



*“Arise and Come Forth unto Me”*  
**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:**

How can we apply Jesus’s visit to the people of Nephi to His Second Coming? Join Dr. Eric Huntsman as he focuses on one of the most critical events in human history and how it informs our moments of darkness and disaster.

### **Part 2:**

Dr. Huntsman continues to explore the Savior’s visit to the Americas and examines the power of His one-by-one ministry to save His children.

## Timecodes:

### Part 1:

- 00:00 Part I - Dr. Eric Huntsman
- 06:31 Dr. Huntsman bio
- 08:26 The focal point of the Book of Mormon
- 12:18 3 Nephi 8:1-4 - Nephi son of Helaman
- 14:17 3 Nephi 8:5-18 - Terrible, natural disasters
- 20:45 3 Nephi 8:19-25 - Great darkness and disasters
- 27:24 3 Nephi 9:1-22 - Christ's pronouncements
- 32:54 Arm of justice, arm of mercy
- 35:35 Divine violence
- 41:40 Creation obeys the Creator
- 46:21 Anticipatory sacrifices
- 50:10 Jesus beacons us to return to light
- 53:34 3 Nephi 10:21-22 - Persevere through darkness
- 55:33 3 Nephi 11:1-10 - Contemplation and revelation
- 1:01:02 Jesus will gather
- 1:05:18 3 Nephi 18 - The People of Nephi and the sacrament
- 1:08:37 - A painful story paired with hope of the Savior
- 1:22:47 End of Part 1 - Dr. Eric Huntsman

### Part 2

- 00:00 Part II - Dr. Eric Huntsman
- 03:05 Depression, darkness, and God's light
- 05:52 "He's my only son"
- 08:25 Type of Jesus's return
- 11:04 A voice in the darkness
- 13:25 The Father testifies of His Son
- 16:17 Open your ears?
- 17:56 Jesus descends
- 21:22 When suffering, choose the Father
- 24:42 Feeling Jesus's wounds
- 30:00 Why does Jesus have scars?
- 33:12 One-by-one Savior
- 37:07 Helped by better singers
- 38:15 Hosanna
- 44:48 Baptism
- 50:27 Jesus Christ lives
- 54:21 End of Part II – Dr. Eric Huntsman

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## Biographical Information:



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

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

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

More recent work includes “The Lamb of God: Unique Aspects of the Passion Narrative in John,” in *Behold the Lamb of God* (Religious Studies Center, 2008); “*Livia Before Octavian*,” *Ancient Society* 39 (2009); “*And the Word Was Made Flesh: An LDS Exegesis of the Blood and Water Imagery in John*,” *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 1 (2009); “Your Faith Should Not Stand in the Wisdom of Men. Greek Philosophy, Corinthian Behavior, and the Teachings of Paul,” in *The New Testament Brought to Light: Latter-day Saint Insights into Acts through Revelation* (Religious Studies Center, 2009); “The Six Antitheses: Attaining the Purpose of the Law,” in *The Sermon on the Mount in Latter-day Scripture* (Deseret Book, 2010); and three chapters in *The Life and Teachings of the New Testament Apostles: From the Day of Pentecost to the Apocalypse* (Deseret Book, 2010).

In early 2011 he published a book-length study of the Passion Narratives with Deseret Book entitled *God So Loved the World: The Final Days of the Savior’s Life*, which was followed by a Christmas companion volume on the Infancy Narratives entitled *Good Tidings of Great Joy: An Advent Celebration of the Savior’s Birth* released later that year. A third volume on the miracles stories in the gospels entitled *The Miracles of Jesus* with Deseret Book was released in August 2014. His new book, *Worship: Adding Depth to Your Devotion*, was released in August 2016. His newest book *Becoming the Beloved Disciple: Coming unto Christ through the Gospel of John*, a study of the characters in the Fourth Gospel as types of different types of contemporary walks of faith, was released December 10, 2018.

He is currently co-editing and contributing to *Perspectives on Mormon Theology: Atonement for Greg Kofford Books* as well as working on the *BYU New Testament Commentary* volume on the Gospel according to John.

On August 7, 2018, he delivered a landmark BYU devotional address entitled, “*Hard Sayings and Safe Spaces: Making Room for Struggle as Well as Faith*.” He has also been a frequent speaker with *BYU Education Week*, *Women’s Conference*, and *Deseret Book’s Time Out for Women*.

He served in the Thailand Bangkok Mission (1985-86). Second counselor in the bishopric of the Philadelphia Third Ward (1991-94) and Provo Park Ward (1995-1996). Bishop of the North Park First Ward in Provo (1996-2002). Has served as an ordinance worker in the Provo Temple since 2002, and is currently a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Courses Taught: New Testament, Old Testament, Book of Mormon, Biblical Greek topics, Greek and Roman history, and Judaism and Early Christianity in the Classical Near East.

Areas of Expertise: New Testament Studies, particularly Johannine Writings, Pauline Epistles, and Luke-Acts, and the Ministry and Atonement of Christ in the New Testament Gospels; Koine and New Testament Greek; Greek and Roman history and Classical literature; Early Christianity and the Roman World; Women in Classical Antiquity.

Areas of Research: Johannine Literature; historical Jesus and his depiction in the gospel narratives; Luke-Acts; Pauline Epistles; Early Christianity.

Languages: Classical Greek and Latin (translation); Thai (fairly fluent); German (conversational and reading); French and Italian (basic reading); basic Hebrew.

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## 3 Nephi 8-11 Part 1



GUEST: ERIC D. HUNTSMAN

- 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 co-host, John Bytheway, who I will describe as 3 Nephi 8:5. There arose such a co-host such as one has never been known in all the land. We're also here with our friend Dr. Eric Huntsman.
- 00:00:26 John, we are in [3 Nephi 8-11](#). These are the pivotal chapters of the Book of Mormon. I've been looking forward to this all year. What are you thinking going into this?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:38 How did these people get the chance to be there? Maybe they thought that same thing, that they happened to be there at that time when the Savior would come. It's fun that we've got Eric with us today. I thought who would be willing to take on these chapters because they're big. Yeah. Probably many people have read many, many times these chapters.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:03 You're so right, John. This is a darkness to light chapter. And it is heavy, and important, and sacred, yet uplifting, and powerful, and fun. There's so much here. I was going through all my friends to bring on for this week. I felt very guided to Dr. Eric Huntsman.
- 00:01:24 Eric, what are we looking forward to today? You've been planning this for a long time. Where are we going to go?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:01:29 I felt like I struck the lottery in getting these chapters. It really is the center of the Book of Mormon. We have, as John said, a lot of material to cover. It divides neatly into two parts. Chapters 8-10, which interestingly enough were one chapter in the 1830 original edition of the Book of Mormon. That would've been chapter four before it was broken up into our current chapters and verses. Has the destructions that happen with the death of Jesus, and then the voice of the Lord speaking in the darkness, and then speaking further in chapter 10. But then as we move into what had been chapter five, which went through 11, 12, 13, we have chapter 11 where the resurrected, risen Lord touches

down at the temple in Bountiful. That may be where we divide things between our two parts. The 8, 9, and 10, probably our first part. If you're someone who doesn't always finish that part two, please come back because chapter 11 is where the real meat is going to be.

00:02:29 Some of you will recognize this book. This was [President Benson's](#) talk, A Witness and a Warning. And if you don't mind, there was something particularly for chapters 8-10 for this first part that I was really impressed by. He says, "In the Book of Mormon, we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on a few decades prior to Christ coming to America." So that was the chapters before eight as well. "By careful study of that time period, we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand in the temple in the land Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet."

00:03:08 We are dealing with such tumultuous times right now, and I'm not saying the Second Coming is tomorrow or 10 years or 20 years. But then [Elder Oaks](#) once said on a talk on the Second Coming, "Whether the Second Coming comes because of the unexpected appearance of the Lord or our own unlooked-for death." That mean we could all have our last day today, we need to prepare ourselves. I think that's what President Benson was saying. Let's look at how the people in the first part of 3 Nephi dealt with the challenges, and secret combinations, and the wars, and the upheavals and the collapse of government. And then in the chapters we're looking at in part one, 8, 9, and 10, how do you deal with cataclysms?" Which President Benson says actually anticipate or a type of the cataclysms that will come before the coming of the Lord. Have faith and joy because when that's over, whether you're there in the flesh or you get to have a ringside seat on the clouds when Jesus comes again, we will all have our own 3 Nephi 11 experience.

00:04:10 And we'll talk about this in part two, But when the multitude comes and feels the wounds in His hands and His feet. And we'll talk about the parallels with Thomas in John 20. But I can't help but think of [Elder Bruce McConkie](#), I just read his biography. His famous final testimony... What was it? 1984, where he said, "I will know no better then than I know now. And in a coming day I will kneel at His feet, and I will wet His feet with my tears, and I will feel the wounds." That's the point. And I don't want to get all kind of sensationalistic too much with the Second Coming aspect, because this is something we can apply now.

00:04:49 When we look at the scriptures, we look at what we call exegesis. Trying to understand what a text meant to them there then. And then what a lot of us as religious educators really do trying to pick up on likening the scriptures to ourselves is what I call exposition. What does it mean to us here now? As I was reading these chapters, I kept thinking of another fancy word, a proleptic interpretation, looking to the future. Not them there then, not us here now, but everyone here then or better apocalyptic. And once again, not to overdo those Second Coming thing, when we look at the Book of Revelation and the title Revelation in Greek, apocalypses means uncovering or unveiling. It's not just about the future, it's also symbolic interpretation that can be us here now. One of the best ways of reading the Book of Revelation is what do we learn? It's not the details of the disasters and the things that happen when Jesus comes again, it's the unveiling of Christ in his majesty and seeing Christ as the major figure in history.

00:05:50 That's what I hope we will do particularly in 8, 9, and 10, is that we will see, "Okay, what is the darkness we're experiencing? What are the trials we're experiencing? Can we hear the voice of the Lord speaking to us and preparing us for part two for 3 Nephi 11 when we will in one form or another, in one place or another, have the same experiences as all those people at Bountiful?"

Hank Smith: 00:06:14 Wonderful. Absolutely wonderful. To everyone listening, you know we have two parts. And occasionally, someone will listen to part one but just doesn't get to part two. And you can't do that with this episode. You've got to carry on to part two. Part one is the lead up to this supreme event.

00:06:31 John, Eric has joined us a couple of times in the past, but let's introduce him.

John Bytheway: 00:06:36 Yeah. We're so happy to have Dr. Eric D. Huntsman back with us. Now, I have a habit. At least when my church meetings start at the right time of watching the Tabernacle Choir every morning, on Sunday mornings at 9:30, I see Eric all the time singing in the choir. Some of you might, "Hey, I've seen that guy before." Yeah. He was at 19 years in the Tabernacle Choir. And sometimes, as others are singing in English, he's singing in the original Greek and Latin. No, I'm just kidding. But he received a bachelor's in classical Greek and Latin from BYU. And then ancient history at the University of Pennsylvania, a master's, and a PhD in ancient history from the University of Pennsylvania. And already, you can tell from some of the things

he said, this guy knows his stuff. He's been teaching at BYU in religious education since... What was it, 2003?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:07:31 Yeah. So I started BYU in 1994 in classics and then chose to transfer to ancient scripture in 2003. Because as much as I love everything Greek and Roman, what I really love is Jesus and I wanted to teach the New Testament.

John Bytheway: 00:07:45 Wonderful. We mentioned this last time I think, but Eric wrote an Easter book called [Greater Love Hath No Man](#). Also, he gave a talk in one of those BYU speeches in 2018. It was "Hard Sayings and Safe Spaces: Making Room for Struggle as Well as Faith," a landmark talk. Go to [speeches.byu.edu](https://speeches.byu.edu). Hey, we are blessed to have Dr. Huntsman with us. Thank you for coming back, Eric.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:08:12 Thank you. I'm happy to be here.

Hank Smith: 00:08:14 And normally, we interview Eric when he's in Jerusalem. He likely will be in Jerusalem when this episode airs. But we have him in Utah right now, so we thought we'd grab him just before he goes.

00:08:26 Eric, I'm going to start in the [Come, Follow Me](#) manual. The title of this week's lesson is Arise and Come Forth unto Me. It starts this way, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.' With these words the resurrected Savior introduced himself fulfilling over 600 years of Book of Mormon prophecies. This is Elder Holland, 'That appearance and that declaration constituted the focal point, the supreme moment in the entire history of the Book of Mormon. It was the manifestation and the decree that had informed and inspired every Nephite prophet. Everyone had talked of Him, sung of Him, dreamed of Him, and prayed for His appearance. But here He actually was. The day of days, the God who turns every dark night into morning light had arrived.'" With that, Eric, let's jump into this significant lesson in the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:09:27 I'd want to share my personal feeling as someone who... Once again using that funky term exegesis. I consider myself not a theologian but an exegete in that I work scripture. But above all, I consider myself a practitioner. I live the gospel, I try to experience it. What I was moved by in that 3 Nephi 11 passage section of text is that we come to know Jesus by personal revelation. So yes, we have 600 years of prophecy. We come to a knowledge of Jesus by reading scripture and what our mothers, and fathers, and missionaries, and friends, and

teachers taught us. But at some point, we have to have a land Bountiful experience where Jesus appears in our lives. And whether it's symbolic, or just by the power of the Spirit, or one day in a very real sense, the veil will be pulled back and He will be in our lives.

- 00:10:23 There are some prices that have to be paid and some experiences that need to be weighed through, and that's why part one of our visit is on chapters 8, 9, and 10. What I'd prefer to do is move through the text, try to pace ourselves and go section by section, what we call pericope by pericope or paragraph by paragraph and make sure we don't miss anything.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:46 The build up the way Mormon intended for us to read it. Let's walk through it. A verse at a time.
- John Bytheway: 00:10:51 Eric, could you explain? You used a phrase and the first time I ever heard it, I heard a perfect rhyme with the word Jesus. But then I learned exegesis doesn't have the name Jesus in it. It has a different thing. Can you give the average exegesis, eisegesis. Because exegesis sounds like an ex.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:11:13 Ex-Jesus person. That's right.
- John Bytheway: 00:11:15 Right.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:11:16 It comes from a Greek phrase, which means to lead out. It's letting scripture speak for itself. It's trying to lead out what the meaning was. Reconstructing as well as we can, what the original author intended and how the original audience would've understood it. Now, you mentioned eisegesis, or in Greek we'd say eisegesis, that means leading in or reading in. And that's sometimes a mistake we make where we impose on scripture what we think it means. Sometimes we cherry-pick or take a verse or two out and we do what's called proof texting. That's why earlier I mentioned this term exposition, which comes from a Latin expression, which means application. Which I think as religious educators and students of the gospels, that's what we really want to do. We don't want to read into scripture what we think it means. We want to take what Scripture means and apply it to ourselves. I often say, "Try to understand what the passage meant to them there then. And then under the guidance of the Spirit, once you have the principle or the idea, try to responsibly apply it to us here now."
- 00:12:18 Right, this first section verses 1-4 of chapter eight. In my margins, I divide my scriptures up, and you can't see it here, but

I draw lines in between the paragraphs or the pericopes as we call them, and I label in the margin who later in 3 Nephi 11 will be chosen as one of the 12 Nephite disciples, and he was the one who was keeping the record. And Mormon wants us to know that this record that He was drawing from, as he tells just a hundredth part of what Jesus said and did was reliable and it was true. And it's interesting how he describes the son of Nephi, the son of Helaman, "He was a man of many miracles. He was a man who was attentive. He was a man who loved the Lord."

00:13:03 This will come out as we talk, my specialty in New Testament scholarship is the Gospel of John. And at the end of the Book of John, a later editor adds two verses. This is John 21, 24, and 25 talking about this beloved disciple, the way we use and understand the source or the original author of the text. John, the son of Zebedee, one of the three inner circle of Jesus's apostles says, this is the disciple which testified of these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true. Mormon is doing at the outset of our reading today, exactly what that later editor did for the Gospel of John. You can trust this. This is a person who knew the Lord and was loved by the Lord. He showed it by his life, he showed it by his ministry, he is going to give us information about what is happening. That's verse one.

00:13:54 And then it times it, the 33rd year and the people are looking with earnestness for the sign which had been promised by Samuel the Lamanite, we read about that in the Book of Helaman. But there was doubtings and disputations in verse four. Isn't that interesting? When you have a time of doubtings and disputations, your answer is to hold onto the records that are just and true to the sources which are reliable. And then we move into the first big cataclysm in these chapters. This is verses 5-18, which I have labeled terrible natural disasters for three hours. Of course, these have all been prophesied and it wasn't just Samuel the Lamanite, Zenos, an unknown Old Testament prophet who was on the brass plates. We read about this 1 Nephi 19 had prophesied of these disasters at the death of the Messiah. Nephi himself several times. And then of course we've mentioned Samuel the Lamanite in Helaman 14.

00:14:47 They shouldn't have been surprised, this had been prophesied. And then this read from the text, some of these disasters as they happen. Verse five, "There arose a great storm, such as one had never been known in the land. There was also great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth." And then there are lightnings in verse seven. The city of Zarahemla takes fire in verse eight.

City of Moroni sinks into the depths of the sea and the earth was carried on the city of Moronihah. Now, it's easy enough to say these are horrible destructions, natural disasters. We see more of these today than we would like to. But the ancients would've seen this in a very particular way. I've mentioned wind. I've mentioned fire. I've mentioned sea. I've mentioned earth. And the way the ancients looked at things, these were the four primal elements. You have wind, earth, fire, water, and those elements which constitute the building blocks of creation are being undone.

00:15:54 We mentioned [Elder McConkie's](#) final testimony, I'll just paraphrase it. When he talked about the darkness that covered the earth in the holy land for the last three hours of Jesus' suffering on the cross, he said something as if the very God of nature suffered, and indeed He did. In ancient Eurasian mythology, they believed that the world was created when this primal figure called Tiamat, this Mesopotamian female goddess figure was killed by Marduk, and chaos was overcome, and the world was organized. Well, that's weird. But echo of what we know is true. Creation is not out of nothing ex nihilo. It's an active organization and we know the Father did that through the Son, and we will actually see Christ identify Himself that way as the Creator of Heaven and Earth in a moment. But at His death that all comes apart.

00:16:48 There's an interesting phrase in Colossians 1:17. It's this Christ hymn we call it where the Paulian author has reproduced in Greek for his audience. This hymn praising Jesus, and it says in verse 17, "He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Which what does that mean? In the Greek, it means all things hold together. They're not just organized by the word the Son of God, they're maintained... And we read in section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants that Christ is the power that organizes and holds the universe together. Symbolically what we're seeing is at His death that's being undone. Now, it's not undone all the way clearly. I mean this is symbolic, but it's to help understand that who they're going to meet in chapter 11, the Creator has died. The light of the world is snuffed out, there's going to be darkness. Creation looks like it's being undone.

00:17:45 Look at some of these other verses, there was more great and terrible destruction of the land northward. The whole face of the land was changed, more thunderings and lightnings. But look at verse 13, "The highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough." Now, that seems to be an echo and a reversal of Isaiah 40:4. "The rough places will be made smooth, and there'll be a way

prepared in the wilderness for the coming of the Lord." John the Baptist does that. Everything preparing for Jesus to come at His death is being undone. These very real physical cataclysms and disasters are even more important symbolically in what they're showing about Jesus. Verse 17, "The face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings." We read other times, the rocks that had been solid are found in seams and broken.

00:18:37 Well, what is Christ? According to that wonderful little saying in Matthew 7, "The wise man builds his house upon the rock, Christ is the sure foundation. And in this moment of His death, the very foundation of the world, if you will, is broken up. Really quite striking in my opinion.

Hank Smith: 00:18:55 Maybe it's like a teacher here saying, "I can't get their attention. This will get their attention."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:19:02 Yeah, yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:19:03 This will get everybody to stop where they are and listen.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:19:08 This is one of the things that's so interesting about the Book of Mormon because the signs that appear in the New Testament are done on overdrive in the Book of Mormon, right? You have three hours of darkness at the crucifixion, but here we're going to have three days of darkness. And we'll read about the details in a moment. It's a vapor. I mean, it's physical. But likewise, at His birth, it wasn't just a star in the heaven. It was light for three days. What was the reason for that? Was it because the House of Lehi had different promises? It was the promised land. I think it was as much for us as it was for the Book of Mormon peoples. I mean, that was another thing [President Benson](#) always said. "They didn't have Mormon's book. It was written for us." I'd wrote a book on the miracles of Jesus years ago, and of course, the miracles were real and happened as the scriptures laid them out. But what's even more important about those miracles is what they symbolize on greater things.

00:19:58 Healing blindness represents showing spiritual sight. Healing deafness, opening our ears to the words of the Lord. Overcoming physical death. If you're the daughter of Jairus, or the widow's son, or Lazarus is representing overcoming spiritual death and being healed physically is being healed spiritually, that's what's going on here. These were real terrible cataclysms that as you say, we're waking the people up, but they're even more important for us symbolically. And the question is can we understand or see in the disasters which we unfortunately,



sometimes, witness and/or experience in this life? Can we see what the Lord is trying to say to us? Are we able to see in the experiences we unfortunately sometimes have, the voice of the Lord?

00:20:45 Let's go to verse 19. So this next chunk of text, which is 19 through about half of 23, "I call great darkness upon all the face of the land." It's interesting because we've got once again this kind of scriptural echoes. Darkness was the ninth plague of Exodus in Exodus 10. But even more so as we've already mentioned, the last three hours Christ was on the cross, Matthew 27:45, it's Mark 15:33, and Luke 23:44 represents that the light of the world is being snuffed out. And then of course, the people who have experienced these things, they start to mourn and let's read that. This is second half of verse 33, "There was great mourning, and howling, and weeping among all the people continually; yea, there were great groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destructions which had come upon them." And in one place they were heard to say, "O, that we had repented before this great and terrible day," and that's a very Old Testament image. Joel uses that for instance.

00:21:50 "Then would our brethren have been spared." Verse 25, "O, that we had repented before this," once again, "great and terrible day, and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out; then our mothers, and our fair daughters, and our children would've been spared, and would not have been buried." They're talking particularly about the city of Moronihah that had been buried. Then as we slip into chapter nine, they're left in darkness to sit with the loss and the pain. Which is interesting because so often when we do have a loss in our own lives, there are those dark hours, days, sometimes weeks afterwards where we feel alone. Where is the Lord? And you have to wait for that understanding of that comfort to come.

John Bytheway: 00:22:38 Well, Samuel the Lamanite said exactly that this would happen. Somebody would say, "Oh, that we had repented before this great and terrible day," in Helaman 13. I love Samuel the Lamanite. It's the only Lamanite sermon that we have written down. To see his prophecies come true is exciting, but he saw this coming.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:22:58 When we talked about the darkness, and that clearly picks up on that image, we know from the gospel of John that Christ is the light of the world. Look at verse 22, "There was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon

the face of the land." Conversely, there's this beautiful passage in section 88, not that we have a favorite passage of the Doctrine & Covenants. But if we did, one of them would be section 88. It's talking about the light of Christ which shineth that proceedeth from the presence of God and fills the immensity of space. But then it has this beautiful passage, it says, "He is in the light of the sun and the power by which it was made. He is in the light of the moon, the power by which it was made."

00:23:34 When my daughter was little, I used to take her outside and she'd look at the moon and I'd read this to her. I'd say, "He's in the moon and the light of the moon." And she'd go, "Jesus. Jesus is up there." All those things, which are basically just reflecting the light of Christ all go dark. This powerful symbol that without Christ... As I mentioned earlier, things don't consist. They don't hold together without the Creator. There is no light without Jesus and all those things go dark.

John Bytheway: 00:24:05 I have a question for both of you about verse 22 that uses a phrase that Lehi's dream uses, the mists of darkness. When you read Lehi's dream in 1 Nephi 8, it's all Lehi. When Nephi sees it though, he sees Lehi's dream with the life of Christ. They actually mention mists of darkness before His coming. And it sounds like it's a symbolic thing and it's a real thing that happens right here too.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:24:33 Yeah, I hadn't thought about that. Thanks for pointing that out. I mean, what we're seeing is the mists of darkness that are always in the world and that we all have to pull through and hold on the iron rod. Without the iron rod, you're overwhelmed by the mists of darkness. In this period, we're given a taste of what the world would be like without Jesus. And I think it's meant to be a warning image. It's only three days long, but it's letting us know what eternity could be like if Jesus were not there for us.

Hank Smith: 00:25:05 And perhaps, Eric, that's why Mormon goes into such detail about how dark it was. He could just say, "It was really dark." But he keeps going. They could feel the vapor of darkness. There was no light because of the darkness. There's no candles nor torches, nor fire kindled, not even with their exceedingly dry wood that always has made me laugh as if we're thinking, "What about the exceedingly dry wood?" He says, "Not even the exceedingly dry wood."

- John Bytheway: 00:25:31 Yeah, we'll try the somewhat dry wood. No? Well, try the really dry wood then. No? Try the exceedingly dry wood maybe that'll light.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:25:39 Some of our friends that are really into Book of Mormon geography and try to localize this. They'll talk about, "Well, this could be a volcanic eruption." Just the other day I was listening to an earlier episode. It was about chiasm, John. And you were talking about how wonderful a chiasm was in Alma 38, I think, you were talking about. This is as cool as that is. Let's not focus on the structure over the message, the content. And that's the thing. Yeah, it may have been among other things, tempest, and whirlwinds. There could have been a volcanic eruption which was smothering people with carbon monoxide and ash, but that's not as important as that. There's nothing you can do to overcome the darkness. I'm glad you brought that up because it's not the stars, and the moon, and the sun aren't giving their light. There's nothing you can do to overcome it because your exceedingly dry wood, you can't light your lamp. Because without Jesus it's hopeless. Because all those things are reflecting Jesus.
- Hank Smith: 00:26:35 Yeah. For getting into Mormon's head, I remember hearing my friend Ryan Sharp say, "Okay, we get it. It's dark." But as I start to look, I'm going... The symbolism you're talking about. Without the Lord, you might think, "Oh no, I could figure it out. I could get some light somehow." And Mormons making it clear, there was no light without Him.
- John Bytheway: 00:26:55 Yeah. Boy, when God does an object lesson. Wow! And I thought as a young father, if you can't light wood, you can't cook. But what do you feed your kids? You've got three days of this where you can't cook, you can't see. When he wants to make an impression... Boy, can he make an impression without literal light for three days? You start to think of how necessary it is to have the light of the world, the spiritual light as well.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:27:24 Now, if chapter eight is the destructions and the darkness, and chapter 11 is what we want to get to the appearance and the revelation, 9 and 10 are transitional. Because the people are still in the darkness, but the voice speaks to them. You get the hope in chapter 9:1-22, I've labeled this section Christ's pronouncements to the people. And then I've subdivided that. The first section I want to look at is verses 1-12, "The voice of Christ chronicles destructions among the Nephites." In a moment, we're going to see that as Christ describes Himself in the darkness. He's going to start using a lot of phrases that are familiar to us. Once again, Mormon and Nephi wouldn't have

had these records, but they're familiar to us from the New Testament. I would say, because the same spirit is inspiring the writers, and Christ is the one speaking in both cases.

00:28:21 And we have a friend [Daniel Becerra](#), who's written about 3 and 4 Nephi, and he had a really interesting quote that I just wanted to share with you real quickly. "Because as Jesus introduces Himself to the people..." And we'll talk a lot more about this when he appears in person in chapter 11 and once again, describes Himself further. He uses all these familiar phrases. A lot of them parallel with what is said about Him and that He says in John, but every once in a while, there's some things that are going to be surprising.

00:28:52 I want to have this quote in the background as we move through chapters nine and 10, Daniel says, "Mormon invites disciples to allow Christ to defy their expectations. He presents to us a Savior who resists easy categorization, who blurs the boundaries between humanity and divinity, between father and son, between male and female, between individuality and relationality. As much as Jesus, the man, Jesus was Jehovah in human form and if He loved the chosen, He knew His friends and His friends knew Him and He's relatable, He's still Jehovah. And He makes God more comprehensible and more relatable." But this is why I love the Gospel of John so much, it shows how Jesus was still divine. And our finite minds cannot completely understand Him. There are going to be some tensions as He is presented as fully God here.

00:29:47 I mean, this is one of the things that's so interesting about the Book of Mormon. And why I like it as a Johannine scholar, the Gospel of John, first few verses in the beginning is the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, and that always kind of makes people go, tilt "what are you talking about?" "He's not God the Father. What is that? What's saying He's divine?" What does the title page say? "Show that Jesus Christ, the eternal God, manifest Himself to all people." I remember when I used to teach Book of Mormon more frequently, I would start to talk about the title page purposes and after we had talked about the great things God has done for our fathers and mothers, and bring us to knowledge of the covenants, and said "And bring us to knowledge of Jesus Christ, the..." And the freshmen shout, "Son of God." I'm like, "Nope, eternal God."

00:30:26 And in part two, when we read Jesus introduce Himself as the God of Israel and the whole world, this is what you have to be aware of. Yes, we've come to know Jesus well from the gospels, and in the Book of Mormon we've come to expect things from

Him, from the prophecies, but He's still going to be that Jesus that defies expectations. That's more than you can possibly comprehend. But want to have that in the background as we work through these passages.

00:30:52 I was struck by the fact that in verse two, you have a triple wo. Verse one says, "There's a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth upon the face of the land crying. Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth." Now, a triple wo only happens twice that I could find. 2 Nephi 28, we've had that at Revelations 8:13. And remember, wo is kind of a cry of indignation, and judgment, and warning. I'm thinking of Christ pronouncing wos upon Bethsaida, and Chorazin, and Capernaum. Wo unto the scribes and Pharisees in chapter 23. There's certainly precedent for this, but He's letting us know that there's some judgment here. And this is what's interesting. As I've mentioned, John, we love the New Testament Jesus, we think, Because that's the Jesus who's loving, and kind, and good, and people misunderstand or misrepresent the Old Testament Jesus as being this God of judgment.

00:31:58 Reality is the most common descriptor of Jehovah in the Old Testament is hesed, lovingkindness. If you think Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so as the old gospel song went, read the book of Revelation. You have a choice. You can have the loving, kind, healing Savior or you can have the God of judgment. In fact, to kind of take that old saying, "Jesus loves me, this I know." Zarahemla's toast you know. I mean, we've got a Book of Revelation Jesus in chapter 8, we're going to get the Gospel of John Jesus in chapter 11 and following. And then in chapter 12 of Sermon on the Mount Jesus, Matthew 5-7. And it's an interesting thing to take the Revelation Jesus, the 3 Nephi 8 Jesus before you do the Gospel of John, and Matthew, and 3 Nephi 11 Jesus. Because you realize what's there if He isn't the loving Savior.

John Bytheway: 00:32:54 I have circled the pronouns on first 12 verses as you'd said. Sometimes when there's a natural disaster, it's dangerous for us to say, "Oh, that must be a punishment from God or something." We have no idea. And even Jesus cautioned the 12 about that. Do you think that tower at Siloam that fell, he wanted to say... But here it is so explicit. Verse three, Zarahemla, "I burned that with fire." Verse four, Moroni, I caused to be sunk. Moronihah, I covered with the earth. What I love about this is He's saying, "I did this," but then in verse 13, He says, Okay, "oh, all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they will ye not now return unto me and repent of your sins and be converted that I may heal you." I have a line

in my margin that points to the earlier verses and says, "Arm of justice," and points after 13, and says, "Arm of mercy." He says in verse 14, "Mine arm of mercy is extended toward you."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:33:56

Yeah, and in a moment, I want to look at that next section 13 and following. Because you have this idea that you're spared because you're more righteous, but we also have to be careful with that because natural disasters do take righteous people. We know that those who are spared are among those who are more righteous. They're not all the more righteous people. There's something else in verse two, if we go back to our wo, wo, wo verse. There is a verse that has haunted me since I was a little boy. "For the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice because of the slain fair sons and daughters of my people." Actually, this would've happened chronologically long before Moses seven. This is the vision of Enoch. This is Moses 7:26, "Enoch beholds Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand and unveiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced."

00:34:50

I don't want to indulge in this too much. I mean, we don't want to become all exorcists, or omen, or indulge too much in diabolic things. But one of the things the scriptures make clear, and we had this earlier in Nephi, "There is no Satan. I'm not the devil for there isn't one." Satan doesn't want people to believe in him because he's more effective when he's stealth. The scriptures make it clear there is an adversary, that there is an opposition. Just as we're having Jesus in His role as just judge revealed in chapters 8, 9, and 10, we're also having what I call the unmasking of Satan. It is a reminder that this is a war, it's a spiritual war and that's why we have to hold on to Jesus and the rod.

Hank Smith: 00:35:35

Eight and nine, these are tough chapters. Well, one of the reasons I invited Eric is because of his understanding of biblical studies. For those who would like an in-depth look at divine violence in the Book of Mormon, there's an article by that name, [Andrew Smith](#), who we all know, dealing with difficulty in scripture, divine violence in the Book of Mormon. We can put a link in our show notes to that. One part of his article, of Dr. Smith's article, caught my eye. He quotes Terence Fretheim, a Lutheran theologian. He talks about divine violence in the Bible and then Andrew Smith, he relates it to the Book of Mormon. And this is just one part of a wonderful article. He says, "In pursuing divine purposes, God does not act alone but works with what is available with human beings as they are with all their foibles and flaws."

00:36:29 “Fretheim also stresses that this violence must always be understood in the context of violence as perpetrated by mankind. In other words, God never acts violently first. Similarly, Fretheim is also clear to point out that divine violence is never an end unto itself. It is never uncontrolled, blind, or capricious, but rather always has a purpose.” He then quotes another Walter Bruchman. He says, "This judgmental violence may be reduced to one thing. God's use of violence inevitable in a violent world is intended to subvert human violence in order to bring the creation along to a point where violence is no more." In other words, whenever God acts violently, He does so not only to stop or punish human violence but also does so in a way that promotes, teaches, or ensures a move of humankind generally away from such violence." And then he goes on and says, "Would the violence of 3 Nephi 8 and 9 lead to the Zion of 4 Nephi?" Great article, Andrew Smith. Shout out to Andrew, Dr. Smith.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:37:37 Well, as dark as this has been with destructions, and cataclysms, and no light, and devils laughing, and divine violence, John has pointed our minds forward. Let's start to transition out with verses 13-22 with that arm of mercy because that's when things get better. Let's look at verse 13. We've already mentioned this, "O ye that were spared because you were more righteous than they, will you not now return to me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you." I've circled return and repent, converted and heal. Those are the four words I circled in that verse.

00:38:14 Return is interesting. Of course, we don't know what the language is like at the time of Nephi, the son of Nephi, the son of Helaman, but maybe it was originally still based on some kind of Hebrew, at least the recording languages. But in Hebrew, in the Old Testament, shuv means to return. Turn to the Lord. Now, of course that's also how they describe repent. But in English, repent... we think of that as feeling sorry. But [President Nelson's](#) talked about this and in the Greek, it means, metanoeo, actually means to change your mind. So think more like the Lord. It's not that we're always bad every day and have tons of things to repent of in terms of guilt every day, but we need to turn to the Lord fully every day. We need to be converted. It's all about this healing. This is what we're going to talk about from now on. Turning to the Lord, having a new heart, being forgiven, and being healed.

00:39:06 Look at verse 14, "Verily, verily, I say unto you..." And by the way, in the New Testament Gospels, when it says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," in Greek, it's "Amen, amen, lego humin." Amen,

amen, I say to you. And we say amen at the end of something to say, "I agree." But whenever Jesus speaks in the gospels, he says, "Amen," first. In fact, I saw one translation says, "I'm telling you the truth." This is the Jesus we know and how He teaches in the New Testament. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, come unto me. You shall have eternal life." What? Come unto me, you think of Matthew 11:28. "My great arm of mercy is extended to you. And whosoever will come in, will receive. And blessed are those who come unto me." This is almost a Nephite beatitude before we even get to chapter 12, right?

00:39:55 When we have that word, blessed. "If you come unto me, you will be blessed." And this is when... it's going to be light from now on, friends. "Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I created the heavens, and the earth, and all things that in them are." He says, this is my name, Yeshua. I'm the guy who saves. That's what the name Joshua means in Hebrew. Christ. I'm the Mashiach or the Christos, the anointed one. "I am the Son of God. I create the heavens and the earth." And I'm thinking of the opening lines of John here, everything that was in them, "I was with the Father from the beginning." Again, I'm still channeling John 1 there.

00:40:33 "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John 10:27-32 or the intercession prayer, John 17:21, "And in me has the Father glorified my name." In one verse, Jesus has basically done the gospel job. Okay. And this is a voice speaking in the darkness. This is the light of the world and He's back. He's still in the spirit world, but He's organizing things in section 1-38, but He can multitask. And He's getting them ready for what we're going to see in chapter 11, "I came unto my own and my own received me not." Once again, this is an echo of a very famous passage in the Gospel of John, which says, this is John 1:11, "He came unto His own and His own received him not." I don't know what reformed Egyptian was doing or what Nephite was doing, but I know what the Greek was doing. It says, "He came unto his own." In Greek, it is, *idia*, neuter plural. He came to His own things and His own *theoi*... masculine plural nominative, His own people received Him not.

00:41:40 And the reason I've always been moved by that passage in John is that His creation always obeys Him. Even when He says, fall on that city. Burn that city. Drown that city. Isn't it Helaman 12 where Mormon interrupts, and He talks about how the dust moveth hither and thither, the command of Almighty God. But men hearken not and in the gospels, Jesus commands water to become wine and it does it. The elements obey Jesus, but people have not. "And the scriptures concerning my coming are



fulfilled. And as many as have received me to them, I have given to become the Sons of God." We're still channeling John here, verse 12, chapter one, "As many as received Him, to him, He gave power to become the children of God." Technical in Greek, it says, "Sons of God in King James."

00:42:28 But of course, that in Mosiah 5:7 or 27:25, Ether 3:14, it's the Sons and daughters of God. "He has come to give us the power to become the children of Christ. And in me is the law of Moses fulfilled." But that's an interesting literary device in scripture. It's not just the beginning and the end. The technical term for this is a merism, M-E-R-I-S-M. It's the beginning and the end and everything in between. That's why in the Book of Revelation, you have the seven seals undone, different dispensations. Jesus is the operative figure throughout history. The ethical principles of the law of Moses were never done away with, they were deepened. But there were certain ritual practices that were done away. "You shall offer unto me no more the shedding of blood. Your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away. I will no longer accept your sacrifices, your burnt offerings." Because those things were anticipatory of the great atonement of Jesus Christ.

00:43:30 Verse 20, "Ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit." This is Psalm 51:17. We talked about Psalms a couple years ago together. Remember Psalms sometimes have synonymous parallelism, but sometimes they have this called synthetic or climactic parallelism. The second expression is deeper. So when it says a broken heart, your heart is broken. Contrite seems kind of weak in English, but in Hebrew, it meant crushed. Your heart's broken but your spirit is crushed. You have to be completely pliable. "And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because their faith in me at the time of their conversion were baptized with fire and the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not."

00:44:19 Now, there may have been many instances where Lamanites were converted and had a baptism of fire. It's a little ironic, it says, "They knew it not," because I'm thinking of Helaman 5:43-48 when Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman were in the prison, and remember the darkness overcomes the prison, but then the fire comes. Those Lamanites knew there was fire because they were surrounded by it. But this passage meant so much to me. My senior year of high school I was in Jackson, Tennessee, and all my born-again friends, evangelical friends were trying to get me to be saved, and they were talking about

this experience you had to have. I realized you can have the baptism of fire and not necessarily have had some kind of big bang experience. We've got the big bang saw on the road to Damascus, Alma, the Younger. You've got these huge experiences. When I used to teach this, I'd say, "You've got those big bang conversion experiences." But most of us have steady state experiences, I'm using models of the universe here.

00:45:19 And where your testimony grows slowly over time... I'm actually the oscillating model of the universe. I've had these little explosions, these little bangs as well as the constant one. But it's really interesting because we're going to have... It's beyond our time together, but when you have some fire immersion experiences in Bountiful, we're going to see some symbolic representations of the baptism by fire. You've got Pentecost in Acts 2. But those are more important symbolically for not just the purifying power of the Holy Ghost and the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost, but the enlightening and the bright power of the Holy Ghost, if that makes any sense. I hope reassuring for those who cannot claim they've had a big bang conversion, and they can't think of a time when they were just completely overwhelmed with the Spirit because there were some Lamanites, at least. They were baptized with fire and the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.

John Bytheway: 00:46:21 Eric and Hank, these verses, it's so intriguing to me that before He even showed up in person, He is saying, "No more shedding of blood." I just think that's fascinating. And like you said... what was that word you used? Those sacrifices were anticipatory. They were pointing them to the great and last sacrifice. I wonder the level of confusion these good folks would have when it was all of a sudden, "No more that." Now, I want you to bring a broken heart and a contrite spirit. I loved what you said, a crushed spirit. The sacrifice is you, you bring yourself now, which I'm sure they were like, "How do we do this? This must've been amazing." I wanted to comment on what you said at the end about being baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost and didn't know it. I've always thought if you're immersed in fire, you would probably know about it, right?

00:47:14 Here's what [President Ezra Taft Benson](#) said, this is a talk called A Mighty Change of Heart from the October '89 Ensign, he said, "We must be cautious as we discuss these remarkable examples. Though they are real and powerful, they are the exception more than the rule. For every Paul," you've talked about that road to Damascus, "for every Enos, for every King Lamoni, there are hundreds and thousands of people who find the process of repentance much more subtle, much more

imperceptible. Day by day, they move closer to the Lord, little realizing they're building a God-like life. They live quiet lives of goodness, service, and commitment. They are like the Lamanites who the Lord said, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not."

00:47:59 And here's another one from [Elder D. Todd Christofferson](#). He said, "You may ask, why doesn't this mighty change happen more quickly with me? You should remember that the remarkable examples of King Benjamin's people, Alma, and some others in scripture are just that. Remarkable, not typical. For most of us, the changes are more gradual and occur over time. Being born again unlike our physical birth is more a process than an event. And engaging in that process is the central purpose of mortality." That's from May 2008 General Conference.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:48:35 Remember that great talk [Elder Bednar](#) gave about the painting of a harvest he has on his wall that had the little brushstrokes gold and brown and whatever. That's always comforting as parents, because our attempts to have family prayer and family home evening lessons, but it's the consistency over time. And some of you heard me talk about this before, but one of the great gifts the Lord has given me for someone who is a nerd and gets too deep and too exegesis... Not ex-Jesus, John, but exegesis and all the complexity of scripture. My son's disability has been such a gift. Because with Sam, we talk about simple principles of the gospel. The time I spent with him over two decades now, just teaching the basics are paying off. That young man has been converted little by little and he has such strong, simple faith now. And that's why I was talking about the big bang conversions as opposed to steady state. And I'm in the middle, to be honest.

00:49:35 I'm giving you a third option, what I call the oscillating one. Because they go up and down, but I have these little explosions. I can point to three or four experiences in my life that were pretty significant just to be grateful to the Lord for those. I had an experience in high school when I really came to know, and loved the Lord, and have a testimony of Him. I had experience in my mission that was transformative. I had experience in graduate school. And those have kind of been anchors to me. They do happen. And I think we're grateful when we do have some special experiences, and we write them down, and we share them with our family and close friends when it's appropriate.

Hank Smith: 00:50:10 As you've been teaching us, Eric, I'm seeing the contrast that Mormon is making the dark times where it feels like there is no light at all, he made that pretty clear, to it gets better. It gets better. Here's the voice of the Lord. "Return. Come to me. I am light and life." Can you imagine the two things they're worried about right now are light and life? "I can offer those things." And then of course, we're coming to the climax in 3 Nephi 11. I wanted to read to you something from an author. This is one of my favorite authors. He says this, "The psalmist proclaimed weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Each of us has nights and days of weeping in this life. We all experience loss and pain in its various forms. Almost all of us have lost a loved one. Many of us have lost dreams and hopes. All of us are at risk of losing health and abilities. Yet, even in our loss or darkness, I would say, we can experience peace and joy. We are promised peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come. Christ came that we may have life and to have it more abundantly."

00:51:28 This is the next paragraph from this author, "I have written and spoken elsewhere about the greatest loss and heartache of my life, the autism diagnosis of my son, Sam. Although he was not formally diagnosed until he was four, he had clear developmental delays and challenges with emotional self-regulation from the time he was a baby. We were frantic when he began to regress. He stopped smiling. He wouldn't let us hold him. He began to lose some of the little language that he had had. On the day he was finally diagnosed, the child we thought we would have and the dreams we had for him died. But, with early intervention, the help of trained specialists, prayers and inspiration, we have seen miracles, small and great. You can see the light coming back. He has started to smile again. He learned how to receive our love and better express our own. In March of 2015, I ordained him a deacon and he faithfully passes the sacrament, and we know that Sam is now giving priesthood blessings. While our worries for the future remain, we have love, testimony, and support and we have much room for joy."

00:52:40 So many of us, Eric, go through that same thing of, "This is so dark. Is this ever going to get better?" 3 Nephi 9, 10, and 11, they come. That was from a wonderful [BYU devotional](#) called, and John, you've already mentioned it, Hard Sayings and Safe Spaces: Making Room for Struggle as Well as Faith. Eric Huntsman, 2018.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:53:05 Yeah. I think we even had pictures of Sam when he was vacant expression as a baby, and that picture when he was ordained a deacon and then, I think, graduating from Timpview or

something. That one verse that I love from the Psalms that, "Weeping endures for the evening, but joy comes in the morning." That's what we're about to do as we close up this section and get ready for part two, because that will be the day when Jesus comes and that can happen for all of us.

00:53:34 I just wanted to close chapter nine, and then we have a few things to say about chapter 10. Look at this verse 21, "I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin." I think of John the Baptist in John chapter one, and he talks about, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." And isn't that interesting? It's singular. He's not talking about individual mistakes, or transgressions, or sins as we often think of it. It is the entire fallen mortal state, that is what Jesus has come. And then verse 22, "Therefore, who repenteth, who changes their heart, who turns back to the Lord and cometh unto me as a little child..." Think about all those wonderful examples in the scriptures in the gospels where Jesus says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such, I have laid down my life. And have taken it up again." John 10:18, Jesus says, "I have power to lay it down again, and I have power to take it up."

00:54:34 The synoptic gospels and the speeches of Peter and Paul throughout the rest of the New Testament often portray either the Romans or the Jews killing Jesus and God raising Him from the dead. But with His high Christology, this portrayal of a divine Jesus in John, we realized He would not have died if He had not allowed it. It wasn't the crucifixion that killed Him. He'd laid down His life, and He has power to take it up again. "Therefore, repent and come unto me all ye ends of the earth and be saved."

Hank Smith: 00:55:06 Eric, we have so many listeners out there. We hear from them all over the world who are in their own dark times.

00:55:14 John, how often do we hear from people who, I just lost my teenage daughter in an accident. I just lost my spouse. Just got a cancer diagnosis. So dark. And I think what you're showing us here, Eric, is the light is coming. It is coming. And that's the perfect verse, 3 Nephi 9:22, "Repent. Come to me. I can give you what you're looking for. I can give you light and life."

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:55:44 Well, with chapter 10 of 3 Nephi, we start to wrap this part up and are getting ready for chapter 11. The Lord leaves them for a while. They're silenced in the space for many hours. Everyone's astonished. They stop lamenting and howling. And I guess,

they're introspective and thinking. And it's when in that moment that they're pondering, it's almost like they're ready for some more now. They're kind of reflecting on what the voice has spoken to them. It says, "The voice came again to the people," and says, verse four, "O ye people in the great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob, who are of the house of Israel, how oft have I gathered you as a hen would have gathereth her chickens under her wings, and nourished you." That, of course, is something Jesus says, final week of life, it's in Matthew 23:37. This idea of a mother hen gathering her little chickies under her wings trying to protect them.

00:56:39 That's such a powerful image. It's interesting that in the Old Testament, sometimes almost maternal images are used for God. It's not always father or paternal images. And this happens quite a bit in the New Testament as well. I'm going to have a passage later in this chapter that is echoed in John. But this idea of Christ in this loving, nurturing way, gathering her chickens under her wings... and our friend Daniel, when he talks about this, it goes on, says, "How oft? How oft? How oft?" And you can almost imagine a mom who's tried so hard to protect, and teach, and take care of her child. And that child just done the wrong thing, and she doesn't give up. How oft have I asked? How oft have I tried? How oft have I begged? How oft have I loved you? Such a powerful image. You wouldn't, but I'm still here trying to gather you. I'm still here ready to protect you. Verse six, "If you will repent and return to me with full purpose of heart, I will shield you with my wings."

Hank Smith: 00:57:45 I'm interested in those times in scripture where the Lord identifies with the feminine. Think of the woman who lost the coin. The hen, a female sheep being shorn, a nursing mother, a woman giving birth. He's used that many times. It's always interested me. Any thoughts on that?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:58:06 Jesus represents the best of both genders. He's loving and He's nurturing. Now, the reason I call that a cultural construct... In my family, Elaine and I have kind of exchanged things. She tends to be disciplinarian. She's the one who handles problems. And I'm the one who hugs the little babies, and I miss my children when they were small, and I tend to be really nurturing and loving. And that's fine, Jesus is a good model of that. I think that's empowering for female saints, female disciples to see themselves reflected in Jesus. And it's not he's the strong priesthood leader. He's the nurturer, he's the carer, he's the one who loves. And there are strong women. So I think there's a reason that the scriptures are so consistent with that.

00:58:47 And in fact, if you look forward to the last part of verse 10, it's after he's said this, "The people began to howl and weep again." In verses 8, and 9, and 10, the earth stopped shaking, and so they calmed down. And it says, "Their mourning was turned into joy, and their lamentations into the praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer." And the reason that verse made me think of what you were just sharing, Hank, is a wonderful passage at the end of the farewell discourses in John 16. This is Jesus realizing that within hours, His friends are going to be distraught and heartbroken when He's taken, and crucified, and dead.

00:59:28 He says, "A woman when she's in travail, when she's in labor, hath sorrow because her hour is come. But as soon as she's delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world." And those of us who have children and have been with wives when they've given birth, you see this odd transformation as a difficult labor. But I remember the first time they put Rachel in Elaine's arms. Elaine just changed. She was so happy to have that baby in her arms. Jesus, on the one level is saying in that John 16:21 passage, "Your sorrow is terrible now, but it's going to be like when that little baby's put in your arms and it's going to be joy." But I also think it's self-referential, and that's why your idea that sometimes, maternal images are used with God and Jesus in particular obtains. Because Jesus' sorrow and pain is going to be worse than anything. But the joy for the child that's brought into the world is us when we get eternal life. Does that make sense?

01:00:31 So Jesus is the woman struggling to bring forth a child in pain, but when we as delivered, and redeemed, and saved, and exalted or put in his arms, he's going to have joy. So I think that passage is on two levels. The people here among the Nephites, their sorrow was turned into joy. And we also have this transformation of the judge Christ, about to be turned into the Savior Christ. If that makes any sense as we start to shift into chapter 11.

John Bytheway: 01:01:02 I have in my margin... Because I love this idea of Jesus being the same yesterday, today, and forever, He's a gatherer. So look at verse four. Now, if I have my English class right, "How oft have I gathered you?" I put present tense. Verse five, "How oft would I have gathered you?" I put two past tense. And verse six, "How oft will I gather you?" Past, present, and future, He is a gatherer. And then I see us, past, present, future, ye would not the end of verse five. We don't like being gathered. But past, present, and the future, He is a gatherer, and He wants to turn

our mourning into joy. And He is relentless, and He won't give up. And that's how one way He's the same yesterday, today, and forever.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:01:53 The people have changed their lamentations into joy and suddenly, the voice says, "The scriptures have been fulfilled and you've been spared because you're more righteous." And He mentions earth, fire, wind... Almost sounds like 70s band, Earth, Wind & Fire. So earth, sea, fire, and the whirlwind, or talked about the four elements, all of the creation being unsettled. And since He's mentioned prophecies, look at verse 14. "And now, whoso readeth, let him understand; he that hath the scriptures, let him search them." It's actually in the middle of Mark 13, which is the Mount of Olives discourse in Mark. It's interrupted and says, "Whoever readeth know this." And so he's saying, "If you're reading the scriptures, know that this is what's happening and he that has the scriptures, let him search them." And I, of course, thought of John 5:39, which is a problematic passage. This is a great example of exegesis versus exposition.
- 01:02:45 When we look at that in English, search the scriptures for him. You think you have eternal life. They testify of me. We usually use that passage as a proof text or as a mandate, you should be studying your scriptures. But actually, the context gives you a different exegesis. It says in Greek, you're searching the scriptures because you think you have eternal life in scriptures, but the scriptures are testifying of me. And if you look at the context of chapter five, it's his opponents, the Jewish authorities. So they're spending all their time in dusty Torah scrolls, they're reading their Hebrew texts and they're not seeing Jesus. He's saying, "The scriptures testify of me." So when it says, "Search the scriptures," it's not just do your 10 minutes, your 20 minutes, your half hour scripture reading every day. Use the scriptures as a way to find me. The prophets have talked about me. Here I am. Pretty soon, I'm going to be there.
- 01:03:37 And Mormon then jumps in and he has a final statement at the end of chapter 10, says at the ending of the thirty and fourth year, this is verse 18, "The people of Nephi who are spared, they are starting to pour out their hearts for the blessings that have come upon them insomuch that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven, He did truly manifest Himself unto them." Which is of course 3 Nephi 11. That soon is interesting. I have seen lots of conflicting opinions as to how soon this happened. I think it's safe to say at least 40 days later because the people have time to get to Bountiful, and they have time to think about it, and prepare. But what's important is the ascension of Christ.



01:04:21 Remember what the angels said to the disciples in Acts 1 when Jesus ascended? This same Jesus who you've seen go up into heaven in same manner will He return. Now, of course that's speaking of the Second Coming. But when Jesus descends, touches down, if you will, the Temple of Bountiful in chapter 11, using President Benson's rubric of this is a type of the Second Coming, His descent to Bountiful is like His Second Coming. So that's what's important from that verse. It's not the actual timing. But He's gone up and in that same way, He's going to come down. And look at verse 19, "Showing His body unto them and ministering to them; and an account of the ministry shall be shown hereafter." Basically, chapters 11-27. Showing His body is interesting, and this is where I want to start in part two as we talk about this appearance. There's something really powerful about showing the body and we'll talk about the opportunity people had to actually feel the body.

01:05:18 But one of the things that always struck me, I'm getting ahead of ourselves again. In 3 Nephi 18, I think is when Jesus first administers the Lord's Supper on the Nephites. He says, "The bread is in remembrance of my body, which I have shown to you." Now, using the New Testament, Last Supper accounts as a template, we usually think of the body broken, the lifeblood spent, the different sacrament hymns we have. And so we think of the broken body, but the body He showed the Nephites was a resurrected body. The sacrament is not only commemorative looking back to His sacrifice. I would argue, it's anticipatory. Looking forward to that great messianic banquet after the Second Coming, just as the Risen Lord is appearing to the Nephites. The Lord Jesus after the Second Coming is going to be with us when we take the sacrament.

01:06:07 Yes, as I told Sam, think back to the Last Supper in Gethsemane and crucifixion. But also, look forward with joy to the future when we're all together for that great messianic banquet. In fact, I would argue... when you're talking about past, present, future, John, I would say the sacrament's all three. Yes, it's commemorative and that's what we usually focus on. It's the past. It's present in a very real way because we like the disciples in the upper room are gathered together to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And we are a family at that moment bearing witness that we accept Jesus. But it is proleptic, that fancy word I used earlier, it's future looking and we're looking forward to the Second Coming when we will be with that resurrected Jesus. We've got exciting stuff. As we do 3 Nephi 11, we're talking about a historical event, the visit of the Risen Lord that is symbolic as President Benson suggests of the

Second Coming and the kind of experience we will all have with Him when he comes again.

- John Bytheway: 01:07:07 Eric, I am trying in my conversations about the Book of Mormon to stop saying, "When Jesus appeared to the Nephites." Now, He did, but it's not entirely accurate. In April of 2023 General Conference, [President Dallin H. Oaks](#) changed one word in the midst of his talk. He said, "After His ministry in the Holy Land, Jesus Christ appeared to the righteous on the American continent," and I had that epiphany. Look, it says in verse 18 that there were those who had been called Lamanites. The dividing line about who was there to see Jesus and who wasn't was not on cultural or racial lines, it was upon wickedness and righteousness. That's important. I'm going to try to always say, "Jesus appeared to the righteous in the new world."
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:07:56 Yeah, exactly. This is the beginning of chapter 11 says the multitude gathered of the people of Nephi. And I wish I could give credit where credit is due, I can't remember who said this. Someone pointed out, it's not Nephites, it's people of Nephi. We're no longer using Nephi versus Lamanite language, but now, we're more inclusive. Anti-Nephi-Lehis, they were ethnically Lamanites, but they consider themselves as if they were of Lehi and Nephi's lineage. The righteous is a great way to put it. Textually, we could say even what we have from Nephi, the center of Nephi, and from Mormon suggests that it's wrong to talk about Nephites as opposed to Lamanites here.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:37 Eric, before we go on, I want to ask you, and John, you too, about what you would say to our listeners who are in really dark places. When they're in their third Nephi 8s and 9s, right, where there is no light there. One of the most devastating stories I've ever heard, both of you'll remember this, Elder Holland told the story back in 2016 about a man named [Troy Russell](#). This is the story that Elder Holland told. "My friend, Troy Russell pulled his pickup truck slowly out of his garage on his way to donate goods to the local Deseret industries. He felt his back tire roll over a bump thinking some item had fallen off the truck. He got out only to find his precious nine-year-old son Austin, lying face down on the pavement. The screams, the priesthood blessing, the paramedic crew, the hospital staff, they were in this case to no avail. Austin was gone.
- 01:09:38 Unable to sleep, unable to find peace, Troy was inconsolable." It reminds me of what we've read a little bit in 3 Nephi 8 and 9. He said it was more than he could bear and that he simply could not go on. Later on in the Deseret news, there was an article about Brother Russell that on his Facebook page, he had written

a letter to his son. He said... This is back in 2017, I think, when he wrote this. "Exactly two years ago, at about this exact time, my heart was completely broken. And in my limited perspective at the time, never to be repaired. All joy in life was gone and I had no idea what to do. All I wanted was to wake up from the nightmare of losing you, hold you in my arms, let you know how much I love you, and never let you go."

01:10:36 But in that darkness, Troy told of finding a note in his son's church pants that said, "Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God." And he goes on to talk about the light he's seen through prayer and trusting in the Lord. We have listeners who are in their own 3 Nephi 8s and 9s. How do we help someone see that 3 Nephi 11 is coming? I can think of a friend who I know right now who is going through a very painful divorce. The heartbreak you see in her eyes and on her face. I guess there's a time to sit for a while, but I want to let them know he's coming. The light is coming.

01:11:25 Coming up in part two of this episode.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:11:28 We had a moment when we sing in general conference, We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet. It was one of these wonderful Mack Wilberg arrangements. But we are aware that he had colon cancer. And it wasn't his last conference, but we thought it might be.



## 3 Nephi 8-11 Part 2



GUEST: ERIC D. HUNTSMAN

- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Eric Huntsman, 3 Nephi 8-11.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 00:08 If we prematurely try to give gospel context and perspective, that almost hurts. I think of the contrasting examples of Martha and Mary in John 11. Their beloved brother has died. Jesus is tarried for four days so that He is dead and buried. Martha reacts one way, but Mary reacts another. Martha comes and says, "Lord, if thou hast been here, my brother would not have died."
- 00:33 Then she expresses faith and says "Say the word, and I know that God listens to you." And he says, "Your brother will live again." She goes, well, I know I was busy doing the dishes. Luke 10, I was listening because I heard about the resurrection. He'll rise in the resurrection. Then Jesus teaches another principle, he that believeth me, he'll never die, et cetera.
- 00:33 When Mary comes to him, she says the exact same thing. She falls at Jesus's feet and says, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died." And she's so inconsolable. Jesus does not start making doctrinal or Christological pronouncements. He weeps with her. There's more than just a place or time to sit for a while. I mean, that's why our Jewish friends sit Shiva for seven days. You don't do anything but sit with the person who's mourning for seven days.
- 01:20 You need to let people grieve, and the best thing you could do is just put your arms around them and say you're sorry. Let the spirit guide you when it's time to start saying more because I think sometimes, oh, I know this divorce is terrible and I was divorced, but that was 10 years ago and now I'm happy. I mean, sometimes we run the risk of minimizing someone's pain and suffering.
- Hank Smith: 01:42 The darkness is real.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 01:43 The darkness. And these people had to sit there for three days in their darkness. In fact, even though the voice of Jesus starts coming to them, he says a few things and then it's dark for a while, and he says a few things and then they howl for a while, and then he says a few more things and then they have some joy, but then he says a few more things, there is a matter of pacing which we are too impatient to do, to sit with the sorrow, to sit with the grief, share a few things when inspired, then back off and realize that the darkness lasts three days or a year or a lifetime. There is not, I think a panacea, a band-aid that fits everyone. That's what we have to be careful with.

02:28 And that's why I think we have the scriptures because you can talk about this is what the righteous went through and then the Lord came in [chapter 11](#), but you don't rush to say, "Okay, that's exactly what's happening to you." You let people pick up from the object lessons as John describes them in scriptures. Let them apply them to themselves.

John Bytheway: 02:48 And can we sit with you as we talk about these wonderful things on here and let you know the days of darkness are temporary and as you said, but they are absolutely real and we would never try to explain them away with a phrase or two.

Hank Smith: 03:05 There's an article in the digital only version of the [Ensign](#), September of 2020. This man talks about going through depression. I won't read the whole article, but listen to this language in light of what Eric's taught us here about 3 Nephi 8, 9, and 10. He says, "The darkness seemed to come out of nowhere. I started feeling anxious and depressed about all the unresolved issues in my life. I lost confidence in myself. I began questioning my faith. The list goes on. It seems like even small inconveniences were blown out of proportion. My good life was suddenly catastrophic. I was fighting an internal battle with demons inside my head. Darkness seemed to engulf me.

03:49 And as these feelings got worse, I started asking myself things like, 'What if I wasn't here anymore? Would people even care?' Demons in my mind would answer. No one would even notice if you were gone. It paralyzed me with fear. But while I was dealing with all this, I acted normal. I talked to my family like everything was fine. I locked away my feelings from others. I felt like I couldn't share how catastrophic my mind was."

04:14 And he goes through all of the help he received from doctors and counselors and all the tools that God has provided. And then he writes this, "For so long I didn't think it was possible to hear the voice of God's love in the midst of depression."

- 04:32 Eric, this is chapter 8, 9, and 10, "but a little glimmer of a light from the Savior helps me hold on to hope. I opened up about my struggles I learned from friends" and then he says, "I wouldn't have the faith and testimony that I do in Jesus Christ today if it wasn't for that period of darkness I went through. I am beyond grateful for the light that He brings into my life that helps me defeat the demons and fears in my mind."
- 05:04 He says, "We can always hold onto the Lord's hope and the light." Anybody who's out there struggling or suffering, we have the guest of all guests who has more empathy than almost any other person I've ever met. I hope that you can hold on. And like Eric said, we don't know when the darkness is going to end. We just do know it, it does.
- 05:26 Reminds me also of Joseph Smith history, and it seemed to me and then these three words for a time that I was doomed. I always liked those three words. It's only for a time. You probably felt that same way, Eric, with Sam's diagnosis, you think this is going to destroy me, but looking back you can see no, this is for a time.
- John Bytheway: 05:47 As Jesus is going to say for a season. I like that phrase too.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 05:52 And we rejoice with people when they get to the light. We can't shoot prematurely. I remember soon after Sam's diagnosis, I was working my Thursday temple shift. I was so upset. I had some time in between sessions and I was walking the third floor and just sad. I remember saying, "Lord, all these righteous desires I had for my son that he would go on a full-time proselytizing mission and that he'd marry in the temple, and that he'd have a family. None of these things are going to happen now."
- 06:21 It turns out that Thursday was the day before good Friday. Okay, so we're in passion week, right? The spirit came to me and said, "Well, there are lots of young men in this church who don't do those things and it's because of choices they make. If Sam doesn't do those things, it's because he didn't have the opportunity."
- 06:39 And I said, "But he's my only son." And the spirit smacked me upside the head and said, "What about my only son?" Right? The day before Good Friday. I was a little abashed, and later I was reflecting on that and I wrote a little essay and I said, "So often we say we want to be more like Jesus and then the Lord allows us to have the trials and the heartaches and the

disappointments that will make us more like Jesus." And what's our first impulse? "Lord, take these away. I don't want them."

07:10 Sometimes we have to just go through. You can't go around, you can't go over, you can't go under. You just have to go through. Our role as fellow saints, as friends, as sisters and brothers is to be there with people as they're going through, to hug them, to weep with them. We're supposed to mourn with those who mourn. We're not supposed to talk them out of feeling bad. We're not supposed to give them platitudes. We're not supposed to say, "Oh, isn't it great they're having a wonderful reunion on this side of the veil?" We're supposed to be sad that they're not with us. The person's lost.

07:44 We have a lot to learn, and we'll learn it together and we'll get there. People were weeping and howling in these chapters and the Lord worked them little by little and eventually the light and the day and the morning will come and it's going to be wonderful as we talk about 3 Nephi 11.

Hank Smith: 08:02 I loved how you pointed that out, the mourning and the wailing of the people turned into joy, praise, and thanksgiving.

08:10 Eric, we've hinted at it a little bit so far, but I think we're ready. All of our Come, Follow Me studies, all of our followHIM episodes have led us to this moment. 3 Nephi 11, walk us through it.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 08:25 What I would like to say before we start is we're talking about a historical event that we believe and that we accept that the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ appeared to a group of the righteous as John put it last time, but also the people of Nephi described in the text.

08:41 This is also a type of how he appears in our lives and it's also an anticipation of how he will appear to the entire world after the great and wonderful day at the second coming. Let's keep multiple levels of interpretation and application as we go to this. Now, I think it's not insignificant that the Lord, and I'm sorry I keep using this casual term, touches down, but it's almost like we have a lander, right? I mean, we've got something coming down from heaven and touching down at a temple in a place called Bountiful.

09:16 And what does Bountiful conjure up for us? We think about Lehi's family wandering through the desert for so long and they finally get to a place of plenty and wonder and where they can

get ready to build their ship and go forward. It's a land that's prosperous, it's a refuge. The old capital Zarahemla has been burned up. This is the backup capital if you will, but it's also at the temple.

- 09:39 And for those of us who are Latter-day Saints, particularly temple-going Latter-day Saints, the temple for us is that place where heaven and earth meet. Whether you're going up on a mountain like Mount Sinai or you're going up to the mountain of the Lord's house, you're reaching up to heaven and heaven reaches down to you, so it's not insignificant the setting here. As we're looking to apply 3 Nephi 11 to our encounter with the risen living Lord, I would say for me at least it is the temple.
- 10:08 The other thing is we mentioned towards the end of part one that we don't know exactly what the timing is. Both Nephi, son of Nephi, and Mormon have peppered this with some dating, but all we had in verse 18 of chapter 10 was soon after the ascension into heaven, He manifested himself unto them.
- 10:25 There's been some time here. We talked a little bit about struggles and having to go through darkness and we had those three days. We don't know how many days after that people had to prepare and think about it, but it's interesting to me that when the people gather at the temple in the land Bountiful verse 2 of [chapter 11](#) says, they were conversing about this Jesus of whom the sign had been giving concerning his death. Revelation comes when we are looking for it. And we talk about thinking and pondering and here they're talking about it and it was in this moment of really wanting to know more that this next revelation happens.
- 11:04 This is the famous passage where he's introduced by the Father first through a voice that they don't recognize in verses 3 and 4. It came to pass while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it were out of heaven. They're looking around, "Who talked to us?" But they understood not the voice. It's not a harsh voice, it's not a loud voice. It's notwithstanding it was a small voice, it pierced them to the center. There's not a part of their frame that did not quake, and it's pierced them to their very souls causing their hearts to burn.
- 11:37 This is replete with a lot of scriptural imagery. Of course, we're thinking of Elijah after some of his darkest moments. He has fled from Ahab and Jezebel, and he's gone down to Horeb or Mount Sinai and he's been so depressed. At one point he says, "Lord, take away my life." There's an earthquake and there's a



fire and the Lord's not in the earthquake He's not in the fire, but then there's that still small voice as the King James renders it.

- 11:59 It's interesting. It caused their hearts to burn and I naturally gravitate to Luke 24:32 to disciples on the road to Emmaus. They don't understand what it's saying, they don't know who it is, but they're feeling, and that's how the Spirit affects us. Sometimes it happens with feelings first.
- 12:18 Came to pass again, they heard the voice, they still didn't understand it. And again, the third time they heard the voice and they did open their ears to it and their eyes were towards the sound thereof and they look towards the heaven and the third time, verse 6, they understood the voice which they heard and it said unto them, "Behold, my beloved son, in whom I am well-pleased and whom I have glorified my name. Hear ye Him."
- 12:44 This is so significant because this is the voice of the Father. The son is the mediator, He's the representative of the Father. So when He's been speaking in chapters 8, 9, and 10, that was the voice of the Son. Here is God the Father, master of all universes. Speaking to these people, of course, my beloved son in whom I am well pleased, we immediately think of the baptism, we think of the transfiguration, we think of the sacred grove. And as was the case at both the transfiguration and the sacred grove, the first vision, hear ye Him.
- 13:25 Those particular episodes aren't in the Gospel John, but I need to let my Gospel John have a role here. I have glorified my name, that is such quintessentially Johannine language. I'm thinking of John 12. This is during passion week. Jesus is in the temple. Some Greeks want to come and see him. This is what I call the Johannine passion prediction and the synoptics. Three times Jesus tells His disciples, son of man is going to go to Jerusalem and He's going to be betrayed and suffer at the hands of the priests and the leaders of the people and he is going to die.
- 13:57 Only once in John He tells the story about how He needs to lay His life down and less an ear of corn falls into the ground and dies. It won't live. And then the voice of God speaks in the temple and says, "I have glorified it and glorified it again." And that's what we have here. We think from a Latter-day Saint perspective, Moses 1:39, "This is my work and my glory to bring to pass the eternal life and immortality of men," which is exactly what Jesus has been doing, right? The last hours of his life and through the resurrection. He's bringing about the glory of the Father, and all of that's wrapped up into this powerful verse. All

these times when the Father has directly interacted with us in this fallen world. Praising His son at the baptism, at the transfiguration, he will do this to the Prophet Joseph and the sacred grove.

- 14:48 He did glorify and testify to his son in the temple according to John 12, and he says, hear ye Him. Now he's talking to the people of Nephi gathered and powerful, but remember this book was written for us. The father is testifying to us. "Jesus is my son, hear ye Him."
- 15:11 And everything we're going to read in these rich chapters 11-27. You need to picture yourselves as if you were at the land Bountiful that He is speaking to us. This of course is the entire act because then as we move into verses 8-12, Jesus actually descends, but verses 3-7, with the voice of the Father speaking is just so pivotal.
- John Bytheway: 15:40 I'm so glad you ran through those verses. Those are the footnotes right there. If you look at footnote 7A, baptism of Jesus, man of transfiguration, first vision where that very consistent language. I heard our friend Brad Wilcox say once, and this is an application here is a perfect father talking about his son in public. Notice how he did it. I love him. I'm so pleased with him. I thought about that as a father, how do I talk about members of my family in public? Could I use that as a model? That's an application, but I like that idea.
- Hank Smith: 16:17 How do I talk about my members of my family, my spouse, my children in public? Eric, you pointed out a phrase, open their ears. That's an interesting, I've never seen someone close their ears. What do you think that means?
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 16:30 Of course it's symbolic at some level, those who have ears and will not hear, or those that have eyes and will not see, we through our obstinance or rebellion or just our ignorance sometimes refuse to hear. So it's not like they're necessarily making a choice to close their ears, but because of where they are in life or choices they've made up to this point, they haven't been able to hear the voice of God. But you need to be willing to do that. We have to be willing to use our ears to hear the word of the Lord.
- Hank Smith: 17:04 Yeah, I really like that, that there's a choice there of do you want to hear because it's there.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:09 It reminds me of Amulek. I knew but I would not know. I heard but I would not hear it. They did open their ear. They did something different, and isn't it interesting? I mean the Father could have just spoken once while they're not listening.

Hank Smith: 17:21 No.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 17:22 He speaks again, they're not listening. But he apparently the repetition is significant. I mean, three is a symbolic number on its own. There's something happening, not that we have a favorite recent general conference talk, but [Elder Kearon's](#) talk of being relentless to how he's pursuing us. I mean, this is that. God wants us home and the way to get us home is through His son and He's so eager to introduce us to His son because His son is going to do it. He's going to bring us home.

17:56 Verse 8, it came to pass. As they understood, they cast their eyes up towards heaven and behold they saw a Man, capital M here, descending out of heaven and he was clothed in a white robe and think of all of the visions. I mean, think of Father Lehi. We've been anticipating this for a long time. A man in a white robe coming down and he came down and stood in the midst of them and the whole multitude turned upon him and did not dare open their mouths. They thought it was an angel, and that used to always perplex me. What do you mean? This is Jesus, obviously. But they don't know what Jesus is going to look like and they didn't have a three-year mortal ministry to get to know the man of Nazareth who's going to be resurrected and then wear a white robe.

18:39 They've only known the pre-mortal Jesus as Jehovah who's been speaking through their prophets despite the prophecies of taking upon flesh and doing all those things that we've read, it still just must have been just so mind-boggling to them that a God was going to appear looking like a man.

19:00 We mentioned our friend [Daniel Becerra](#) and he said that this unexpectedness of Jesus that Mormon is saying, "Don't try to pigeonhole Jesus. He's so much more than you can expect." They're just really shocked. He has to say to them, "Behold" verse 10, "I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world."

19:22 And I think of course, Jacob 7:11, No prophets have spoken, we may not have their records or have their testimonies, but says, "no prophets have spoken except they have testified of Christ." And then here I am, the light and the life of the world doesn't

get much more Johannine than that. Live of the world in John 8, "Life of the world. I have drunk out of that bitter cup."

19:49 Now we actually tend to think about that as the Gethsemane experience and the synoptic Gospels, Mark, Matthew, and Luke. Instantly, that bitter cup is mentioned in John 18 during the arrest, even though John doesn't tell us about the Gethsemane experience. He drinks that bitter cup and taken upon myself the sins of the world in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

20:13 So we've got another one of these verses with so many familiar concepts that Jesus spoke in other contexts wrapped into one powerful verse. But what I wanted to share here was a quote I found from [President Holland](#) when he was president of BYU. He gave a talk back in 1989. Though John and I were still at BYU, called The Will of the Father in All Things was based upon this verse. "I cannot think it either accident or mere whimsy that the good shepherd in his newly exalted state appearing to a most significant segment of his flock chooses first to speak of his obedience, his deference, his loyalty, and loving submission to his father."

21:00 This is when it's done. I suffered in the garden. I carried that burden on the cross. I died. I rose again, I ascended into heaven. I'm it. Your next guest will talk about how some of the Sermon on the Mounts kind of cast, so you have in Matthew 5:48, "Be perfect as my father in heaven is perfect." But now I can say be perfect even as I or your father in heaven in 3 Nephi 12:48.

21:22 But look what Elder Holland says next "in an initial and profound moment of spellbinding wonder when surely he had the attention of every man, woman, and child as far as the eye could see, his submission to his father is the first and most important thing he wishes us to know about himself. Even the triumphant Savior, the resurrected Lord, the glorified man coming down in a white robe who's about to say, I am the God of Israel and the God of the whole earth. What he wants to say is I suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

Hank Smith: 22:03 That's the only lesson he could teach. It's going to be that one in your own times of suffering, choose the father.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 22:14 Now, of course, the multitude, they fall to the earth and they start to put things together. Oh, that's right. King Benjamin did say that and Abinadi did say that. Nephi did say that. Oh, I see how this is working. All these things were prophesied and we

were told that the Christ would show himself unto them after His ascension into heaven.

22:31 And it came to pass, the Lord spake unto them saying, "Arise and come forth unto me that ye may thrust your hands into my side and also that you may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet that ye may know that I am the God of Israel and the God of the whole earth and have been slain for the sins of the whole world." And I want to unpack almost every phrase there. But before I do that, I want to go back to what Daniel has said about this unexpected Jesus.

22:59 Just as Elder Holland, President Holland emphasizes that Jesus at this moment of triumph emphasizes submission to the father. Daniel's pointed out in his study of 3 and 4 Nephi, it's this wounded God that is what no one's expecting, right? They didn't even expect him to look like a man. They thought it was an angel. And now he says, "I am the God of Israel and the whole earth." And he says, "Oh, by the way, look at these scars I have." This goes against Alma 11 and Alma 40 and everything we were told about the resurrection and things being put into their perfect frame.

23:33 Let me read this quote from our friend real quickly. In the Gospels where we have the luxury of three years of getting to know the man of Nazareth, Jesus made flesh. We have miracles, we have walking on water, we have caring for people, we have all these different things. And Daniel says, "Rather than appealing primarily to the Savior's miracles and power as proof is divinity, as the gospel authors typically do, Mormon sees evidence of Christ's Godhood in His wounded body". Not what you expect from after the father, the greatest being in the universe.

24:14 Mormon wouldn't have known this, and Nephi wouldn't have known this. But we as readers of the scriptures, as we've been fortunate to receive them, of course, think of poor brother Thomas in chapter 20 of John who isn't around when 10 of the disciples see the risen Lord in the upper room and he shows up late, don't know where he was, shopping, I don't know what he was doing. When he shows up and he's like, "We've seen the Lord." He's like, "I don't believe it until I can feel the prints of the nails in his hands and put my hand in his side. I'm not going to believe it."

24:43 And then of course, Jesus shows up after eight days. This is John 20:26, "Again, his disciples were within and Thomas with them then came Jesus, the door is being shut, stood in the

midst and said to them, 'Peace be unto you.' Then said He to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side and be not faithless, but believing.' And Thomas answered and said unto them, 'My Lord and my God.' Jesus said unto Thomas, 'Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet believed.'" And that's why he earns this unfortunate sobriquet "doubting Thomas".

- 25:21 Remember Thomas isn't any old disciple. He is one of the surviving 12. He's supposed to be a special witness and in terms of being able to feel the wound marks in his side, it's interesting to me that Acts 1, I think it's verse 3, talks about Jesus showing himself after his passion to his disciples by infallible proofs in Greek *techmerios*, which means sure token. In the ancient world you break a coin in half and you give one half to your friend and you have the other half and they fit together.
- 25:55 Thomas is a special witness. He's supposed to not only say, "I believe Jesus rose from the dead." He's supposed to say, "I know He rose from the dead and I know He is the Savior of the world," and that's what these wounds represent is His sacrificial death to save the world. This wounded God is showing up and the experience that is important for special witnesses in John 20 and Acts 1 ends up being the privilege of 2,500 people.
- 26:28 If we're using 3 Nephi 11, not only as a powerful story of a historical event and also as an anticipation of a future encounter with the Lord after the second coming. But as a template of the spiritual experience we should be having in our own lives, there's something significant going on. Are we having that encounter with the wounded God?
- 26:52 But He says, "I'm the God of Israel and the God of the whole earth." We already mentioned this in part one title page of the Book of Mormon, bringing us to acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God. And this of course goes so along with Johannine and Christology. And it says the God of Israel.
- 27:13 It also says the God of the whole world. I think of John 4 after the story of the woman of Samaria who comes believe in Jesus and then runs and shares the news with her entire village and what do they do? They come, they say, "Oh, now that we've heard Him, we don't believe because of your word, but we know of ourselves He is the Savior of the world."
- 27:29 A lot of people don't know this. The word Savior applying to Jesus only appears twice in Luke and once in John to Jesus. We

don't always realize that because that's our common way of respectfully referring to Jesus Christ without always using His name. He's the Savior. He's the Savior, but when it says He's the Savior of the world, it's taking the promise to the covenant people and applying it to everyone and I have been slain from for the sins of the world.

- 27:55 This is another one of those verses that's overwhelming. The people come one by one, verse 15, "And thrust their hands into his side and felt the prints of the nails in his hands and his feet and they went one by one and did see with their eyes and feel with their hands." They had heard the voice during those three days of darkness, they have seen Him, the voice of God and they've heard Jesus announce Himself earlier in the chapter, but now they are also feeling with their hands and did know of a surety.
- 28:27 See, that's what Thomas wanted. Thomas wanted not faith. He wanted that surety and they bear record that it was He of whom it was written by the prophets that should come, this wounded God.
- John Bytheway: 28:40 I'm thinking about verse 14 and this invitation, the Savior actually extends, come forth unto me that you may thrust your hands into my side and also that you may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet.
- 28:56 Hank, you might know that I donated a kidney to my brother in the 1990s. I have a sizable scar on my side. I don't show it to people. There is a level of intimacy. The Lord is inviting them. That is just amazing. To touch someone's hands is a level of intimacy, to shake someone's hand, but imagine having Him invite you to touch not just His side but a wound in His side, that's amazing. That He would extend that an invitation and now that is something you would never ever be able to forget.
- Hank Smith: 29:33 Absolutely. I've often wondered in the order of these things, because normally, it's come feel the prints in my hands and then the wound in my side, but I wonder if these people of Nephi have no concept of crucifixion but a wound to the side, they would know. That's a fatal wound.
- John Bytheway: 29:49 Yeah. What He is inviting them to do is such a close personal experience.
- Hank Smith: 29:58 That's a little too close for me, right?

John Bytheway: 30:00 Yeah. I've had students "Hey, wait a minute, I thought when you're resurrected everything's made new again. Why does Jesus still have wounds?" How do you answer that usually, Hank?

Hank Smith: 30:13 Agency is eternal, He chooses.

John Bytheway: 30:16 At the second coming they will say, "What are those wounds in your hands?" And He will say, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Section 45 repeats the same story but says, "What are those wounds in your hands and in your feet?"

Hank Smith: 30:31 Isaiah said, "The Lord has engraven you in the palms of His hand."

John Bytheway: 30:36 Yeah. I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. I always think of the sign language when I... What's that 1 Nephi 21:15, talked about these wounds. He said, this is from a talk called teaching preaching and healing. January 2003, Ensign, [Elder Holland](#) wrote, "Jesus has chosen even in a resurrected otherwise perfected body to retain for the benefit of His disciples, the wounds in His hands and in His feet and in His side. Signs if you will, that painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect. Signs if you will that pain in this world is not evidence that God doesn't love you. Signs if you will, that problems pass and happiness can be ours. Remind others that it is the wounded Christ who is the captain of our souls. He who yet bears the scars of our forgiveness, the lesions of His love and humility, that torn flesh of obedience and sacrifice. These wounds are the principle way we are to recognize Him when He comes. He may invite us forward as He invited others to see and to feel those marks."

Hank Smith: 31:47 You don't have to be scared of the wounds that you get when you're fighting on the right side.

John Bytheway: 31:51 Yeah. And if you have wounds, it's not signs that you're not loved. It's signs that all of us go through things like this, but I love that problems pass and happiness can be ours.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 32:04 Now this is an interesting thing. We get the number 2,500 later of Todd Parker. Some of you may remember Todd taught forever in ancient scripture at BYU and in his old packet he calculated that if each person, see if I get this right, had only 10 seconds with Jesus, it would've taken seven hours. And if each person had 20 seconds, it would've taken 14 hours.



- 32:29 And something is telling me that Jesus didn't say, "Next. Next. Next." Or Nephi wasn't there saying, "You only get 10 seconds with Jesus." Something tells me each person had as much time as they wanted to fall at His feet and feel and love, which means there must be some bending of the space-time continuum here.
- 32:46 I mean, something's going on, but once again, let's not get hung up on the historical particularities of this. What it's saying is each person gets this opportunity to take what is still for most of us faith and turn it into a sure knowledge of this wounded God who took upon Himself the sins of the world.
- Hank Smith: 33:12 It seems that we have a one-by-one Savior, doesn't it? We could go to the temple and baptize someone for everyone, but he wants this done one at a time, one name at a time. Each person is important.
- John Bytheway: 33:26 Each marriage, each ordinance, could we just do them all at once? Nope. It's not about efficiency. It's about that personal Savior one by one.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 33:37 When I first started serving in the temple, we used to almost always pride ourselves on how quickly we could do the ordinances and how well we knew them. They kept saying to us, and it's finally caught on, take your time. The words are power, the words are precious. It's important for the patron, but it's also the only time the person for whom you're performing the ordinances is having that experience.
- 34:01 That goes along with what you were saying, John, one by one and meaningful. It needs to be a meaningful experience. But what is the experience they have after they've all done this however much time it took? verse 17, "Hosanna, blessed be the name of the most high God and they did fall at the feet of Jesus and did worship Him." Hosanna, blessed be the name of Him who cometh in the name of the Lord is what we cry at what?
- John Bytheway: 34:30 Triumphant entry. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 34:30 Yeah. Triumphant entry.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 34:32 Now of course everything that's done in the Book of Mormon, you're talking about object lessons, John, it's done on a bigger scale, right?
- 34:37 So we had palm branches and people shouting in Jerusalem, but here we've got people who have felt the wounded God shouting

that. And of course, what does Hosanna mean? It means save us now, Hosanna. You could also back up to the glory in Excelsis Deo, the host of heavens. In Luke chapter 2, I have another quote for you. From April 2020, [Elder Gong](#) gave a talk, Hosanna and hallelujah, the living Jesus Christ, the heart of restoration and Easter. He said, "Hosanna is our plea for God to save. Hallelujah expresses our praise to the Lord for the hope of salvation and exaltation and Hosanna and hallelujah, we recognize the living Jesus Christ."

35:24 You know that I spent a lot of time in Jerusalem, so I love holy week and I love Palm Sunday and we sing Hosanna all the way down the Mount of Olives. In traditional Christianity, between Ash Wednesday until Easter morning you don't say hallelujah. I don't know if you're aware of that as part of Lent or being solemn. Hallelujah is a praise of joy, but it originally meant praise be to Yah, to Jehovah.

35:51 They do say Hosanna because they're praying for Jesus to save them and then they wait until Easter morning because they are now saying praise be to Jehovah, but it's recognizing that this Jesus is resurrected is now revealed as God. Here, as I said, we're having kind of our Nephite post-resurrection triumphal entry. I will follow with Elder Gong there and say Hallelujah is not portrayed here, although I just had this come to my mind. It is in chapter 20, after they have the sacrament for the second time, they shout out and cry with one voice and gave glory to Jesus so they don't say hallelujah there, but it's implicit that we are praising this man and asking this wounded God asking Him to save us, but we're also praising Him. Hallelujah.

Hank Smith: 36:40 What a moment. Have you ever been in one of those moments, Eric, singing with the choir and it's just wow, everybody's feeling it.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 36:47 I had one and this isn't going to sound immediately like it's pertinent, but I hope it will be. When President Hinckley was in his final months, we had a moment when we sing in general conference, We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet. It was one of these wonderful Mack Wilberg arrangements.

37:07 But we were aware that he had colon cancer and it wasn't his last conference, but we thought it might be and we were all so emotional. We got a little verklempt to use the Yiddish term. I was crying and I wasn't really singing. We have boxed lunches in between the Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon session. And during lunch I kept asking all my friends, "Were you able to sing? That was so emotional. Spirit was so strong. We were so

grateful for President Hinckley and the spirit was so strong."  
And everyone I talked to said I wasn't singing.

37:36 It's one of those moments that we felt like we were being helped out by better singers than ourselves. The reason I bring that up, I mentioned the host of heaven with the angel of the Lord in Shepherd's field, that first Christmas Eve sing Glory to God in the Highest. I think of the crowds on that first triumphal entry Hosanna, blessed is he that come in the name of the Lord. I think of these people saying, "Hosanna, blessed be the name of the most high God." I think of what we will shout, sing, and feel at the second coming. That's what I always tell my students when we prepare for that Palm Sunday procession in Jerusalem.

38:15 As I say, this is not commemorative once again, John, past, present, future. It's not looking back to Jesus's triumphal entry the last week of his life. It's accepting Him as our king in our lives now and shouting, save us Lord now, but it's certainly proleptic or anticipatory looking forward to that party. You think it's a joyful thing seeing two or 3000 Christians come down the Mount of Olives waving palm Branches and singing for a couple hours. You just wait till all the mess our world is in right now is over and Jesus is appearing and the heavens are being unveiled like a scroll and everyone sees the face of the Lord at once and we know, "Wow. Finally. Finally, it's over."

Hank Smith: 38:57 That's what gets me about this chapter, Eric, is. I don't think they thought it was today. I don't think anybody thought it was going to be today. They were just some incredible things that happened and they were all gathered and talking and here he is of that idea of the second coming.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 39:15 And once again not just the past, which is 3 Nephi 11 and not just the future, which is the second coming, but using this as some type of on a different scale we should seek for in our lives now. We recognize Him as our king. We recognize Him as our wounded God. We recognize Him as our Lord. We recognize Him as our friend. Are we shouting Hosanna? Are we shouting hallelujah or singing it or whispering it? Is this what we're looking for after those days of darkness that we talked about in part one when there's been such hard times and the Lord unveils Himself in our life now?

Hank Smith: 39:54 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 39:56 I want you to explain again Hosanna, because I've seen, oh, grant salvation or show us the way to be saved or save us now.

- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 40:05 Hosanna literally means save now. So it's a command or a plea, so save now. Now we read into that. Save us now or we give us Salvation. I mean there are different ways of rendering that.
- 40:16 By the way we're talking in a Christian context of Palm Sunday and here in a Nephite context. When you hear it most joyfully proclaimed in a Jewish context is during the Autumn Festival Sukkot, which is called Tabernacles in our Bibles. You go down to the western wall for instance and they're waving their branches, it's palm and willow and they're waving them, and they do a lot of the Hosanna psalms. You hear them, "Hosanna, Hosanna." The first time I saw that I thought, "Oh, that was the template for the disciples at the triumphal entry."
- Hank Smith: 40:53 Oh, interesting.
- John Bytheway: 40:55 How much did they know about the promise of his coming and how much they must have marveled that I got to be here today? I wonder how long that marveling went on with them. And Elder Holland in the quotation you used talked about that now is the time and you are there. He said something that dates a little bit, you're less inclined to check the film in your camera than you are the faith in your heart. Now, anciently, we used film in our cameras anciently, but that idea of he's there right now as you alluded to before, come to Christ, don't worry about when He will come because if you just come to Christ, you're already there when He comes. He's right there now with them and He wants you to come and see Him one by one. Hard to wrap your head around that.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 41:47 We talk about one by one and how each person had that experience to feel the prints in his hands. 18-21 I've written in my margin Nephi 3 called. So here you are in this big group and then all of a sudden Jesus picks you out and says, "Hank, come forward." And Nephi comes, comes and he bows before the Lord and kisses His feet. The Lord commands him to rise and He says, "I'm going to give you power that you may baptize" and you'll have other opportunities to talk about this.
- 42:22 He's going to talk a little bit in this chapter about having no disputations and commissioning people to baptize. This may seem a little off subject but it's connected. So yesterday on my temple shift, my first assignment was to record in the baptistry. Love so many aspects of the temple, but there's just the special spirit in the baptistry.
- 42:43 Especially these days when you see these youth just coming in in numbers. We're there and I was watching a young man, 16,

and we didn't have enough baptizers and this kid ended up baptizing 11 people until we could get another one. And I remember thinking when some procedures had changed and they started let the young people perform proxy baptisms. I don't know, maybe I was a old-fashioned. I'm like I used to be only endowed people who did it, and I had been reading in advance of our discussion today about Nephi being called forward and commissioned and given power to baptize when Jesus would go into heaven.

- 43:24 And I thought, this young guy and he was nervous and he was given the same commission as I heard him say, "Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ." Same thing that Nephi's son and Nephi's son of Helaman received and it was in a temple, so this is having the temple Bountiful and I don't know for some reason I was unusually moved by that.
- Hank Smith: 43:47 I wonder if when the Savior comes again, if we're all getting ready to hear some grand new thing we've never heard before and he decides he's going to speak on faith, baptism, repentance, and the holy Ghost.
- John Bytheway: 44:00 Doctrine of Christ.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:01 In other words, the gospel.
- Hank Smith: 44:01 Yeah, the gospel. It's always interested me that Nephi was among the multitude just so humble. If I was Nephi, you both know me and how prideful I am, I would probably say, "Jesus, Jesus, where do you want me? Do you want me right next to you? Where do you want me? Do you want me in front?"
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:22 Kind of pushing forward to make sure he sees you.
- John Bytheway: 44:24 I can't find my name tag.
- Hank Smith: 44:26 That's me, your main man. Instead there's Nephi, just among the multitude.
- Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:34 Reminds me of that parable in Matthew where he says, "When you're called to a wedding, don't get a front seat, sit in the back."
- John Bytheway: 44:41 It's better to be called up.
- Hank Smith: 44:42 It's better to be called forward than to be sat down than to be humbled.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 44:48 Well, it's interesting that you anticipate with this next section verses 22-29 are about that Jesus comes and we're expecting this great big thing, millennial thing, and He talks about baptism and that's exactly what He does. The Lord called others and said unto them, "I'm giving you power to baptize and by the way, let's not argue about how to do this."

45:05 And he says, there's been some disputations but whosoever repenteth of his sins through your words, and desires to be baptized, you're going to go in the water and you're going to baptize him. Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the son and the Holy Ghost."

45:20 And our current wording having been commissioned of Jesus Christ. It's the 1835 Book of Commandments. They changed it from having authority to having been commissioned, and that's just semantics. The concept is the same name of the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghost. Then you're going to immerse him in water and you're going to come out of the water.

45:38 Now remember this is different. We've been baptizing unto repentance since at least Alma and presumably sooner people were being baptized into repentance by John the Baptist. We even see this in the book of Acts that Paul runs to people in Ephesus who had been baptized according to John, but not in the name of Jesus Christ.

46:00 And by the way, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, the Holy Ghost and baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ are not in tension with each other because Jesus is one of those three. But we have something new going on here. It's not just being baptized unto repentance, and of course, later your next episode I think we're going to talk about how he establishes the church here. It's being baptized in this new church.

46:22 So presumably a lot of these people, certainly Nephi, son of Nephi, son of Helaman had been baptized unto repentance under the system that they had been following in the Book of Mormon up until this time. But the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost of course is something we read at the end of Matthew 28 that this is the great commission.

46:44 Up until this point, the encounter with deity that these people had had, I mean obviously it's the power of the Spirit, but it was the pre-mortal Jehovah, but we've actually heard God the Father for the first time earlier in this chapter and now we have the full Godhead completely revealed to them. We now know the Father, Son and Holy Ghost of the Son being this wounded

God, the risen Lord, and we're now being baptized with the Holy Ghost.

47:11 But He says in verse 27, "The Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one and I am in the Father and the Father in me." And I'd already mentioned these passages in John 10 and John 17 that have alluded to this before, "But there shall be no more disputations". It is about baptizing them in the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, immersing in water when you have authority, and that's how baptisms are going to be done from now on.

47:36 And it's not, "Oh, we're going to talk about a simple principle of the gospel" when you have this Christophany, this appearance of Christ. Baptism is how you come to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Hank Smith: 47:48 Like a birth, you become His.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 47:50 Yeah. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 47:51 You're in my family now. Eric, you've walked us through these significant chapters in the Book of Mormon, especially 3 Nephi 11, this majestic moment in all history. It is such a crucial belief of ours that the Lord came to the people of Nephi, that he will come again and that he can, like you said, come to each of us in our own lives. If I've been at home listening with my scriptures open, learning all that you've taught me as a scriptural expert, what do you hope I would do differently? What do you hope I would change?

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 48:29 Well, we've looked at that one passage in part one about repentance and conversion and repentance daily not being just about sin, but about turning our hearts to the Lord.

48:44 What we see in all of these chapters and especially in chapter 11 is how that focus really needs to be about Jesus. John, I heard you in a previous episode talking about being converted unto the Lord. It wasn't about being converted to the church or converted to X, converted to Y. It's natural as a human being to think in terms of group identity and institutions and of course the church's divine, it really is about Jesus Christ.

49:12 Now, this is His church. It provides us the covenants and the structure and the direction, but it is here to bring us to Christ in terms of what your question started out with, Hank, for people particularly as they're suffering or they're in their darkness of chapters 8, 9, and 10. The day and the light is only going to

come with Jesus, and it's when we're expecting other people or even institutions or communities to bring the day when the day is the light of Jesus Christ.

- 49:47 I am Jesus Christ. I am who the prophets have testified. I am the light of the world. I am the God of Israel and the whole earth, and our response should be, Hosanna, blessed be the name of the most high God and fall at His feet. Some of this can be experienced symbolically at this point in our experience.
- 50:05 When I was growing up as a younger person in the church, we didn't talk about grace and we hardly even read the Book of Mormon, which I know sounds crazy to people today. But when President Nelson got us reading the Book of Mormon, we had to grapple with grace. We had to grapple with Jesus Christ as the main character of that book. We had to talk about salvation in ways we didn't before.
- 50:27 Throughout my adult life, I have seen us talking more and more about Jesus Christ, not the inclusion of the Father, the Spirit. This is why I think [President Nelson](#) has just stressed the name of the church so much. This is the church of Jesus Christ, and if I could just go on a hobbyhorse for a moment or soapbox, when President Nelson asks us to use the correct name of the church, I don't think he expected us to say 10 times as often, church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- 50:56 I think he wants us to say we're members of the Church of Jesus Christ, and not just use the correct name of the church but actually start living like we are followers of Jesus Christ. Another context in other subjects, I've often said the most two sacred things we say in a prayer is Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, the name of Jesus Christ, because that tagline in the name of Jesus Christ is so frequent and used so often in ordinances and at the end of talks and testimonies, it becomes almost disrespectful the way we say it.
- 51:33 We're not gaining anything if we use the correct name of the church or if we talk about Jesus Christ and it almost doesn't bring a lump to our throat to say Jesus Christ, if He's as real to us as He was to these people who felt the wounds in His hands and His feet and His side who fell at His feet. I've got this genetic problem with my tear ducts so you don't have to tear up or pull a Huntsman.
- 52:01 Some people, our friend Brother Lloyd Newell gets soft and gentle. I mean he channels his Richard G. Scott and other people have different styles. This isn't about style. This is about



feeling and experience. I believe the more and more people who come to know Jesus Christ, they will get through their days of darkness and they will be there for other people and they will perform the ordinances like baptism that we see here, and they aren't going to just be performing ordinances because it's something you got to do to get into a certain kingdom. It's like, "Wow, let's take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ. Let's go to the temple, make covenants to be closer to the Lord. Let's get the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Let's be sealed. Let's go to the temple to work in the laundry just because we want to be in the house of the Lord."

52:55 This is what our church practices. We often talk about orthodoxy, correct belief, something called orthopraxy not correct practice in terms of rules and things you got to do just right. Remember I said at the beginning of this episode, I don't consider myself a theologian. I try to be a practitioner. I just want to experience what the Lord has for me in this life, so that's what I would share with people.

Hank Smith: 53:22 That's wonderful. What is it? Ether 12, seek this Jesus. Eric, we want to thank you for taking your time to be with us today. Decades of being a religious educator, having someone like you walk us through these chapters is such a blessing to have someone who's spent so much time studying all of this and to say, let me walk you through it. We're really grateful that you take the time to do that.

Dr. Eric Huntsman: 53:51 Well, thanks for giving me the motherload, the best part of the Book of Mormon. Amazing.

Hank Smith: 53:57 And we had one of the best educators here. You did it justice, which we appreciate. We love how much you love the Lord. It's evident every time I talk to you. It shows on your face and in your words. With that, we want to thank Dr. Eric Huntsman for joining us on followHIM today. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and every episode we remember our founder Steve Sorensen. He would've loved this episode, Eric.

54:28 We hope you'll join us next week as we walk through the Savior's first visit with the people of Nephi 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 free 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.

55:01 The digital copies of these books are absolutely free. You can watch the podcast on YouTube. Also, our Facebook and Instagram accounts have videos and extras you won't find anywhere else. If you'd like to know how you can help us, if you could subscribe to rate, review, and comment on the podcast, that will make us easier to find.

55:19 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: Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to Him, followHIM.

## THE GREATEST DECISION OF MY LIFE



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello everyone. Welcome to another followHIM Favorites. My name's Hank Smith. I'm here with John Bytheway, and we are sharing a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we're in 3rd Nephi 8 through 11. This is the big moment for the Book of Mormon. I brought a story for you that is absolutely one of my favorites, and it's going to tie into basically the Savior's call in 3rd Nephi 8, 9, 10, 11 to repent. He says, specifically in 3rd Nephi 9, "Return unto me, repent of your sins, be converted, that I may heal you." I really like this story because so often we have things in our lives when we repent that we need to let go of, and sometimes we don't want to. So I thought this story goes really well with this. This was told by President Monson. He's quoting a different story from 1974. Someone wrote this story, 1974. It's the story of Benjamin Landart, 1888 in Utah, 15 years old, works on a farm. I know you love working on a farm, John.
- John Bytheway: 01:00 Oh, wow. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:02 Also plays the violin. It said, "Occasionally his mother would lock up the violin until his farm chores were done. So great was his temptation to play the violin." They don't have a lot of money. Benjamin's around 19 years old, 18, 19 years old, he's invited to try out for the territorial orchestra. Well, they're going to play in Denver. This is huge. He's going to play for a guy named Mr. Dean, and Mr. Dean says that he is the most accomplished violinist he has ever heard west of Denver. He said, "Report for the orchestra in the fall. You'll be earning enough for you and enough to send home to your family, quite a bit to send home to your family." Unbelievable. Yes, this is so great.
- 01:48 A week after Benjamin hears this news, his bishop calls him into his office, and asked him if he couldn't put off playing the orchestra for a couple of years. The bishop told Benjamin that before he started earning money, he owed something to the Lord. He asked Benjamin to accept a mission call. He promised their bishop if there was any way they could raise the money for him to serve a mission, since they don't have any money, he

would accept the call. He goes home and he tells his mother about the mission call. She's overjoyed, like most moms. She told him that his father always wanted to serve a mission, but he had been killed before that opportunity could come.

- John Bytheway: 02:33 Oh, wow.
- Hank Smith: 02:33 But then they discussed the financing of the mission. Benjamin said, "We can't sell any more land to go," and John, listen to this. Now think about-
- John Bytheway: 02:43 Oh no, I think I know what's coming.
- Hank Smith: 02:46 ... the Lord's saying, "Turn to me with your whole soul. Turn to me." Then she says, "There is a way we can raise this money. The family has one thing of great enough value to send you on your mission. We can sell your violin." Six days later, John, on March 23rd, 1893, Benjamin wrote in his journal, "I awoke this morning and took my violin from its case. All day long, I played the music I love. In the evening when the light grew dim, I could play no longer. I placed the instrument in its case, it is enough. Tomorrow I leave for my mission." And then this great quote for those of us who think, "Oh, I can't give that up. I love that thing," whatever it is, "too much."
- 03:35 That violin in your life, whatever the Lord is asking you to give up, whether it be a sin or anything else you sacrifice for the Lord's work. 45 years later, June of 1938, Benjamin wrote in his journal, "The greatest decision I ever made in my life was to give up something I truly loved to the God I loved even more. He has never forgotten me for it." The Lord knows, John, when we give up something that is truly a sacrifice to us for Him. I think He's going to let us know how grateful He feels. Isn't that a great story?
- John Bytheway: 04:08 That is a great story. I was hoping it would be, "We'll take the violin on your mission and play in sacrament meeting," or something like that.
- Hank Smith: 04:17 You get to play in a worldwide orchestra, right? It's a beautiful story of I am willing to give up all. I bet you're thinking of King Lamoni's father.
- John Bytheway: 04:27 Yeah. I'll give away all my sins to know thee... Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 04:31 Just tell me what to give up. I'll give it. I love it. Join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you

get your podcasts. We're with Dr. Eric Huntsman this week, walking through these pivotal chapters. You're going to love it. Then come back here next week, we'll do another followHIM Favorites.