-testifies-he-has-been-born-of-god-mosiah-27-alma-36?lang=eng>

Becerra, Daniel, Amy Easton-Flake, Nicholas J. Frederick, and Joseph Spencer. “Book of Mormon Studies.” Book of Mormon Studies . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/book/book-mormon-studies>

Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Sin and Suffering.” BYU Speeches, March 15, 2021. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/dallin-h-oaks/sin-suffering/>

Dew, Sheri L. “The 2 Sentences That Changed President Gordon B. Hinckley’s Life Forever.” LDS Living, May 17, 2017. <https://www.ldsliving.com/the-2-sentences-that-changed-president-gordon-b-hinckleys-life-forever/s/85398>

Dew, Sheri. “Famous Last Words.” BYU Women’s Conference. Accessed May 20, 2024. https://womensconference.byu.edu/sites/womensconference.ce.byu.edu/files/dew_sheri_0.pdf

Elder Brent H. Nielson of the Presidency of the Seventy. “A Record of What I Have Both Seen and Heard.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 6, 2024. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2024/04/23nielson?lang=bf>

Elder Dale G. Renland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Lifelong Conversion.” BYU Speeches, November 8, 2023. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/dale-g-renlund/lifelong-conversion/>

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Ye Must Be Born Again.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 2, 2007. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2007/04/ye-must-be-born-again?lang=eng>

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Your Adventure through Mortality.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, March 1, 2019. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/liahona/2019/03/your-adventure-through-mortality?lang=eng>

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Behold Thy Mother.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 2015. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2015/10/behold-thy-mother?lang=eng>

Erickson, Jenet Jacob. “Designed for Covenant Relationships.” BYU Speeches, May 17, 2024. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/jenet-erickson/designed-for-covenant-relationships/>

Erickson, Jenet Jacob. “The Grand Story of Our Eternal Family.” Wheatley Institute, November 9, 2023. <https://wheatley.byu.edu/jenet-erickson-speaks-at-byu-hawaii>

Erickson, Jenet Jacob. “Motherhood: Restoring Clarity and Vision in a World of Confusing Messages.” Motherhood: Restoring Clarity and Vision in a World of Confusing Messages . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/divine-design/motherhood-restoring-clarity-vision-world-confusing-messages>

Freeman, Emily Belle. “‘Which Name Should You Take?’ the Inspired Question That Came to Emily Belle Freeman During the Sacrament.” LDS Living, October 10, 2022. <https://www.ldsliving.com/which-name-should-you-take-the-inspired-question-that-came-to-emily-belle-freeman-during-the-sacrament/s/92729>

Griffin, Tyler, Brad Wilcox, Shon Hopkin, and Brad Farnsworth. “The Book of Mormon: Christ’s Atonement II: Mosiah, Alma, and Moroni.” YouTube - BYU Religious Education Roundtable, March 19, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZXEMIGyleQ&list=PLc5yYrpPFm2vyDwtqZKGP-X4728vHZYBf&index=17>

Holland, Jeffrey R. “However Long and Hard the Road .” Deseret Book: Books, DVDs, Music, Art & more for LDS Families - Deseret Book. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.deseretbook.com/product/4455690.html>

“Jenet Jacob Erickson and Brad Wilcox Share Wheatley Research with Mercatornet.” Wheatley Institute, December 16, 2022. <https://wheatley.byu.edu/jenet-jacob-erickson-and-w-bradford-wilcox-share-wheatley-research-with-mercatornet>

Jenkins, Preston. “This Boy and His Mother: Healing from Trauma as a Gay Latter-Day Saint: .” Amazon. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.amazon.com/This-Boy-His-Mother-Latter-day/dp/B0B59HFQLJ>

Julie B. Beck. “Nourishing and Protecting the Family .” BYU Women’s Conference, May 1, 2009. https://womensconference.byu.edu/sites/womensconference.ce.byu.edu/files/julie_b._beck.pdf

Largey, Dennis L. “Lessons from the Zarahemla Churches.” Lessons from the Zarahemla Churches |. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-mosiah-salvation-only-through-christ/lessons-zarahemla-churches>

Lund, Gerald. “The Work and the Glory, Bol. 1: Pillar of Light.” Deseret Book: Books, DVDs, Music, Art & more for LDS Families - Deseret Book. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.deseretbook.com/product/P4906474.html>

Marshall, George C. “The Nobel Peace Prize 1953.” NobelPrize.org. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1953/marshall/lecture/>

“May 27–June 2: ‘They Were Called the People of God.’ Mosiah 25–28.” May 27–June 2: “They Were Called the People of God.,” January 1, 2023. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/come-follow-me-for-home-and-church-book-of-mormon-2024/22?lang=eng>

McCullough, David. “American Christmas Memories | David McCullough and the Tabernacle Choir.” YouTube, November 1, 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATkPmMWJfos>

Miller, Adam S. “Adam S. Miller, Philosopher and Theologian.” Adam Miller. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.adamsmiller.net/>

President Gordon B. Hinckley President of the Church. “The Marvelous Foundation of Our Faith.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 2002. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2002/10/the-marvelous-foundation-of-our-faith?lang=eng>

President Russell M. Nelson of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “The Love and Laws of God.” BYU Speeches, December 8, 2021. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/russell-m-nelson/love-laws-god/>

President Russell M. Nelson President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “Hear Him.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 5, 2020. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2020/04/45nelson?lang=eng>

President Russell M. Nelson President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “Rejoice in the Gift of Priesthood Keys.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 7, 2024. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2024/04/57nelson?lang=eng>

President Susan H. Porter Primary General President, President Susan H. Porter Primary General. “Pray, He Is There.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 7, 2024. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2024/04/42porter?lang=eng>

Sheri L. Dew Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency. “It Is Not Good for Man or Woman to Be Alone.” Homepage - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 2001. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2001/10/it-is-not-good-for-man-or-woman-to-be-alone?lang=eng>

Sheri L. Dew Second Counselor in the Relief Society general presidency. “Sheri Dew—“This Is a Test. It Is Only a Test”.” Women’s Conference of Brigham Young University, 1998. https://womensconference.byu.edu/sites/womensconference.ce.byu.edu/files/dew_sheri.pdf

Smith, Hank. "Be Happy." www.seagullbook.com. Accessed May 20, 2024.
<https://www.seagullbook.com/be-happy.html>

Spencer, Joseph. "As Though" . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/abinadi/though>

Spencer, Joseph. "Latter-Day Saint Perspectives on Atonement: One Prophet's Vision of Nonviolent Atonement." Edited by Deidre Nicole Green and Eric D. Huntsman. UI Press wordmark, p. 240. . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/?id=p087554>

Spencer, Joseph. "Learning to Read Isaiah with Jacob." Learning to Read Isaiah with Jacob . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/jacob/learning-read-isaiah-jacob>

Spencer, Joseph. "The Book, the Words of the Book: What The Book of Mormon Says About Its Own Coming Forth." Book of Mormon Central, July 12, 2021.
<https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/book-words-book-what-book-mormon-says-about-its-own-coming-forth>

Spencer, Joseph. "The Time of Sin." Book of Mormon Central - Archives, July 6, 2021.
<https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/time-sin>

VanderWeele, Tyler J. "Religious Communities and Human Flourishing ." Abstract - Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/603/2017/08/ReligionFlourishingCDPS.pdf>

"Wheatley Fellow Co-Writes About the Economic Benefit of Families." Wheatley Institute, August 22, 2023. <https://wheatley.byu.edu/family/wheatley-fellow-co-writes-about-the-economic-benefit-of-families>

Williams, Clyde J. "Instruments in the Hands of God." Instruments in the Hands of God . Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-alma-testimony-word/instruments-hands-god>

Biographical Information:



Jenet Erickson, an associate professor in the Department of Church History and Doctrine in BYU Religious Education, teaches The Eternal Family (REL 200) course as well as Introduction to Family Process (SFL 160) for the School of Family Life. Her research has focused on maternal and child well-being in the context of work and family life, as well as the distinct contributions of mothers and fathers in children's development. She is a research fellow of both the Wheatley Institution and the Institute for Family Studies and has been a columnist on family issues for the Deseret News since 2013.

Fair Use Notice:

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* may make use of copyrighted material, the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright holder. This constitutes a “fair use” and any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this podcast is offered publicly and without profit, to the public uses or the internet for comment and nonprofit educational and informational purposes. Copyright Disclaimer under Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976, allowance is made for “fair use” for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. In such cases, fair use is permitted.

No copyright(s) is/are claimed.

The content is broadcasted for study, research, and educational purposes.

The broadcaster gains no profit from broadcasted content. This falls under “Fair Use” guidelines:

www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html.

Note:

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* is not affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints nor Brigham Young University. The opinions expressed on episodes represent

the views of the guest and podcasters alone. While the ideas presented may vary from traditional understandings or teachings, they in no way reflect criticism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day leaders, policies, or practices.



Mosiah 25-28 Part 1



GUEST: JENET J. ERICKSON

- Hank Smith: 00:00:04 Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my believing co-host, John Bytheway, and our guest, Dr. Jenet Erickson. John, we have now finished the movement of Mosiah. People are going here and there and up and down. Everybody's back in Zarahemla. Mosiah is King, Alma the Elder is high priest, and they run into some significant issues. What are you looking forward to today?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:35 The interesting storyline here that all of a sudden everybody's back in Zarahemla and they look at each other and they hear each other's stories, and it's this emotional rollercoaster for them at first to hear, "What happened to you guys? Oh, this is what happened. Oh my goodness." Then we've got this rising generation stuff. And I'll tell you, you read Mosiah 26, and you read it and it sounds like it could be today. It's a really fascinating chapter. So, I'm looking forward to just talking about maybe this was all written for our day, as we say, and particularly chapter 26. And then what do we do? How do we react?
- Hank Smith: 00:01:09 By written in chapter 26, the loneliness of leadership. Alma is in a tough spot. John, like I said, we have Dr. Jenet Erickson here. To us, she's Jenet. But she earned that title, so we'll call her Dr. Erickson, at least for a little bit. What are you going to take us through today? What should we be looking forward to?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:01:31 This is powerful three chapters that present to us this focal point of the establishing of the church, this change from a monarchical, like a monarchy that's Christian with King Benjamin, to the establishing of the church. And it's going to be so significant, because for hundreds of years they've been looking forward to the promise that the children of Lehi and Sariah will be restored again. And it hasn't happened. They've tried and they've tried and it hasn't happened and they've passed the record on. We see from Enos and all those generations passing on the record and the promise of the covenant. And now the church is going to be established and it

will lead to the Lamanite Conversion such that the entire Lamanite nation in a sense will be converted, will become more righteous than the Nephites, and then the Savior will return.

00:02:24 Joe Spencer will say, "This is Mormon's project, he's telling us about our day." This shifting of a removal of the state in a sense from religion, the restoration of the church or the establishment of the church, the conversion of the Lamanites and the return of Christ. And there's this beautiful plan laid out in these chapters.

00:02:47 But not only that, there's something maybe even more deeply meaningful at the core of this in these sections, we're going to witness the glorious story of conversion. The vilest of sinners will be converted. And not only converted, but they'll initiate the much looked for covenant being fulfilled. And they will be the ones who will start that restoration and enable it. So, we learn the Lord does hear the prayers of faithful parents. He hears the prayers of His people, he does intervene and His will be done.

00:03:24 And then when we read Alma's conversion specifically where he describes this movement from deliverance, we're going to hear that word starting now again and again and again. This is the book of conversion and deliverance. And Alma is going to teach us what it means to move from physical deliverance to the deliverance that's so personal of each soul coming to know that only through Christ can we be delivered. The collective and personal Redeemer who brings deliverance to each of us. I love these chapters.

Hank Smith: 00:03:59 We're going to be introduced to Alma the Younger, who's going to get more coverage in the Book of Mormon besides Jesus. He's going to get more pages in the Book of Mormon than any other person. And you're right, this movement from vilest of sinners to a translated prophet, I think one of two, right, John? One of two translated prophets in the Book of Mormon. What does that say? That message. You can go from this to this.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:04:28 These sections, the language that we'll hear, we're going to hear this beautiful pattern. We're going to hear captivity, trust, deliverance, born of God over and over again, and that will be the foundation of his 20-year ministry. It will only be in the years that we have in these sections. He will be a prophet. His ministry will only last 20 years, so he could have been a 35 to 40-year-old man when this conversion happens. We don't know, but it's going to provide the foundation for the teachings that he is going to give all the rest of his life, and we're going to

see that beautiful pattern, trust, deliverance, born of God, out of captivity.

Hank Smith: 00:05:11 Oh, I love it. I'm really looking forward to this. John, now, Jenet has been here many times. We love having her on followHIM. She is delightful, fun. However, there might be a listener who has been under a rock for the last few years and is saying, "Who's Jenet Erickson?" So John, give her an introduction.

John Bytheway: 00:05:32 Yeah, I was taking notes. We're in the intros, Hank, and I'm taking notes. Captivity, trust, deliverance, born of God. That's awesome. Dr. Jenet Jacob Erickson is an associate professor in religious education at BYU. She teaches the Eternal Family course. So excited to have her here today because there's some real cool family stuff involved in here. And she and her husband Michael have been blessed with two children, they live in American Fork, Utah. We're really happy to have you back. In fact, a couple of weeks ago I said, "Hank, good move for calling Jenet for these chapters because they're good family chapters." Like you just mentioned, the prayers of faithful parents that have meaning. I'm really glad you're here.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:06:16 Oh, thank you

Hank Smith: 00:06:18 Jenet, let's read from the Come, Follow Me Manual. This is really well written. It says, "After nearly three generations and living in separate lands, the Nephites were one people again. Limhi's people, Alma's people, Mosiah's people. Even the people of Zarahemla who were not descended from Nephi were all numbered with the Nephites. Many of them also wanted to become members of the Lord's church as Alma's people had. So, all those who were desirous to take upon them the name of Christ were baptized and they were called the people of God," which is the name of the lesson this week.

00:06:47 "After years of conflict and captivity, it seemed that the Nephites would finally enjoy a period of peace." Oh, how often have we been there in life? Oh, like finally it's going to be great. "But before long unbelievers began to persecute the saints, what made this especially heartbreaking was that many of these unbelievers were the believers own children, the rising generation, including the sons of Mosiah and one son of Alma. The account tells of a miraculous visit of an angel. But the true miracle of this story is not just about angels appearing to wayward sons. Conversion is the miracle in one way or another, it needs to happen to all of us." Oh, very good. Very good. Jenet, where do you want to go?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07:33 I love that John referenced as we started this emotional conversation that happens here at the beginning of chapter 25.

John Bytheway: 00:07:41 Read the record of Zeniff and buckle up.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07:44 Yeah, that's so true. If we look at 7-11, you're going to hear, here they're all gathered, and King Mosiah says, and I love this about him, he says, "We have got to hear the history of these people." And we will talk a little bit about why history matters, but you just hear what John referenced. And now when Mosiah had made an end of reading the records, his people who tarried in the land were struck with wonder and amazement, for they knew not what to think. When they beheld those that had been delivered out of bondage, they were filled with exceedingly great joy. And again, when they thought of their brethren who had been slain by the Lamanites, they were filled with sorrow and even shed many tears of sorrow. And again, when they thought of the immediate goodness of God in delivering Alma and his brethren, they did raise their voices and give thanks to God.

00:08:31 And again, when they thought of the Lamanites, they were filled with pain and anguish. Isn't this life? It's this moment when you're like, "If I looked back on my life and remembered the challenges and also the joys and the miracles and the amazement, and also the consequences and accountability that goes on," he is appreciating the power of history here.

00:08:56 And I don't know if you have favorite historians, but I'll never forget when David McCullough, the remarkable historian and writer of history came and spoke in the Tabernacle, and he talked about the importance of history. The lessons of history are manifold. Nothing happens in isolation. Everything that happens has consequences. We are all part of a larger stream of events, past, present, and future. Read history by all means, read history. Giving us a sense of proportion, our place in this grand story we'll tell our children history is Christ, His story. It's God's dealings with his children.

00:09:41 I love how you in talking about the allegory of Zenos, the powerful truth, watching the Lord's work be done, even as he honors the agency and accountability, His will will be done. And when we see Christ, his story, we can develop a trust that His work amidst all the complexity will be done.

00:10:04 I have one other little quote that I love from George Marshall, a speech that he gave at the end of World War Two that has to do with history. Again, the great General George Marshall. It's

1947, and he says, "In order to take a full part in the life which is before you, I think you must in effect relive the past." And it's like Mosiah recognizes that. If we're going to take full part in this life, we have to hear the history that has gone before us. A deep understanding of history is necessary, not merely recent history which concerns itself with trivia surrounding conspicuous men and events, but an understanding of that history which records the past activities of men, and leads to an understanding of what has created you and what has destroyed great civilizations. Emphasizing the power of knowing where we are in this story, the effects and consequences, understanding our place in it, and Mosiah seems to get that here.

- Hank Smith: 00:11:09 Such a roller coaster. Verse eight, filled with joy. Verse nine, sorrow. Verse 10, joy. Verse 11, the pain and anguish like, "Ah, what a difficult day."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:11:22 He ends at this description in verse 11. They are still so deeply concerned about the Lamanites. And what I love is within just a couple of chapters here, the answer is going to come in the conversion of people who had been considered the vilest of sinners. And that they will be the catalyst, having been converted by Christ to participate in the work of salvation, which is always what happens when we're converted. It's a catalyst to becoming participants in that saving work. The answer is going to be soon, in a sense, that yearning for the Lamanites.
- Hank Smith: 00:11:59 You mentioned Joe Spencer, who we've had on the show before. There's a shift in perspective when you see the Book of Mormon as a story of redemption of the Lamanite people.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:12:10 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:12:11 Where you think the book's about the Nephites, which it is. But in the background is this story of Lamanite falling away, coming back.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:12:19 I think Joe would say that Mormon's project, it's very powerful. Each book ends with a major political change. Here we have at the end of Mosiah a major political change going on. We're going to see in the rise of the Lamanites, then we're going to see the Gadianton robbers in Helaman. Then we're going to see the coming of Christ in Third Nephi. And that these dramatic political changes are part of the political theology through which the Lord is bringing about his work. There was no way that the Lamanites could be converted, because to be

converted when we had a kingdom, a Christian kingdom, a Nephite Christian kingdom was to become a Nephite.

00:13:04 And then when we see this split of moving from the state, that religion becomes fully separate from the state. You watch how Alma refuses to be a king. He's followed on the heels of the horrifying King Noah who stands in as a foil to King Benjamin, and Mormon it seems like is really clear in trying to show the differences between these two kings. And Alma is asked to be King by his people and he says no, he absolutely refuses. And then you see this full separation. The church must exist apart from the state apparatus, since they create, there's not a reliance on the state. It's their own covenant community that's created. And then that is going to lead to the conversion of Lamanites, who to convert no longer means I have to become a Nephite. It means I become saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, a follower of Christ. I think Joe is right in seeing this beautiful plan that God has, including in the political process that then enables the conversion of these descendants, so it can fulfill its promise.

John Bytheway: 00:14:20 Fantastic. It was brilliant of King Mosiah to say, "Everybody gather. Now I want you to hear this." Can you imagine how differently it was, "Oh, just put those, that new group that, just put them down on Zarahemla Street," or whatever. But instead, imagine how uniting to hear this. You've been to testimony meetings like that where you're sitting there and you're filled with joy, and then you're filled with sorrow, and then you're filled with thanksgiving, and then you feel pain and anguish and you hear. When I was a bishop, every fast meeting I took notes on every testimony. I had no idea that I would use that for funerals sometimes of the people whose testimonies I recorded. It's very uniting to hear everybody's story and that was an inspired move, so that now we know where those people have been that are now trying to come together in this new group. Wards are like that. We've got people coming from different areas. Think of the early days of the church. Here come a bunch of migrants from England and let's hear their stories, so we can become united in a church.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:27 As you were talking John, I was remembering the Steed family, that's the Work and the Glory history that wonderful. Of course, when you go to Palmyra and you want to find out where did the Steeds live, where was their farm, right?

John Bytheway: 00:15:40 Where did the Steeds live?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:40 Where's their farm? But there's that beautiful music that was produced to tell the story, and it begins with a song that has the

words, "Lord, how we thank thee for families. Seasons of sorrow and seasons of joy." And that the story of the Great Family, here's this family of Lehi and Sariah that are part, this important branch in the covenant family that have been split apart and the Lord has a story for their remarkable redemption, so that the seasons of sorrow will ultimately be turned to seasons of joy. That's personal for our individual families. I know that to be true, however long it takes. And He's telling us over and over again, "I have the power and the plan to redeem and restore this family." The whole grand family as well as our individual families in our seasons of sorrow and our seasons of joy that He will ultimately make eternal joy, is the real assurance of the Book of Mormon.

Hank Smith: 00:16:45

Jenet, if you don't mind, let's just stop here for a second. Our listeners are always on our minds. Everyone is going through difficulty of some sort, and if you're not, you soon will be. And what you just said is so crucial. What would you say to a parent who is listening to this going, "I want to believe that. I want to believe that the Lord will redeem my family, make it whole again."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:09

Hank, this whole story as you watch a father plead for his children, his son to return, and you watch. There's no question. I remember first reading this story as a younger person and thinking, "Where's the mother? Had she died?" We don't know all the reasons why scripture, The Book of Mormon obscures the presence of women, but there's no question that that mother was yearning. I think about Elder Holland's powerful statement about a mother yearning. He tells a story of the wonderful Preston Jenkins who had that terrible mission trauma and then experienced same-sex attraction, comes home from his mission and Elder Holland's going to describe this mother, day and night for weeks, then for months that turned into years, this boy and his mother sought healing together through periods of bitterness, mostly his, but sometimes hers, and unending fear, mostly hers, but sometimes his.

00:18:06

She bore, there's that powerful burdensome word again, she bore to her son her testimony of God's power, of his church, and especially his love for this child. In the same breath, she testified of her own uncompromised, undying love for him to bring together these two crucial pillars of her very existence, the gospel of Jesus Christ and her family. She poured out her soul in prayer endlessly and then he bears witness with the grace of God, her own tenacity and the help of scores of church leaders, friends, family members, professionals. This importuning mother has seen her son come home to the

promised land. He says, "We acknowledge that such a blessing does not, or at least has not yet come to all parents who anguish over a wide variety of their children's circumstances." But here there was hope. Little by little, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and his determined, redemptive, absolutely saintly mother.

00:19:20 And he bore witness. The Lord does hear our prayers. The promises are sure in our covenants. There is safety in our covenants. That power that draws them in is active and living and forceful. The Book of Mormon is like a 2,500 year story that he will hear our prayers. He will restore the line. Maybe the whole thing that we're developing in this process is learning how to hold onto the hope of unfulfilled promises, and develop that godly capacity in ourselves. That's who God is. He is ever seeing where we are not and where we will be, and he sees it with hope and absolute assurance that in his hands that can be brought to pass.

John Bytheway: 00:20:11 Well and in a book that if we take him literally could have been 53,000 pages long because they could not include a hundredth part, why would they include this if it wasn't to give hope and healing? At least hope. If the healing isn't there right now, there's hope. Why did they include these stories here? Well, that's a gift. And I'm always reminded of how easy it is to mess up Moses 1:39 and say, as a parent, "It's my job and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of my children." And actually Lord says, "Actually, that's my work and I am able to do my work. I'm really good at it." To be able to feel that hope is in the book, that's why they're here.

Hank Smith: 00:20:56 John, you brought up the one one-hundredth, yet this story of Alma the Younger we're going to get twice in The Book of Mormon.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:21:03 Yeah. Amazing.

John Bytheway: 00:21:04 He's going to tell his own sons later.

Hank Smith: 00:21:06 Yeah. One of the gifts, Jenet, that Joseph Smith gave us is obviously the book of Moses, and the God who weeps over his children. You don't get that anywhere else that I've seen, but in Enoch, "How can you weep? Like, you're God. Why are you weeping?" John, what does he say?

John Bytheway: 00:21:25 How is it that thou canst weep?

Hank Smith: 00:21:27 Yeah. What does the Lord respond with?

John Bytheway: 00:21:29 "These thy children, I created them. And the day I created them, I gave them their agency, and asked them to choose me their father. But behold, they are without affection and they hate their own blood." Ouch. I mean, you read it and it hurts, but that tells us he's not detached. He's not unaffected by what happens to us. He's interested in us and what happens to us, thankfully.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:21:54 Doesn't it seem like it's easy in the complexity of life to really wonder where is God? We might wonder in this story, this 2,500 year story, where is he? That allegory, right, that we have recently studied, Zenos' allegory. You see this being is actively involved, and we're going to see in this story, he will intervene. He honors agency, he honors accountability, but his will will be done. Jacob testifying, "In his mystery, God honors agency and accountability. And he will bring us where he needs to bring us. He will bring the world to the place it needs to be." And I don't know how he does it, but I think we can trust it. His whole testimony is going to be grounded in trust in God, trust in God, trust in his power to redeem.

John Bytheway: 00:22:45 And people very close to me need this today, people that I pray for. We want everybody to feel the same hope that we're talking about and to say, "Hey, we have a heavenly Father and a Savior who is mighty to save. He knows what he's doing.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:23:03 And that has to be why this story is told twice. It has to be to tell us, "I will redeem." I can hear my mom last year and every family, this is the story of family, the complexity of family life, the complexity of these journeys, but she describes aching. And here I want my parents to be resting in their retirement, but God is very efficient in using mortality and she describes getting up out of bed and pleading, "Where are the promises? Remember these covenants that I've made and where are the promises, the assurances?" And into her mind she was told, "Think on your covenants. In your covenants lies your safety." And then, she sat up on her bed and reflected on the promises of the initiatory blessings, the promise of beginning with the baptism, the Holy Ghost, the initiatory, the endowment, and was filled with joy. He will keep his promises, his covenants. General conference, what do we hear a hundred thousand times? In your covenants, in your covenants is power and strength, and it's infinite in its power to redeem.

Hank Smith: 00:24:12 A couple of weeks ago, Dr. Bowen was here and he said, "The Lord is playing 5D chess. He is moving pieces-"

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:24:20 Yes,

Hank Smith: 00:24:21 "... In ways you can't understand. You see 2D or 3D. My ways are not your ways." Right?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:24:29 There's nothing we can do that he has not already taken into account and that's our children. That's all of us. We can trust him. That's maybe the bigger question, rather than when will they come back? The Lord's saying, "Trust me."

John Bytheway: 00:24:44 Who is it that says, "They were his long before they were yours." Is it the Orson Whitney quotation?

Hank Smith: 00:24:49 I frequently tell parents or friends of someone who they're like, "Oh, I wish I could bring them back, bring them back." I use a little analogy. I'll say, "Just remember who the assistant is. The Lord is the surgeon. You are the assistant. If you swap places and say, 'Lord, assist me in this work', he's going to say, 'well, go ahead. I'll have to fix pretty much everything you do after you do it.'" I've seen people go, "Oh yeah, I am his assistant." Just wait for him. He'll tell you what to do. He'll say scalpel and you give him a scalpel, but don't switch places with him. Don't start thinking, "I'm the surgeon. The Lord is going to assist me." You're going to get it backwards and you're going to make a difficult thing even more difficult.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:25:37 Yeah, that's powerful Hank. And it feels like we're going to learn from Alma the Elder what that looks like to allow the Lord to be the surgeon, and maybe the assistant, and the joy that it brings as we allow his miracles to happen.

Hank Smith: 00:25:51 Let's jump back in Jenet. Thanks for taking that pause. John, you and I talk frequently that we're always thinking about our listeners. We couldn't do this if it wasn't for those who put up with us.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:26:03 I love that and I feel that from you both. Thank you for being that way. That's how the podcast is.

Hank Smith: 00:26:09 Where should we go, Jenet.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:26:11 We're going to get to this whole remarkable king Mosiah who then is encountering Alma. Alma, who refused to be a king, he's in this country with a king and was called by God to establish a church, and what is Mosiah going to do with this? And what you see is we have to recognize that King Benjamin, the remarkable King Benjamin, and Mosiah is going to tell us in 29 when you

discuss this next week, that if you had a righteous king, it would be wonderful like Benjamin. But we saw in Noah that's not always possible. What we're going to hear is the covenant that King Benjamin was able to have an entire nation make. Like wow, all of them entered into that covenant. Yet, it did not have trans-generational stability. That rising generation did not participate in the covenant. Joe Spencer would write, "We will learn that the church fares best when pursued and perpetuated as an institution fully independent of the state and its interests. The Christian Church prevails rather than the Christian kingdom. Which is remarkable."

00:27:20

What we find out is in the covenant, the church establishes for them under Alma, there is not a state apparatus in the covenant. They carry one another. The reliance isn't on the state. A new community is created out of covenant. They weave together a community through covenant. Mosiah recognizes this is fundamental, so the church must be established with teachers and priests. It must be established here in Zarahemla. It's really interesting just now we're having this recognition that an increase in the United States in terms of people not affiliating with the church. What has it meant? What does it mean? What are the challenges? And you actually see in our most elite writing, the Atlantic an article just a week ago talking about, this is written by an agnostic, the risks that society faces when we are not connected to churches because nothing is as powerful in building community.

00:28:21

There's nothing that society has to replace what happens when we are knit together in religious conviction. And it's why there's beaucoup data, Tyler Vanderwill at the Harvard Human Flourishing Center, he's super gifted scholar, but he'll show through very sophisticated means what the implications of religion are in people's lives and they're remarkable. Improvement in well-being, improvement in lifespan, improvement in health. There's really nothing to compare other than the family itself with its impact on development than religion. And yet, he'll distinguish spiritual from actual participation in a religious community. And spiritual is powerful. When we align ourselves with something higher than ourselves, whatever form that takes in our lives, it's a powerful gift. But the positive impact are magnified multiple fold when you are part of religious community. There's something about the power of religion within that community and these smaller communities of wards where we are bound together that I think Mosiah is recognizing God has brought to us, and we need this in our community. We need this in our nation.

Hank Smith: 00:29:39 I wrote a book on happiness. It sold dozens of copies.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:29:43 We are so grateful for your books by the way.

Hank Smith: 00:29:46 But one thing I learned is something very similar to what you just said, Jenet, that happiness and social circle are almost twins and that ward family creates a social circle.

John Bytheway: 00:30:00 I feel, and I hope this is true, that people, after COVID when we started to gather together again, I hope that people went, "Oh, this is so nice to see everybody. Hi. Hi." Every other bench, however we did that. But I hope they felt, "Oh, I think I get why we need to gather." Because I did. I thought, "This is so nice." We lift and help each other. I remember seeing a headline that said, "Society benefits when people believe they are accountable to God." I didn't read the story, the headline was so good. All of society benefits. But when we gather, I don't know if we're accountable to each other, but we sure do help and support each other. By experience, I've needed that help and support in my ward neighborhood. I love that.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:30:48 It is interesting. I think we rightly recognize the power of the Atonement as a personal power of salvation and exaltation, but it's also a communal power. Throughout the Book of Mormon, we're seeing the Lord save nations and peoples, which are really families, they're family lines that are being saved. And that the Atonement is not just an individual force, but it is a national, it's a people. It's a community. When we watch Alma ask his people if they want to be baptized. And the question he asked them, "Do you want to mourn with those that mourn, and are you willing to do this?" Then he's clarifying, yes, the bond ... In President Nelson's quoted words from recent general conference is both lateral, it's this horizontal direction, and it's vertical, and that covenants with God establish bonds with one another that are saving bonds. They're redemptive powerful bonds. So I think that's what you're hearing in church. Right? In our ward families.

Hank Smith: 00:31:56 Jenet, maybe the predominant message or the loud message we're getting that religion is bad, that it causes all sorts of problems, you're saying the research, the data is opposite.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:32:11 I cannot tell you that enough. It is exactly opposite. Now, that's not to say that there aren't individuals in religious institutions that are suffering and that religion can be a source of pain in people's lives. That can be true as well. But when we look broadly sociologically, the benefit of religion in people's lives is unparalleled. Second only to, I should say family like the

closeness of family bonds. There's no replacement for us in society that can replace the impact of religion.

- John Bytheway: 00:32:44 I hope our young adult listeners are hearing this. Don't listen to the chatter, listen to the data. We're talking to Dr. Erickson here who knows the data. And the chatter and the noise out there might say something different. This is why I love having you on, because you know stuff about families from the data.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:04 I'm grateful for good scientists. You do not get a better scientist than Tyler Vanderwill. And the methodologies that are used to establish, does it actually have a causal effect? Is this just a link that's correlative or is it causation? And he can establish a causative relationship between religious affiliation and benefits in life in all the dimensions of well-being. It's very real.
- Hank Smith: 00:33:29 I love it. We're going to keep tapping into your knowledge here, Jenet. So we're still in 25. We've been here a little bit. Let's keep going.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:39 Do you love that in 25:15, we're going to get this said about Alma. He went preaching to these groups of people preaching, repentance and faith on the Lord. And we're going to hear when he first organized the church way back in Mosiah chapter 18, we're going to hear that he preached repentance and faith in the Lord.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:34:00 And he's going to tell those that he calls to be priesthood keys, those he calls to have teaching responsibilities, they will preach nothing but repentance and faith on the Lord. The next thing that's going to happen, of course, is they will be baptized. And Limhi's people had heard about baptism. They knew it way back when King Noah left. And Limhi comes in and Ammon comes from the people of Zarahemla and they hear about baptism and they want to be baptized. And Ammon says, "We're going to have to wait." And it's so beautiful that now is the time when those people of Limhi who had experienced all that difficulty, the destruction, and then miraculously being brought out of that land of Nehemiah into Zarahemla, can now be baptized.
- 00:34:47 We're going to see the doctrine of Christ laid out beautifully, faith, repentance, baptism, joining the church, becoming part of this covenant relationship with Christ and with one another and the blessings of the gift of the Holy Ghost. You're just going to see all that laid out really beautifully in the teachings in Chapter 25 that Mosiah is giving to these groups of church members. Can you hear Elder Renlund from this last conference talk about spiritual momentum is created, and he's quoting President

Nelson, over a lifetime as we repeatedly embrace the doctrine of Christ, this spiraling that happens in our lives as we over and over again repent, exercise faith, faith, repent, renew our covenant with the Lord, and are changed by the power of the Holy Ghost?

00:35:39 Alma gets it. That's what he's telling us. He's saying the same thing President Nelson's saying. He's saying what Elder Renlund's saying when he quotes President Nelson that this process is a beautiful spiral through which we are transformed over time, faith, repentance, renewing that covenant, receiving the power of the Holy Ghost in our lives.

John Bytheway: 00:36:01 I am struck again that in verse five, Mosiah did cause to be read, "Okay, let's hear from Zeniff and his people." And then verse 14. Now, Mosiah had made an end of the speaking and reading to the people. He desired Alma should speak to the people. Now, I want you to hear from Alma. And I love this, that Mosiah could have said, "I've prepared a talk," but he's like, "No, no, no. Listen, now you tell him what happened to you." Such cool deliverance stories. And then in verse 16, he did exhort the people of Limhi and his brethren, all those that had been delivered out of bondage, that they should remember that it was the Lord that did deliver them.

00:36:37 So I put in my margin, "Who is the deliverer?" And I'm thinking of the New Testament. Let's create some feasts so that they will not forget. Okay, we'll call this one Passover. We'll do that every year. We'll call this one Tabernacles so that you'll remember what you lived in when the Lord delivered you. And it's that constant challenge we need to remember who our deliverer is, who our Redeemer is. I always underline those. Now, are you guys going to remember this because usually two or three pages later somebody forgets, right?

Hank Smith: 00:37:07 Yeah. It's just so fast.

John Bytheway: 00:37:09 This will take exactly five paragraphs before they forget.

Hank Smith: 00:37:12 Right.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:37:13 That verse is so important. We have to come back to it because this is going to be the whole theme of Alma's ministry is deliverance. And it's going to start first with Abinadi, it's going to go to Alma, his father, and it's going to be transformed in really beautiful and powerful ways in Alma the Younger. You are exactly right. This is the theme of the Book of Mormon captured

here. Alma the Younger is going to be our great teacher of that taking it from his father.

Hank Smith: 00:37:38 The text doesn't say this, but Limhi is the son of Noah, right, John?

John Bytheway: 00:37:42 Right.

Hank Smith: 00:37:43 And I'm assuming that Limhi was alive for a lot of his father's ministry. That means he might have seen Alma as one of the wicked priests.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:37:56 How interesting. Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:37:57 How do they relate to each other?

Hank Smith: 00:37:59 Yeah, here we are.

John Bytheway: 00:38:01 Okay, Limhi, listen up. Alma's going to say something. You need to hear this.

Hank Smith: 00:38:05 Yeah. And Limhi's going, "Wow."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:08 Yes. That is amazing.

Hank Smith: 00:38:09 This is surreal, right? That he is up there teaching.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:14 No wonder there's that sorrowing, rejoicing. They're struck by amazement, including Limhi, like, "Wow."

Hank Smith: 00:38:20 Yeah. That guy, I knew him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:24 I knew him.

Hank Smith: 00:38:25 Yeah. He was not that when I knew him.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:29 Now, I don't think we can leave this doctrine of Christ chapter without looking at verse 23, and it's going to talk about the seven churches that are established by Alma. It references a very important part of this, "To take upon them the name of Christ," or of God. You're never going to hear this beautiful doctrine of Christ without taking upon us his name, which I think is capturing the covenant relationship that's established with God in this doctrine of Christ, that it's really establishing that relationship through which conversion and change can take place. All of these things are really important, faith, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost.

00:39:12 They happen within relationship, a relationship that's established by covenant connection. It's such a beautiful relationship that the Lord endows us with his name. That's how close he wants to be with us, that we are his as if we were his own in his own household or in his own embrace, in his own family. Right off, we're going to hear development happens from within relationship. That's absolutely true in family life. Development spiritually happens from within covenant relationship. Taking upon us his name is the language of covenant relationship that allows the doctrine of Christ to do its beautiful work in our lives. Now we get to 26 and it's painful. It's the painful part.

John Bytheway: 00:40:00 I like starting in verse 21. How are we going to organize all these new people that want to believe, it sounds, Hank, like Alma baptizes Limhi?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:40:06 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:40:08 That's interesting.

Hank Smith: 00:40:09 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:40:10 Hey, will you baptize me? Wow. I love verse 21, "They did assemble themselves together in different bodies being called churches." Now, have you heard this word before? The word does come up before, but he's explaining it. "Every priest preaching the word according as it was delivered to him by the mouth of Alma. Thus, notwithstanding there being many churches, they were all one church, yea, even the church of God."

00:40:32 There was nothing preached in all the churches except it were, here we go again, repentance and faith in God. Doctrine of Christ. Now, there were seven churches in the land of Zarahemla. I just like the idea of I have in my margin one church, many meeting houses. I like that he's explaining, "We are one church, but we are many." These communities are going to meet in smaller groups all over the place, but there's one church.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:40:55 John, you referenced, so importantly, that priesthood keys that are included here that allow for that oneness, that allow for covenant relationship to be established and allow for that correlation to happen. It happens through priesthood keys. Beautiful that we see that here.

John Bytheway: 00:41:14 Sheri Dew, it wasn't her that said it. She was at a training. One of the visiting authorities said, "Satan will do everything he can to separate you from priesthood keys." And I thought, "How interesting, as we've talked about covenants in the church and their importance." If somebody's trying to separate you from priesthood keys, I hope you see who's behind that.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:41:38 Wow. That's powerful. It is the way whereby Christ is accessed through those priesthood keys that opens the channel, yes, through which covenants can be established.

John Bytheway: 00:41:50 How cool was that to have President Nelson talk about keys and Kirtland?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:41:55 Yep. Temples, covenants, oh yes.

John Bytheway: 00:41:58 Yeah, it was fun. I went to my classes. What was conference about? They're all temples. Yeah, I got that impression too.

Hank Smith: 00:42:08 I think of the 1830 church and it's kind of like a ward, and then we keep making these little 1830 churches all over.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:16 With 24-year-old bishops and 22-year-old bishops, right?

Hank Smith: 00:42:18 Yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:19 Yeah. In that early church.

Hank Smith: 00:42:22 John, you mentioned one church, many meeting houses. I've loved hearing from those who listen to our show all over the world.

John Bytheway: 00:42:32 It's surprising, the different countries. Where were people listening? Kuwait? Didn't we hear that last week, Hank? Kuwait. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:42:40 India. Come on to YouTube, tell us who you are, and where you're listening from. We would love to see the many churches, but one church. It'd be fun for you to see that, Jenet, all those who hear this.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:54 Yes. And all of us doing the same sections of scripture together. It's like, wow.

John Bytheway: 00:42:59 How cool is that?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:00 Yeah. Chapter 26 is where it gets a little hard because we've had the joy of the church being established and the miracle of the Holy Ghost being poured out on these newly baptized members and all organized under teachers that teach them the doctrine of Christ. And then it says, "We had a rising generation that could not understand, did not believe, rejected the doctrine of Christ, and are trying to destroy the church." It's a really tough issue because we're trying to figure out the church and the state in a sense because we still have a king who was the leader of the church in a sense, so now who's responsible for this? And we see that there's sin going on.

00:43:41 It appears that those who are rejecting Christ are rejecting commandments and are rejecting accountability and the Resurrection and all of that. It says in verse six, "They did cause members of the church to commit many sins. Therefore, it became expedient that those who committed sin were admonished by the church." The priests bring these people to Alma and Alma's like, "I don't know what to do. Aren't we part of a kingdom still that would handle these wrongdoings?"

John Bytheway: 00:44:13 Takes him to Mosiah, "Here, take this."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:14 Takes him to Mosiah. Yes. And Mosiah says in verse 12, "I judge them not. This doesn't have to do with the state, Alma, it has to do with the church. I deliver them into thy hands." And I love that verse 13 where it says, "And now the spirit of Alma was again troubled." Who is this man? He's been given this huge responsibility. He's in a sense the Joseph who's asked to restore the church and establish the church.

John Bytheway: 00:44:44 Alma's in this place, verse 10, "There had not any such thing happened before in the church."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:48 Yes.

John Bytheway: 00:44:49 I'm looking through the handbook on this. I can't find this. What do I do?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:55 It says in verse 13, he feared that he should do wrong. You might remember this, Hank, when President Nelson came and gave a devotional at BYU 2019 and he was super open about the challenge of the policy around the children of LGBTQ parents. And it was so tender to hear him say, "Whenever the sons and daughters of God weep, for whatever reason, we weep."

00:45:20 So our supplications to the Lord on this issue continued. And I could hear in Alma and our dear President Nelson, that same yearning of prophets. They are suffering. I don't want to do wrong. Help me know what to do. We get the very first prophet revelation written down in the Book of Mormon right here this in answer to question. Alma.

John Bytheway: 00:45:44 Yeah. This is the beginning of his Book of Commandments. I put in my margin.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:45:49 Here's the Book of Commandments.

John Bytheway: 00:45:50 Here's section one for Alma, right?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:45:54 Yeah. So beautiful. It's going to say in verse 14, "He pours out his whole soul to God." There's a wonderful scholar who writes about Enos describing that same thing, pouring out his soul to God. And the word is kenosis. It's a Greek word that captures this emptying out of power that then produces power in a religious sense.

00:46:18 And you can just hear this when we are called upon to offer our all to God in covenant relationship. Then not holding anything back, it opens the door to power. And that's what we see in Alma. So we see the beautiful verses. Hank, do you mind reading 15?

Hank Smith: 00:46:38 Mosiah 26 verse 15, "Blessed art thou, Alma, and blessed are they who were baptized in the waters of Mormon. Thou art blessed because of thy exceeding faith in the words alone of my servant Abinadi."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:52 How beautiful. And then do you see blessed again?

Hank Smith: 00:46:56 Yeah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:57 Blessed art thou and blessed are they and blessed art thou. Yea, blessed is this people. And the Lord is telling him, "You are so beloved. Thank you for all you've done. Thank you for what you've done for the people. Thank you for establishing the church and they will be blessed for bearing my name, being part of this covenant relationship."

Hank Smith: 00:47:19 He needs a boost, doesn't he?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:47:21 He needs a boost. Yes. The next part is really interesting because he's asking what to do. The Lord says, "Blessed are you

for asking about what to do for the transgressor." And you can hear it in the Lord himself, "I care about these people. Thank you for asking me about them. Thank you for seeking help in what to do." He's going to talk to Alma about gathering them as a shepherd does a sheep. And you're going to hear Alma say, his son, say that again in Alma five. It's like he's quoting his father's Book of Commandments revelation and he'll talk about gathering as a sheep. But then what the Lord's going to do to him is he's going to take him past the immediate question and he's going to take him to the end of time. It's really interesting. Joe will call this term eschaton.

00:48:13 It's a Greek term that focuses on the final event in the divine plan. Here's this Alma, he's like this big question, "What do I do right now?" And the Lord takes him to the end of time and he says, "If they know me, they shall come forth," this is verse 24, "and they shall have a place eternally at my right hand... that when the second trump shall sound", if they knew me, they shall come stand forth. And those that didn't know me, they will know that I am the Lord their God. So he's going to take him to the end of time. It's as if he's telling him, "Alma, I am the final judge. I will do that. You don't have to worry. I will do the judging. This whole end thing that you're worried about, am I going to be condemning people? Am I going to be doing something wrong in this? I will do the judging. Don't you worry about that."

00:49:04 And then he's going to say, "This is what you need to worry about now." And that's when he's going to give him his beautiful answer, verse 28, "He that will not hear my voice the same you will not receive into the church if this is a person who does not want me to be their Redeemer." And then he describes that you will judge according to the sins which have been committed, and he's going to use these two words over and over again, teaching him about repentance and forgiveness, forgiveness and repentance. When people repent, we forgive. He that forgiveth not, will have the same condemnation. So the Lord is going to be teaching Alma about repentance and forgiveness. He's taken him to the end of the time, "I am the final judge."

00:49:49 Then he brings him back to the present and says, "These are the truths about repentance and forgiveness. We forgive. I forgive any and all whenever they repent. You should also forgive." But then he's going to say something powerful, and it's really getting to this idea that the Lord will protect his church. He will need to protect this covenant community. It has to be a stable and protected community. Elder Oaks explained so powerfully

the objective of church discipline because that's really what Alma is asking about, "How do we respond?" The objective of church discipline is to facilitate repentance, what President Oaks says. And at the same time protect the flock and preserve the good name and influence of the church.

00:50:40 You hear in Alma's answer, the Lord is saying, "There are boundaries around this. There are some who will be, in a sense, blotted out who have rejected and refuse and are causing harm. I will protect this church. I will protect its purposes in the lives of people.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:51:00 He's going to teach Alma how to do that, recognizing the whole purpose is to draw people back in. Those that have sinned, to draw them back in, to forgive and invite repentance, but I will protect my church and there is a boundary around it to facilitate all that is needed in this covenant community.

John Bytheway: 00:51:21 Towards the end of the year when we get to Moroni 6 and he talks about this is how we ran the church, it's nine verses, Moroni 6, and he has the last part. If some was found to commit transgression and they repented not... It sounds very much like this. Maybe he drew from this. I also wanted to emphasize those two words, will not. What's the difference between will not and cannot in verse 28? It's not those that cannot hear my voice, but those that will not, that they refuse to hear. Oh yeah, that's a good point. And speaking of will not believe, it's really interesting at the beginning when this rising generation as it mentions, starts to go a different direction, it says in verse three, "Now because of their unbelief, they could not understand."

00:52:10 And most of us would think, "Isn't that the other way around? I don't understand this, so I don't believe it." No, it's because of their unbelief. They could not understand. We're told to doubt not, but be believing. We're a believing people. Our articles of faith, all but one start, we believe. I'm reminded of President Packer who said once that, "In the world, seeing is believing. But in the gospel, believing is seeing." It's the faith precedes the miracle thing. We're also taught that in Polar Express, but I didn't think I'd mention that. That's interesting that their unbelief made them so they couldn't understand.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:52:52 It's so interesting in the department to have these remarkable historians who know all the facts about church history and they'll talk about what it's like to engage with people who have questions about things. So often what we might experience as a question is really what's presenting from a deeper question

about trust. So often something has felt violated or betrayed. There's been an emotional experience that then we're asking the question seemingly focused on some aspect of church history or something like that, but really it's belying what's underneath which is, "I don't know if I can believe, I don't believe this, I can't even hear what some historian might say is accurate facts because what's really at the core is I don't trust." Some have reasons, having been betrayed in some way or a trust that felt like it was not fulfilled in some way. But really at the core so often is trust or belief.

- John Bytheway: 00:53:49 32 chapters from now, in Alma when he is talking to the Zoramites and he used the best phrase, I love it, "Will ye give place that the word might be planted in your heart?" Would you open up enough belief to see what this does? Maybe that's what that is. They didn't give place so therefore they couldn't understand the word of God and that's an act of faith to give place and that's what he was asking them to. I'm going to tell you something that based on what your prayer on the Rameumptom just said, you don't believe. "But don't cast it out. Give place and see what happens."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:54:26 Yeah, that is powerful.
- Hank Smith: 00:54:28 I feel for Alma in this chapter. I think of any church leader, a bishop, a stake president or Relief Society president, a Young Women president thinking, "I don't want to mess this up. These are souls. What if I do something and ruin it? What if I personally take down the entire church?"
- John Bytheway: 00:54:48 Yeah, right, "there go the pyramids".
- Hank Smith: 00:54:50 The Lord's response that you showed us Jenet is listen, "This is my church. I am doing this." He says in verse 23, "It is I that taketh upon me the sins of the world." Alma, you didn't do that. I created them. "I grant... unto the end, a place at my right hand". Hey Alma, you are doing a great work, but just remember who's in charge. And maybe a bishop or Relief Society president needs to hear that, that hey.
- John Bytheway: 00:55:17 This is so reassuring. I've got the pronoun circled, verse 22, "This is *my* church" and then "him will / freely forgive. It is / that taketh upon me the sins of the world. It is / that hath created them. It is / that granteth unto them that believeth unto the end a place at *my* right hand." And I was texting our dear friend Sheri Dew this morning going, "I'm trying to remember this story about President Hinckley being assured, this isn't your church. This is my church."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:55:45 The Lord keeps saying, "I will do my work. This is my work. I will do the redeeming."

Hank Smith: 00:55:51 I love you. You're doing great.

John Bytheway: 00:55:53 This is my leather-bound copy.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:55:56 Oh, that's a special copy, John.

Hank Smith: 00:55:58 John, it must be nice to read a book and then go. I'll just text the author, right?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:03 Yeah, totally.

John Bytheway: 00:56:05 Who knows more about President Hinckley? Well, I'll text a biographer because usually we're texting about BYU sports. There was a time when President Hinckley was called to the first presidency as an additional counselor and Sheri said, "He used to say, 'I'm not the third counselor, I'm an additional counselor or assistant counselor.'" The other members of the first presidency were ill and President Hinckley was shouldering a lot of the load of the church, so listen to this. This is quoting. "President Hinckley was faithful to the scope and limits of his stewardship forwarding many matters to the 12 where he was unwilling to move ahead on decisions of any magnitude without the full support of his brethren. Nonetheless, at times the load he carried seemed overwhelming."

00:56:52 "One day when faced with an unusually difficult situation for which there appeared to be no resolution, he dropped to his knees to petition the Lord's help. He later related what took place. 'There came into my mind the words, be still and know that I am God. I knew again that this was his work, that he would not let it fail and that all I had to do was work at it and do my best and that the work would move forward.' " It's okay. This is not your church. This is my church and I've got this. These verses remind me of what you said earlier, Hank, that this is my church, that you are not the surgeon, you are the assistant.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:57:35 I love that you emphasize that, John, because later when his own son is lying unconscious for three days, he gathers the people and his whole thing is I want you to see what the Lord has done. He deeply internalizes that message. It is God who is doing this work in the most personal aspects of his life, Alma the Elder's life, his children, and also doing the work in his sphere as the prophet of the church. Beautiful how he

internalizes that message and you see and bear witness of it to others.

00:58:08 Isn't it a miracle that after he receives this revelation, this instruction and the Lord tells him go forth, it says, "It came to pass" in verse 37, "that Alma did regulate all the affairs of the church according to this revelation and they began again to have peace and to prosper exceedingly in the affairs of the church." Then you hear these remarkable leaders walking in all diligence, teaching the word of God, suffering affliction, going forward, trusting the Lord in the work of His church. And it brings about goodness, it brings about the prosperity of the people.

Hank Smith: 00:58:45 Jenet, as I've looked at this chapter, I've thought no matter what Alma does at this point, someone's going to be unhappy and isn't that pretty common in leadership? Look, I'm deciding who to make mad. How do we help members realize that leaders are in a hard spot?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:08 I know when I have been in the presence of leaders, I've had some interesting interactions about difficult things and it is so humbling to me to witness their earnestness to do whatever the Lord wants. They truly have to lose any sense of I need validation from others. They have to leave that space of my decisions are going to be based on validation. I've heard Sister Beck describe it beautifully. It's like, where are you facing? Are you facing outward or are you facing upward? Which direction are you facing? And to see the earnestness to know and carry out the will of God regardless of what it might mean for how they are spoken of or how popular they are and you can see they cannot do otherwise. They cannot do otherwise because He is their leader. He's the one to whom they must respond and I think with it is this assurance as we see in Alma. If we do that, good will follow. It's the only path to take that's sure.

Hank Smith: 01:00:16 It's difficult but it also sounds freeing that you can say, "I'm putting all that aside. I'm going to get my message. I'm going to give it. Come what may and love it."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:26 Yeah. Yes, yes. Elder Wirthlin.

Hank Smith: 01:00:27 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 01:00:30 I have presided over some membership councils and the song going through my mind all night long, "Who am I to judge another when I walk imperfectly?" I remember one time

kneeling down with my counselors and the handbook says, "You have to decide." And then you ask your counselors what they think. I felt something lighter than I thought. I think disfellowship... I don't think ex... on this one and right when I said it, I heard the words. That's right, bishop, just as clear as somebody was right there. That's right, bishop. I was like, "Wow."

- Hank Smith: 01:01:15 Thank you. Thank you.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:16 This is not your church, John. This is mine. I got this. That's right, bishop. And it was the clearest thing I've ever heard.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:01:27 John, that is so beautiful because I think that's exactly what Alma is in this place of. This isn't about punishing. It is preserving the church, but it is this... I love how President Oaks says in that quote that I just referenced, he says, "The principal purpose is not to punish the transgressor. In fact, that isn't what the church does. It isn't punishing but to aid his repentance and save his soul and who can know that but God through the power of the Spirit what needs to be done." That's what Alma is learning. This is not a state run operation. This is revelatory church broken apart from the state, receiving direction about how to help a soul repent and how to protect the integrity of the church.
- John Bytheway: 01:02:17 And I keep thinking of Doctrine and Covenants here and Section 64, those sections in there. "I, the Lord, forgive sins." It's like that's what I do. Boy, you guys mess up a lot, but I, the Lord forgive sins as you're trying to figure all this out.
- Hank Smith: 01:02:33 And be gentle with your leaders, everyone out there. They're not perfect. They're in a tough spot, so be gentle, be kind, be merciful the same way you would hope someone would judge you.
- John Bytheway: 01:02:48 We're talking about these people joining the church, but I love the way it's put in verse 18. "Blessed is this people who are willing to bear my name." Listen to the sacrament prayer. "Willing to take upon them the name of thy son." None of us are able, but we can be willing. We can try because we're going to stumble for in my name shall they be called. And I love the Lord says, "And they are mine."
- 01:03:13 I think about when I went to get my scriptures embossed before my mission. You can put your name on your scriptures. I had the whole conversation. "Is that really your name?" "Yeah. B-Y-T-H-

E. Yeah, just put it on there." And what does that say? It says the scriptures are mine. When I see people who are willing to bear the name of the Savior and sometimes in literal ways putting on the name tag, I think of this verse, they're mine. The Lord loves us for that. I think that when we go to sacrament meeting, don't you feel this? I'm not only willing to take upon me the name of Christ, I'm honored, I'm humbled, I'm thrilled to take upon me the name. What other name would you rather have? What a great thing that is to be able to do that every week.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:59 Yeah. It's covenant language. I think whenever we hear that bearing name, I remember hearing about President Oaks' call to be an apostle. That calling as an apostle is to bear witness of the name of Christ throughout the world. And he launched into this study of what does it mean, what is this reference to the name of Christ. And ended up writing a little book that I think didn't get shared widely but with these profound insights about the name referencing the authority of God, referencing His power to redeem, referencing His ultimate power.

01:04:33 But hearing you describe that, I was reminded of Emily Belle Freeman one time describing, sitting in sacrament meeting partaking of the sacrament and thinking of all the names that the name of Christ brought with it, Redeemer, Savior, Comforter. All these names that say, "He has made it possible for me to receive the power of that name in all of its meanings." And it's no end. There's no end to the power of the name of Christ. So beautiful. Be willing to bear that and receive the gifts that come with it.

John Bytheway: 01:05:09 Coming up in part two of this episode.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:13 My children are a reflection of me, my skills, my capacities. Their goodness is an evidence of my goodness and their failure, it's so human of us as parents to be like, "Their failure is an indication of my failure."



Mosiah 25-28 Part 2



GUEST: JENET J. ERICKSON

- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Jenet Erickson. Mosiah chapters 25 through 28.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07 Well, let's go into 27, and here we're going to get this remarkable instruction about what we might call, I think Joe Spencer calls it the political theology of the Book of Mormon. Mosiah is going to establish the rule of law, in a sense that there will be religious freedom. No persecutions, all will be equal, each laboring for their own support abounding in the grace of God. He's going to recognize that the flourishing of truth and human flourishing cannot happen without establishing religious freedom. That is true around the world. It's interesting the data on that, how nations that have higher levels of religious freedom have higher flourishing in a host of things, including economically thriving. There's more entrepreneurship, there's more investment from companies. There's more growth, and stability that allows for that growth. You have stronger equality between men and women, the more religious freedom there is. There's just a lot to be said for the power of establishing religious freedom and the flourishing of human beings, and certainly our church stands for that. There's Joseph Smith saying, "At the core of it all is the need to honor the rights of all in their religious beliefs and convictions."

- Hank Smith: 01:30 The difficulties in Missouri, I think, brought that out of him, that it's not just us. We want the right to worship for everyone.

- John Bytheway: 01:42 And it was in the Constitution and it didn't seem like he was, "Wait, we have a right." Yeah. You find him in church history talking about, well, this right is for everybody in the Constitution. It's interesting you brought that up.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:58 We're going to get to the next powerful story. Verse eight. "Now, the sons of Mosiah were numbered among the unbelievers, the sons of the King, and also one of the sons of Alma was numbered among them, and he was a wicked and idolatrous man stealing away the hearts of the people causing

much dissension". And this is powerful. It helps us understand why protecting the church is important. Alma, his father, trying to know what it means to maintain the integrity of the church, because it says this was a great hinderment. It gave a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them. So it's creating vulnerability among people. How painful to have his own son engaging in that. It appears like it was secretly ... he may not even been fully aware of all that his son was doing.

- Hank Smith: 02:52 Maybe it was because of his new policy.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 02:55 Yeah, that's so interesting.
- John Bytheway: 02:57 It's scary that he's called a man of many words and much flattery. Who else gets that description? Sherem and Korihor.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 03:06 Yes. And he will stand before Korihor. It's so interesting. Alma will towards the very end of his life, and see, I'm sure, in Korihor who he had been.
- John Bytheway: 03:17 That's brutal.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 03:19 We're going to read in Verses 14 through 16. I remember as a child reading this and thinking about people I loved and wondering why does the Lord send an angel to them? He answered Alma the father's prayer, and I'm sure his wife and the mother of Alma, why doesn't he answer this family's prayer? And I think it's helpful 100% to know the Lord is hearing and answering our prayers. And we heard that reiterated in conference several times in really beautiful ways. But what's happening here, is the Lord is not going to allow his church to be destroyed. So we might see it as this kind gesture to a father who's praying for his son. In fact, the Lord is saying, " I'm not sure what Alma the younger is going to do, but I am not going to allow my church to be destroyed." He's going to say in Verse 13, "Alma arise and stand forth. Why persecutest thou the church of God? For the Lord has said, this is my church and I will establish it and nothing shall overthrow it." Of yourself, later, he's going to say, "You may choose of yourself to destroy yourself, but you will not destroy the church."
- 04:31 And I think that there's a lot to be said about trusting in God. His will be done. We can trust Him. And if it's not our will, we can know it is His will and it will be okay, but His will will be done. Now, don't you love that? He's going to say to him, Verse 15, "Can ye dispute the power of God?" And we're going to hear the sons of Mosiah say the same thing. "What else could do

such a thing except the power of God?" So in Verse 20, "and they rehearsed unto his father, all that had happened, and his father rejoiced for he knew it was the power of God". Nothing else could do this."

- Hank Smith: 05:12 I've walked out of my lessons before thinking that this angel is going to appear and go, "Seek no more to destroy the church of God." I'm like, "I'm trying to teach."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 05:24 But we can have that feeling and just to know God will not allow us to destroy his church. He won't. Are you amazed that Alma, the Father, gathers all the people together? I remember when I was younger reading about this man and recognizing how humiliating. If he were in a place of using his son to validate himself in any way, which is the place that I can often be in. It's natural for parents. My children are a reflection of me, my skills, my capacities. Their goodness is an evidence of my goodness, and their failure, it's so human of us, as parents, to be like, "Their failure is an indication of my failure." It can be shameful to see your own children struggle. And then you'll often hear that feeling of, "I have failed." There's a feeling that parents might have, "I somehow failed. I didn't do ... because look at this child, they're an indication of my failure." And Alma. He is not in that place.
- 06:23 I love it. He gathers everybody together. He's totally unafraid for the whole world to see. "This is my son who has been going about as the vilest of sinners. All I want you to see is the hand of God in this person's life, in my son's life." It's inspiring to me, not unlike the father, the prodigal son. He says, "Here's my son. He was dead and is alive again. He was lost, but is found." There's that beautiful purity and his yearning for them to see the hand of God in his son's life. John, do you mind reading Verse 22?
- John Bytheway: 07:00 Mosiah 27:22. "And he caused that the priests should assemble themselves together and they began to fast and to pray to the Lord their God, that He would open the mouth of Alma, that he might speak, and also that his limbs might receive their strength, that the eyes of the people might be open to see and know of the goodness and glory of God."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 07:21 So beautiful because, sometimes, we can be in that space of, "God, this child's suffering, or they're doing wrong, or they have done wrong. And this is shameful." And Alma is in a space of saying this is an evidence of the goodness and glory of God. Not my own, not this child's goodness, not somehow that I was

more successful, but this is God who is manifesting Himself here in the life of this son.

- John Bytheway: 07:46 As some people read this appearance of the angel, there may be parents out there who are saying, "Hey, could I order one of these for one of my kids?" And they're looking at the footnotes and, oh yeah, if you would like this kind of divine intervention, see appendix B. And there's an order form back there. How high in the Richter scale can I go? I want thunder. Let's do a 9.2 on the Richter. And when I read Verse 15, Jenet, you mentioned this. It's just the angels. Sounds like he's having some fun with him. So, huh? Can you dispute the power of God? Huh?
- Hank Smith: 08:19 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 08:19 Do you see me standing here before you? Does my voice shake the earth? And then, "Behold, I am sent from God." What are you going to do now? And I'm imagining, I was thinking about going on a mission. Yeah, good idea. I love the little sermon in a sentence in Verse 16. "Go and remember." Oh, that's good. "Go and remember. Remember the captivity of thy fathers in the land of Helam." They had to get delivered out of there. And here you are. I would love to believe that angel is Abinadi who's watching over that family. There's nothing that indicates that. I've never heard anybody say it, but wouldn't that be cool?
- Hank Smith: 09:00 Yeah. Wouldn't that be great?
- John Bytheway: 09:03 If the angel was Abinadi? We'll have to ask him one day.
- Hank Smith: 09:05 He's just like your father.
- John Bytheway: 09:07 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 09:09 John, we're going to come back to that expression you pulled out. Not only does he remember that deliverance, but he's going to preach and testify, that it's going to be the cornerstone of his testimony, his conversion process, I think, from Alma.
- John Bytheway: 09:24 And I remember somebody in Old Testament year, saying that the one event that is talked about the most in the Old Testament, and a lot of the New, is the Exodus, is that deliverance. Now they have their own deliverance story. Maybe in church history, we can think of the pioneers like that too. And we can remember that journey and those pioneers who stood as a witness of God thereafter, they were told to do here. Oh, there's one other thing I think is kind of cool. In the manual for

individuals and families, there's my favorite little Walter Rane painting. It's kind of small,

John Bytheway: 10:00 but the four sons of Mosiah are carrying Alma, who's unconscious, to mom and dad. And mom's going, "Oh no." And dad's going, "All right." And you could see the different reactions in the painting.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 10:13 That is so interesting. You're recognizing that deliverance may yet come. Meaning the angel is not the one who creates the conversion that converts Alma. He's given a choice by what he experiences. But then for all of us who are still yearning for people to come back, for people to know the truth, I was really touched reading Joseph Grenny, who works with people who have left prison and are seeking a way out through that, The Other Side, is what it's called, that remarkable institution in Salt Lake that facilitates people coming out of addiction.

10:49 He has seen so many beautiful and also hard stories. People will be changing and then they'll go back and you could wonder, when is this going to happen? And I love how he wrote recently, "The primary godly creative capacity God is training me for is measured by how long I can hold a vision of righteous longings while no evidence yet exists for their fulfillment." And that we become like God, as we hold that place, hold onto the truth and the assurance that God hears and answers prayers, that he will do his work in the lives of those we love and we hold onto it even when we don't see yet any evidence for the fulfillment of that. That's how we grow into how God is.

John Bytheway: 11:39 Elder Jeffrey R. Holland in a book called *However Long and Hard the Road*, he said, "We learn that there is majestic, undeniable power in the love and prayer of a parent. The angel who appeared to Alma and the sons of Mosiah did not come in response to any righteousness on their part, though their souls were still precious in the sight of God. He came in response to the prayers of a faithful parent and to save the church", as you said. But I love that the angel says, "For this purpose, have I come." And what is this purpose? In verse 14, "Alma who is thy father, has prayed with much faith concerning thee." Wow.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 12:19 And he will hear the prayers of every parent, even if it's answered in a different way from an angel appearing.

John Bytheway: 12:24 A different sequence than you might think. But yeah, you can take that verse and say, "This was saved for me."

Hank Smith: 12:31 Yeah. We don't want any parent out there to think, "Oh, I just don't have enough faith." Because we don't know how long Alma has been praying.

John Bytheway: 12:39 How long he prayed, how many sleepless nights? We don't know.

Hank Smith: 12:42 Yeah, could be years. Right, Jenet? You said he could be an adult here. Alma the younger.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 12:47 He could have been in his... I mean he had 20 years after that. That suggests he wasn't a teenager. It was so beautiful to hear Susan Porter in this most recent general conference, Sister Porter talk about her father and I could hear the yearnings of this child wanting her dad to join the church and have their family sealed. You'd hear the heart of this child all through her life and he dies. He didn't come into the church before he died. President Nelson's parents did. President Hunter's parents did. Elder Bednar's, all these people who've experienced something like that. And yet they came in before the end and her dad dies. And then it was so beautiful to think of this child who'd prayed for so long within six days of his passing, he is ready to have those blessings given. So you think we cannot know when, but we can know for sure he hears those prayers. God will bring about miracles in lives that we can't even anticipate all the ways that he will bring about those miracles.

John Bytheway: 13:52 I love what Sheri Dew said, that the gospel reaches across the street, across the world and across the veil.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 13:58 And across the veil. There is no end. There's no barrier in that sense. I want to take us to this story of deliverance, this powerful message of deliverance. Alma is going to say, let's see his testimony, verse 24. He stands up and bids them to be of comfort. I'm okay. And then he says, "Behold I am born of the spirit." And then he tells us the words of the Lord that every person will need to be changed, every one of us, not just Alma, the vilest of sinners. Every one of us will need to be born again and become new creatures. And then he's going to testify, "I am born of God." The end of verse 28 and verse nine, "My soul has been redeemed." And then I love this verse 30, "I rejected my Redeemer and denied that which had been spoken of by our fathers. But now that they may foresee that he will come and that he remembereth every creature of his creating, he will make himself manifest unto all."

15:03 So Alma was saying, he has done that for me. I rejected him and he has made himself manifest to me. And then he's going to

say, "It's not just me. It's all, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess before him at the last day when all shall stand to be judged of him, then shall they confess that he is God." Every single one of us is going to ultimately know who this God is and we may choose to reject him. I don't know that very many are going to choose to reject him in the end, but all of us will know. Alma is then going to testify of that beautiful truth. I love that. If we go to Alma 36, somebody will do this later, wonderfully guide us through this.

15:48 But here's this pattern that we opened with at the beginning where you see the words Alma 36. He's going to start that Chiasmus, that's so beautiful that Jack Welch brought to light as a young missionary in Germany. We're going to see these words, captivity, bondage, none could deliver but Christ, trust, deliverance, born of God. There's the series. And then he's going to end that story where he is telling Helaman, his son, about his conversion experience. He's going back to what we're reading. He's just retelling it in greater detail. And he's going to start with that list in that order and he's going to end in exactly that list. He's going to end with, born of God, deliverance, trust, none could deliver but Christ, bondage and captivity. So that beautiful chiasmic structure where it's A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and then G, F ends in the other order.

16:48 But when we think about that language, if we went back to Abinadi's words way back that Abinadi says to his father, we're going to see in Abinadi's words that he prophesies bondage, captivity. This is Mosiah 11, verses 21 and 23. He's going to say, "There will be bondage, captivity. None shall deliver them except it be the Lord, the Almighty God." Abinadi is going to say those words. Alma in Mosiah 24 with his people is going to say exactly the same thing. They had been in bondage and he had delivered them and none could deliver except it were, the Lord their God. Those same words. And John, as you pointed out in Mosiah 25, we're going to hear Alma say that the people should remember that it was the Lord who had delivered them. Then we're going to hear the angel say to Alma, you need to remember that the Lord delivered them out of bondage.

17:45 And then we're going to hear in Alma 36, Alma tell that whole thing in his story. "I was captive. I was in bondage. None could deliver but Christ, I put my trust in him. He delivered me and I was born of him." Alma, his father is going to talk about it in terms of a physical redemption, physical deliverance. You were brought out of physical bondage, and what we're going to see is the movement from that physical bondage story into the most deeply personal redemption spiritually that is ultimately going

to be expressed in, "I was born of God, I was changed, became a new person." We're going to see him tell that story in Alma 36. He's going to do the same thing in Alma chapter five. He's going to talk about, have you remembered their captivity? Have you remembered the need to be changed and born of God and to put your trust in God and in it, that song of redeeming love that comes, that then brings hope and is born of faith.

18:53 So charity, faith, and hope, it's going to be grounded in that message of captivity, deliverance, none could deliver but Christ, he delivered me and I'm born of him. I couldn't help but think, "Well, what does this have to do with all of us?" I may not see myself as the vilest of sinners. Am I in captivity? Do I experience bondage? Alma's going to reference, as you mentioned already, he's going to reference in Alma 36, this whole story of the Exodus, that most oft repeated story. That's the story of deliverance. Again, do I need deliverance? I think of all the moments, every day when the burdens of the ego, if they will, the fears or the temptations or the anxieties, the worry about, "Am I being noticed? This is uncomfortable, life is uncomfortable," and all the moments throughout, every day when we need deliverance from a redeemer and he promises us,

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 20:00 He will do that, he will do it. And the deliverance will take the form of that doctrine of Christ, change as we are born of him, through the process of faith, repentance, renewing that covenant, experiencing the power of the spirit and becoming changed. And we will all know ultimate and full deliverance having been reborn through putting our trust in the deliverer, Christ. It's remarkable how Mormon does this for us. Here it is in Mosiah, Abinadi's words. Here it is in Alma's words. Here it is in Alma the Younger's words. Here it is these same powerful expressions of deliverance from bondage through Christ and none could do it for any of us, but Christ himself.

John Bytheway: 20:51 That's really good, Jenet.

Hank Smith: 20:53 Had to underline verse 30. "He remembereth every creature."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 20:59 He had this beautiful description of the soil that we create that allows access to the living water where we pull out the weeds. And you may be wondering, well goodness, have I made the right soil, I yell at them, the spirit's not in the home. We didn't do scripture study, we didn't do all of these things. And he ends with, "Watch the Lord Jesus Christ perform his miracles."

21:20 John, as you were referencing what Alma's answer is when the Lord says to him as he's worried about, "What about these people and what do I do?" And he says, if we go back to that verse, "It is I that hath created them. It is I that granteth him, that believeth, and in my name are they called. They shall know me. They shall know that I am the Lord, their God." His father's bearing that testimony and Alma the son is bearing that testimony. Every knee will bend and know, President Uchtdorf is inviting us to, "You do what you can do and you are not the Redeemer. He will do his work and you watch as he brings forth his miracles."

Hank Smith: 22:04 Sarah and I, many, many eons ago, we were walking out of the Jordan River temple and we were walking back to our car. She said something so odd. She said, "Do you think that Adam and Eve felt really dumb when they found out that they had been naked the entire time?" And I was, "What?" And she said, "Wouldn't you feel, 'Oh my goodness, what was I-

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 22:32 So embarrassed. Ashamed, right?

Hank Smith: 22:34 Yeah. "I did that and I did that and I did that. And oh, had I known," and I said, "Sarah, this is a funny thing that you're telling me. I don't know why you're telling it to me." And she said, "It really changed me." She said, "It is not fair to judge yesterday's mistakes with today's knowledge. You've learned something now that you probably didn't realize then. It's not fair for you to take what you know now and judge you of 10, 20, 30 years ago."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 23:07 Yeah. Wise, Sarah. Because it's so beautiful that the Lord then says to them, Satan's saying, "Look, you're naked. Run quick, hide. How shameful that you're so imperfect that you have weakness." And the Lord says, "Come, come. I will cover you." And he clothes them in something far better than what they had tried to create. Which atonement word, kaphar. When I first became a mom, it was so striking me, I was set up for failure. I'm completely set up for failure is how it felt. I'm still immature. I'm still developing as a person and I have these very dependent souls who are going to be shaped by me, who are going to be shaped by my lack of development. And it felt like I was going back to Adam and Eve where they're between this place, "We're trapped here. We can't keep both these commandments. How do we do it?" And here the father says, "I will send a redeemer." What did you think? This whole thing was about your learning and growth, and it's a story not of perfection. It never was. It was always a story of redemption, for parents and children in their struggle. I am learning about

God. I'm learning to have faith in his redeeming power. I am growing in the ways I need to grow through. The very thing that seems so wrong to me is the catalyst for my own coming to know and trust the Redeemer. And God, he does this so beautifully. He's bringing about their redemption and he's bringing about my redemption in the same story even though my ego's like, "But I wanted to do it perfectly. Wasn't I expected to do it perfectly?" And we'll hit ourselves against the wall if we think this is the story of perfection. It has always been a story of redemption. The whole thing for parents and children.

Hank Smith: 25:00 I'm going to ask Jamie Neilson, our wonderful social media manager to create that meme, Jenet, what you just said. "It was never a plan of perfection. It has always been a plan of redemption." Almost melted there.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 25:16 Thank goodness, right? Thank God. This is a story of redemption. Well, do you know what we get to end with? We get Mosiah 28 and these incredible men, the vilest of sinners want to do the hardest thing imaginable. They want to go to a people who have hated them and there's been so much danger and battle and warfare and threat and they want to go share the gospel of Jesus Christ and they can't bear but do it. They can't keep themselves back.

25:52 And not only do they want to go do that, they're denying their right as princes, inheritors of the throne, who could have had such a life. So beautiful that, that belief in Christ is such a catalyst to further saving work. We have to be part, the more converted we are, we can't help but want to be part of his saving work. And they're going to work a remarkable miracle, miracles we will see for hundreds of years yet be manifest in this remarkable decision to leave all that they had and go help save others.

John Bytheway: 26:28 And before they leave, at the end of Mosiah 27, it says, "They went about zealously striving to repair the injuries which they had done." I go, "Mormon, that was good editing right there." Look at verse 37 because he is going to say what the wicked priests asked Abinadi, they tried to stump him with this Isaiah verse and verse 37, "How blessed are they? They did publish peace. They did publish good tidings of good and they did declare unto the people that the Lord reigneth", though here comes Abinadi again, because that's the question that they asked the wicked priest. I think well, Mormon, that was elegant. How you stuck that in there. That was good.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 27:09 And don't you think he loved it? I mean, he loves saying, "Here's this wicked priest that heard those words, is converted by that. Has a son who is as wicked as can be, who is converted by Christ. And now all of these are going to publish peace." There is the story of redemption. What they couldn't have known would be possible, the most magnificent story possible.

John Bytheway: 27:32 And Abinadi, after he reads Mosiah 14, which is Isaiah 53, he explains it in Mosiah 15. And he says, "Who are they?" Well, he says, "These are they who have published peace." I'm not using the exact words. There are those who will hereafter publish peace. And here's Abinadi prophesying almost about the four sons of Mosiah.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 27:53 So beautiful.

Hank Smith: 27:55 It's almost as if these four sons thought we have a better kingdom to build than our own.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 28:01 Yes, they trade it and you see their father, it's such an incredible decision because not only does it change the whole future and prepare for the Savior's return. That work had to be done for him to come, but then you also recognize that because they refuse the kingdom, Mosiah cannot pass it on and the entire political structure will change to allow the flourishing of the church, the design of God from the beginning.

John Bytheway: 28:29 And it could have been Mosiah's like, "Boys, were you listening when we had the records of Zeniff read and the records of Alma? Do you know what it took to get those people? You want to go back there?"

Hank Smith: 28:41 I'm sure there's many Nephites we find out later who say, "That's crazy."

John Bytheway: 28:46 They're going to reflect on it later in Alma. And some said, "No, let's kill them."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 28:53 It's so scary that King Mosiah is, "This can't be right." I mean, he has to go before the Lord to say, "What do you think about this?" And I love how the answer he receives from the Lord is in verse 7, "And the Lord said unto Mosiah, 'Let them go up, for many shall believe on their words, and they shall have eternal life. And I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the Lamanites.'"

29:19 You can hear the prayer of Jacob and the prayer of Enos and all of this earnestness. How do we help them know the truth? How do we bring Lehi's and Sariah's descendants back? And you see here it is and they must have rejoiced to see these young men make this choice to go do that, to start that great work.

Hank Smith: 29:39 We've been talking about parents so much, I automatically thought of parents' private suffering of sending a child on a mission.

John Bytheway: 29:47 Yeah. Pretty soon I'll have one son in Uruguay and one son in West Virginia. I'm saying, "Okay, Lord, take care of them."

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 29:56 Yes. What an act of faith of parents. There's no question. I hadn't thought about it until, myself, because our children are 14 and 11, but when we were in Madagascar recently visiting my brother, his family was serving a mission there. I thought, "Oh my goodness. What if my Peter were called to serve here?" And all of a sudden I could just hear what an act of faith it is for parents to entrust their children literally to the hands of God with no ability to control what they will experience or the hunger, whatever kinds of things, right?

Hank Smith: 30:30 I can't talk about this. I cannot. John, you got to walk me through it when it happens.

John Bytheway: 30:36 Yeah, I know. My oldest daughter, Ashley, I'll never forget the email, "Dad, somebody spit on me today." You're like, "Oh no."

Hank Smith: 30:44 Let them go up.

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 30:46 Yeah, let them go up because you know how much it will mean.

John Bytheway: 30:50 In verse 3, it talks about their motives, "the thought that any human soul should perish. Yea, even the very thought that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble". When I read endless torment, I think of forever, but go backwards, and it says in Mosiah 27:29, "My soul was racked..." This is after he wakes up. "My soul was racked with eternal torment," so I put in my margin. How can you have eternal torment for three days?

Hank Smith: 31:17 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 31:19 And what's the answer to that? What's the answer?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 31:23 Don't we hear in section 19? It's his way of helping us change.

John Bytheway:	31:27	Right. It's not I didn't say that torment would have no end. I said it was endless torment because endless is my name. It's this, "Wait, what?" Section 19 was enormous to share that, so that's fun that he uses that line. "I was racked with eternal torment." How long? Three days. You can have eternal torment for three days.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	31:50	John, I love that you highlighted that this is torment that's not endless. We might think eternal means, but that is defined by God, but I love how they couldn't bear to think of people suffering without knowing the goodness and the redemption of God. Not that they assumed they're going to be damned forever, but wanted them to be drawn into the light and goodness of God. Couldn't bear for them to experience that suffering. That's beautiful love for our brothers and sisters. They wanted to help their cousins.
John Bytheway:	32:22	I probably had a pie chart of motives for going on a mission. All right.
Hank Smith:	32:28	Right.
John Bytheway:	32:28	My brothers went-
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	32:29	As we all do.
John Bytheway:	32:29	My dad went. I'm supposed to go. I want to go. They get more refined as you're out, but I love what it says in verse 32, "They've been traveling roundabout through all the land, publishing to all the people the things which they had heard and seen." Elder Brent H. Nielson in general conference. Remember that talk? A record of what I have heard and seen, and I hope we don't limit the idea of a testimony to the feeling because sometimes you can see the fruits of it as Jesus would say, "Know them by their fruits." What have you heard and seen? In Acts 4, Peter and John said, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
	33:11	Sometimes it's fun to make a list. Elder Nielson, when he began his talk, he mentioned that one of the requirements from graduating with seminary was to name all 15 temples. To be able to identify them. This will tell you how old I am. My flip chart that I had in the Philippines had 16 temples on it, and I could identify them by looking... And he said, "I couldn't do that today." There's 335, and these are things we have seen and heard in our lifetimes, which is miraculous.

Hank Smith: 33:44 You could identify the 15 temples in Utah, maybe. How many are there?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 33:49 Maybe.

Hank Smith: 33:49 There's exactly 15. I just looked it up. Jenet, as we wrap up, I have a couple of questions. One would be, here you are, you are very well-educated, very well-spoken, and you, to deepen your heart, want this to get into the hearts of your students. Why do you put so much confidence in this book? That's quite a thing. I mean, when you think, "I'm impacting these young people, hopefully for the rest of their lives, and I'm putting my confidence in the teachings of this book," how would you answer that? Why are you so convinced this is going to be a blessing to them?

Dr. Jenet Erickson: 34:33 What a miracle it is, as President Hinckley would say, to literally heft in our hands the manifestation of God's love that He literally, in the Book of Mormon, breaks through heaven into earth and manifests His hand to say, "I will redeem my people. I will gather Israel. I will answer the prayers of the prophets of the past, the husbands and wives, and men and women, and prophets. I will restore my children." We literally get to carry the emblem of the covenant in our hands. When Enos talks about he's writing this record, and you see they keep passing on generation to generation, each generation getting one closer to the fulfillment of the covenant. We hold it, in a sense, the emblem of the covenant. What is the covenant? It is that made that President Nielson teaches so beautifully before we even came to this earth that they, our heavenly parents would send a redeemer, and He would fulfill His redeeming work.

35:40 It's not trust in the book per se. It's not trust in myself as a teacher. It's trust that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and He will fulfill His promise. When we accepted Him before this life, when we accepted that He would do that, when we put our trust in Him, it was well-placed trust in the most virtuous being imaginable of being a pure love, and He did it. There's no reason to fear or doubt. It was done. It is finished. He did the will of His Father, and it is finished. Whatever place they are, we are, in the journey. I'm so much in need of being reborn and experiencing that full process of becoming new in Christ. Wherever we are in it, He has done all that is needed, and it is assured for us. I think it's that trust in Him, that placement of Him.

John Bytheway:	36:39	I just made another note. Well-placed trust. Where do you place your trust? Where's the best place you can put your trust? Wow.
Hank Smith:	36:49	Jenet, our listeners all over the world, we're going to hear from them on YouTube. I think they're going, "Yes." Thank you for being with us. Thanks for spending time with us.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	36:59	Oh, it's such a privilege. We're all so grateful for you. Thank you for doing this work.
Hank Smith:	37:03	Well, we love having you on followHIM. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and we always remember our founder Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We're going to continue in the Book of Mormon on followHIM. 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.
	37:51	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:	38:19	Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to Him. Follow Him.

CAN YOU UN-DRAGON A DRAGON?



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello everyone, welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I share a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we're in Mosiah 25-29, or 28, this week.
- John Bytheway: 00:14 28.
- Hank Smith: 00:14 And I have a story for you from CS Lewis. They did a movie on The Chronicles of Narnia 10 years ago, maybe longer than that now, where it brings in this boy, Eustace, and he fits quite closely to Alma the Younger. Because Eustace comes to Narnia, which is this magical land, and you've got Aslan, this Christ figure. I know you know that part. But Eustace, he's a difficult person. He wants to ruin almost everything. He hates the people there. He hates the other people. He came with his cousins. He wants to be away from them all. He's very selfish, very prideful.
- 00:55 At one point in the book, he gets away from the group, far away from them, finds himself in a dragon's cave. And in this dragon's cave is all sorts of treasure, and he loves it. He's so excited to be so rich and to be away from these people that he's with. He falls asleep, basically, in this dragon's treasure, and Lewis writes, "He had greedy dragon-ish thoughts in his heart and he became the dragon." So when he wakes up, he's the dragon. He comes down to talk to his friends, and of course he can't talk because he's a dragon, and they try to kill him. And eventually one of the friends, her name is Lucy, she figures out who it is.
- 01:37 Here's a couple of quotes from the story. It says, "An appalling loneliness came over him. It was very dreary being a dragon. He shuddered whenever he caught sight of his own reflection. He was ashamed to be with others." And his friends try to help him, but they think, "We can't stay here forever. We might have to leave him here. We might have to leave him on this island being a dragon." I don't think dragons can go on the boat with you, right?

John Bytheway: 02:07 They can. They just can't breathe, because they start the boat on fire.

Hank Smith: 02:11 Just don't sneeze. Right?

02:13 So they wake up one morning and he is back to his original form. He's definitely a changed person, but he's back to his original form. And they asked him what happened. Now, think of that with Alma the Younger when he wakes up and they asked him basically what happened.

John Bytheway: 02:34 What happened? Yeah.

Hank Smith: 02:35 What happened? So here's what he said. He said, "I was lying awake, wondering what on earth would become of me, when I looked up and saw a huge lion coming slowly toward me. It told me to follow it. It led me into the mountains. There was always light wherever the lion went. So at last, we came to the top of a mountain and there was a garden there, trees and fruit and everything. And in the middle of it, there was a very big round bath with marble steps going down in. I thought if I could get in there and bathe, it would ease the pain." He's got a pain on his arm from one of the bracelets he had put on when he was a human, and now being a dragon, it's really painful for him. "But the lion told me, before I could get down into this bath, I must undress first."

03:24 He said, "I thought dragons are snaky sort of things that can get rid of their skin, so I started scratching at myself and the scales began to come off. I scratched a little deeper and my whole skin started to peel off beautifully. I could see it there beside me, looking rather nasty, but it was the most lovely feeling. I scratched and tore again and again and more skin peeled off beautifully. I thought to myself, 'How many skins do I have to take off?' For I was longing to bathe. Then the lion said, 'You will have to let me.'" Now listen to this, John, with Alma the Younger in mind. "The very first tear he made was so deep, I thought it had gone right to my heart. It hurt worse than anything I'd ever felt. The only thing that made me able to bear it was the pleasure of feeling the stuff peel off." Right? You talk about sin. "He caught hold of me and threw me into the water. It hurt, but only for a moment, and then I found all the pain had gone."

04:30 Isn't that just a great story of Alma the Younger type moment of, "I want to change. I truly want to change. Help me change." You got to hear how CS Lewis finishes this story, John. Right out of the book, it says, "Great was the rejoicing when the restored

Eustace walked into the circle around the campfire. No one, least of all Eustace himself, felt any desire to go back for more treasure. It would be nice and fairly true to say from that time forth, Eustace was a different boy. But to be strictly accurate, he began to be a different boy." Then these four words, John. I've always loved them. "The cure had begun."

John Bytheway:	05:16	That's great. That's a born again.
Hank Smith:	05:19	Yeah. I've been born again. I think that's the exact phrase Alma uses. Right?
John Bytheway:	05:24	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	05:25	I have repented of my sins. I have been redeemed of the Lord. I am born of the Spirit.
John Bytheway:	05:33	CS Lewis. You know what he was talking about. And that's why I love it. Because you listen a little closer because you know you're going to hear that testimony in there.
Hank Smith:	05:42	Yeah. I long to bathe. I wanted to be away from my sins. How can I get away from my sins? Well, you'll have to let me help.
John Bytheway:	05:50	Right. Okay.
Hank Smith:	05:53	Will it hurt? Yes, it's going to hurt, but it's going to be okay.
	05:57	Well, we hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. We're with Dr. Jenet Erickson this week, and she is phenomenal. So come join us over there and then come back here for another followHIM Favorites.