



EPISODE 42

GUEST: ROSS BARON



"Ye Are the Children of the Covenant"

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:

Do you remember what Jesus taught on His second day in the Americas? Dr. Ross Baron illuminates the teachings, including Jesus's Gathering of Israel and God's love for all His children.

Part 2:

Dr. Ross Baron elucidates the profound lessons of Jesus's continued visit to the Americas and explores the attitudes to avoid regarding tithing, the Lord's love of children, and the testimony of Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon.

Timecodes:

Part 1:

- 00:00 Part I - Dr. Ross Baron
- 02:10 Ross Baron's bio
- 03:44 *Come, Follow Me* excerpt
- 04:46 3 Nephi 19:1-12 - Jesus's first day
- 07:15 Size of the multitude
- 09:24 3 Nephi 12 - Beatitudes
- 12:42 3 Nephi 19 - Praying to Jesus or the Father
- 13:48 3 Nephi 17:16-19 - "No eyes can see"
- 16:23 Matthew 13 - Lack of belief and prophetic words
- 19:41 The Savior teaches using Isaiah 52-54
- 22:00 Jesus's visit Day 2: A sacramental experience
- 24:18 3 Nephi 20:10-13 - They are the House of Israel and Micah
- 27:50 3 Nephi 20:18-22 - Harvest imagery
- 30:26 3 Nephi 20:29-1- Message about the Jews
- 32:52 The Gathering of Israel
- 36:21 The Lord remembers all His children
- 40:43 Why is the Gathering of Israel important to Jesus?
- 43:15 Two things that will happen in the temple
- 47:47 Only 1% of Jesus's visit
- 49:16 3 Nephi 20:32 - Isaiah 52 parallels
- 51:15 Dr. Baron shares a miraculous story involving a missionary
- 59:58 3 Nephi 21 - The Book of Mormon is a sign
- 1:03:38 3 Nephi 21:12-18 - A dividing to come
- 1:05:45 End of Part 1 - Dr. Ross Baron

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II - Dr. Ross Baron
- 00:07 Taking the Book of Mormon seriously
- 01:49 3 Nephi 22 - Isaiah 54
- 05:30 3 Nephi 22:14 - So beautiful it will make you weep
- 09:20 3 Nephi 22:13-17 - Parallels to D&C 109
- 11:12 3 Nephi 23:7-109 - Where is the writing of Samuel?
- 16:09 Recording our sacred moments
- 17:16 3 Nephi 24 - Malachi 3 parallels
- 19:49 D&C 84 - Refining fire
- 23:21 Dr. Baron shares a story about being a bishop
- 26:15 3 Nephi 24 and 3 Attitudes to avoid

- 30:18 Elder Ballard and Elder Packer address reporters
- 31:56 Attitude 2 to avoid
- 33:02 Attitude 3 to avoid
- 34:50 3 Nephi 9 and 3 Nephi 10 - Abiding the day
- 36:44 3 Nephi 25:1-5 - The proud will burn and Elijah will return
- 41:39 Dr. Barons shares family history with his Jewish family
- 45:55 3 Nephi 26:6-14 - Mormon confirms Jesus taught for days
- 48:11 3 Nephi 26:16 - Jesus and the children
- 50:07 3 Nephi 26:17-19 - The people see and hear the unspeakable
- 51:00 Dr. Baron shares his feelings about Jesus and the Book of Mormon
- 53:45 End of Part 2 - Dr. Ross Baron

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Biographical Information:



Ross Baron was born and raised in Southern California. He joined the Church when he was 18 and served a mission to Argentina, Buenos Aires South which was divided, and he then served in Argentina Bahia Blanca. When he returned home, he met, fell in love with, and married Kathleen Ann Bolton in the Los Angeles Temple.

Together they have nine children (five boys and four girls). Currently, they have eighteen grandchildren.

He received a bachelor’s degree from BYU-Provo in finance, a master’s degree, and a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California (USC) in Religion and Social Ethics.

Brother Baron was involved in business and entrepreneurship before he went to work as a full-time Institute Director CES Coordinator in Southern California at the Glendora and Claremont Institutes for the Church. After twelve years as an Institute Director and Coordinator, He came to teach at BYU-Idaho in the summer of 2005. In 2018, he and his family were invited to teach at the BYU Jerusalem Center as a visiting professor. They were there for one year, from 2018-2019. In 2023, He was invited to be a Visiting Teaching Professor at BYU Provo in the religion department.

He has served in the Church as a gospel doctrine teacher, a young men's president, a stake mission president, a counselor in a bishopric, a bishop, high counselor, member of a stake presidency, and a stake president.

Unique things He has done:

1. Swam across the San Francisco Bay for the Escape from Alcatraz triathlon.
2. Went on The Price is Right and won a stove, a mop, and a barrel sauna.
3. Went on the History Channel to represent the Church.
4. Participated in a radio show in Southern California where callers could ask me any question about the Church.
5. Played the drums with a group of institute students at the Hard Rock Café in Los Angeles.
6. Played the Drums at Guitars Unplugged at BYU Idaho in the Fall of 2005 and the Winter of 2006 (Our group made it to the "Best of" both semesters).
7. Played chess in the US Open Tournament in 1991 in Los Angeles.
8. Have spoken at Christian Colleges and Universities on the Church.
9. Led 6 Community Firesides about the Church where thousands attended. This is featured on the Website Fairlds.org

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3 Nephi 20-26 Part 1

GUEST: ROSS BARON



- Hank Smith: 00:00:03 Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. I'm your host, Hank Smith. I'm here with my great and marvelous co-host, John Bytheway. John, that's 3 Nephi 21:9. Great and marvelous work. That describes you, great and marvelous. We are going through 3 Nephi 20 through 26 today. This is the Savior's second day with the Nephites. What are you looking forward to? What comes to mind?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:29 When I saw the lesson plan, [3 Nephi 20 through 26](#), people will look at that and say, "Oh, these are the words of Jesus," but there's all this Old Testament in there. He's going to talk about Malachi. He's going to talk about Isaiah. He's going to talk about Micah. Even the prophecy of Joseph Smith sounds like in there. I'm really excited for Ross here because I would love some extra clarification on this part that comes from Micah. I'm really looking forward to that.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:54 John, Ross Baron has become a good friend of mine over the last few years. When we first had him on, I didn't know who he was. I said, "Who is this guy?" Since then, we have become fast friends. I've had many wonderful conversations through these last few years. Ross, what are we doing today?
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:01:11 These are some of the most textually deep chapters. And if we zoom out a little bit, we're talking about really the Savior in terms of his majesty and power in gathering his people. And when I say his people, I mean Gentiles, house of Israel, his people. And in some ways, day two is the Savior's exposition on how the Abrahamic covenant is actually going to be fulfilled.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:38 I'll ask a student, "Tell me about the Savior's visit to the Nephites," and they quote the first day, something that happened in 3 Nephi 11 through 18. Then I say, "Well, that was the first day. What do you think of the second day?" Not very many people quote that second day. They honestly don't know what's happened. Maybe one of the reasons is what you said, Ross, it's textually deep. It can be difficult. We're going to make

sure today that the second day is as wonderful as the first day in the minds of our listeners. Ross has been here before. John, if you could give us a quick introduction, that will be helpful.

- John Bytheway: 00:02:15 We're so glad he's back because that was a very memorable episode when we had Ross before. He was born and raised in Southern California. Joined the church at age 18, served a mission in Argentina. He and his wife have nine children and 18 grandchildren. He received a bachelor's degree from BYU and a master's and PhD from USC, University of Southern California, in religion and social ethics. Before he started teaching at BYU Provo, he was involved in business and entrepreneurship. Then he was an institute director in Southern California. Taught at BYU-Idaho.
- 00:02:54 Currently, he's in Utah serving in a YSA Bishopric. I love these points in his bio. He swam across San Francisco Bay for the Escape From Alcatraz Triathlon, not as an inmate but as a participant. He went on The Price Is Right and won a stove, a mop, and a barrel sauna. He went on the History Channel to represent the church. He was on a Southern California radio program where people could call in and ask any questions about the church. He's played the drums at Guitars Unplugged at BYU-Idaho. Their band made it to the best of. All sorts of fascinating. You're a well-rounded guy. You're playing the drums and you won a stove, a mop, and a barrel sauna.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:03:41 What's better than that?
- Hank Smith: 00:03:42 What could be better?
- 00:03:44 All right, Ross, let me read from the [Come, Follow Me manual](#) and let's have some fun. This is how it starts. It says, "When you hear people use terms like house of Israel, do you feel like they're talking about you? The Nephites and Lamanites were literal descendants of Israel, a branch of the tree of Israel, and yet they felt lost from its body." That's Alma 26. "But the Savior wanted them to know that they were not lost to him. 'Ye are of the House of Israel,' he said, 'and ye are of the covenant. He might say something similar to you today, for anyone who is baptized and make covenants with him is also of the house of Israel, of the covenant. In other words, when Jesus speaks of the house of Israel, he is talking about you. The instruction to bless all the kindreds of the earth is for you. The invitation to awake again and put on thy strength is for you. And his precious promise, 'My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed,' is for you.'" Ross, at least one of the lessons is reminding these people of Nephi who

they are and where they're from. With that, Ross, where do you want to start?

- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:04:46 What I'd like to do, even though the block is [3 Nephi 20](#) through 26, day two starts in 3 Nephi 19. 3 Nephi 11 through 18 is day one. We've had this incredible experience. And like you said, Hank, people will generally glom on to day one, remember what was said in day one. As soon as you hit 20, 21, and 22, it's pretty deep water. Let's briefly talk about 3 Nephi 19. I had an experience where Elder Holland visited our stake in Rexburg, Idaho. He took as his text 3 Nephi 19, but framed it with this. He talked about what do you do when Jesus says he's going to come back, but you don't know when, what would you do? He used 3 Nephi 19 as a template in a way to talk about the second coming. Use these verses where, number one, the 12 get together. They then divide the people and they teach.
- 00:05:44 Then in verse 9, "And they did pray for that which they most desired and they desired that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them." What do we do while we wait for Jesus for the second coming? We listen to the 12 and we pray for that which we most desire, which is the Holy Ghost. We then participate in ordinances. In this case, they're going to participate in baptisms. Then we're going to receive the Holy Ghost. It's going to encircle us as if it were by fire. All these things are preparatory to what's going to happen. And I think it's so interesting, at the end of verse 14, "Angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them." Verse 15, "And it came to pass while the angels were ministering unto them, the disciples, behold, Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them."
- 00:06:30 I love what Elder Holland did there. It's not in any General Conference talk. If anybody wants the reference for it, I can't give you the reference except that he talked about it in a stake conference. I loved the take he had on this. It's beautiful. Then there's something else that's going on here. The people are so overwhelmed. And, by the way, we should be clear, the multitude in 3 Nephi 11 through 18, at the end of verse 3 Nephi 17, it says, "There were 2,500 people." They have spent all night going to their friends, neighbors, family, begging them to come to day two. Can you imagine? You go to your family and say, "You're coming to day two." And they're, "I don't want to go to another meeting." "No, I'm going to knock you out and drag you. You're coming to this meeting."
- 00:07:15 Whatever multitude, we know 2,500 people day one. I have to imagine, I don't of course know, that it's got to be double or triple that, maybe more. We don't get the numbers for day two,

but we got them for day one. This is a massive multitude. The Savior shows up after angels are ministering. They've witnessed the 12 who have had fire encircle them after they were baptized. They got their prayer answered from verse 9. Then the Savior does something super interesting. He immediately kneels down and starts to pray. He thanks the Father that they've been given the Holy Ghost, but then verse 21, "Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words." That pattern continues, verse 23, "And now, Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me that we may be one."

00:08:10 And I know I'm going back a little bit, but in 3 Nephi 18 when they had the sacrament, which is very similar to the pattern that happened when he fed the 5,000. Feeding the 5,000, by the way, occurs in the Book of Matthew, the Book of Mark, the Book of Luke, and the Book of John. Not all things in the gospels, as we know, show up in all four books, so whenever they do, I take notice. The pattern is this. In 3 Nephi 18, Jesus talks to the Father as he blesses and breaks the bread. He then gives it to the disciples. The disciples then give it to the multitude. You see the pattern? I believe there's a temple pattern here as well.

00:08:48 The Father talks to the Son, the Son talks to the disciples, the disciples then distribute to the multitude. That's why Paul in Romans 10 verse 17 says, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." We're going to get that witness from somebody else. Joseph himself, Joseph Smith, is going to get it from James. James is going to bear witness to the soul of the prophet Joseph, the young boy Joseph. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." It's that witness by James that's going to motivate him to go into a grove and pray. I love the pattern that's going on here.

00:09:24 Again, repeated Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and then 3 Nephi 18. And then the Savior is now praying that they will believe their words, their words. I need to believe in the 12. By the way, the first beatitude, 3 Nephi 12, "Blessed are ye if ye will give heed unto the 12 whom I have chosen." That is the first beatitude at the temple sermon. That's amazing. That is so powerful. By the way, when he comes, he introduces himself in 3 Nephi 11, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ," then immediately says, "whom the prophets testified shall come into the world." Immediately upholds his prophets and apostles.

00:10:01 That's repeated again in verse 29, this idea that they will believe ... In 28, they're going to believe in their words. Then one other comment, "That I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me that we may be one." Sometimes we talk in the church about being united, about being one. But it begs the question, one or united in what? What are we united in? Football teams are united. You can have a club that's united. Wicked people can be united. We have to be ... And I think this is super important, Zion is one heart, one mind. We have to be one with Christ and with Christ's servants, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.

00:10:43 Hank and John, you and I could have different views on how to achieve different things. This would be beautiful that the three of us could be totally united in our love for Jesus Christ and his servants, the First Presidency and the Twelve, but still have diversity in the way in which we carry that out and still be united. That is critical. The idea that, "I may be in them as thou, Father, are in me, that we may be one," one in them, one in his servants. And I believe that's what's going on in these things that the Savior's doing with them in 3 Nephi 19, which is the beginning of day two.

Hank Smith: 00:11:19 The reality is that I would know nothing about Jesus if it were not for his called prophets and apostles. You might say, "Well, I can have access to Jesus anytime," but you wouldn't even know he exists without Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Joseph Smith, Paul. You would know nothing about him. So to say, "I can have access to the Lord without accepting them as prophets and apostles," is being double-minded, talking out of both sides of my mouth that, "Oh, I can accept Jesus without them," but the only way I know about Jesus is because of them.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:11:57 Amen. I love it.

Hank Smith: 00:11:58 Don't we see that in Chapter 19 in a way because the Savior isn't there when they all get there? It's the 12.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:12:05 It's the 12.

Hank Smith: 00:12:06 And maybe the Savior is holding back saying, "Let's see how you accept them. Then I will come."

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:12:12 That is beautiful, and that is exactly right. In fact, that's why I said he starts out 3 Nephi 11 with, "I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world," very first thing. Then 3 Nephi 12, the first beatitude is, "Blessed are ye if ye shall

give heed unto the 12." Then 3 Nephi 19, the 12 get baptized. They see the 12 encircled by the Holy Ghost. He upholds the 12 and then he prays that we'll believe on their words that we may be one. Yes, Hank, that's exactly what's going on. It's beautiful.

00:12:42 If I can do one other thing in 3 Nephi 19, my students always ask, "Brother Baron, they're praying to Jesus. We're not supposed to pray to Jesus." They start to pray to him. Verse 18, "And behold, they began to pray, and they did pray unto Jesus calling him their Lord, their God." And they're all like, "We don't get it." And you're not supposed to pray to the Savior. But if Jesus came, I think we'd be so overwhelmed we would tend to fall down and worship him. But I love what Jesus does. "And it came to pass that Jesus departed out of the midst." He goes out and he says, "Father." He deflects their prayer and he basically says, "They pray to me because I am with them," at the end of verse 22. He is super careful to deflect their prayers to him and immediately be the submissive Son. And remember, he's glorified, resurrected. This isn't the Jesus of mortality; this is now the glorified who sits on the right hand of God. But still always submissive, always grateful, and making sure that they understand the divine pattern.

00:13:48 At the end of 3 Nephi 17, if I might jump back quickly there, he prays there. The multitude are overcome. In verse 16, it says, "The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father. No tongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man, neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak." Why can't we utter those things? And I think there's a little insight here that's similar to what happens in 19. "No one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father."

00:14:28 I'm going to venture out and do a teeny bit of speculation here. We know that they had a one-by-one experience. We know that each one went and felt the nail prints in his hands and in his feet and thrust their hands into his side. We know that. Now they're saying, "We can't conceive of how much joy filled our hearts when he prayed for us." What if, what if, again, speculation, but what if while he was praying, Hank, you heard him praying for you? And John, you heard him praying for you? Very specifically, almost like a patriarchal blessing. And I heard him praying for me, and every single person in some God-like way in his time, what we didn't hear was a general prayer. We heard him pray for us and it melted our hearts as he knew us and prayed for us and strengthened us.

- 00:15:19 At the end of 19:32, "Tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed, neither can be written by man the words which he prayed." They're overcome. Then at the end of verse 35, "So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews, wherefore I could not show unto them." Show unto them. Show unto them what? He didn't do any miracles, not in 19. He hasn't raised anybody from the dead, not in 19. "So great miracles because of their unbelief." And I'm suggesting that something happens during this prayer that the Savior utters that is as miraculous as raising someone from the dead. That's what I'm suggesting. And that's how we start day two. This is our day two intro, which is absolutely incredible.
- John Bytheway: 00:16:05 What sticks out to me at the end of that verse, "I could not show unto them so great miracles because of their unbelief." It's like, "I wanted to, I was willing to, I was able to, but I could not because of their unbelief." We have other instances of that sort of a thing. He's not going to reward unbelief.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:16:23 In Matthew 13 at the end, he basically says exactly the same thing. Matthew records, "He couldn't do many miracles because of lack of faith." Lack of belief. We close the mouths of the prophets. The prophets can, obviously, speak the word of the Lord. But if we don't give heed, if we don't act, then they're not going to speak. That's what's going on there.
- Hank Smith: 00:16:43 Both of you, feel free to correct me here, but as we've been studying the Book of Mormon this year, one thing I've noticed is that the theology between God the Father and the Son is not as laid out as I thought it was. If you'd talk to one of these Nephites before Christ come, they might not have been able to articulate the theology that you and I have. So I can see them praying unto Jesus and Jesus understanding that saying, "They don't quite have the theology yet." Because after this, when you hear Mormon and Moroni teach, they teach the separation between the two, but there's not a lot of that before. If someone were to say, "Well, they pray to Jesus, why can't I pray to Jesus?", we're not in their same position.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:17:27 I think what you're saying is right on, Hank. 3 Nephi 20 and 3 Nephi 21, the Father is mentioned 20 times in 3 Nephi Chapter 20 and 19 times in 3 Nephi 21. That's the most in any chapter. To your point, he seems to be trying to make a very clear distinction now theologically about that. I think you have some really good evidence in these chapters. He'll even say when he introduces Malachi, "The Father commanded Malachi." He will say, "It was the Father who commanded Malachi. It is the Father's work. It is the Father's plan. I am going to carry out the

will of the Father as his beloved Son." But I think what you're saying is very accurate.

Hank Smith: 00:18:13 We have heard the term the Father before in the Book of Mormon, but oftentimes, it's referring to Jesus. Abinadi, he was referring to Jesus when he talked about the Father.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:18:22 In 2 Nephi 31, Nephi does hear the voice of the Father. There are some, but your point is it's not as clear theologically and I think it's not as clear theologically in the Old Testament as well. Students will always ask me, "Is this the Father or the Son?" And I say, "Kind of moot, not clear." It's not really anything they're thinking about.

Hank Smith: 00:18:43 Ross, as we head into these next few chapters, here you are. You grew up Jewish and then you read the Book of Mormon. You're hearing from Isaiah in the beginning of the book. You're probably pretty familiar. And then we get into Jacob, Mosiah, Alma, and we lose a lot of that Old Testament talk and then here we pick it up again. Was that a great moment?

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:19:05 Yeah, that's great. That's interesting what you're saying. I read the Book of Mormon really fast when I found out about it and they gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon. I was like [Parley P. Pratt](#), I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat. I was reading the Book of Mormon. It was in 3 Nephi when I had my experience with the Spirit. It was right in these chapters. Really interesting that you bring that up because this is where I had to stop reading. I was overwhelmed and I knew that it was the word of God. And it was in exactly these chapters.

00:19:41 That totally happened for me. Because you're right, 1 Nephi, going into 2 Nephi, has a very Hebraic structure in terms of syntax, grammar. And then the further you get away, it's less. And then all of a sudden, when the Savior shows up, it clicks back in, which is really cool. Now we're going to get more into Isaiah again and we're going to get this Old Testament flavor. And the Savior, like John mentioned, is he's going to use Isaiah 52, he's going to use Micah, he's going to use Isaiah 54, and he's going to weave them his own ways and he's going to interpret. It's remarkable. It really is remarkable. And there's a profound depth to it. That springboards us into 20 beautifully.

Hank Smith: 00:20:22 It seems to me that Nephi and Jacob remember, or in Jacob's case at least, he hasn't lived in Israel but he remembers hearing about it. And then after Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, King Benjamin, Alma the Elder, Alma the Younger, not a lot, if any, of the covenant Abraham, who we are or where we're from. Am I

stretching it to say maybe these people have forgotten or that topic of, this is who we are, this is the covenant. Has that been forgotten?

- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:21:02 I'm down with that.
- Hank Smith: 00:21:03 I wonder if when Jesus comes and he says, "You are my people, the house of Israel," I wonder if there's people there who go, "We're Nephites."
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:21:11 Yeah, we're Nephites.
- Hank Smith: 00:21:11 We're Nephites.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:21:11 Well, I think you've got this wrong.
- John Bytheway: 00:21:15 I've always felt like just the existence of the Isaiah chapters in the Book of Mormon is like Nephi going, "Listen, we lost our real estate, but we can't lose our identity. This is still who we are. The promises still apply to us, and the blessings still apply to us, and the burden still applies to us. We got to live like house of Israel." And I love how constantly Jesus is going to be telling them, "This is who you are. The day before I told them about you, you are my other sheep and I'm going to bring you also." And scriptures keep reminding them of that, because not it's just who you are, but there's the blessing and the burden of being Abrahamic covenant and what goes along with that.
- Hank Smith: 00:21:55 I think so. That's beautiful. That's great. Well said.
- 00:21:58 Okay, Ross, what do you want to do?
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:22:00 Again, zoom out for a minute. I actually think 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 are going to be the most in-depth and it's the Savior teaching. Gathering of Israel, fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. And it dovetails, I believe, perfectly with what [President Nelson](#) said in 2018 when he spoke about the hope of Israel. "The Lord is hastening his work to gather Israel." Like what you said, Hank. Maybe a lot of young people are like, "We hear that, we don't know what that means." No. The Lord is hastening his work to gather Israel. That gathering is the most important thing taking place on earth today. Nothing else compares in magnitude. Nothing else compares in importance. Nothing else compares in majesty." To me, day two is that. We are now going to talk about that. What I love about the Savior, before we have this long discourse, we're going to eat. And we're going to have another sacrament experience. We're going

to have another covenantal experience. We've lost it a little bit in our culture, and that is when you eat with somebody, and this is big in the Middle East, you are at one with them.

00:23:17 So if somebody saw John and I eating together, subconsciously, they automatically know we're friends. Yeah, those guys are friends. They eat together. What Jesus does at the end of 3 Nephi 18, day one, he eats with them. Shows up 3 Nephi 19, he's going to have these experiences we've talked about. We're going to then have another sacramental experience and we're going to eat together. Day one, we have a sacrament. Day two, we have a sacrament. And then he says, and I love this, verse 9, "Now when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit, were one with Jesus, they did cry out with one voice." I want to think you cry out with one voice in song. We all sing with one voice and gave glory to Jesus whom they both saw and heard. And then now the Savior says, "Behold, now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people." I've been reading [3 Nephi 20](#) and 21 for decades and I've been trying to understand these chapters.

00:24:18 I'm going to give you a frame, and I don't want the frame to be so tight that we can't have some movement, but the frame is the following. Verse 10, like I read, "Behold now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning," and I want you to highlight or circle or think about or write, "this people who are a remnant of the house of Israel." When the Savior says, "This people," he's referring to the people of Lehi, all the people that intersected with them, like Mulekites, et cetera. But we're talking Ishmael's family, this people. And then he uses the indefinite article, a remnant of the house of Israel. This is critical. Then he talks about Isaiah. Then he says, verse 12, "And verily, verily I say unto you that when they shall be fulfilled," the prophecies of Isaiah, "then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel." Second category. It's now general. His people, O house of Israel. When Jesus talks about his people, he's not talking specifically about Lehi people or Jews. He's talking about the other tribes of the house of Israel. We okay so far?

00:25:30 Verse 13, "And then shall the remnants," again, that's his people, O house of Israel, "which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east, from the west, from the south, from the north, and they shall be," most importantly, that was me adding that, "brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God who hath redeemed them."

We're going to now know about Jesus Christ, we're going to know about what he's done, and we're going to be invited to unite ourselves with him through the doctrine of Christ. Verse 14, "And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you," this people, "this land." Now, next group, third group. "And I say unto you that if the Gentiles," okay, that's our next group, so we've got this people, we've got his people, we've got Gentiles, "do not repent after they have the blessing which they shall receive after they have scattered my people," Jews. Four groups, this people, people of Lehi. His people, O house of Israel, general, Gentiles and my people.

00:26:35 Here comes the Micah prophecy. He's going to then use Micah Chapter 5 verses 8, then Micah verse 17, then Micah Chapter 5 verse 9. Then he'll go in verse 18, Micah Chapter 4 verse 12 and verse 19 is Micah Chapter 4 verse 13. The Savior ... I love how he can use Scripture. He's going to weave the Scripture. He's going to liken Scripture. "Then shall ye," I think he's talking about the Lehi people, the people of Joseph, "who are a remnant of the house of Jacob shall go forth among them," Gentiles, "and ye," Lehi people, "shall be in the midst of them," Gentiles, "who shall be many, and ye shall be among them."

00:27:15 And then here's the simile. "You're going to be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest," and then paralleled with that, "as a young lion among the flocks of the sheep." So you've got lion and young lion, beasts of the forest and flocks of sheep. "Who," this lion or young lion, "if he goeth through," either beasts of the forest or flocks of sheep, "will tread down and tear in pieces, none can deliver." What people get concerned about is, is this a prophecy about Lamanites raising up and using violence? And I think that is not correct and I'll tell you why.

00:27:50 Verse 18, "I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor." The context here is the idea of a harvest. It's a gathering. What's going on is we are gathering. Now, look at the Micah prophecy in verse 19. "For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted. Yea, I'll make thy horn iron." A horn, Old Testament, keren is the Hebrew word, is symbolic for strength and power. "I will make thy horn iron." Which will go to Isaiah 52 where he talks about putting on thy strength O Zion, which in section 113, the Lord revealed that means putting on the power of the priesthood. To do what? Not to do violence. To gather people to Jesus Christ.

00:28:41 And, by the way, in Deuteronomy Chapter 33 verse 17, do you remember the blessing upon Joseph? The wild bullock with his horns will do what? Push the people back to Christ. What are

we doing in 19? I will make thy horn iron. In other words, you're going to put on the power of the priesthood. "I will make thy hooves brass," the direction that you go. "And thou shalt beat in pieces many people." The phrasing beat in pieces in the Hebrew is the idea of threshing. Again, we're talking harvest metaphors here. We're going to thresh, we're going to gather. And what are we going to do when we gather? We're going to consecrate their gain unto the Lord, their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. "Behold I, Jesus, am he who doeth it."

00:29:25 What we've got in these Micah prophecies about Joseph in the latter days, both Lamanites and the people at Ephraim and Manasseh who are gathering the people from all four corners of the earth with the power of the priesthood, they are bringing the people and then consecrating all the diversity of gifts to gathering them to Jesus Christ.

John Bytheway: 00:29:46 First of all, I love how you helped us see these different groups he's addressing because, Hank, was it Scott Woodward that talked about the different audiences of the Book of Mormon? It was the remnant, who is this book, children of Lehi, right? It's the house of Israel. It's also written to the Gentiles. Those three are boom, boom, boom. Jesus addressed those three right here.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:30:11 And I would add a fourth.

John Bytheway: 00:30:12 Yeah, you added the fourth, of my people.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:30:15 My people. Jesus will constantly say through the Doctrine & Covenants, through the Scriptures, "I came unto mine own and mine own received me not." When he talks about my people ... Can I jump to verse 29? Verse 29, "And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in my own due time. That I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem," clearly, we're not talking about Lehi's people anymore, "which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father. And it shall come to pass that the time cometh when the fullness of my gospel shall be preached unto them," the Jews, "and they shall believe in me that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name." This goes to Hank's point. Now they're going to have an understanding of how to bridge the gap, of how to actually understand the true nature of God, his Son, to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. I'm suggesting 29 through 31 is specific not to the house of Israel in general, not to Lehi's clan, not to Gentiles, but to Jews.

John Bytheway: 00:31:28 The Jews are his “my people”.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:31:30 My people.

John Bytheway: 00:31:31 In verse 18 and in verse 29.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:31:34 29, 30, and 31.

John Bytheway: 00:31:35 Those that he visited.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:31:38 Those are my people. And, by the way, Jesus is from the house of Judah. That would make sense to me that my people would be the people of the house of Judah. Now sometimes the Savior will say, "My people, O house of Israel." That's a nuance to slide a bit away from my specific designation. And then if you go to the last verse of [3 Nephi 20](#), "Verily, verily, I say unto you," I'm in verse 46, "all these things shall surely come even as the Father hath commanded me. Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people," notice this now, this is super important, "the Father which hath covenanted with his people," the house of Israel in general, "and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance."

00:32:24 Wow. I'm pretty excited about it. In other words, I really think that if somebody is listening to this right now and wants to have an amazing experience, and you made four columns, and you said this people, his people, my people, and Gentiles, and then that's how you frame 3 Nephi 20, 21, 22, and then you said the blessings that he's giving to each one of them, it'll open the chapters to you. It'll open the chapters to you.

Hank Smith: 00:32:52 Ross, let's do something real quick because I know there are listeners out there saying, "Man, I wish I had a better grasp of this." When we talk about the gathering of Israel, isn't it pretty crucial that we have at least a basic understanding of the scattering? Because we say, "Oh, God made a promise, the Father made a promise, Jesus made a promise with ancient Israel that he would gather them. Well, why didn't he keep them together in the first place?" Those of you who are listening, if you want an in-depth version, John and I did this with Dr. Shon Hopkin way back in [Episode 9](#) on 2 Nephi 11 through 19. If you remember that, John, we went and did a, "Let's start at Abraham and go all the way up." But Ross, can you give us ... I don't know how quick you can do a summary, but it starts way back in Genesis with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God says, "You're going to be my people that's going to

bless the whole earth." You're not my special people that I only love, it's, "You're the people I'm going to use to bless all the families of the earth."

- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:33:48 Right on. Let me do it as quick as I can. First off, I like to say that Exodus 19 when he says, "I'm going to make my people a holy people," that's plan A. It's not just a particular tribe gets the priesthood. It's that we become a kingdom of priests and priestesses, kings and queens. And what's the purpose of that? To be fanned on a chair and to be fed grapes? No, it's to waste and wear our lives out to bring people to Jesus Christ. It's literally to serve humanity. That's what the whole idea of being chosen is. But then I call it the second fall. In Exodus 32, people worship a golden calf, are riotous, and then Moses is upset, God's upset. That's the second fall. The Abrahamic covenant, we always talk about four blessings. We'll say, "Oh, Abraham got the blessing of land. He got posterity. He got the ministry. And he got the fullness of the gospel." Awesome. And then I always say, "With those blessings come corresponding responsibilities." You cannot talk about the blessings of Abraham without talking about corresponding responsibilities.
- 00:34:55 The four corresponding responsibilities, as I dovetail it, to work in with the latter days, is that we have to live the gospel. That is, we have to keep the commandments. And God knew that Abraham would. In Genesis 17, he says, "I know you, and I know you will live the gospel." Number two, we got to care for those in need. Number three, we have to unite families for eternity. And number four, we have to invite all to come unto Christ. Here's how you understand the Old Testament. Here's how you understand the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. If you stop living the gospel, caring for those in need, uniting families for eternity, and preaching the gospel, then you lose all of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then hence you are thenceforth, quoting Jesus, "good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men".
- 00:35:43 You are then scattered, but the scattering always serves a purpose. God doesn't do anything, [2 Nephi 26:24](#), "Save it be for the benefit of the children of men." His scattering is then to allow them to be in a position where we can have the earth blessed to the degree we can and then we'll bring them back, but bringing them back is less about bringing them back to a particular place, although there is that aspect, but more about bringing them back into the fullness of the gospel covenant.
- 00:36:12 Again, if you want understand the Old Testament and you understood it in terms of the Abrahamic covenant, blessings

and responsibilities, then you understand the scattering of Israel.

- Hank Smith: 00:36:21 Yeah. When we talk scattering, are we talking about a scattering or a scattering in general? Because when Israel comes back to the promised land under Joshua, they're there. We're ready to be the people. We're ready to be holy. We're ready to bless the earth and then we choose kings. We don't want Jehovah. We want a king and Jehovah, through Isaiah and others, says, "You're going to be scattered, but one day, one day, I will bring you back. I will gather you together again." Is that the verse 29? I will remember the covenant which I have made, the one that I made back when Isaiah was alive.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:36:55 Yep. This is why it connects to what [President Nelson](#) said, this part of the time we live on the earth is the time of the ultimate fulfilling of the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In fact, no prophet quotes [1 Nephi 15](#) more than President Nelson when he says that the promises that Abraham got will be fulfilled in the latter days. There were others, some gatherings together, we worked on it, but it's really now that we're actually completely fulfilling or going to completely fulfill these particular promises. Love that. I hope that was helpful.
- Hank Smith: 00:37:34 I think it was.
- John Bytheway: 00:37:35 Absolutely. And I'm looking at the very fact that Jesus quoted the Abrahamic covenant in 3 Nephi 20 verse 27, "After you were blessed then fulfilleth the Father the covenant which he made with Abraham saying," as we go, would you say this is the first time it's been spoken in the Bible anyway, Genesis 12 is the footnote there?
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:37:56 Yep.
- John Bytheway: 00:37:56 In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. I always like to say, what is the greatest blessing we can offer each other, our brothers and sisters in the world? It's down the street at the temple to gather families together.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:13 Agreed. This gathering, Ross, that Jesus is talking about, this is the same gathering that Nephi was looking forward to.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:38:20 1 Nephi 22. Exactly.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:22 Nephi was saying, "One day, one day, it's going to happen," and Jesus comes and says, "One day, we're closer now. We're 600

years closer. It's still a ways off, but one day, I will gather you together again." I loved our episode with [Dr. Josh Sears](#), John, if you remember, when we talked about the apostasy. And he said frequently ... We talked about the apostasy as a loss of the New Testament church. He said he wanted us to think of it a little differently, the apostasy, as the loss of the covenant. No one's talking about the covenant. After Jesus, you don't hear much about the covenant of Israel until Moroni comes to Joseph Smith and starts quoting all these Old Testament prophecies. He doesn't quote New Testament books. He quotes Old Testament books. Don't think of the apostasy as Jesus came, in the New Testament, established his church. It's gone. We're going to bring it back. Think of it as the covenant that was given to Abraham. What did he call it, John, a covenant consciousness is off of the earth.

- John Bytheway: 00:39:19 Yeah. First time I heard that phrase from [Dr. Robert Millet](#) that we've had on the podcast who talks about we seem to have a lack of covenant consciousness and I've even heard him say that the restoration of the gospel was in fact a restoration of covenants. [Joseph Fielding McConkie](#), I remember, saying that sometimes we talk about the New Testament church. He said, "Who came back, John the Baptist, to restore what?" Aaronic priesthood. Aaron. Oh, that's Old Testament. Peter, James, and John came to do what? Restore Melchizedek priesthood. Oh, that's Old Testament. And then he would say, "This is the old-time religion."
- Hank Smith: 00:39:54 That's awesome.
- John Bytheway: 00:39:55 And here we are looking at Jesus talking about Abraham and Micah and here comes Isaiah in a minute and Malachi.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:03 Yeah. If we have any listeners out there who are going, "Man, I wish I could understand the scattering more," go back to our [episodes](#) there in 2 Nephi. We really tried to lay that out for our listeners.
- John Bytheway: 00:40:15 The scattering and gathering has an order. First, you get scattered in your testimony. I call it first you're scatterbrained and then you'll lose your real estate. Now how do you get gathered? You get gathered in your heart and mind to Christ. Today, you gather to stakes of Zion physically. It's spiritual, then it becomes physical, and then to be gathered again, it's also spiritual first and then becomes physical.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:40 I like that.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:40:42 I think that's well said.

Hank Smith: 00:40:43 Let me ask you another question, Ross, before I let you move on. And that is, why is this gathering so important to Jesus? We're talking Genesis Chapter 12. Let's move on. He made a promise, right? He chose a family. By the end of the Old Testament, you're thinking, "Get a new family." This is not the family you want. They can't do it. But would you say that this is so important to him because he made a promise a couple of millennia ago and he intends on keeping it?

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:41:11 Yeah. I would even suggest that the promise pierces the veil into pre-mortality. I would suggest that these are the noble and great ones and that this promise is a promise made before this world and then reenthroned in this world and that the expectation and requirement is that it be carried out. When we say why the gathering, the Prophet Joseph said, "The object of the gathering is to build a temple." That's the object. Now we can be gathered to stakes and be close to temples. We don't have to go necessarily to a particular place anymore because wherever we are now gathered in a stake, if we're close enough to a temple, we're gathered.

00:41:52 We can now completely fulfill the Abrahamic covenant in a way that could never have been fulfilled in the entire history of the earth because now what can we do? We can carry out our Abrahamic responsibilities, caring for those in need, fully living the gospel in our own lives, preaching the gospel, inviting all to come into Christ, and uniting families for eternity in holy temples. This idea of why the gathering, we're not just some church that we're going to do humanitarian aid, which is great. We're going to do the work for the salvation and exaltation of every single one of God's children.

Hank Smith: 00:42:33 Don't forget the mission statement. This is my work and my glory, to exalt my children. This is the end goal. This is what I'm after.

John Bytheway: 00:42:42 I want to read the [Joseph Smith](#) statement because I brought it today because I love it so much. This is Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith page 308. What was the object of gathering the Jews or the people of God in any age of the world? The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby he could reveal unto his people the ordinances of his house and the glories of his kingdom and teach the people the way of salvation. For there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:43:15 On your quote from the Prophet Joseph, which goes with and connects to the Isaiah Chapter 2, 2 Nephi 12, and Micah prophecies about in the latter days, a temple shall be built, the house of the Lord shall be built in the top of the mountains. It says two things are going to happen in that temple. It says, number one, "We're going to walk in his ways," and number two, "We're going to be taught his truth in the temple." I always like to ask my classes, how is that different than what we do in church? I go to church, I'm taught his ways.

00:43:44 I go to church, I mean I'm walking in his paths. How is the temple walking in temple paths different than going to church and how it's being taught there different? If we could explore that for one second because you brought up the Joseph, what we're going to be taught, the ways of salvation. I would say this, when I go to the temple, once I've gone for myself, now I go do proxy work for others and I'm doing vicarious work, I am literally walking in his paths. I am not metaphorically doing it. I'm a little s, savior, Obadiah verse 21, on Mount Zion as I walk in his paths, as I am there for that person and I am performing something that they couldn't do for themselves, which you cannot do in church and I can't do it in a soup kitchen. I can't do it anywhere but in the house of the Lord.

00:44:35 Number two, I'm taught His ways and I love to talk about the temple, what we wear, the media we listen to, the interaction between people, how we speak to each other, what the purpose and intent is. These are the ways of the Lord. It's different than the world. It is not of this world. Whenever I draw the diagram of Moses' tabernacle that he got by revelation in Exodus, I always say, "Why is the holy of holies, the temple proper, has zero boundary with the world?" Have you guys noticed that? The tent around it creates massive space between the tabernacle temple itself and the outer curtain because there's no touching. The temple itself is not of this world. There's no border. I find that absolutely amazing. When you said the object is so we can be taught the ways of salvation, we are being taught literally the ways of God and we get the opportunity to imitate him, and the more we imitate him, the more we become like him.

John Bytheway: 00:45:36 I love that. We're going for someone else. I can't do that at sacrament meeting. I can't take the sacrament for someone else, but boy, in the temple, I can do things for my family that have gone before.

Hank Smith: 00:45:50 Yeah, like the Atonement was proxy work for someone else. I am walking in his past. I am doing proxy work for someone else.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:45:58 We're talking literally go and do vicarious work for other people in imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ and that enables me to become more like him in no other way. When the Isaiah 2 prophecy, Isaiah says, "It shall come to pass in the last days," he doesn't even bring up chapels. And I always like to say Joseph Smith never built a chapel in his entire life. He never did, not interested. Not that they're not important, don't get me wrong, but he built temples. Isaiah, boom, he sees the temple. Isaiah then says, "I see Zion," where the Lord is going to go forth from Zion. Then he sees the second coming, then he sees the millennium. And I always like to say, "No temple, no Zion, no Zion, no second coming, no second coming, no millennium." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has God's temple which allows us then to create Zion. We cannot create Zion actually without a temple. There's no way. We can't be fully united with Jesus Christ and the Father and his servants without a temple.

Hank Smith: 00:47:03 Ross, you've opened that up to John and I. It's not just a temple we go to. It's a temple we go to and we literally become a savior on Mount Zion. It's lowercase, like you said, a savior.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:47:15 Yep. You do something in the temple that you cannot do anywhere else and we learn his ways there. We learn his ways there. There's a spirit and a glow and the interaction in the temple, the way we speak to each other, how we treat each other, it's transcendent.

Hank Smith: 00:47:37 There might be those listening who think this is dense material. One thing I would keep in mind is that Mormon says later, "I'm giving you 1% of what Jesus said."

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:47:50 That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:47:50 If Mormon decided of the things that I have that Jesus said, this is part of the 1% that I'm going to give, don't give up on it because it stretches you a little bit. Keep digging, keep looking.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:48:04 Yeah. I love what you just said and I think that's 100% true. I always like to challenge a student or a friend to say, "Take 3 Nephi 20, no distractions. Take a half hour, read through it, make notes." You're going to feel the Spirit. And you know what? You're going to get a witness that Jesus is the Christ and that Joseph Smith's a prophet. That's what's going to happen when you take the time to seriously study this. That's where this is at.

Hank Smith: 00:48:30 I agree with you. Ross, I think in 3 Nephi 20, it's hard to recognize those Micah references because they're not marked like the Isaiah and Malachi ones.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:48:39 And Jesus never says, and Micah said.

Hank Smith: 00:48:41 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:48:42 Yeah, it sounds like some really bad day at the zoo. You've got lions running around and sheep tearing things apart. What do we do with that?

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:48:52 Right, right.

John Bytheway: 00:48:53 We appreciate you bringing that down a little bit.

Dr. Ross Baron: 00:48:55 I would hope that within what the Savior is saying, we're talking about harvesting and gathering his people, and if we, again, frame it with a Deuteronomy Chapter 33, what does Joseph, the wild bullock, have? He has horns. And what does he do with those horns? He's not goring people. He's pushing them back to the Savior. That's the idea and it's the power of the priesthood, which then connects, if I may, in 3 Nephi 20 and starting in verse 32, he's going to start quoting Isaiah 52 again. This prophecy that Abinadi quoted at length, "The father hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the earth." What does that mean? 1 Nephi 22, he is going to bring his covenant back. That's how he makes bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations. "And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Father and the Father and I are one."

00:49:48 Hank, going back to your point about he is now making some very specific distinctions between he and the Father. All the earth shall see the salvation of the Father. It's the Father's plan. [Preach My Gospel](#) missionaries are really good that it is the Father's plan and that Jesus came to fulfill all the terms and conditions of the Father's plan. Verse 36, "And then shall be brought to pass that which is written. Awake, awake again, put on thy strength, O Zion." Now we're not talking about Jews anymore. O Zion. "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." Now we are talking about Jews. In section 113, the Prophet Joseph Smith does a Q&A. What does it mean to put on thy strength? Hold the power of the priesthood, put on the authority of the priesthood. Verse 37, shake thyself from the dust, arise, sit down, O Jerusalem, loose thyself from the bands of thy neck." Again, section 113, return to the Lord, and the curses of God that are upon Israel in their scattered condition.

00:50:50

And, John, I love what you said, scattered mind and heart, scattered physically. This is them in their scattered condition. And then the prophet Joseph says, "If they will, in fact, loose the bands of the neck and put on the strength of Zion, then God will speak to them," which is verse 39, 40, 41. We will get revelation, to gather Israel, to care about the one. I was wondering if I could share a story that happened to me when I was a bishop about a particular missionary. I was serving as a bishop in Southern California. I'd sent about 20-plus missionaries out. We got word that one of the missionaries, no one could find him on the mission. No one knew. They didn't know if he was dead, alive. They didn't ... No one knew. And you can imagine how distressing that would be to the ward, to the family, to the mom, to the dad, and, of course, it was. About two weeks go by, nothing. We don't know one thing. The missionary department's upset. You can imagine, it was a Sunday evening. I was at church. The meeting ended. I was going to my bishop's office and I got a very distinct impression, go get the missionary. I know priesthood government pretty well. A bishop has nothing to do with missionaries. That's a mission president. The mission president has the priesthood keys for the mission.

00:52:10

I go to my stake president and my stake president was a man named Robert Reeves, who's one of the most amazing men. I said, "President, can I share with you something?" I said, "I just got this impression that I'm supposed to go get this missionary." And he pauses and he looks down, he had a deep voice, he says, "Ross, this is of God." I go, "Good, glad to hear it." He goes, "But let's call the missionary department." We call the missionary department. Missionary department, of course, knows about this missionary and the missionary department says, "President," he said, "if you approve it, we feel good about it, but call the mission president." They're three hours ahead of us. It was probably 8:00 at night. We called the mission president, told him we talked to the missionary department, and the mission president said, "I am 100% in favor of you coming out here. If you want to do that, you have my blessing."

00:52:59

Now I tell that part of the story so that you don't think I'm some Jason Bourne maverick Bishop running around the church. In other words, I think it's important to hear that every single priesthood key holder was in line. I called my counselor, James Wilkinson, he was my second counselor, and I said, "James, this is what's going on. I need you to book some flights." He calls me back half hour later and he says, "We're booked out of Ontario Airport in Southern California to this particular place. We're leaving at noon on Monday." I was like, "Great." We get in the

plane, we're flying. He leans over to me and he says, "Bishop, what are we doing?" And I said, "I don't know." And he goes, "Not very comforting." So we land. Mission president picked us up, drove us to the mission home, gave me keys to a mission car, a mission cellphone and a map, and said, "God bless," and then drove away. And it was James and I in a foreign state that I've never been in with a map, a cellphone, and keys.

- Hank Smith: 00:54:03 Ross, no one had heard from this missionary.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:54:06 No one. Now it's two and a half weeks, going on three weeks. I said, "James, we need to pray, brother." We drove and then we pulled off to the side of the road and we actually put the map on the dash. And we pled with the Lord. We got done and we both stared at the map and we both had this impression. God gave us an impression, "You should go to this town," two and a half hours away. Now it's about 7:30, 8:00 at night already in this foreign state. We drive. We get to this little town, it's now 10:00, 10:30 at night, dark. We get there and we pray. Impression, walk around the town. It's a little town.
- 00:54:49 So I go, "James," he goes, "I know." We get out of the car, we just start walking around. We get to this one street and we're walking down the street and I had this church video moment. I stop dead in my tracks and I go, "He's in that house right there." And James goes, "Are you sure?" I said, "Yep, he's in that house right there." We go, we knock on the door. It's 10:30, quarter to 11:00. This woman answers the door and I said, "Hi, my name is Bishop Baron and this is James Wilkinson and we're here for Elder so-and-so." And she goes, "I knew you'd come," and she slams the door. And James looks at me and I'm like, "Whoa, whoa," okay.
- 00:55:29 And probably 15, 30 seconds pass, the door opens. There's the missionary. Eyes, huge, "Bishop Baron, James, what are you doing here?" I said, "Get out here on the porch." I said, "I don't know what you've done or what's going on, but the Lord sent us here and you're coming back with us." Lots of crying, weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth. Two and a half hours later, he's in the car with all his luggage and we're driving back to the mission home. And the mission president said, "No matter what time it is, if you find him, you call me."
- 00:56:04 Now it's like 2:00, 2:30 in the morning. We got another two-hour drive. I call the mission president, I got to say something I wanted to say my entire life. I said, "President, the eagle has landed." We get back to the mission home. We have a flight booked like at 8:30 or 9:00. The mission president gets up, we

eat together, he talks to the missionary. We get back on the plane, we fly back. We land back Tuesday at 1:00. Sunday night, the impression came. Monday, we left. Tuesday, we had the missionary back. God spoke to his servants, his weak servants, imperfect servants. Why? Because he loves one missionary and because he cared about that one missionary and that family and those parents who were crying and weeping for their son. That's the gathering.

- Hank Smith: 00:56:55 That's how the gathering is going to work. Plan on it.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:56:58 He's going to give his servants, both sisters and elders, men and women who serve in the kingdom, revelation to find the one. Every time I tell the story, I think, "How could that have happened?" That's impossible. It's absolutely impossible. That doesn't happen.
- Hank Smith: 00:57:16 Isn't that verse 39? They shall know that I am he that doth speak.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:57:22 That's right. The Lord directed us at every step of the way. Every time I acted, I got more light. Every time I acted, we got more light. And I want to say about my counselor, James Wilkinson, who dropped everything because I called him and said, "Hey, we're going to go," and he said, "Yep, done. Done."
- Hank Smith: 00:57:44 And I'm guessing the family said, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings."
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:57:53 And, by the way, verse 40 ultimately about Christ, but we know verse 40 is also about anybody who publishes salvation and peace and says, "Good tidings of good." It's a powerful story about the Savior and what he does with those who were willing to listen and willing to act.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:13 What I love about that, Ross, is you experienced it. What's your favorite quotation, Hank, that I think you said?
- Hank Smith: 00:58:22 A person with an experience is never at the mercy of a person with an opinion.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:28 I've loved this. What have we done so far? 3 Nephi 19. This is Jesus's second day. 3 Nephi 19, what was one sentence for that? Listen to their words. Listen to these prophets that I've called. 3 Nephi 20, these different audiences that you talked about in the gathering, that was the remnant and the house of

Israel and the Gentiles and my people. Sort those out as you go through that and as you read this, am I on track?

- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:58:57 And the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.
- John Bytheway: 00:59:00 We're going to bless all the families of the earth and we've got to gather to do that and then we're coming into 21.
- Hank Smith: 00:59:06 Ross, we're not talking about the Lord starting the gathering here in [3 Nephi 20](#). No, this is a future gathering that he's telling them about which should clue you into why Mormon put it in the book.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:59:18 Exactly. And if I may, still in 3 Nephi 20, if you go and he says, starting in 43 talking about the Savior, "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. As many were astonished at thee, his visage was so marred more than any man," referring back to Isaiah 53, "his form more than the sons of men." This is all Isaiah 52, by the way. "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Now, on sprinkle, you might want to make a note that in the Joseph Smith translation for Isaiah 52 there, it's, "So shall he gather many nations." Sprinkle is gather. I think that's the really important thing.
- 00:59:58 Then we move into 3 Nephi 21 and I love that we're going to get a sign. Verily, I say unto you," verse 1, "I give unto you a sign so that you're going to know when," this is your point, Hank, this is a future thing. I'm giving unto you guys a sign. When the Gentiles bring forth this book, you're going to know what's going on. What is the sign going to be? The sign is going to be the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. What I'd like to do here is connect this concept of sign. All through time, the Lord gives signs. There's those who think, "If I see a sign, I'll believe," and then there's the God process, which is, "If I believe, then signs follow." That's Mark 16.
- 01:00:43 In the case of this, when Jesus shows up in 3 Nephi 11, I'm backtracking a little bit to give it some context, they hear the voice of the Father, they hear the voice of the Son as he introduces himself. The people throw themselves down on the ground, but that's not good enough. He requires them to come forth and feel the nail prints in his hands and in his feet because those are the tokens and signs so that they'll know that he is the true messenger of the Father and they cannot be deceived. They will have felt the nail prints. It's not a spirit like in Luke Chapter 24, 36 through 39, they thought they had seen a spirit, but he said, "Handle me and see for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." That was their sign.

- 01:01:28 Then he's saying, "Okay, latter days, we're going to start to gather Israel again. We're going to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant. It's going to be fulfilled." How are you going to know? I'm going to bring forth the Book of Mormon. I'm going to bring forth this text, that will be a sign unto you. I served in Argentina and what we do is we go and we talk to people. Every single person wants to know, how do we know you are true messengers? And what do we say? We're going to give unto you a sign that's going to allow you to know that we and Joseph are true messengers, and that's the sign, that's the Book of Mormon, which is palpable and they can have that experience with God.
- 01:02:09 I personally think that is one of the most exciting things and that's why every prophet emphasizes that the tool of the gathering is the Book of Mormon because it allows us to answer that question, what's the greatest evidence that Joseph Smith saw the Father and the Son in the sacred grove? The truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. That is the greatest evidence. This idea of a sign, show me a sign, is us being able to say, "Okay, here is the Book of Mormon verse 7, "And when these things come," I'm in Chapter 21, "that thy seed shall begin to know these things, it shall be a sign unto them that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant, which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel," all over.
- 01:02:52 And then it immediately talks about what you talked about when you called, John, your marvelous horse in verse 9. And then verse 10, "But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand." Who we talking about? The Prophet Joseph. "Therefore, they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them." The end of 20, we were talking about the Savior. Now we're talking about the servant in the latter days, who will be an instrument in the hands of God. Verse 11, "Therefore, it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him," Joseph, "to bring forth unto the Gentiles and shall give unto him," Joseph, "power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles. They shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant."
- 01:03:38 So the whole people. Then from verse 12 to verse 18, he will quote Micah again, essentially saying similar things. We're going to gather. It's going to be a threshing. It's going to be a dividing. Not a violent dividing, but a dividing of those who will come into the fold and who will allow themselves to hear the word of God. But be clear. He will, among the Gentiles, cut off their horses,

their chariots, their cities, their strongholds, their witchcrafts, their soothsayers, their graven images, their standing images, the works, their hands, their groves, and their cities so that all deceivings, lyings, envyings, strifes, crafts, and whoredoms will be done away.

01:04:20 Now, that's not going to 100% happen, of course, until the second coming in the millennium, but the work of the gathering is this process of gathering and sifting and him, going back to 3 Nephi 20, gathering his sheaves unto the floor. This 3 Nephi 21 is this powerful chapter about that going on and about him gathering his people again and commencing the work of the Father. 21 follows 20 in a powerful way but adds to the idea of the various people being gathered in.

Hank Smith: 01:04:52 And the Book of Mormon being the tool.



3 Nephi 20-26 Part 2

GUEST: ROSS BARON



- John Bytheway: 00:00 Welcome to part two with Dr. Ross Barron 3 Nephi 20 to 26.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 Let me tell you both [a story](#). I had a conversation with a member of the Twelve years ago. They don't frequently reach out to me, but this was a conversation I had. We were with a small group of missionaries who had yet to go serve and they said, "What advice do you have?" He said, "Number one, please don't do dumb things. You represent the church. When you do dumb things, you can really set the church back." And then he said something I had never heard. "The second piece of advice I can give you is that if someone is not taking the Book of Mormon seriously, they're not ready and you can move on." The more I read the Book of Mormon, especially this chapter or chapter 21, the more I understand that, that it will speak to someone, the book will speak to them.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 00:53 Yep. Can I quote [President Nelson](#)? This is then Elder Nelson. This is from the October 2010 General Conference. He said, "Many years ago, two colleagues of mine, a nurse and her doctor husband, asked me why I live the way I did. I answered, 'Because I know the Book of Mormon is true.' I let them borrow my copy of the book and invited them to read it. A week later, they returned with my book with a polite, 'Thanks a lot.' I responded, 'What do you mean thanks a lot? That's a totally inappropriate response for one who has read this book. You didn't read it, did you? Please take it back and read it. Then I would like my book back.' Admitting that they had only turned its pages, they accepted my invitation. When they returned, they said tearfully, 'We have read the Book of Mormon. We know it's true. We want to know more.' They learned more, and it was my privilege to baptize both of them."
- 01:49 That's exactly what you were saying. I mean I love that, the instrument of the gathering, Book of Mormon. We've done 20 and 21 textually deep. We've talked about the gathering of Israel. Then now the Savior is going to quote the entire 54th chapter of Isaiah. He's done Isaiah 52, he's done Micah. He's

weaved those verses together. Some of them are out of order, but 3 Nephi 22 is Isaiah 54 in its entirety.

- 02:18 I'm going to suggest to you that the frame we look at Isaiah 54 is how a husband ought to treat his wife or how the Savior treats his church. In other words, the church is metaphorically scripturally referred to as the woman or the wife, the bride, He is the bridegroom, 3 Nephi 22. 1-3, children. 4-8, love. 9 and 10, commitment. 11 and 12, material comfort. 13-17 protection. In other words, this is what Jesus does for us. When we say children, in this case we're talking about, of course we're talking about children, but we're talking about his children coming into the kingdom, and that the church has prevailed. We started out with six members in upstate New York. Their Colesville branch had about 60 members eventually. It's kind of a motley crew as we move from New York to Kirtland where they've baptized 127 people. We know the history right there.
- 03:25 But then the Lord says in verse 2, "Enlarge the place of thy tent. Let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations." Why? Why would we have to do that? Well, because more and more people will come unto the kingdom. Since President Nelson has been the prophet, there have been 185 temples announced.
- 03:49 Now, look at the phrase that Isaiah put in here in verse 2, "Spare not." In other words, you can imagine being in a budget meeting and we're talking about building another temple. You can imagine somebody saying, "Hey, shouldn't we be careful here? Shouldn't we be a little conservative?" And then Isaiah, shouting through time from thousands of years ago, "Spare not. No, spare not. You need to lengthen thy cords. You need to strengthen the stakes. This is God's work and it's going to move forward and it's going to move forward at an accelerated place. Why? For thou shall break forth on the right hand," verse 3, "and on the left, thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Children, meaning people are going to come into the kingdom. Then what are we going to do? We're going to love them. We are going to absolutely love them.
- 04:44 And this is what all these verses talk about this idea, "In a little wrath, verse 8, "I hid my face from thee for a moment. But with everlasting kindness, will I have mercy on thee saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Commitment. Verse 10, "For the mountain shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee. Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee."

- 05:06 Material comfort. Middle of verse 11, "I will lay thy stones with fair colors, lay thy foundation with sapphires. I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles, all thy borders of pleasant stones." And then 13 through 17, he's going to protect his covenant people. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. Great shall be the peace of thy children. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper." Verse 17.
- 05:30 I want to make a comment about one sentence here I love in verse 14. "In righteousness shalt thou be established." When I was a stake president in Rexburg of a YSA stake, I would interview between 50 and 150 couples to be sealed every April, July and December. Think about that number I just said, because that was the end of semesters. I would say, "I'm going to give you a little counsel," and we turn to 3 Nephi 22, "In righteousness shalt thou be established. You want your home and your marriage established, then it's got to be done in righteousness."
- 06:09 That's what we want. "In righteousness shalt thou be established." Wow, there you now receive the protection blessings. Now we get the blessing of children, of love, of commitment, of material comfort and of his protecting covenant power. I love how he transitioned 3 Nephi 20, 3 Nephi 21. Now we're in Isaiah 54, 3 Nephi 22. He's saying, "This is how I'm going to treat my covenant people. This is how it's going to work in the latter days as we fulfill the Abrahamic covenant. I have not forgotten you in the gathering of others because you will be blessed."
- Hank Smith: 06:44 When I have my students read Isaiah 54 or 3 Nephi 22 and I say, "Did you weep?" And they say, "No." And I said, "Then you didn't read it. Read it again." If this is the one chapter, the Savior quotes from Isaiah, to me, this is just Hank speaking, Isaiah 54 will teach you or show you the character of Christ. Here's this woman who seems to be unfaithful, the reproach of your widowhood and her husband is calling her saying, "I will bless you. I will take care of you. That mountain may erode and I will still love you." If you want to learn how Christ feels in His heart towards you, of course to the House of Israel, you can feel it. Go slow, work your way through it and you'll feel it.
- John Bytheway: 07:41 Beautiful. I'm glad you brought up that metaphor. How many times do we see that where Jesus is the bridegroom and the church or Zion or His people are the bride? When I think about eternal marriage, which is a unique idea for us, I think of course that's true because look at this metaphor the Savior uses so often.

Hank Smith: 08:02 Ross, and maybe you read a chapter like this when you're feeling a little discouraged that, is this gathering actually going to take place? When you look at the monster of sin on the earth, it seems almost impossible that righteousness is going to win.

Dr. Ross Baron: 08:18 There's times in the history of the church where you would've thought, "It can't possibly be pulled out. They're in Farr West." People, this can't happen. He's telling, "Look, sing, cry aloud, be happy." Think about Isaiah speaking to his prophets, "Spare not. Enlarge the tent. Keep making it bigger." And this chapter, which, Hank, you talked about makes you weep, prophesies, testifies that in fact His kingdom is going to roll forth, the stone cut out of the mount without hands, it's going to fill the whole earth. It's going to break in pieces and consume all the other nations. That's exactly what Isaiah is saying.

Hank Smith: 08:58 There's another verse of Isaiah that I love to think of where Isaiah says, "Those who think they're going to beat Jehovah, the wicked who think, "Oh, we've got this made," are like a man who is asleep and in his dream he is eating and he wakes up and he is hungry.

Dr. Ross Baron: 09:15 Or he drinks and he wakes up and he's thirsty. Yep.

Hank Smith: 09:18 "Wait, what? I thought I was winning."

Dr. Ross Baron: 09:20 No, that goes to the last verses 13 through 17. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper," which was also in section 109. [President Nelson](#) asked us to restudy section 109, "No weapon formed against his covenant people shall prosper. Every tongue that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." This is the heritage, this is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, "That righteousness is of me saith the Lord." President Benson used to carry that in his pocket. I know he got some serious heat when he was Secretary of Agriculture to President Eisenhower in 1952 to 1960, obviously in other parts of his life, but he loved that verse.

Hank Smith: 10:01 Ross, one thing you need to know about John is that he will buy a book if his friend tells him it's great. He doesn't buy a book for its cover. He doesn't look in a magazine. But if I walk up to John and say, "Let me tell you about this book I read," he usually says, "Sold. I'll go get it."

John Bytheway: 10:16 You sold me. If a friend that I trust says, "Oh, this is great," I believe him. I don't believe the advertising, but I believe a friend.

Hank Smith: 10:23 And here comes Jesus with a book recommendation.

Dr. Ross Baron: 10:28 Yeah, he has a book recommendation, and that book recommendation and it strikes fear into every Latter-Day Saint when they hear, "It is a commandment I give unto you that you search these things diligently for great are the words of Isaiah."

Hank Smith: 10:40 I guess it's not a recommendation. It's a commandment.

Dr. Ross Baron: 10:45 Right. He never actually commands you to read it. He doesn't even command you to study it. He actually commands you to search it and search it diligently. Why? Because verse 2, "He spake as touching all things concerning my people, which are of the House of Israel." And then he says, "If he talked to them about House of Israel, he also must speak about the Gentiles."

11:06 So John, I'm glad that you got that recommendation and you're reading the book of Isaiah. I think that's great.

11:12 Now, what's fascinating about 3 Nephi 23 is he says, "Listen, I've got other scriptures I need you guys to have. But bring them out, I want to look at them." He looks at them. Verse 7, "Bring forth a record which you've kept." So Nephi brings it out. He casts His eyes upon them and says, "Huh, you've missed some stuff."

11:31 "Verily I say unto you, I commanded my servant Samuel the Lamanite, that he should testify unto this people. That at the day that the father should glorify His name in me, that there were many saints who should arise from the dead and should appear unto many and should minister unto them." And he said unto them, "Was it not so?"

11:50 Can you imagine being Nephi right now? Aw. "Yea, Lord. Samuel did prophesy according to thy words, and they were all fulfilled." Jesus, "How be it that you have not written this thing and that many saints did arise and appear unto many and did minister?" And it came to pass that Nephi remembered this thing had not been written. It came to pass that Jesus commanded that it should be written. Therefore, it was written. It's like, "Oh, man."

Hank Smith: 12:11 He remembered. That's one of my favorites. "You know, I was just about to do that."

Dr. Ross Baron: 12:16 To write that. "I was going to write that, but then you showed up."

John Bytheway: 12:19 "I had stylus in hand and then these three days of darkness hit and I kind of lost track of time."

Dr. Ross Baron: 12:25 I don't know. I lost track of time. I would like to make a comment though about this idea that there were many saints who should arise from the dead and should appear unto many and should minister unto them. And the question that I'd like to maybe pose here, and I'm going to make a suggestion and this is my view of this, that they ministered unto them. You've got Jesus rising from the dead. Samuel prophesied that saints would also arise and should appear unto many and should minister to them. There's a prophecy back in 2 Nephi 18, which is Isaiah again. It's going to be kind of a strange verse that we don't talk a lot about. It talks about this question. I'm in 2 Nephi verse 19, "Should not a people seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead?"

13:18 When they were laying the foundation of the cornerstones at the Salt Lake Temple, [Parley P. Pratt](#) was one of the original members of the Quorum of the 12 Apostles. On April 6th, 1853, he gave a talk called spiritual communication and he talked about how we should seek to the dead so that the living can hear from the dead. We should seek to God.

13:40 I want to share some of the things that Parley says. He said, "Who communicated with Jesus and His disciples on the Holy Mount? Moses and Elias from the invisible world. Who bestowed upon the apostles the commission to preach the gospel to every creature in all the world? He that had passed the veil of death and had dwelt in the spirit world. Yea, he that had ascended far on high above the realms of death. Who communicated with the beloved disciple on the Isle of Patmos and revealed those sublime truths contained in his prophetic book? He that liveth and was dead through his angel who declared John, 'I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets'."

14:13 Who communicated with our great modern prophet and revealed through him as a medium the ancient history of a hemisphere in the records of the ancient dead, Moroni, who had lived upon the earth 1,400 years before. Who ordained Joseph the prophet and his fellow servant to the preparatory

priesthood to baptize for remission of sins, John the Baptist who had been beheaded, who ordained our first founders to the apostleship to hold the keys to the kingdom of God and these the times of restoration, Peter, James and John, et cetera?"

14:39 "How do the saints expect the necessary information by which to complete the ministrations for the salvation and exaltation of their friends who have died? By one holding the keys of the Oracles of God through which the living can hear from the dead. Shall we then deny the principle, the fact of communication between the worlds? No. Verily no. Ye Latter-Day Saints, ye thousands of the hosts of Israel, ye are assembled here today," this is at the dedication of the cornerstone laying of the Salt Lake temple, "and have laid these cornerstones for the express purpose that the living might hear from the dead, that we may prepare a holy sanctuary where 'the people may seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead and that heaven and earth and the world of spirits may come commune together'."

15:28 The [reference](#) on that is the cornerstone laying called Spiritual Communication April 6th, 1853. What I would suggest is that instead of thinking of this as dead people appeared to them, it didn't just say that. They arose, they appeared to them, and they ministered unto them. Well, they might have been communicating information that these Nephites would need to be able to do work for them or for their ancestors who they didn't have records for so that we could then do that work. That's amazing.

John Bytheway: 16:01 That's exactly what happened. What Elder Pratt said, "All of those who are dead in the body anyway came and visited the living." That's great.

Hank Smith: 16:09 Can I share something that is based on this conversation between Jesus and Nephi? I can see the Lord saying something like this to me. He looks at my journal and he says, "I thought that you and I had this, fill in the blank, sacred experience'."

16:25 "Yes, yes we did. I did have that sacred experience." Jesus said to Him, Hank, "How be it that you have not written this thing? You had this incredible experience. Why didn't you write it?"

Dr. Ross Baron: 16:41 I mean, I wonder how many times we have an experience and then upon reflection we're like, "Surely the Lord was with me during that and I knew it not." And if we don't record those events, maybe we'll never know or at least not in mortality. "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

Hank Smith: 17:00 Oh man, so good. And in moments where I am having a hard day, sometimes I'll open up that note that I have made and review those experiences. It is a soothing thing.

17:12 Okay, Ross, we still have more chapters left. Where are we going to go next?

Dr. Ross Baron: 17:16 Okay, what we're going to do now is the Savior is going to give them chapters 3 and 4 of Malachi. What I think is significant here is, number one, I brought this up earlier. "It came to pass," I'm in chapter 24, verse 1, "that He commanded them that they should write the words which the Father had given them to Malachi." And then he quotes, we're going to start in Malachi 3:1, "Behold, I will send my messenger." By the way, I think it's super interesting. Malachi, Malachi in Hebrew means my messenger. "I will send my messenger. And this messenger, I think John the Baptist, Joseph Smith, there's others, "He shall prepare the way before me and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple."

17:57 Again, remember I brought up in Isaiah chapter 2, 2 Nephi chapter 12, if there is no temple, there is no Zion. If there is no Zion, there is no second coming. If there is no second coming, there is no millennium. He has to come to the temple, even the messenger of the covenant. And then he asks this question verse 2, "But who may abide the day of his coming and who shall stand when he appeareth?"

18:17 I want people to understand that question is in every single one of our standard works. This question, "Who may abide the day of his coming? Or who shall stand when he appeareth?" It's in the Old Testament, Malachi chapter 3, verse 2. It's in the New Testament, Revelation chapter 6, verse 17. It's in the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 24:2, which I'm reading right now. It's in the Doctrine and Covenants section 128 verse 24. And it's in the Pearl of Great Price in Joseph Smith history when Moroni quotes in chapter 1 verse 36 the entire third chapter of Malachi to the prophet, to the boy Joseph.

18:54 That question is in every single one of the standard works something we ought to listen to. And I believe that this chapter then and chapter 4 help us answer the question, "Who shall abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when he appeareth?" That's what the purpose of the Father commanding Jesus to include Malachi chapter 3 and chapter 4.

19:22 So then he says, "Why? Because when Jesus shows up," end of verse 2, "He's going to be a refiner's fire and a fuller's soap."

What's he going to do? "He's going to sit as a refiner," I'm in verse 3, "and purifier of silver." And who's he going to purge? "He's going to purify the sons of Levi." To what end? "That they're going to offer unto the Lord an offering and righteousness." But begs the question, number one, who are the sons of Levi? And number two, what's the offering?

19:48 Well, if we could go to section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants for a minute, the oath and covenant of the priesthood, which is given in section 84, verse 33, "For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I've spoken. The magnifying of their calling are sanctified by the spirit unto the renewal of their bodies." Notice 34, "They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron." In other words, any righteous Melchizedek priesthood holder becomes, because of that covenant oath and covenant, a son of Levi. It was not just Levites who are being purified, it's the entire body of priesthood, the holders of the priesthood as [President Oaks](#) would ask us to do. "All the body of the holders of the priesthood are going to be purified." To what end? "So that we can offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

20:37 Now, in searching Isaiah, Isaiah 66, he's going to talk about what this offering is in the latter days. I'm in, Isaiah 66, verse 19. "I will set a sign among them." Now, we've already talked about the sign, Book of Mormon. He's going to send those that escape, i.e, those who have been gathered "to declare my glory among the Gentiles". We're talking about missionaries, we're talking about we're people who are doing the work for God. And notice what they're going to do. "They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations." That's verse 20. How's he going to bring them? Upon horses, chariots, litters, mules, swift beasts. Meaning, "Every single possible way, we're bringing them." To where? "To my holy mountain, Jerusalem, to the temple, saith the Lord as the children of Israel bring an offering and a clean vessel into the House of the Lord. And I will also take them for priests and for Levites saith the Lord." Section 84, 33 and 34.

21:40 Isaiah saw this happening. The offering is not animals, it's people. We are being purified so that we can do God's work. And when we do God's work, we become more like him to be able to abide the day and stand when he appeareth.

John Bytheway: 21:56 That's awesome. I'm thinking of when John the Baptist came and conferred the Atonic Priesthood and he used that language, that the sons of Levi may yet offer unto the Lord an offering and righteousness.

Hank Smith: 22:08 I love that. Part of this offering is people being refined, so I should expect to be refined. The Come, Follow Me manual for this lesson has a link to a [video](#) called the Refiner's Fire. It's not one of those doctrines I love. I do want to be refined, but I don't. Does that make sense?

John Bytheway: 22:29 It does.

Hank Smith: 22:30 I do want to be refined, but I don't want it to hurt. I want to be refined in a hammock with a lemonade.

John Bytheway: 22:40 Hank, what's the line of How Firm A Foundation? "When through fiery trials thy pathway may lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply. The flame shall not hurt thee. I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine." When you're in the furnace of affliction, just remember he's refining you.

Hank Smith: 23:03 So hard. Ross, what's a fuller's soap?

Dr. Ross Baron: 23:06 The [fuller's soap](#) is not just the laundry, it's this lye and this dye that is brutal to almost take the skin off your body. I mean it is that kind of soap that the fullers would use, especially in this one part of the Kidron Valley right outside where the temple might've been. That's how they clean things. It's a brutal... This isn't the nice soap you have in your home right now. It's not that kind of soap.

23:35 When I was young and I got called to be in a bishopric with a man who's passed away, his name was Richard Winder, we were in the bishopric together. Richard Winder mentored us. There was a woman in our ward whose husband had committed suicide and she had three little kids. She was angry, she was sad. I mean, she was all of these things. When you talk furnace of affliction, I can't even communicate to you sufficiently the difficulty this was.

24:07 There were some things I thought. Again, I was young. I'm talking 27, 26, and I thought she was doing some things that were wrong and I'd brought it up with Bishop Winder in bishopric a couple of times. I said, "Are you going to talk to so-and-so? Are you going to sister so-and-so?" And he was like, "Yeah, yeah." And I was like, "Because you know, man, I'd like to be a fly on the wall when you talk to her like. Man, this is going to be great. You're such a great bishop. And man, you'll really talk to her."

- 24:33 Finally, it came around that he met with her. We had bishopric meeting after that and I said, "Hey, how did it go with sister so-and-so?" And he said, "Yeah, she told me all these things that are going on in her life." And I said, "Yeah, what'd you say?" He said, "I came around from my desk and I held her hand and I said, 'That makes me weep.' And then we cried together." And the second he said it, I knew that's exactly what the Savior would've done.
- 25:02 You know what it did? It healed her. Your question, Hank, it's not always the right answer, but sometimes I think we have to sit with people and not say anything except to be there. I don't know if you guys know this, but I had stage 4 cancer. I had surgery, I had chemotherapy, I had radiation. It was touch and go. It was bad. I had people that would come and just sit with me and be with me. It was super comforting and awesome, like you don't have to say anything, the fact that you're there. Sometimes saying something can actually come off trite, cliché and not helpful. Now I'm not saying all the time that's the case, but I think we can sit with people and be there with them, mourn with those that mourn. That being there can be the kind of comfort as pastors and we can just be with people, and that I think can be the best thing possible. That's been my experience.
- Hank Smith: 26:04 I don't want to be burned in the fiery furnace speaking of the refiner's fire. And if God wants to, he'll save me. But if not... All right Ross, let's keep going.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 26:15 So I do also think there are three attitudes that we have to avoid that are in 3 Nephi 24, Malachi chapter 3. Verse 7, "Even from the days of your fathers, you are gone away from mine ordinances, have not kept them." Then he says this, "Return unto me and I will return unto you." Powerful. "But ye say, 'Wherein shall we return?'"
- 26:39 Attitude number one to absolutely 100% avoid is if you don't think you need to repent. If you somehow think in church or the prophet or whatever or the spirit, the scripture study that it's pinching your collar a little bit that you need to change and you're like, "I don't need to change," no, that's an attitude we have to avoid.
- 27:00 Number two, will a man rob God? Yet, you have robbed me, but you say wherein have we robbed thee? The second thing we have to avoid, you have to have an attitude that says, "I am going to put my money where my mouth is." Some of you guys know that... And this is my experience, so I can't generalize church-wide, but most people who've been to the temple,

endowed members without a current temple recommend, it's not the Sabbath, it's not the law of chastity and it's not the word of wisdom. My experience, it's almost always tithing.

27:37 I don't want to have a [tithing](#) lesson necessarily here. I want us to zoom out a little bit. It's about recognizing that all that we have comes from God and that He's asking for a little bit back. Giving that back is as good for your heart and as good for your soul as anything you do. This idea, "Wherein have we robbed thee? Wherein shall we return?" We have to avoid those.

Hank Smith: 28:03 Ross, I'm so glad you're bringing this up. This is a tough one. I think you hit it right on. Tithing is for the tithe-payer. It is meant to bless you. "Why does God need my money? Why does the church need my money?" No, it's, "Why do you need to pay tithing?" It is for you.

Dr. Ross Baron: 28:24 I had a brother come to me who had been baptized, he and his whole family, this was down in southern California. He was an Aaronic priesthood holder. Faithful, coming to church, family coming to church. Brought him in and I said, "We want to ordain you to become an Elder," and he goes, "Oh no, I won't do that." I said, "Why?" He says, "Because you're going to make me pay to do that."

28:42 "I don't know. What do you mean?"

28:44 "Tithing," he goes, "If I don't pay tithing. So you're making me pay to do that." And I said, "Oh, no, no, no, no. We're not making you pay to do that, but if you don't do that, you can't be a Melchizedek priesthood holder because you'd be a thief." And he goes, "What?" I go, "You're a thief right now and that's why we can't ordain you an Elder." He goes, "I don't understand." So we read this passage. You not paying tithing isn't about God needs your money. It's about your heart and your soul. And while you're not paying tithing, you're a thief. The good end of that story is he paid tithing and became a good Elder.

Hank Smith: 29:23 When the Lord says in verse 9, "You're cursed with a curse," that's not the Lord cursing you because you haven't paid. That's you cursing yourself because you didn't pay. That is such a difficult concept to learn. It reminds me of when Jesus says, asks to Peter, "Do you love me more than these? Do you love me more than these?" Because that's what this is about. Where is your heart? I personally need a check on my life where the Lord frequently asks me, "Am I still number one in your life?" Yes, you are. "Am I still number one in your life?" Every month we

have to have this interview because it could creep up on me and destroy me.

- John Bytheway: 30:04 Over the years, I've heard so many different speakers, motivational, inspirational, whatever, not of our faith. It's amazing how many of them recommend that you should tithe, they say.
- 30:18 I was at a meeting one time where [Elder Ballard](#) was speaking. Hank, it was 1997. They were talking about the sesquicentennial of the pioneers coming into the Salt Lake Valley. Elder Ballard's telling the story. Elder Packer and I were back east talking to New York reporters trying to drum up support. So first President Packer got up in front of all these reporters and he said, "We are here to answer all of your questions. I will answer the easy ones. Elder Ballard will answer the hard ones. And I will decide which ones are easy and which ones are hard."
- Dr. Ross Baron: 30:51 That's great.
- John Bytheway: 30:52 Elder Ballard said, "There were two things, two questions. No matter how hard we tried to answer them, we could not satisfy these New York reporters. Number one, how do you get people to pay tithing and how do you get those young people to go on missions?"
- 31:07 Reminds me of that [talk](#) somebody gave about hearing the music of the gospel. I saw a poster at BYU in the copy center once that said, "Those who danced were thought to be quite insane by those who could not hear the music." For me, I look at tithing and I say, "I wish all of the commandments were as easy as this one." Maybe it's because I don't earn much or something. But I have a calculator. This is cake. This is so easy.
- 31:34 When I was on my mission, Elder Robert L. Simpson came and spoke to the missionaries. I wasn't there. It was a week before I got there. My companion told me, "Elder Simpson talked about thank you for this sacrifice and your time." And then he said, "Sister Simpson got up and said, 'Oh, all this talk about sacrifice. Baloney. It's the least you could do'."
- Dr. Ross Baron: 31:56 That's awesome. Remember we're answering the question, "Who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appeareth?" This is the question we're answering. This is what this is preparing me for. Can you imagine, Hank, the Savior shows up and you can't abide the day or you can't stand because you did love that more than Him? You talk about

weeping and wailing and gnashing your teeth. And by the way, you'd think for nothing. That was the stupidest thing I ever did, but that takes a certain kind of heart, a certain kind of faith, a certain kind of person who loves the Lord. That's number two.

- John Bytheway: 32:34 Yeah, read the Book of Acts if you feel like holding anything back.
- Hank Smith: 32:39 In my mind, the reason the church teaches tithing is to 100% bless the tithe payer.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 32:50 Amen. 100% agree.
- Hank Smith: So Ross, attitude number one, "I don't need to repent." Attitude number two, "I'm not going to pay my tithing. I'm not going to give." What's attitude three?
- Dr. Ross Baron 33:02 Attitude three, verse 13, "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, 'What have we spoken against thee?'" This is the attitude. Here we say, "It is vain to serve God. What doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? We call the proud happy. They that work wickedness are set up. Yea that tempt God are even delivered."
- 33:27 That is this attitude that somehow by keeping the commandments, we're not blessed like the world, we don't profit like the world. Those kinds of things aren't happening, so why in the world should we do it? We have to avoid that particular attitude.
- 33:46 Psalm 73, by the way, we're not going to get into it, but it's a beautiful chapter where David is having this attitude and then he says, 'Until I went to the House of the Lord, then I got my perspective.'
- 34:00 I think of [President Nelson](#), think Celestial. Think Celestial here. "Don't be mistaken by the world. What doth it profit that we've kept his ordinances? What? We call the proud happy. They that work wickedness are set up. Don't buy into this trap." And this is the third attitude. "Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard. Book of remembrance is written before him. For them that feared the Lord thought upon his name." And then I love this, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts. We bind ourselves to him", we get his hesed, according to President Nelson, "his everlasting kindness, his love, his mercy."

- 34:36 "When I make up my jewels," we're back to Exodus 19, his private personal property, he makes up his jewels and then he says this, "and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."
- 34:50 Now back in 3 Nephi, were connecting these chapters. In 3 Nephi 9, verse 13, he said, "I spared you." In chapter 10 verses 6, 10, 12, 13 and 18, he uses the word spare. "I spared all of you." They were his because I believe they were able to abide the day. They were able to stand when he appeared because they didn't have these attitudes and they will be spared. Verse 18, "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." We can't fully understand that now, but at a certain point, we'll be able to discern that. I love this chapter.
- John Bytheway: 35:35 Love that, return and discern. One day you'll come back and you'll be able to tell the difference and it's not what you're saying right now.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 35:43 Exactly. It's not what you're saying right now. I think we got to be careful. It's not for me to make any kind of external judgment about that. I'm going to judge my own soul on this. I'm not going to worry about the external, but I have to guard against that attitude. I have to be careful.
- Hank Smith: 35:59 The third attitude you talked about there, Ross, seems to me like a transactional relationship. It's like a cold contract versus a warm relationship.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 36:09 Cold contract versus warm covenant.
- Hank Smith: 36:11 Yeah, this isn't about what he can do for me. This is what he's already done for me. I want to enter into a relationship with him no matter what that looks like.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 36:22 [Elder Renlund](#) I think has really re-emphasized this. "I don't want my children to do right. I want them to choose to do right." Isn't that what we really want for our kids? I want them to choose. They choose. And so we talk a lot about that in my family. "Don't do it because I said. Do it because you know it's right and you want to do it."
- 36:44 Hank, I think your point is we got to avoid this attitude, transactional. Then he's going to go into this super famous chapter. Verse 1 is chilling of 3 Nephi 25, "For behold, today cometh that shall burn as an oven. And all the proud yea and all

that do wickedly shall be stubble." Those are two interesting characteristics of those who will be stubble, is pride and wickedness. "And the day cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts that shall leave unto them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name," back to that, "shall the son of righteousness, Jesus Christ, arise with healing in his wings and then we're going to be treated like calves in the stall we'll be taken care of."

37:26 Then verse 3, John, back to your Micah prophecy, "Ye shall tread down the wicked for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet." This is the Micah prophecy, but it's played out not because of something violence we did, but because of Jesus Christ coming, because of the second coming, because of the things that are going to occur not because he's mad but because they're going to bring it upon themselves. There's symbolic and literal things going on here.

37:53 For me, this is so powerful. Verse 5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Comment here. The word great I've heard so many times in gospel doctrine. Somebody will say, "It's great for the righteous and dreadful for the wicked." But the word great there is the Hebrew word gadol, which doesn't mean awesome or cool. It means huge. It means big. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the huge, big and dreadful day of the Lord." And by the way, I love when the Savior says, "It's going to happen like the lightning coming out of the east, the sun is rising. Every eye shall see. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed. All flesh shall see it together." Section 88, "The veil of his tabernacle will be removed." Section 101, "The veil o'er the earth will be removed." We're going to all see the Lord. And it's huge and it is dreadful because it's serious business. The Savior is coming.

38:49 But before that day, Elijah's going to come. Now, I was raised as a Jew and we had Passover. Every single year we had Passover. I know both of you have done multiple Passover's. What you do in the Passover is you make a place for Elijah. And at a certain point in the Passover Seder, you open the door for Elijah to come in.

39:09 Now, the question we should be asking is, Elijah doesn't live for 500 years after Exodus chapter 12, after the Passover. Why in the world are Jews setting a place for Elijah during the recounting of the Exodus? Do y'all follow the question? There's no natural connection between the Passover, the deliverance and Elijah. There's no natural connection. I believe that the

rabbis, the sages through the centuries are beckoning the Messiah to come, but what they do is they include Elijah at the Passover Seder as a way to invite, as a way to hope, and as a way to beckon the Messiah Jesus Christ to come. That's why they set the table for Elijah.

40:06 I did that my whole life. Most of your listeners might know that on April 3rd, 1836 he did come. April 3rd, 1836 was during the Passover. While Jews worldwide were opening their doors for Elijah to come in, Elijah did come to the Lord's house to His servant and to bestow upon Him particular keys or permission to use the priesthood a particular way so that the gathering of Israel, now we're going to tie this all up, so that the Abrahamic covenant could be 100% fulfilled for not just the living but for the dead so that every single soul from Adam to the last soul will have the opportunity to hear the gospel.

40:53 I believe that the work for missionary work on earth and the work for the dead are the greatest evidences of the truthfulness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, of the nature of Jesus Christ, and of the divine mission of the prophet Joseph Smith. It makes no other sense any other way. Elijah coming, Jesus quoting this as He's about to end day two demonstrates how we're going to gather Israel in its fullest way to completely get the Abrahamic covenant as he promised.

John Bytheway: 41:30 Planting in the hearts the promises made to the fathers, trying to teach this idea to your children. How would you describe what are roots and what are branches?

Dr. Ross Baron: 41:39 I was once at a dinner with all my relatives and not one of my living relatives is a member of the church. They're super supportive, very interested, but it can be a little touchy because I do lots of family history and they know what I'm doing. So we were at this big dinner table and one of my cousins from England, as a matter of fact, people are talking and there's probably 25 people there and he said, "Ross, why do you do all that family history work?" And it was like the record went... And the lights went down and it was on me. Every single person was focused on me. And I said, "You know that prophecy at the end of the Hebrew Bible from Malachi? It says the hearts of the fathers are going to turn to the children and the children to the fathers so that we can have roots and branches. The roots, these beautiful roots are my ancestors and the branches are my children and grandchildren. He goes like this, "That's beautiful."

42:40 And then the record player started again and the lights go back on, metaphorically speaking of course. It was this beautiful

moment where I was able to use the scripture, put it in context for them, and it made total sense. I go, "That's why I'm doing family history, so we'll know who our roots are, what our branches can expect, and our hearts will turn to our fathers and our children can have that beautiful opportunity I had."

- Hank Smith: 43:03 That's fantastic. As I read chapter 25 verse one and you think, "Oh the Lord sounds mean here. The proud and the wicked will burn," I'm quick to point out to my children it's the wickedness and the pride which burns. It's not the Lord, the Lord is saying, "Hey, here's the natural result of pride and wickedness." You'll burn up and you'll destroy your family. You'll be left without a root or a branch. I wrote by verse 1, "Pride and wickedness destroy families." I think that's the essence of verse 1.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 43:38 And the converse that if I'm humble and striving for righteousness, then I stand when he appeareth and I abide the day. There you have the beautiful parallels and the converse of what you just said. Pride and wickedness destroy families, humility and righteousness. Isaiah chapter 54, 3 Nephi 22, "Thou shalt be established in righteousness." How do I abide the day of the Lord? Well, he tells us how to abide. That's beautiful what you just said. We got to make sure we get the positive side as well.
- Hank Smith: 44:10 Elijah is coming to help families be righteous and humble and sealed so that the earth isn't wasted.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 44:19 We testify to the whole world without reservation, without qualification, that Elijah in fact did come back and did bestow the keys that the priesthood upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and that this part of the prophecy, verse 5, is fulfilled. Check. It's done. Hank, your point earlier, he's talking about a future day. A lot of these things are fulfilled. This is happening right now.
- John Bytheway: 44:49 I love that [President Nelson](#), as he defined gathering of Israel, added what? Six words: on both sides of the veil.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 44:58 You want to have a fun experience, go do baptisms, initiatory work, endowment and sealings and count how many times they repeat the person's name. Think about that. Every single person will have their name lovingly repeated. And again, you do the exercise where you count from baptism all the way to the sealing. How many times we repeat their name? Wow. "I have not forgotten my people." Remember the purpose of the Book of Mormon, "So that they'll know they were not cast off forever."

Hank Smith: 45:31 Looking at 3 Nephi 25 with you, Ross, has helped bring some depth to this statement. You might recognize it. "Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God, and the family is central to the creator's plan for the eternal destiny of his children." That's 3 Nephi 25.

Dr. Ross Baron: 45:51 Amen. Amen. Wow, that's great.

Hank Smith: 45:55 Ross, you've walked us through these very textually deep chapters as you said. We're in our last one, 3 Nephi 26. So what do you want to see?

Dr. Ross Baron: 46:02 3 Nephi 26, Mormon seems to, now he's going to insert himself and do some editing and some summarizing. Sometimes it's not super clear, Are we at the end of day two? Is day three started? In fact, is it more than that because he's going to say in verse 13, "I would that you should behold the Lord truly did teach the people for the space of three days. And after he did show himself unto them oft and did break bread oft and bless it and give unto them."

46:31 Mormon starts to do some editing, but clearly I believe that he's talking about day two. By the way, Hank, you brought up earlier verse 6, "There cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people." Meaning we should be super careful about how we take what he did include because he's saying in fact, verse 8 and 9, seems to be like, "I'm going to try my people." I want to see how seriously take this and then I'll give them more. And if they don't take it seriously, I'm going to take it away."

47:04 Love your point there, but there's something about the nature of Christ that has always been amazing to me. And that is in verse 14, "And it came to pass that he did teach and minister unto the children of the multitude of whom hath been spoken." The children, the children are there. "And he did loose their tongues and they did speak unto their father's great and marvelous things, even greater than He, Jesus, had revealed unto the people. And he loosed their tongues that they could utter."

47:36 There's a bunch of things we could comment, I think, about that verse. I love to ask a question, and that is, what does this teach me about Christ? One of the things that I love about this is that he was okay not to have taught the coolest stuff. He let little children speak things greater than he revealed unto the people and I'm thinking, "I kind of want to teach the cool stuff." And the Savior's like, "No, this is good. That four-year-old over there,

he's going for it with the gathering of Israel right now. This is great."

- 48:11 I like to think about how that teaches me about Christ. He is thrilled when his children are doing things that he loves and he's okay that they're in the limelight, like that's okay. That even greater than he had done. He then says at the end of verse 16, "Behold, it came to pass on the morrow that the multitude gathered themselves together and they both saw and heard these children. Yea, even babes did open their mouths and utter marvelous things. And the things which they did utter were forbidden that there should not any man write them." Again, character of Christ.
- 48:49 Can you imagine some astonished parents? Can you imagine your twin boys, Hank, uttering amazing doctrinal truths and you'd be just like, "They never acted like that in family night."
- Hank Smith: 49:00 Yeah. I'd say, "You must have a great father. That's what I'd say." Yeah, for sure.
- Dr. Ross Baron: 49:06 There's other things we could say, but I think in terms of I love that Mormon edits this, then we get these beautiful windows about what happened with the children. But again, if we take it back to what does it teach me about Jesus Christ, I think it teaches us about the character of the Savior.
- John Bytheway: 49:22 I love, Ross, that you started out with Jesus saying, "Okay, now listen to their words, the 12." And then we watched the character of Christ and quoting Isaiah and quoting Micah and quoting Malachi. They didn't know Malachi because Lehi left before Malachi, and yet I want you to have the words of Malachi. He could have said, "Well, I'll just tell you," but he honored his prophet enough that he gave credit to Malachi for those words. I credit whatever it is. He demonstrated what you said in 3 Nephi 19, "Now listen to their words. And then now listen to some babes and some children speak even greater things."
- Dr. Ross Baron: 50:07 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 50:07 Wonderful. If you look at the last two verses of 3 Nephi 26, there's a feeling about it. Jesus has visited. And it says in verse 17, "The disciples whom Jesus had chosen from that time forth were baptizing and teaching." Verse 18, "They saw and heard unspeakable things. Verse 19, "They taught and did minister to one to another." This is all the members. They had all things in

common. They're honest with each other. They tried to do everything I should say. And Mormon says, "They did do all things that Jesus had commanded them."

- 50:43 It's the same way I'm feeling at least in a way today, Ross, when you dig into the words of Jesus and you really study. It's kind of the natural result. There's this goodness that comes into their lives after he is there. And of course for Nephi, we know it lasts a really long time. I don't know.
- 51:00 Ross, your lesson here will last me a couple of hours at least. But you've dug into the words of Jesus and there's a blessing that comes from doing what you just did with us that can almost come in no other way, sit with the words of Jesus and seek to understand them. It's an investment that pays dividends.
- John Bytheway: 51:20 Love that.
- Hank Smith: 51:21 Ross, before we let you go, I think our listeners would be interested in your thoughts on these few chapters that we've done, but the whole book in general. What are your thoughts on it? What do you think about it?
- Dr. Ross Baron: 51:33 I appreciate that opportunity. I'd like to witness that the Book of Mormon basically says that it is one of its main purposes is testify to the world that Jesus is the Christ and that the covenants of the Father are going to be fulfilled. I think we've seen today in a microcosm that that is true.
- 51:51 My witness to people would be that the Book of Mormon, if taken seriously like [President Benson](#) said, you will feel the spirit of the book. It will testify of Jesus being the Christ and it will testify of the restoration of the gospel through his prophet Joseph Smith and that there are prophets on earth today. I cannot overemphasize that. And feel the power of the book. And I have hope that people have felt the power of the book as we've studied it today. I know that it's true and I know not because of study, which I do know that part, but I want to be careful. I want to say like Alma chapter 5, "I fasted and prayed many days and the Holy Ghost has witnessed to me that it's true. And I know that."
- Hank Smith: 52:35 John, what a day. We were very blessed.
- John Bytheway: 52:37 I can't wait for my roots and branches to hear this.

Hank Smith:	52:40	Yeah, I love it. I love it. Thanks, John.
Dr. Ross Baron:	52:43	That's great.
Hank Smith:	52:44	With that, we want to thank Dr. Ross Baron for spending his time with us. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen. And at the end of every episode, those of you who listen all the way to the end, you know that we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We have more 3 Nephi to look at on followHIM.

STRUCK BY LIGHTNING



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello, my friends. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I are sharing a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we are in 3 Nephi 20 through 26, and I have a story for you. Although you may remember it, it was given in General Conference 24 years ago, turn of the century, October 2000. If you go to 3 Nephi 20 verse 41, the Lord says, "Go ye out from the midst of her, meaning Babylon, wickedness, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." Well, Elder Holland in this talk called Sanctify Yourselves tells this story about being clean.
- 00:43 He says, "Let me share a story with you suggesting how soon and how unexpectedly these moments can come that you need to be clean." He says, "On the afternoon of Wednesday, September 30th, 1998, a little league football team in Inkom, Idaho was out on the field for its midweek practice. They had completed their warmups and were starting to run a few plays from scrimmage. Dark clouds were gathering as they sometimes do in the fall, and it began to rain lightly, but that was of no concern to a group of boys who loved playing football. Suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere, an absolutely deafening crack of thunder split the air inseparable from the flash of lightning that illuminated, literally electrified the entire scene. At that very moment, a young friend of mine, AJ Edwards, then a deacon in his ward of the McCammon, Idaho stake was ready for the ball on a handoff that was sure to be a touchdown, but the lightning that had illuminated earth and sky struck AJ Edwards from the crown of his football helmet to the soles of his shoes."
- 01:57 "The impact of the strike stunned everyone, knocking players to the ground, leaving one player temporarily without a sight, and virtually everyone else dazed and shaken. Instinctively, they started running for the pavilion next to the park. Some of the boys began to cry, some began to pray. Through it all, AJ Edwards lay motionless on the field. Brother David Johnson of the Rapid Creek Ward rushed to the player's side. He shouted to coach and fellow ward member, Rex Schaefer, 'I can't get a

pulse.' These two men rather miraculously both trained as EMTs, started a life-against-death effort in CPR. Cradling AJ's head as the men worked, was the young defensive coach of the team, 18-year-old Bryce Reynolds. As he watched Brother Johnson and Brother Schaefer urgently applying CPR, he had an impression, 'I'm confident it was a revelation from Heaven in every sense of the word.' He remembered vividly a priesthood blessing that the Bishop had once given his grandfather following an equally tragic and equally life-threatening accident years earlier."

03:05 "Now, as he held this young deacon in his arms, he realized for the first time in his life he needed to use his newly conferred Melchizedek Priesthood in a similar way. In a forthcoming call to serve a mission, young Bryce Reynolds had been ordained an Elder just 39 days earlier. Whether he audibly spoke the words or uttered them under his breath, Elder Reynolds said, 'AJ Edwards, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the power and authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which I hold, I bless you that you'll be okay. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.' As Bryce Reynolds closed that brief, but fervent blessing offered in the language of an 18-year-old, AJ Edwards drew his first renewed breath."

03:53 Elder Holland goes on to say more prayers, more miracles, more priesthood blessings, an ambulance drive to Pocatello, a near-hopeless life flight to the University of Utah. He says, "It is sufficient to say that a very healthy and very robust AJ Edwards is in the audience tonight with his father as my special guests. I also recently talked on the telephone with Elder Bryce Reynolds, who has been serving faithfully in the Texas Dallas Mission. I love these two wonderful young men."

04:26 And then he talks about these moments when you got to be ready and clean to act. That is why the Lord repeatedly says in scriptures, back to 3 Nephi 20:41, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." Great story, right, John?

John Bytheway: 04:45 Yeah. He had to be ready right then. Oh, goodness.

Hank Smith: 04:49 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 04:49 How do you predict a lightning strike? It's not like, "Well, in a couple of weeks I got to get my act cleaned up or something." It's no, be ready right now. You never know when.

Hank Smith:	04:58	"Hang on, guys. Let me go read my scriptures and say my prayers and go to the Temple and go talk to the bishop before I can come back and bless you." I don't know if they're still out there, AJ Edwards and Bryce Reynolds, but John Bytheway and Hank Smith say good work.
John Bytheway:	05:11	Good job.
Hank Smith:	05:13	Come join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. We're in 3 Nephi 20 through 26 this week, and we have Ross Baron, Dr. Baron, John, who I think he knows everything.
John Bytheway:	05:26	So smart.
Hank Smith:	05:27	Yeah, so smart. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. And then come back next week. We're going to do another followHIM Favorites.