



“He Hath Borne Our Grievs, and Carried Our Sorrows”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Friday and Saturday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

How can Isaiah help Latter-day Saints remember their covenants? Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt examines the Servant Song in Isaiah and the power of remembering covenants.

Part 2:

Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt examines Isaiah 50-57 and the Savior’s call for repentance and the call for every Saint to stay or return to the covenant path.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt
- 01:16 Introduction of Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt
- 03:41 Primer for having a direct experience with Jesus Christ
- 04:59 Read Isaiah slowly
- 05:36 Isaiah as General Conference preparation
- 08:04 The Book of Mormon is the best commentary for Isaiah
- 12:06 Isaiah is valuable to our day
- 14:42 Isaiah 42 foretells the gathering of Israel
- 22:05 Jacob helpful commentary on Isaiah
- 24:05 Isaiah 50 includes a Servant Song and applies to our families
- 28:39 Elohim and Jehovah
- 32:12 The Servant is Jesus Christ
- 35:12 The power of covenants
- 40:22 Remember God
- 43:30 The Covenant Path
- 49:02 End of Part I–Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II– Dr. Jennifer Platt
- 00:08 Invitation to end suffering
- 01:47 Jacob’s commentary
- 05:08 President Nelson’s reminder of our three identities
- 06:58 Dr. Platt shares story about ministering
- 11:14 Dr. Platt shares story about a new calling
- 15:15 Man of sorrows
- 18:55 Jesus suffers with us
- 24:35 Jesus invites us to come home
- 29:44 Repentance is encouraging
- 31:33 The Covenant Path
- 34:23 Mission of the Church
- 37:34 Metaphor of the Covenant Path
- 41:37 Dr. Platt shares story of a student realizing there is a place for everyone
- 45:23 Dr. Platt shares her journey as a Saint and a scholar
- 50:48 End of Part II–Dr. Jennifer Platt

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Biographical Information:



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

She was a seminary and institute instructor for ten years prior to joining the religious education faculty at Brigham Young University and now teaches at BYU- Idaho. She is an author and public

speaker, having presented for BYU Women's Conference, Education Week and Deseret Book's Time Out for Women events. She currently serves as the Relief Society President in her stake.

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

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to FollowHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	And I'm John Bytheway. We love to learn. We love to laugh, We want to learn and laugh with you as together we follow him.
Hank Smith:	00:20	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host. I am here with my beautifully footed co-host John Bytheway. John, you have beautiful feet because Isaiah says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bringeth good tidings." That's you, John. You are a beautifully footed person because you bringeth good tidings.
John Bytheway:	00:46	Honestly say, I've never been called that before, but I'm gelling with my Dr. Scholl's today -
Hank Smith:	00:53	Have beautiful feet.
Hank Smith:	00:57	Hey John, we are in another section of Isaiah and we needed an expert to join us. Who is here with us today?
John Bytheway:	01:05	Well, this is fun, Hank because years ago we worked on a book with a bunch of friends, this Suit Up book in 2013 for preparing for a mission, and Jennifer joined us on this book. We're with Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt. Let me just share a little bit of information with our listeners about her.
John Bytheway:	01:24	She earned a PhD from Arizona State University in educational psychology, focusing on lifespan developmental psychology of women in ritual contexts. Her passion is to learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ from the ground up, has taken her around the world from rural villages of Ethiopia to the floors of primary classrooms. Her happy place is in the temple. That's a great happy place. She was a seminary and institute instructor for 10 years prior to joining the religious education faculty at BYU and now teaches at BYU- Idaho. She's an author and public speaker.

She's presented for BYU Women's Conference Education Week. She currently serves as the Relief Society President in her stake.

- John Bytheway: 02:07 With 50 years worth of collective dating experience, she and her husband Jed met and married at the age of 41. They love life in Rexburg, Idaho. They have an eight year old daughter and a six year old son. You can follow Jennifer. She has a blog called Connecting with Christ and one of her more recent books, Living Your Covenants Every Day. She's spoken at BYU Easter conference. All of those you can find online. But we're really happy to see you again, Jennifer. Welcome, thanks for joining us today.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 02:37 Thanks. It is so good to see you guys. It's fun to be together.
- John Bytheway: 02:41 Yeah, we're grateful you're here. And I would be remiss if I didn't do a shout out to my sister Jennifer Johnson, who adores Jennifer Brinkerhoff Platt, Dr. Platt. Just adores her, and I do as well. For my sister, it's this short of idolatry. A little bit too much. Jennifer, hello from Jennifer. And Jennifer, if you're out there listening, I did my due diligence and said hi to your favorite person.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 03:08 She did tell me to make sure to tell you that she is my favorite person too, over the two of you.
- John Bytheway: 03:13 Okay, I understand. I have beautiful feet, but other than that, there's not a whole lot.
- Hank Smith: 03:23 Hey Jennifer, we are in the book of Isaiah and so many members of the church, when they hear Isaiah, they think, Oh no, I can't do it. So we're counting on you to walk us through these chapters, Isaiah 50 through 57, and to show us how they really can shine for readers.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 03:41 I think that's important. One of my gifts is to be ordinary and to be pretty simple and clear, and I hope that we do that today. One thing that I want to bring our viewers attention to is the timing. The timing of when we are studying Come Follow Me. We're in the week prior to general conference. And for us to think about that, my invitation would be to use Isaiah 50 through 57 as a primer and a preparation. That this is really a chance to have a direct experience with Jesus Christ to prepare us for general conference.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 04:16 In fact, I loved the way that President Nelson in his last talk, he pled with us. He's stunning in the way he pleads with us to give

God a fair share of our time, and he promised that as we do, we would see positive spiritual momentum. And so I would think that if nothing else, let's invite Isaiah to tutor us and to help us to be prepared to receive his living prophet and to be prepared for Jesus Christ.

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| John Bytheway: | 04:45 | I love that. What a great intro. What do you usually tell your students before they study Isaiah? Is there any background? Is there anything that you're like, here's what you need to know before you read Isaiah chapters? Do you ever do that or should we just jump right in? |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 04:59 | No, you bet with the Isaiah chapters, one is to take it slow. The sweetness of Isaiah is in the slow, and so to not feel frustrated by the number of chapters and to be satisfied to just take a couple of verses. So take it slow, read it out loud. And so that's where the family study becomes so powerful, and to use the Book of Mormon. Our chapters today are in the Book of Mormon, and the greatest commentary on Isaiah is in the Book of Mormon. |
| John Bytheway: | 05:31 | We've got a great setup here. Want to go to 50? You want to start in 51? |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 05:36 | Actually can I take a minute? I want to talk a minute about this conference prep. I've had this really sweet thought that as I've been going through Isaiah 50 through 57, and preparing for general conference, that I'm seeing these really powerful connections. That what we're studying today has to do with the gathering of Israel. It's very much about the gathering of Israel, and that's President Nelson's focus. It's every prophet's focus. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 06:03 | Go back a little bit to April 2017. In President Monson's last talk, he invited the church to read the Book of Mormon. He said, "I want you to study and ponder the Book of Mormon every day. And as we do so, we will be in a position to hear the voice of the spirit, to resist temptation, to overcome doubt and fear, and to receive heaven's help in our lives." Now, six months later, in the October general conference, President Nelson, the president of the quorum, reported on his experience of reading the Book of Mormon. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 06:37 | Here's what President Nelson said, and the talk was called The Book of Mormon, what would your life be like without it? "Since President Monson's challenge six months ago, I've tried to follow his counsel. Among other things, I've made lists of what the Book of Mormon is, what it affirms, what it refutes, what it fulfills, what it clarifies and what it reveals." As we're studying |

Isaiah, that's exactly what the Book of Mormon does. Then he goes on, "Looking at the Book of Mormon through these lenses has been an insightful and inspiring exercise. I recommend it to each of you." Well, it wasn't but a few months later that President Nelson's now the prophet and president of the church. He's sitting at the Salt Lake Temple pleading with us to get on the covenant path, and to stay.

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| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 07:30 | Now, we've all been pretty thrilled to watch what we might call changes, but they're actually just clarifications of truths that we find in the Book of Mormon. I've been paying attention to this over these years and saying, I wonder if President Nelson's experience with the Book of Mormon was his preparation to be the president, ministering, the name of the church, worship in the home. So many things that we're emphasizing and focusing on now, are found in the Book of Mormon. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 08:04 | So my point is, if I can piece this together, one, even the prophet is benefiting from general conference and obeying the prophet. Here's President Nelson obeying President Monson. Two, the Book of Mormon's going to give us so much clarity. That there's going to be this focus and direct truth that's going to bring us to Jesus Christ like no other thing. And so when we're studying Isaiah, I would say even, I'm old school, I use paper scripture still, go into the scriptures and before you even start, mark every Book of Mormon reference. Go to the chapter heading of chapter 50 and you're going to see that this is in the Book of Mormon. This is Jacob. And so write Jacob in there. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 08:51 | Get into Isaiah 53 and you're going to see Mosiah 14, mark it and say, This is Abinadi. And then you get to the next, and here's Jesus himself, that he's going to give that to us in Isaiah 54 that here's Jesus himself. So we can take the Book of Mormon and side by side say, let's study this. Let's see what they have to teach us and how they're going to be the very best commentary. There's just no better commentary than the Book of Mormon. |
| John Bytheway: | 09:24 | I love that we have a prophet commenting on a prophet. And so when Abinadi quotes Isaiah 53, and we'll talk about this, and then afterwards gives us additional insight, it's like, oh, how wonderful is this to have Abinadi comment on that. But I want to go back to what you said about President Nelson because he talked about, if I remember right, they even showed a picture of President Nelson, it looked like out on a patio, just with his Book of Mormon out and his yellow pad and everything. And I thought, look at that. Here is President Nelson listening to President Monson and just doing it literally. And it kind of made |

me feel like I need to take that as seriously. Like you just said, here's President Nelson listening to President Monson. I'm going to do it. The prophet just said this.

- John Bytheway: 10:11 What I pointed out to my students, that talk October 2017, is that if you look in the conference edition of the Ensign or online at that talk, at the end we have, it just says President Nelson's Book of Mormon lists. And they're all there, bullet points. The Book of Mormon confirms, and then he has these items. The Book of Mormon refutes, and then he has a bunch of items. Boy, go find that because it wasn't part of the talk, but it's in the conference issue. And you can see the Book of Mormon confirms, refutes, reveals new things, clarifies, and those bullet points are really helpful. To have President Nelson comment on, this is why we've got the Book of Mormon is a treasure, at the end of that talk. You have to go to the Ensign or online to find it. It's now called Liahona, but then it was the Ensign.
- Hank Smith: 11:02 We can link that in our show notes I bet John, followhim.co. I bet we could find a link to that so it could be easy for people to find.
- John Bytheway: 11:09 I use that to begin my Religion 275 class. Here's President Nelson saying, "What are the doctrines and teachings of the Book of Mormon?" And here's a bunch of really concise bullet points about it.
- Hank Smith: 11:22 Yeah, the other thing I thought, Jennifer, is when the Savior comes to the Nephites that he could say, of course, and he quotes a full chapter of Isaiah, and it's Isaiah 54. So as much as we love Isaiah 53 with Abinadi, just as much we should love Isaiah 54 and what the Savior has to say about it and why he would even quote it to them.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 11:44 These chapters come alive, again, in this recent study, has been in the latter days. That Nephi tells us that. He invites us that. That he says these are going to be plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy, and then he keeps telling us how much he loves plainness. And so again, the Book of Mormon's going to be that commentary to help us to make Isaiah plainer.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 12:06 The other thing, this is 2 Nephi 25:8 from Nephi, he tells us that we need to know that they're of worth unto the children of men and he that supposes that they're not and confine the words unto my own people. "For I know that they will be of great worth unto them in the last days. For in that day shall they understand them. Wherefore for their good I have written

them." And so as much as we want to know the context of Isaiah and his time, we need to know our context. And to be able to say, here we are in the latter days, this is it. And what am I doing to fulfill these prophecies? What am I doing to be a big player in this gathering that's being taught about here? Do I know what we're being invited to do? And am I getting really clear in the way I'm living my life?

Hank Smith: 12:58

That's fantastic. All right, Jen, how do you want to jump into Isaiah 50? I'm guessing you want to start in the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 13:05

Yes I do. I want to invite the Holy Ghost to help us and to minister to us that we can live in the gift of prophecy and that I would hope every one of us right now is pleading for his influence. I would also hope that we would desire a straightforward experience with Jesus Christ today. That we're going to have that chance. Elder Holland said this. Do you remember this? He said, "My desire today is for all of us, not just those who are poor in spirit, but all of us, to have more straightforward personal experiences with the Savior. Sometimes we seek heaven too obliquely, focusing on programs or history or the experience of others. Those are important but not as important as personal experience, true discipleship and the strength that comes from experience firsthand the majesty of his touch."

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 13:53

That's what Isaiah is bringing to us today, Jesus, straightforward. I just want to be so clear that that's our objective, is Him. And that the Holy Ghost will minister to us. He's going to deliver that to our hearts. We'll each recognize it in our own unique ways. Be still in that and to know that we are experiencing the Savior and his work.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:19

So let's go backward. I know last week we studied Isaiah 49, but we need to tack these chapters into Isaiah 49. It can't just pick up in isolation. We've got to find Jesus and let's begin there. In fact, even Isaiah 48, the first chapter that's quoted in the Book of Mormon.

Hank Smith: 14:40

1 Nephi 20.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:42

And so again using this Book of Mormon theme, then we'll go back there. And this is, Isaiah 48 is we're getting Judas' apostasy. And then we're going to get into chapter 49, which is going to establish the scattering and gathering. Monte Nyman, he said that chapter 49 is one of the most important chapters in the whole book of Isaiah. Why? Because it's going to foretell the

mission of the Latter-day Saints and the destiny of the land of America. This is where we're going to come in on the scene with the restoration. Nephi's going to commentate on Isaiah 49. We'll tack it on.

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| Hank Smith: | 15:20 | Feel free to. Yeah. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 15:22 | Nephi, when he talks about Isaiah, he calls him the prophet. And again, I mean we talk about a lot of times for Nephi that Isaiah was for him like Joseph Smith is to us, and that there's this kinship connection. Let's look at 1 Nephi 22. Will one of you read us that, 22:15 through 17? And this is going to give us a segue between the scattering and the chapters we're about to jump into. 1 Nephi 22:15 through 17. |
| Hank Smith: | 15:53 | All right, John, you're up. |
| John Bytheway: | 15:54 | "For behold sayeth the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men. For the day soon cometh that all the proud and they that do wickedly shall be as stubble and the day cometh that they must be burned. For the time soon cometh that the fullness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men. For he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fullness of his wrath must come and the righteous be preserved even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear, for thus sayeth the prophet, they shall be saved even if it so be as by fire." |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 16:40 | This establishment Nephi is giving us that we're going to be in this battle, and here we are right now in the latter days, but there is going to be salvation. We're going to be saved. With this framework, with this background of saying, okay, we've got scattered Israel and we're going to need something to piece this together. Jesus, we need Jesus. And then Jacob's going to come on the scene. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 17:03 | I want to jump to 2 Nephi six. We see Lehi's family fractured. He's died, and the family's divided. And really that's such a great metaphor for understanding the scattering and the gathering, that God's family's fractured. And that only through Jesus Christ can the family be brought back together and redeemed. So Jacob is now appointed as a prophet, as a teacher, and he says in 2 Nephi 6, verse 3 that he's anxious. He's worried about us and he's desired for the welfare of our souls. |

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	17:40	And so he says, this is the middle of 2 Nephi 6:3, "I've exhorted to you with all diligence and I've taught you the words of my father and I've spoken unto you concerning all things which are written from the creation of the world." This is such a good bookend for what he's going to do in 2 Nephi 9, which is the other side of the Isaiah chapters that he's using, to be able to see we've got to get a big picture of the plan. And all that the mortal experience is about. So he is taking him back to creation.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	18:12	"Now, behold, I would speak unto you," this is verse four, "concerning things which are and which are to come. Wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah and they are the words which my brother has desired that I should speak unto you." Do you see this President Monson, President Nelson, Jacob and Nephi, that there's this obedience, there's this brotherhood that I want to do what I'm being asked to do. "They are the words which my brother has desired that I should speak unto you. And I speak unto you for your sakes. That ye may learn and glorify the name of your God." Wouldn't that be a good conference question? What do I need to learn and how can I better glorify the name of God?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	18:55	"And now the words which I shall read," verse five, "are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel. Wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah, which may be likened unto you because ye are of the house of Israel." What strikes you guys in there? When you see that and think, okay, here we are going into Isaiah, anything catch your attention?
John Bytheway:	19:23	Verse 23 I think, before he goes into those first two Isaiah chapters.
Hank Smith:	19:28	This one always makes me laugh when Jacob stands up and says, I got an assignment from my brother. I can just hear the audience going, let us guess. You're going to speak on Isaiah. Because if Nephi gets a chance, that's who he's going to use. And now he's passed that onto his brother. If you get a chance to talk to the people, use Isaiah. Talk to them about Isaiah.
Hank Smith:	19:52	It's so interesting to me that they're so excited about it. And yet for modern day Israel, for some members of the church including me sometimes, I'm like, Really? Did you have anything else that you could use? So when Jacob starts out, he says, "These are the words." Where does he go? He goes, "Thus sayeth the Lord God, 'behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles.'" Where is that then? Does Jacob start in 49:22?

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 20:20 Yeah. And then he's going to give us a little more context. And I think even understanding, we're going to hear this a lot, ye are the house of Israel. I don't know what that means to each of us. But I think this is a good chance to say, I need to go get out my patriarchal blessing, and remember that I have a declaration of lineage there. And that that lineage affirms that I am of the house of Israel, and that there are associated gifts and blessings and warnings stated there to show me how to do the work of the gathering. And to remember that. There's another thing Jacob's going to do here that matters. Verse 10, I think, is a very succinct definition of scattering. And it's hardening hearts and stiffening necks. And so it doesn't have to be physical. It's very much about the condition of my heart and where I'm at.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 21:17 And then in 11, that he tells us the gathering is when we come to the knowledge of the redeemer. We'll be gathered together again to the lands of our inheritance. And so knowledge of Christ, knowing Christ, and we've got to really articulate what does knowledge mean. To be able to say, Okay, I want to be gathered. Okay, I need to know him. And I think that that connotes an intimacy, a closeness, a familiarity. And again, this really tees up where we're going with these Isaiah chapters.
- Hank Smith: 21:52 Yeah. So he only quotes a couple of verses there, and then he goes on to give a commentary about what he's just read. So that testifies to what you told us before, which is, hey, if you want to understand Isaiah, read the Book of Mormon.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 22:05 Yeah. Absolutely the best commentary. And Jacob, to me, is a good old friend. He's one when I need a good doctrinal boost, he's one that I need to sit with Jacob that he gets anxiety even. And I don't know that he would describe it the way that I might describe it, but he's familiar. He's a friend. And so his commentary is clear and helpful in understanding where to go with this.
- Hank Smith: 22:32 Yeah, that's interesting because he quotes the Isaiah section that the Lord will lift up a standard and that kings shall be thy nursing fathers and Queens shall be thy nursing mothers. Their faces towards the earth, they'll lick up the dust of thy feet. And now Jacob says, let me talk somewhat about those two verses I just showed you. There's going to be a scattering. We're living it. That seems to be what he's saying. We are living this scattering. But one day there will be a gathering. That's verse 11. I see that one day there will be a gathering. He's getting that from Isaiah.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 23:07 Right. And that the gathering is knowing Christ. But it's not enough to know him. And I think that a lot of times we want

there to be a social Jesus, where we need to know a doctrinal Jesus. Knowing him is knowing, yes, his love, but also his law. And that will include entering into covenants and living covenants.

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| Hank Smith: | 23:27 | So then Jacob makes that commentary and then he jumps to quoting Isaiah 50. So he has quoted from 49, just a little bit, and then he's like, now let me go to 50. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 23:38 | This is where you can have some fun and set the Book of Mormon and the King James version side by side. I love the book that Shon Hopkin and Ann Madsen did where they harmonized Isaiah. That's such a cool tool. To be able to say, what does it look like from the Dead Sea Scrolls, Joseph Smith translation, the Book of Mormon. What else did they use in there? The New Inspired version. I think for our sake, we'll just go into the Bible, because it's what we're doing with Come Follow Me. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 24:05 | What we're going to see out the gate with chapter 50, well first I think we pay attention to the chapter headings. Isaiah's going to speak as the Messiah. And there's going to be some shifts in the way Isaiah uses the language of the Savior. But this time he's going to be as, we're going to get a servant song in here. Let's see, we've had a few others, haven't we? So we'll have a servant song in here and some beautiful metaphors. And for me, I pay a lot of attention to anything that has to do with family. My work, my research, my teaching is focused on the family proclamation. And so any time I see anything, any sort of metaphor about the family, you've got my attention. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 24:48 | Again, this idea that we are God's family and we're fractured and he wants us back. And that's the mortal, state and condition. Salvation and exaltation is our work. We do it through the gathering, through helping people to come to know Jesus Christ. So what's the first thing that we see? "Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? Whom have I put away or which of my creditors is to whom I have sold you?" So a divorced woman, it's a metaphor. It's not exactly what Isaiah's trying to say here is, I'm going to talk to you about one single divorced woman, though the Lord cares about one single divorced mother. He's saying Israel's scattered. I use this little metaphor or this little couplet in my teaching. I start my first day of the family proclamation class and say, Welcome to Godhood 101. God wants us back. He wants to exalt us. Jesus is the way, through salvation. And that the family is the context. |

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	25:50	And when we see it that way, that's gathering, and we're all in process. With this class, it can sometimes be painful. The study of the family can be hard. But when we see this big picture, that it's the study of God's family and belonging there. Anyway, my point is, pay attention to these metaphors and maybe they won't interest you the way they do me, but I really love seeing what God does with people that might be marginalized, lonely, isolated, or feeling like they may not fit or belong.
Hank Smith:	26:22	It sounds to me like he's saying in Isaiah 50 verse one, I don't remember me getting rid of you. I don't remember me kicking you out. It's almost sarcastic. When was it that I kicked you out? When was it that I sold you? I knocked on the door. Nobody answered. I tried to friend you on Facebook. No one friended me back. What happened? And he's like, oh wait, now I remember.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	26:49	Well, and he's saying my covenant is still intact.
Hank Smith:	26:52	Yeah, I'm still here. Right?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	26:54	My covenant is still intact and it always will be. We have agency and we get to choose. We get to decide where we stand with God and if we will connect.
Hank Smith:	27:07	So the idea is I think in chapter 50, verse one, isn't it Jen, I want to be connected to you. You chose otherwise. "For your iniquities, you sold yourselves. For your transgressions is your mother put away." I didn't divorce you. I never left the covenant. You left the covenant.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	27:26	Well, look at the questions in verse two. That the power of asking a question. You think how many times of us are drawn to Alma five because we love the questions and we love this inquiry. So break it down that way. Wherefore when I came, was there no man? When I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem or have I no power to deliver? Those questions are good.
Hank Smith:	27:54	What do you say to those? I'm pretty sure you're pretty good at this. And even reminds them about the drying up of the Red Sea and the Jordan River. He's like, anybody remember those big moments when I had you walk through the Red Sea or across the Jordan Rivers? Anybody remembering that?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	28:11	The covenant is always intact. He wants us back. It's the work of exaltation and that he's very interested in us becoming gods. In

fact, have you guys learned that phrase, Lord God is going to show up. Do you see it there? If you see it in verse 4, 5, 7, 9. When I first heard or read Don Perry, he wrote an article called Hebrew School. It's in the BYU Magazine the summer of 2013.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 28:39 I want to read this to you because, this idea then of saying, look, the covenant's still intact, I want you back. But then he's going to speak as always, the Messiah. "Lord God," this is Don Perry, "is Hebrew Yahweh Elohim or Jehovah Elohim. The M, IM, at the end of Elohim indicates a plural word. So words like Cherubim seraphim, urim, thummin. Elohim literally means gods. "Some non-LDS biblical scholars maintain that Jehovah originates from the Hebrew to be verb. Thus Jehovah Elohim, some scholars assert, may be translated, he will cause to be Elohim. Meaning he will cause Gods to be. For Latter-day Saints, this literal translation of Lord God is significant because of our doctrine. The translation signifies that the Lord is a creator of gods. Or the idea that females and males immortality can become like God in eternity. Lord God is found hundreds of times in the Old Testament, he will cause Gods to be."
- Hank Smith: 29:45 That's fantastic. Yeah.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 29:47 Isn't that so cool? And that when you think about that then in this context, it's through covenants. It's this idea that yeah, I want to be gathered. Every single day I need to be regathered. I need to regroup and say where am I? I'm all in covenant living and that I want to become a god. He will cause me to become a god.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 30:08 So let's play with it for a minute using those verses. Again, don't know if you see them there. Four through nine is where you see them. So what do you see about this Lord God? Any stand out there?
- Hank Smith: 30:20 I almost hear Isaiah is saying, He wakes me up every morning to teach me. This God who can make gods has given me the tongue of the learned. He said that I should know how to speak a word in season. He waketh morning by morning. He waketh my ear to hear as the learned. He wakes me up every morning to teach me.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 30:41 Isn't that fun? Well, and that coming and gathering, if we use the definition that we've just articulated to come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, then I've got to be learned. There needs to be continuous learning of him in order to become like him.

John Bytheway:	30:57	Jennifer, sometimes we refer, and you used this phrase, a servant song. Can you kind of explain that more? Because we see them throughout Isaiah, and that might be new to some of our listeners. It was to me when I first started studying Isaiah, hearing scholars call it a servant song.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	31:16	My understanding of the servant song is that he's speaking as though he's Jesus. Do you know what I think of is a talk that Elder Holland gave.
Hank Smith:	31:25	The Inconvenient Messiah.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	31:27	The idea of the servant song is that here's this poem or this expression of my service. Am I getting that right? Is that your understanding?
John Bytheway:	31:36	Yeah. I remember the first time I heard that I thought, what's a servant song? And then I thought, okay, songs in the Old Testament, like a Psalm. He's being poetic, he's describing something, but it's about this servant. And because we have this chapter heading, Isaiah speaks as the Messiah, we know who the servant is. And sometimes because it's Isaiah, he may be being dualistic and talking about the house of Israel as the servant, all of us, Covenant Israel as the servant, other times it's the Savior as the servant, or maybe both, because he's Isaiah. I just thought that our listeners might, now what's a servant song? Might want to know.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	32:17	I think the important thing with that, again, if we're seeking application. Is to see that it is in the service that we become. That there is, and we're going to see it in Isaiah 53, to be broken, to be malleable, to be taken to the dust and that he'll exalt and lift, but that it's in his work.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	32:40	And one of the things that's been really stunning to me in this study is the number of times the Holy Ghost has just nudged me and said, "Do you see your covenants in here?" Even in this with the Lord God. Like Hank, you're talking about the work we need to do to learn. But even in verse five, he's opened my ear and I was not rebellious. I gave mine back to the smiters. It's a surrendering. It's the use of agency. That so often we go in a negative mindset instead of the power within us, because we are divine, because we have this potential. To be able to own up to that greatness, he will help me in verse seven and in verse nine. He will obey, if in verse 10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light." I get to choose that. In

contrast to verse 11, to kindle a fire that compass yourself about with sparks and walk in the light of your fire.

- Hank Smith: 33:51 Yeah, you try to do this yourself, it's not going to work. You try to walk in the light of your own fire, you're going to lie down in sorrow.
- Hank Smith: 33:59 Chapter 50, I love how he gets stronger and stronger. He starts to see, if the Lord is with me, who's going to confound me? Verse eight, "He is near that justifieth me." God is near, "Who will contend with me? Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me." I love Isaiah's confidence. Once he sees I've got the Lord God on my side, I'm going to win. I'm going to be redeemed. I'm going to be humble. I'll turn my back to the smiters, but in the end I'm going to win because I know who I have on my side. That seems to me to be the message of chapter 50 there, the excitement builds.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 34:34 Well by virtue of covenant. And we're going to get here with talking about the Sabbath when we get into chapter 56. But this idea, I think all the time, when do we start preparing for the sacrament? The moment it finished. The moment we finished, we're preparing again for that next time to get to renew and remember. And that thinking about him, that blessing to always have his spirit, if we will remember him, that's to be taken at face value. And that power is every one of ours, if we'll claim it, to be able to be strong like that.
- Hank Smith: 35:12 Now Jennifer, I don't know if there's a natural chapter heading here. Sometimes those chapter headings, they get in the way. Because it goes right to follow, he says you're walking in your own light. That's chapter 50 verse 11. And he says, Instead of doing that, it seems to me in 51 verse one, look back to the original covenant. Look back to Abraham and Sarah. Don't walk in the light of your own fire, come get into the fire of the covenant.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 35:40 That's right. And to go back to Abraham, what do we know about the Abrahamic Covenant? And what does that mean to us to have the blessings of posterity, the power of the priesthood in our lives? The promises that are available to us by virtue of covenant living. This is really where family history comes in, that yes, knowing that we belong to Abraham, go back to your patriarchal blessing, I'll say it again, and see that blessing of belonging, that there is a declaration of lineage that says you are the seed of Abraham like you're saying in verse two of chapter 51, "Abraham, your father and unto Sarah that bear

you, for I called him alone and blessed him and increased him."
And the same blessing is ours to be increased.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 36:30 When I know my generations, when I know the names. This is one of the things I've done is I've taken five generations of grandparents and great grandparents and so forth and I've got them all on my calendar on my phone so that I know when their birthdays are and I know when their anniversaries are. And then I'll get the pop up. And that's the reminder today's the day to especially study that person. To know them, to connect to who I am and my lineage. Same is true with Abraham, to connect back and to know Abraham.
- Hank Smith: 37:05 So instead of walking in the light of my own fire, why don't I walk in the light of the fire the Lord has provided? He reminds them of the promises he gave to Abraham. Like verse three, "For the Lord shall comfort Zion. He will comfort all her waste places. He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord." What can the world offer? What can the light of your fire, from 50 verse 11, offer that compares to 51:3, what the Lord has to offer?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 37:34 And in fact, look at those words, me and my and I. Verses four through 16, I'd say we go circle and highlight those words, Me, my, to be able to see that, Hank, is so sweet. Here's what he offers and "Hearken unto me, my people." Verse four, "Give ear unto me, oh my nation, for a law shall proceed from me." And to learn to love that law, to cherish and live God's law. "My righteousness is near." In verse five, "My salvation is gone forth." And on it goes. "Wait upon me and on mine arm shall they trust." In the middle of verse six, "But my salvation shall be forever and my righteousness shall not be abolished." You get to choose. Walk with me and this is all yours. Walk on your own...
- Hank Smith: 38:34 Yeah, walk with the light of your own fire. Give it a try. And he calls it sparks. Walk with your own sparks if you want them, but look what the Lord offers.
- John Bytheway: 38:45 And sparks are so brief, they have so little illumination and then they're gone. And the light of God is much more constant. I like that verse one is maybe an Isaiah way of saying you're a chip off the old block. But you know what I love about verse two here is, the Abrahamic covenant doesn't happen without Sarah. And I love that he says, "Look unto Abraham your father and unto Sarah that bear you." I love that this Abrahamic covenant, maybe we could call it Abraham/Sarah Covenant. Just I love that he mentions, this doesn't happen without Sarah. And we know

		<p>their story, and we know that he was promised this posterity. And then Sarah for a long time didn't have children. And so I love that he mentions both of them there. I think that's significant.</p>
Hank Smith:	39:35	Yeah.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	39:35	<p>It carries on that family metaphor that I love so much. That in such a contrast of the bill of divorcement of your mother, here's an intact family, but that it didn't come easy for them. That there was time and work. And I do think sometimes we forget the purpose of a fallen state. That we're meant to struggle. We're meant to become gods, and that there's going to be a lot of work to get there. Hank, tell us about verse seven.</p>
Hank Smith:	40:03	<p>I like what you said there. When you look to Abraham and Sarah, you don't look to perfection. They struggled. It wasn't an easy thing. They were blessed tremendously, but they were blessed through their struggling. It's almost as if he's saying, can you go back and read Genesis and really learn? Don't forget their story.</p>
Hank Smith:	40:22	<p>And I just love where he says in verse seven, "Hearken to me. Hearken to me." Why are you looking other places? Hearken to me. I can give you what you want. "Ye that know righteousness. The people in whose heart is my law." You know it, I know it. Stop worrying about what other people think. "Fear ye not the reproach of men. Neither be ye afraid of their revilings." That's going to go away, but put on the strength of the Lord. This does seem like a big pep talk.</p>
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	40:51	<p>And huge reminder, a huge reminder of what it means to be a covenant people. I've got to check myself all the time. There's this constant worry about the horizontal influences instead of going vertical. And that vertical connection that gets in my heart, that your law is here and that I have to slow down and be still and really receive that power instead of the distraction all around me.</p>
Hank Smith:	41:17	Look vertical, don't look horizontal. That's verse seven.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	41:21	<p>Yeah, go vertical on this. And that's the challenge that I think President Monson said that once. It's better to look up. Isn't that right? Wasn't it President Monson? It's better to look up. You're going to note while we're lifting up our eyes was one of them, in fact. Then we're going to get awake, awake a couple of times. It's going to come up three times, 9:17 and 52:1.</p>

Hank Smith:	41:42	Jen, doesn't that tell you Lehi read Isaiah?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	41:46	Totally. I think so.
Hank Smith:	41:49	What is that? 2 Nephi 1? That's Lehi's message to Laman and Lemeul. Awake. Awake.
John Bytheway:	41:54	Hank, thank you for mentioning Lehi. This idea of waking up, all of these verses that say awake are for people who are already awake physically. And it's a different kind of wake up. To remember the words of President Ezra Taft Benson who said, "We must be shakened and awakened from a spiritual snooze." And I love the metaphor of a snooze button. I'm going to get my act together as soon as school's out, as soon as this, as soon as this, and we reach over and hit our spiritual snooze button. And this awake is your spirit, you're awake physically, because you're hearing me, because you're reading these words. But to wake up spiritually to what's happening, it seems that's what every general conference I feel like we're being invited again, wake up.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	42:43	Your shake is going to come in 52:2. "Shake thyself from the dust. Arise and sit down." I wonder what it would look like for us to really, really live our covenants. That this idea awaken and awaken, put on strength. We live so beneath our privilege as covenant members of the church of Jesus Christ. And there's such power that we have to harness and claim and building Zion. Zion's going to come up.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	43:14	I think a lot of times we talk about Zion and we just can't wait for Jesus to come and clean this mess up, forgetting that we've got work to do in building and establishing that. And then he's going to come and help and be a part of it, but he's already very much present in our lives.
Hank Smith:	43:30	He makes this beautiful analogy in 51:9. Again, referring to their history. He says, "Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon." If you just know that that's Egypt and Pharaoh, so he's hearkening back to the Red Sea there. "Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep." So not only has he now reminded them of Abraham and Sarah, he's now reminding them of Moses and crossing the Red Sea and how he made the way. Do you remember that? Remember how I made the way? I can do that again. Verse 11. "The redeemed of the Lord shall return." He kind of points to this, I'll do it for you, too. I'll make a way.

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	44:10	Yeah. And joy. Do you see the joy? That over and over we get this joy. And that verse You were just in, verse 11, there's joy. It is to be found and it's attainable. Anything else in there? Verse 16, again, this bookend. "Thou art my people."
Hank Smith:	44:30	These chapters so far have been a pep talk, reminder, get back on the covenant path. It sounds like a President Nelson talk. If you're off the path, get back on. Remember how good God has been in the past? Get back on that path.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	44:46	Do you ever wonder about the covenant path? I love that visual. I love the language of it. Sometimes I hear people talking about it though, and they describe an ordinance path. We want to delineate it, make it a checklist. And so, okay, I was baptized, I received the Holy Ghost, the priesthood and the temple and different things. The reality of the covenant path is that it's work. And in a lot of ways we're cleaning up a path. I mean, can you imagine, sometimes you see people on the side of the road with their vests on and they're cleaning up the road. The covenant path is more about engagement. It's about living the covenants. It's about practicing and becoming, than it is about a delineated process. And there's a messiness in that, because it necessitates engagement with other people.
Hank Smith:	45:36	I like that, Jen.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	45:38	Tell me more. What is it that?
Hank Smith:	45:39	Well, I just like that. The covenant path is not a checklist of ordinances. It's living those ordinances. I've never thought of that idea of I've got my orange vest on and I'm cleaning up the way, because I've made promises.
John Bytheway:	45:54	Yeah, I like that President Nelson has talked about the happiness we have isn't so much the circumstances of our lives as it is the focus of our lives. And I think the focus of our lives can be the covenant path. We're focused on the Savior, being where we're supposed to be, trying to live the gospel repenting every day. And I love the idea that a path, there's a lot of off-ramps, there's a lot of temptations, but thankfully because the Lord, there's a lot of on-ramps, too. And if you're not on the covenant path or feel that you are, there's on-ramps. Come back on.
John Bytheway:	46:27	I like what you're saying, Jennifer, that we don't want to make it a checklist or an ordinance thing, but it's that mindset that Martin Harris was told, Learn of me, listen to my words, walk in

the meekness of my spirit, and then this wonderful promise. You will have peace in me. I love that that was given to Martin Harris, and we talked about this last year, who was... some huge decisions. Should I mortgage my farm to finance the Book of Mormon? Can I take the 116 page manuscript to show my wife? Can I take these characters to Charles Anthon? And here's the Lord saying, "Martin, keep it right here. This is where you'll find peace and learning of me and listening to my words." And maybe that's another way to describe the covenant path, Jennifer. Thanks for saying that.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 47:10

You bet. My experience has been, he's never left me on my own. It's never been that life was always smooth sailing. But I know you're happier when you're living your covenants. And that there needs to be a really concerted, focused, intentional effort that I want to live my covenants today. I want to have a straightforward experience with Jesus Christ. I want to draw him into my life. And life can be messy. I mean, I was single a long time and frankly it was pretty fun. I had a good time. But that covenant, that's a rising from an altar of the temple of our God with my sweetheart, nothing can compare to the chance we have to work it together.

Hank Smith: 48:02

Please join us for part two of this podcast.



John Bytheway:	00:01	Welcome to Part 2 of Isaiah 50 through 57, with Dr. Jennifer Platt.
Hank Smith:	00:07	I really love the end of 51 where he says, "Now hear me." I can hear a dad. "Listen to me. You're in such a bad place. You're afflicted, you're drunk, but not with wine. Let me take this from you. I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling. I can take your suffering from you. Let me take it from you." There's such a beautiful invitation. That's an on ramp, I think, verses 21 and 22, as John would say. The Lord's like, "Get back on. You're suffering out there. There's no reason for you to suffer out there. You're my people; get back on the path."
John Bytheway:	00:46	Oh, can I add something to that, Hank? This idea of what is on the path. I think it was President Nelson who said, this might have been June, 2018, "Keep on the covenant path. Your commitment to follow the Savior by making covenants with him and then keeping those covenants will open the door to every spiritual privilege and blessing available to men, women, and children everywhere." And so this same pleading that the very best things I have to offer are found on this path.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	01:18	All that the father hath-
John Bytheway:	01:19	... is on this path. So there's on ramps. Get on.
Hank Smith:	01:23	Yeah. And if you want to see miracles like Sarah and Abraham, and the Red Sea, the Jordan river; you want to see those type of miracles, this is the path you got to be on. I like 51. That was good.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	01:37	I like 51 too. I like it all. You guys, thank you. This has been so fun for me to have something to just drill deep in. I take assignments better than having to create them myself.
Hank Smith:	01:46	Me, too.

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	01:47	So Jacob's going to wrap up his quotation in the first two verses of chapter 52. And then I think we need to write next to at the end of verse two, 52:1-2, I would then write in the margin, assuming people use paper scriptures, 2 Nephi 9:1-3, that he's going to finish up his Isaiah, and then he's going to launch into his commentary and help us to see. 2 Nephi 9; wow, where do we even begin?
John Bytheway:	02:16	Yeah, it's such a great chapter.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	02:18	Why don't we read 2 Nephi 9:1 and 3 to tie this together with Jacob's commentary.
John Bytheway:	02:25	Okay. So this is 2 Nephi 9:1. "And now, my beloved brethren, I have read these things that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel. That he has spoken unto the Jews by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down from generation to generation, until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God, when they shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise. Behold, my beloved brethren, I speak unto you these things, that ye may rejoice and lift up your heads forever, because of the blessing which the Lord God shall bestow upon your children."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	03:06	"Your children." There's family again.
Hank Smith:	03:09	He's just read 51 and 52, and that's his closing thought. I have read you these things so you can know that this is generations. It'll go... It's you and beyond you.
John Bytheway:	03:20	I think that the things that were included in the Book of Mormon were for our day, but I can also feel like here are these folks who have been uprooted from the lands of their inheritance and have been scattered, not because of wickedness, but to preserve them, to the other side of the planet. And I love that they're constantly being reminded, we are still covenanted Israel, and we have still got to keep our covenants. This is still who we are. We have a different area code now, but this is still us.
John Bytheway:	03:50	I love that reminder. And even when Jesus comes, he keeps telling them over and over, "You are my sheep. You are the ones I spoke of over there. I have not forgotten you, and you are part of this covenant, which is the blessing and a burden. It's an obligation as well as a wonderful privilege and blessing." And

I feel like we read it like it's for us, but it's also, they're telling them, "This is who we are. We got to live up to who we are."

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| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 04:20 | Well, in the same way that we hear that message today. That throughout the dispensation, the message has been, "We are the house of Israel." And that if we could just claim our true identity and be true. And sure, there's a wrestle. We're mortal. We're fallen. And there's conditions in a fallen state. But to tap back, that's the tap route to go back to over and over again. I am a beloved daughter of God. I belong to the house of Israel. Our kids every night, when we pray together as a family, as we finish up family prayer, the family cheer, "I am loved. I belong to a family that loves me. I am a daughter of God." I want my kids to know that deep, that it's going to govern who they are and how they're going to live. |
| John Bytheway: | 05:08 | That reminds me of that recent young adult fireside that President and Sister Nelson gave where he said at the very end, "These are these three identities that you remember. You are a child of God, you are a child of the covenant, and you're a disciple of Jesus Christ. And to keep those understandings of who you are in your mind." |
| Hank Smith: | 05:28 | That seems to be what these chapters have been about so far, is bringing them back into a remembrance of who they are, and what is offered to them. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 05:39 | Well, it's amazing. And it's not over is the part that's so cool. That as you keep going, chapter 52 and the redemption that's going to come without money. We're going to get money coming up, and how we're sold and different things that way. But that there's no need for money. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 05:54 | Look at verse six, chapter 52. "Therefore, my people shall know my name. Therefore, they shall know in that day that I am he, that doth speak, 'Behold, it is I.'" And so if to be gathered means to come to know a true knowledge of the Redeemer, here we go. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet." There's your feet, John. My understanding of beautiful, I'm not a Hebrew scholar, but <i>na'a</i> and that it's a verb. That this is not just beautiful description, but it's a beautiful action. |
| John Bytheway: | 06:31 | Oh, that's nice. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 06:33 | And so there's an illusion to that. Because what are you doing? Your beautiful feet are bringing good tidings. They're publishing peace. They're bringing good tidings of good. This is ministering, |

guys. This is the way we engage with each other in the ministry of saying, "How can I help lift the burden? To comfort, to sustain, to bless, to help other people.

- Hank Smith: 06:55 I like that. I'm writing that in. "This is ministering."
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 06:58 It is though, isn't it? I think all the time about ministering. And I think about how it's challenging. It can be hard to figure out how to be an assigned friend. My little boy came home from first grade the other day with the list of how to be a good friend. I took a picture of it, and I'm going to send it to the Relief Society presidents in my stake and say, "This is ministering." It's to listen, and to be helpful, and to have a good time. But it's also to help lift and elevate other people's lives, to help. And isn't it something we get to be assigned to get to know someone in that way? It's missionary work, too. And it's the gathering. And it's being able to say, "I can't bear the thought of you not having what I have." That as we go through these previous chapters and see all the power and the promises, I cannot bear for my neighbor across the street to not know this, to not feel this, to not have this in their lives, too.
- Hank Smith: 07:56 I can see I'm the one... I'm sure John thought of this already, too, is to see the wicked priest of King Noah twist this into, "You should never be telling people they're sinful. You don't have very beautiful feet if you're telling people that."
- John Bytheway: 08:13 This is the Isaiah verse that King Noah and his wicked priest used to try to stump Abinadi. But what does this verse mean? "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace that bringeth good tidings of good." I think that they're trying to say, "Abinadi, you're kind of a gloomy Gus here. You don't sound like a prophet. That's not how Isaiah described a prophet." To read Abinadi's response, "Are you priests and pretend to teach this people? And yet you ask me what these things mean?"
- Hank Smith: 08:47 Yeah. You know what this means.
- John Bytheway: 08:50 What are you teaching these people? And they say, "We teach the law of Moses." "And why don't you keep it?" And he goes on and quotes 10 Commandments, everything. But what I love is that Abinadi eventually answers their question, and he uses a past present future thing. I'm looking at Mosiah 15. He talks about whose seed, and we're going to get to this when we get to Isaiah 53, "These are they whose sins he has born. These are they for whom he has died to redeem them from their transgression. And now are they not his seed? Are not the

prophets everyone that has opened his mouth to prophecy that has not fallen into transgression?" I mean, all the holy prophets ever since the world began? "I say unto you, that they are his seed, and these are they who have published peace, who have brought good tidings of good, who have published salvation and said unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth.' And oh, how beautiful upon the mountains were their feet." And again, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that are still publishing peace." And I love to look at my students to say, "Now Abinadi is going to talk about you." Again, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace."

Hank Smith:	09:58	Will, yeah.
John Bytheway:	09:59	"From this time, henceforth and forever." I was reading from Mosiah 15:12-17. This always touches me that Abinadi eventually answers their question. So what I love about this is that this is their initial question to Abinadi. He asks them what they are teaching, and they say, "The law of Moses." But then he teaches them that redemption comes through Christ, quotes Isaiah 53 to them, as if to say, "How could you miss this?" Yes, keep the law, but salvation comes in Christ. Redemption comes because of Christ. Quotes Isaiah 53, but then eventually tells them, now, this is whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains. They are his seed. They are Christ's seed. I love how he does answer their question, but he teaches them all about the Savior in the middle of it.
Hank Smith:	10:51	Don't you love it? They quote Isaiah 52 to him, and he's like, "I can quote Isaiah 53 to you." Right?
John Bytheway:	10:59	It's a really good question, because if you have that memorized.
Hank Smith:	11:03	Yeah, 52 seems to be an invitation to come back. Come back, depart out of Babylon, and awake and come back to the God who wants to bless you.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	11:14	And partner in his work. Be a part of this. Be all in. So exactly a year ago, you guys, I was just getting ready for a semester to start. I had this very clear prompt come into my mind. It was, "Mothers who know do less," from Julie Beck. And I started processing that and thinking, "Okay, what can be eliminated? What can we do to streamline life? How do we get things a little bit simpler?"

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	11:42	Exactly a week later, I was called to meet with my stake president. I go sit down with him. And I knew, I knew what was coming. And he said, "Do you know what's coming?" And I said, "Yes." And he goes, "Do you want to say it?" "No." He invited me. The Lord asked me to serve as the stake Relief Society President.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	12:01	And it boggled me, because here I'm getting this message, "Mothers who know do less." How is this supposed to be less? I started studying and working through. And you guys, I love the Handbook. I'm a Handbook junkie. Anyone who works with me knows, "Well, don't ask her until you've checked the Handbook." And so I went to the Handbook. And it says from the Handbook, chapter one, "I will be most effective when I align my service in the church with the work of God and the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ." And what came so profoundly to me was, I'm engaging in the work of salvation and exaltation. And this mother who knows, knows that that means anything else is a distraction. And I had to make some decisions about doing less. And now I've got this rubric, and the rubric is such that, what does that have to do with the work of salvation and exaltation?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	12:56	President Nelson, when he asked us to address distractions, he said this to us, to the sisters of the church. I had to pay attention to that. So for me, in a lot of ways, these Isaiah chapters have become an original Handbook of saying, "Here's the work of salvation and exaltation." And when I see verse 10 in chapter 52, "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God," I'd sure like to help him see. And I'd like to be a part of that in being able to say, "Count me in."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	13:32	And so being a part of something really big means that I've got to go into my life and ask some hard questions about what's distracting me. And bless my sweet little kids, they're six and eight, who will quote things like that. "Well, mommy, what does that have to do with God's work?" And that I suspect that God sometimes calls us into his work to help us to do the most important work in training children and helping them to see.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	14:02	So when we get into this next Servant Song and behold the Suffering Servant, that we need to pay attention when we get into chapter 53 to our part, and to where we come into the narrative, but also to where we partner it. I see covenant language in the Savior's suffering that invites us to turn and trust. There aren't chapter breaks in the manuscript. So really, Isaiah 53 should probably begin, don't you think, with verse 13

of chapter 52, right? "To behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled on high." See that word is now a trigger for me to say, "Get engaged in what really matters, the work of salvation and the work of exaltation."

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 14:55 I just want to ask you, this chapter 53 is so precious to us. It's such a sacred text. What do you love the most in here, that when you look at this and have an experience with 53? I mean, we're treading sacred ground here, friends. The holiest of events described here. What do you love?
- Hank Smith: 15:15 Well, here is a chapter that we read. We go through the standard works one a year, and there's certain chapters that come up in more than one, right? Certain verses that come up in more than one. So this is one that the Lord obviously wants us to see more than once every four years. And probably the part that has stood out to me in the last few years as I've studied it is verse three. "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."
- Hank Smith: 15:46 I think of how many of our listeners are men and women right now of sorrow, and they have become acquainted with grief. They're not best friends with grief. No one wants to be best friends with grief. But everybody listening either has, or soon will be, acquainted with grief. I think that there's a connection you can make with the Savior that he, too, was a person of sorrow and acquainted with grief. And he'll carry your griefs in verse four. "Surely he hath born our griefs." He will carry your griefs. He'll carry those sorrows. So not only does he have his own sorrows and his own grief he's dealing with, but he's going to carry yours. He will carry yours. To me, those that acquainted with grief has really stood out through the years.
- John Bytheway: 16:37 That's beautiful, Hank. I am saddened a little bit by, "We hid, as it were, our faces from him." That is such rejection. He was despised and we esteemed him not. We were really bad at estimating who he was. In fact it says it again. "We did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God." Oh, God must be punishing him. But what was really happening is, he was bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows. And this vicarious gift that he gave us is described, so I'm so glad, Jennifer, you said, "Read it slowly." Because you read these slowly, you really start to feel this like, "Oh." What Hank was saying. "He was wounded for our transgressions; bruised for our inequities. The chastisement of our peace." Some translations say, "The chastisement that brought us peace," "was upon him. And with his stripes," probably wounds from the whipping and scourging, "we are healed."

John Bytheway:	17:21	When you read this slow, you can't help but be affected by it, I think.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	17:21	Yeah. Yeah. Isaiah is powerful in the way he draws us into the narrative, that when we start to see that pronoun shift of we and our. I listed those, "We hid, as it were, our faces from him. We esteemed him not. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. With his stripes, we are healed. We, like sheep, have gone astray."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	18:19	I had a student once, her family were sheep herders. And she would just say, "Sheep are so stupid." I don't know sheep. She just said, "Sheep are so stupid. They just all go their own direction, but they know the shepherd's voice." And to think about that metaphor, "We, like sheep, have gone astray." Just stupid, doing our own things, distracted. We've turned everyone to his own way. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Who shall declare his generation?"
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	18:55	I loved the way the Come, Follow Me manual described this. Let's just applaud the writers over there for the work they've done with Come, Follow Me. Just in the intro on the very beginning paragraph, where it says, "Someone who could topple the walls of Babylon would be a mighty conqueror indeed. But that isn't the kind of Messiah that Isaiah described. Jesus Christ frees us, not by just opening the prison, but by taking our place there. He relieves us from our chains of grief and sorrow by bearing them himself. He does not save us from a distance. He suffers with us."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	19:33	I know that Savior. And it's interesting for me with this chapter, the shift that I've taken in my spiritual maturity and growth. I'm not mature, but in my maturing, that sometimes I'd read it with a lot of guilt and shame of, "Look what a loser I am." But today, I'm feeling more of this sense of, "How blessed am I to know this Jesus." And a lot of times, we have an expectation for who he is and what he should be. And this is who he is, and very much one who redeems and saves.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	20:11	And that he wants us to partner in it. He wants us to be a part of it. That when you look on, even, in those verses 10 and 12 are the promised outcomes for him, that with this exaltation, and even in verse 12, that he wants to share it with us. He'll divide the spoil with the strong. Well, good. I want to be strong and be part of that and counted in.

Hank Smith:	20:34	Amazing. The parallels, too, that we see. "He opens not his mouth." We know in Matthew 27, he was brought before Herod and didn't say a word. In Isaiah 53:9, "He made his grave with the wicked." That he was crucified between two thieves. "With the rich in his death."
John Bytheway:	20:52	Meaning Joseph of Arimathea's tomb.
Hank Smith:	20:56	There's just so, so many parallels here. It's almost as if you would say Isaiah just witnessed the crucifixion of the Lord. He was just standing there writing it all down, watching it. And here it is, what, 700 years in advance. 750 years before it happens.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	21:14	Doesn't that press you, though, to consider your own experience with him? That here's Isaiah, yes, a prophet being able to see it futuristic. We're on the other side of it with a written text. To be able to hold still with that, to sit with that, with him, and saying, "Ugh, I see, I see. Behold the man." And to be able to know him and see him. And again, the gathering is a true knowledge of the Messiah. It's really quite remarkable, the blessing we have of a canonized text, of a restoration, and of living at the fullness of time. So we are pretty blessed.
Hank Smith:	21:53	I like what you said there, Jen, that sometimes we read this chapter and think, "Oh, how terrible am I?" Because 54 says, "Let me take this terribleness that you feel, this barren woman who's in this miserable spot, and show you your future." That's what 54 is. It's this rejoicing that the Lord is now coming to find you. You could almost say, "You who did this to him. He took on your sorrows. He was wounded for your transgressions. He was bruised for your iniquities." And now in chapter 54, he's going to come find you and bring you home.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	22:30	Well, and it's important, though. Here's another place where we go into the chapter heading and mark 3 Nephi 22, because Jesus Christ himself is going to quote this chapter. The risen Lord, the conqueror, the Redeemer, and Savior. He's now going to be the one to say, "Okay, I trust this and believe this." Kind of like we did with Jacob. I'd say go into 3 Nephi 21 to preface what we're going to get in chapter 54. And Jesus says, in 3 Nephi 21:6, "For thus it behooveth the Father, that it should come forth from the Gentiles, that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles. For this cause that the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and come unto me and be baptized." Make a covenant, right? "In my name, and know of the true points of my doctrine, that they may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel."

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	23:28	So watch the net. All are invited. Everyone is to come and participate. There's no one left out of this unless you choose to be left out. "And when these things come to pass," this it's 3 Nephi 21:7. "When these things come to pass, 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 into the fulfilling of the covenant, which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel." So chapter 54 is a big deal, that the suffering servant is now saying, "Okay, here we go. Let's get down to business and let's get going."
John Bytheway:	24:10	There's this idea that Hank's introducing, I think when we read about the Savior's suffering and then we're invited by him, it's not trying to make us feel guilty with what he's saying. I think it's to try to make us feel loved.
Hank Smith:	24:24	When you go from 53 to 54, it shows the Savior's character, that he doesn't hold this atonement over your head, like a guilt trip. "It's a gift that I want to give you." Because 54 is this beautiful chapter on, "Come home. Look what I have for you."
John Bytheway:	24:41	Yeah. I love the invitation. The "come unto Christ" invitation is a "come as you are." It's not, "Come unto Christ, but be sure you're perfect before you come." It's, "Come unto Christ and be perfected in him." Right?
John Bytheway:	24:58	Do you remember Sister Chieko Okazaki? I have a favorite statement of hers. She said once, "Jesus is not waiting for us to be perfect. Perfect people don't need a Savior. He came to save us in our imperfections. He is the Lord of the living, and the living make mistakes. He's not embarrassed by us, angry at us, or shocked. He wants us in our brokenness, in our unhappiness, in our guilt, and our grief." I've always loved that idea of the sequence. We come as we are, and then that process begins of him remaking us and reshaping us. But we come as we are. And so I love after all of this in 53 that we read in 54, "Now come and let's do the work together." I think that's what you were trying to say, Hank.
Hank Smith:	25:49	Yeah. 54, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear." So here we have a woman who can't have children break forth into singing and cry aloud. "Thou that didst not travail with child." So he is just using parallelism there again, just repeating himself. He says, "Because you're going to have more children than anyone you've ever met. You better make the tent big. You better move the walls. You better strengthen the stakes, because here comes blessings that you've never thought of." I think of

chapter 53. Because of this atonement, the blessings are now coming from chapter 54, because he says the husband and wife metaphor, that Israel is his wife. And verse five says, "For thy maker is thy husband. The Lord of host is his name. The Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. He'll call you."

John Bytheway:	26:43	And I love verse seven.
Hank Smith:	26:44	Yeah. "For a small moment," yes, "you were forsaken. You were scattered. But I will bring you home. With great mercy will I gather you."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	26:53	So you brought in seven about this and then eight, "In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	27:05	And then 10, I think it is, "And the mountains, for the mountains shall depart." Here's a song for you, John. I love this song. "And the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee. Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed." President Nelson used this verse in a footnote in his last talk when he was talking to us about momentum. One of the things he asked us to do is to repent. He said, "Do not fear or delay repenting. Satan delights in your misery. Cut it short. Cast his influence out of your life. Start today to experience the joy of putting off the natural man. The Savior loves us always, but especially when we repent. He promised that though the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, my kindness shall not depart from thee."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	27:58	Now I'm a footnote fan, and that's, again, that added his footnote. This is what he says, President Nelson. "Kindness is translated from the Hebrew term hesed," I don't do the guttural, "A powerful word with deep meaning that encompasses kindness, mercy, covenant love, and more."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	28:21	And so to draw that then together and to bring it back to where we started, conference is coming, and here's your chance. We're really triangulating here, aren't we? To be able to say, "We've got Isaiah, we've got the Book of Mormon prophets, Jesus himself." We more than triangulated, I guess. And then President Nelson and these teachings that his kindness will not depart. And I fear that we have such misunderstandings about the doctrine and gift of repentance, that it's not punishment but liberation, and this chance to be expanded and to grow.

Hank Smith:	29:02	I've told my students over and over how the Lord sees a "sinner." Isaiah 54:11, "O, thou afflicted, tossed with the tempest and not comforted." He doesn't see, "O, you sinner." He says, it's almost like, "Oh, you poor thing. Behold, I have something better for you. I have a house with foundations made out of jewels, right? I have children for you. I want to protect you." There's so much mercy in, "O, thou afflicted, tossed with the tempest and not comforted." The Lord doesn't see you as some awful sinner. He sees you as someone afflicted by the adversary, and he wants you back.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	29:43	He wants you back.
John Bytheway:	29:45	Elder Holland said, "Repentance is perhaps the most hopeful and encouraging word in the whole Christian vocabulary." Just that we have the chance to repent. And we all know from having little children. Boy, one of your kids comes to you and says, "Dad, I made a mistake," or, "Mom, I made a mistake." You are already at that point, because they've come to you and said, "I made a mistake." You are already so eager to forgive. You don't even know what they did yet. But a kid comes to you and says, "Dad, I made a mistake." And oh, I hope our Heavenly Father's like that. I believe he is.
Hank Smith:	30:17	Me, too. To me, there's almost no wonder the Savior quoted it. It encompasses his character probably more than any other chapter of scripture, his mercy and kindness and love.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	30:28	Hank, a couple of times you've referenced his character, and I love the way you're inviting us to consider that; the character of Christ, and who he is, and coming to know him, not just as a far off possibility, but as someone that we can actually emulate and become. Thank you for the way you're doing that. You've said it several times, that we're seeing the character of Christ here. And I love that, Hank, that you're helping us to see that.
Hank Smith:	30:56	He feels so kind in this chapter.
John Bytheway:	30:59	Yeah
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	30:59	He is.
John Bytheway:	31:01	And even at the end, "No weapon that is formed against these shall prosper. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord."
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	31:09	Yeah. The Creator of all is going to be our great protector. He's going to protect, he's going to keep his promises, he's going to

provide, preside. I mean, there's a proclamation for you. He's going to take care of us as the great, ultimate husband that verse five calls him to be. Well, shall we finish up these couple of...

- Hank Smith: 31:26 Yeah, this has just been a spiritual feast. What's left here, Jen, in 55 through 57?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 31:34 Well, 55, 56, I've told you my rubric. So you'll see the chapter heading. It's going to teach us about salvation is free. Chapter heading of 56, "All who keep the commandments will be exalted." There's my exaltation salvation and the work that we're doing. And this idea that, well, not even an idea, this truth, this foundational truth that we're all invited to come.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 31:57 So verse one, it's like he's saying, "Hey, everyone that thirsteth come." And so everyone's invited; you just have to be thirsty and want it, and come. It's movement, advancement, progression, showing up, doing something, come and partake, and make covenants with me. With this, he's going to talk to us about the everlasting covenant, the covenant with David. So we could go back into Psalm 7 or Psalm 89 to see the covenant that God made with David. But ultimately, we should go forward to the Doctrine and Covenants to understand that this is the gospel with its covenants and ordinances. Or in other words, get on the covenant path. Come be with me. Come join me and make covenants. We can't neglect "let your souls delight in fatness." I love that.
- John Bytheway: 32:52 Yeah. I just barely underlined that, because Jacob says that 2 Nephi 9. I have in my margin, "a great new diet plan," right?
- Hank Smith: 33:04 Let your soul delight in fatness.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 33:07 Just be fat and happy. I went to Thailand one time and we took cooking classes. We'd finish up making a dish, and then we'd lay there on our mats. We finally looked up at our instructor and said, "How do you say fat and happy?" And I'm not sure he taught us the real term fat and happy, but we were fat and happy, you guys. We were. That's pretty funny. Okay, let's see here.
- Hank Smith: 33:32 "Come to the feast," it sounds like, doesn't it?
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 33:33 Come to the feast and eat the rich foods. 55:3 is quoted in the Handbook of Instruction chapter 25. This is the chapter about temple and family history work. And so it says in the Handbook,

"Uniting families for eternity is part of the work of salvation and exaltation. Temple and family history work is the means for uniting and sealing families for eternity. This work includes making covenants as we receive our own temple ordinances. See Isaiah 55:3 and Doctrine and Covenants 84:19-23."

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 34:05 And so again, just a connecting reference there to be able to see that I'm trying to bring it home. We are working, you and I, to fulfill these prophecies in the latter days, and that this is about the temple, and getting people to the temple, which is exactly where I think we'll end today, is getting to the temple.
- John Bytheway: 34:23 Jennifer, I think that you say you love the handbook. I remember the President Spencer W. Kimball threefold mission of the church days of proclaim the gospel, perfect the saints, redeem the dead. I love the way it has been more recently articulated. President Monson added take care of the poor and needy. But today, it is live the gospel of Jesus Christ, care for those in need, invite all to come under Christ, and unite families for eternity. That's the way the work of salvation is articulated today. Instead of redeem the dead, which is a little hard for an 11 year old to understand. But unite families for eternity? Oh, that's the temple. That's what you're talking about and what you just mentioned.
- Hank Smith: 35:10 There's so many invitations in these chapters to come and partake in these incredible blessings. Just, "Lean your ear towards me. Come, hear, and I will make your soul live." I mean, that's poetic.
- John Bytheway: 35:21 If you're thirsty, come. You don't even need money. Come get bread. Come let your soul delight in fatness. That's a good way to put it, Hank. These are invitations, and, "I want to give you everything," it sounds like.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 35:33 Maybe that's how we get everyone to show up to Relief Society.
- John Bytheway: 35:39 Well, this reminds me of John 6. Jesus feeds everybody. They follow him to the other side of the lake, and he's like, "You didn't come because you wanted to keep my sayings. You came because you ate the bread and were filled. But I could give you bread that if you ate it, you would never die."
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 35:53 Do you see in verse one is the water? "Come, ye, to the water." And then you'll see in verse two, here's the bread. And so it is. And that's the fatness. And that's so counterintuitive to think bread and water. Well, maybe the bread might make me fat,

but the bread and the water are very rich foods. It's the same. And this is going to matter when we get into the next chapter. But it's the same when Jesus is teaching about the sacrament, "and they were filled." That "they partook and they were filled."

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 36:22 And again, for us to understand, there's always this invitation to put off the natural man, to be able to say, "I get that I'm in a fallen mortal state, but this is about something so much bigger. Bigger than getting consumed in what my body's looking like, instead of what my body's doing."

Hank Smith: 36:40 Yeah. And that's why he says, "Incline your ear. I want to teach you things. I just don't want to feed you, I want to teach you." And I like that you said, "I'm in a fallen state," because he says later in verses eight and nine, "My ways are not your ways. My thoughts are not your thoughts." We are in different wavelengths. I love you, but you don't see what I see.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 36:59 That's right.

John Bytheway: 37:00 Yeah. I just think that verse eight has given a lot of people some hope when they're trying to figure things out and make sense of things. And sometimes, thankfully in hindsight, we go back and say, "Wow, the Lord was taking care of me, and I didn't realize it." And if we're in the middle of something, we can think, "Well, I know the Lord loves me, so I'm going to keep going. And maybe one day I'll understand." Because verse eight, "He's got his ways." But his outcome that he wants for all of us is he wants to give us everything and he loves us. That's an important verse. We hear that one a lot.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 37:34 It's really important. And the outcome is in verse 12, "Joy and peace. The mountains and the hills are going to break forth before you singing, and the trees of the field shall clap." Can you visualize? Here we go. Here's our metaphor of the covenant path. We've now got mountains and trees applauding us as we're jogging along saying, "You've got this."

Hank Smith: 37:56 And they're singing, yeah.

Dr. Jennifer Platt: 37:58 "You can do it." Let's wrap it up with chapter 56. There's this just beautiful inclusion of all in here. There's a couple of things that we need to pay attention to in getting into it. One is, and we talked about it a little bit in the last chapter, the action that we're called to take and make, our part in the covenant keeping and making, but also who is invited. Verse one, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Keep ye judgment and do justice, for my salvation is near

to come and my righteousness to be revealed.'" So keep and do. And then verse two, "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the Son of Man that layeth hold on it." Growing up, we had a little sign in our home from President Kimball, "Do it." It was the family mantra before Nike. And then, "Keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeping his hand from doing evil."

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| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 38:56 | We're going to get introduced to two groups here in verse three that are important for us to understand and get familiar with. The first is the son of the stranger, and the other's the eunuch. The stranger's mentioned in the Bible dictionary, it'll help us to pull this together. This is another thing with Isaiah, that when you're uncomfortable with the word... Or I even have this habit, if I'm reading something and I come to a word that I don't use in my everyday language, then I stop and look it up. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 39:24 | Now, "son of the stranger," then, to look that up and make sense of it, the Bible dictionary is going to teach us this definition that we're dealing here with a non-Israelite who's had permission to dwell in the Promised Land. These individuals through the law, there were laws that protected them, that they would be regarded and treated with justice and fairness. The tradition was such, there's going to be space and we're going to live civilly, and I'm going to do what I can. It even goes back to the tent that we were talking about earlier, that the tents enlarging and that the stranger needs to have a space and make space there. |
| Dr. Jennifer Platt: | 40:06 | And so there's the first, is this stranger who's a non-Israelite. The other's eunuch. The eunuch, an emasculated man, a dried tree with no seed has no inheritance. He's an outcast. This is our world today, that there are so many among us that feel like they don't belong, or that their circumstances, life conditions, frailties, are such that there's not a place for them. But this, to me, is God's evidence that everyone is invited. Everyone is invited to come. If you'll just please keep Jesus as your focus. That no matter what, if he is your priority, your focus, and you're striving, the salvation and exaltation will work out on the other side. And that we've got to keep that big picture. "My ways are not your ways." Well, that's a plan. That's a big picture plan saying this is a moment in a big scheme of things. Anything you want to jump in there? You're thoughtful. Or do you want me to keep going? |
| Hank Smith: | 41:20 | Well, he's saying that you are very much part of my family, as much as if you were born in as a son or a daughter. You are this foreigner, this refugee, this eunuch, whoever you are, who feel like you don't fit in. You are in the family. |

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	41:37	I had a student one semester in this family class who identifies as non-binary, and they were just wanting to figure it all out. I'll never forget the day. I don't even remember what specifically we were studying, but that they just looked at me and said, "I'm here. I'm here in this story. And I'm here in this narrative, and God has a plan for me." That's the power of God in his Word. And I know that. I know no matter the struggle, no matter the circumstance.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	42:19	I want to be really clear, I'm not calling anyone a eunuch. But we do feel like strangers. I'm so moved by this inclusion. But that the inclusion isn't about stay as you are; you've got to become, you've got to act and you've got to do and progress. And again, that goes back to those identities that President Nelson has given to us, that God has given to us. I am divine. And to know that and to own that greatness, that every day I want to grow in that divinity. I want to be more of her. That there will be that day to kneel at their feet. And to have that familiarity because of the work I'm doing now in seeking this Jesus.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	43:14	In this context, it's keeping the Sabbath. But you'll notice verse two it's Sabbath singular, verse four it's Sabbath plural. Which my understanding is that that's the whole of the law, that the Sabbaths plural means you're keeping the whole of the law. Your ordinances, your covenants. But where is it going to get us? It's going to get us to "my house." "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within mine walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." Do you hear King Benjamin?
Hank Smith:	43:57	Yeah.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	43:57	"The sons of the strangers that join," this is verse seven, "themselves to the Lord, to serve him." And that's the joining that I want to join you and partner and be a joint heir, and I'm going to serve. I'm going to love God, and I'm going to love others. And that's it. "To love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, even one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar."
Hank Smith:	44:33	The holiest place of Israel, they're going to be welcome. In the holiest places of Israel.

Dr. Jennifer Platt:	44:38	For all.
John Bytheway:	44:40	Verses three through eight, I just kind of bracketed those in my Scriptures about everyone invited to come and belong. That's beautiful.
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	44:49	I think it's Elder Gong that talks about covenant belonging.
Hank Smith:	44:53	Yeah. "The covenant community," I've heard it called before.
John Bytheway:	44:56	He does not save us from a distance; he suffers with us. Wow.
Hank Smith:	45:01	Jennifer, this has been a fantastic day. I love that we were in Isaiah. We just didn't talk about Isaiah; we were in Isaiah the entire time. Now to me, it's my idea of a good time. We're a little bit weird that way, John, aren't we? Let's go through six chapters of Isaiah. That's fun for us.
John Bytheway:	45:19	I spent a lot of time writing notes today. This was just great.
Hank Smith:	45:23	Yeah. When you feel like you've come away going, "I think I understand it a little more." I just feel like we're fulfilling Nephi's prophecy. "In that day shall they understand them."
Hank Smith:	45:32	Jennifer, I think our listeners would be interested in your journey, your story, as a scholar, as a teacher in church education for decades now. Your personal story of meeting your husband a little later than most. What's that journey been like for you?
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	45:49	Academics was never on my radar. It's something that the Spirit pushed me into, I think. And a great mentor; I should shout out to my mentor, Randall Wright, and the work that he did in pushing me toward that. Early in my PhD work, I'm a social scientist, and confronted with hard things. I was driving home; I had a little commute. The spirit whispers to me, "This is how people apostatize." I'm freaking out, you guys. I get home, and I fall to my knees at my bedside, and I say, "I don't want to leave you. And I can't afford you to leave me. What am I supposed to do?"
Dr. Jennifer Platt:	46:31	I got out a notebook, and I just knelt there. And I just want to be clear, that prayers don't always get answered like this, for me or for anyone. But there was very clear and direct revelation that flowed. This is what came to me, that I would be spiritually protected and would thrive if I would do some things. One was to never study on the Sabbath, and to make a commitment that

I would never do work on the Sabbath, which ties so nicely into what we just studied. Two, read the Book of Mormon every day, no matter what. Three, be in the temple every week. And if I needed to, I'd have to do a makeup. I remember Richard G. Scott talking about that, that he would do a makeup and go double the next. And then the last was to carry a copy of the family proclamation with me to every class and to use it as the framework for filtering what I was learning.

- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 47:30 And so I did. That was my commitment, and that's what I did. I used the proclamation to filter every theory, to filter every methodology, and to really discern what was going to help me to get my work done, and did it align with the brethren? I don't care what scholarship or what academia I might be called to. If it doesn't align and reinforce and support the brethren, I don't want to do it. It has been such a gift to me to be able to see.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 48:04 I mean, like I said several times, I think, that's my passion class to teach the family proclamation, and to be able to say, "I'm coming at it here with some real life experience." That has protected me all my days. It's continues to protect me to do those things. And for me, those are the essentials. I love to filter that and to say, "How does this align with the teachings of prophets, ancient and living?"
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 48:31 I've been very blessed. It led me to choose an extraordinary companion. When you talk about "my kindness shall not depart from thee," I have it in the flesh. That God sent and orchestrated a marriage to the kindest, purest of souls. To have a companion to complement and walk a parallel path of goodness together has been just amazing. For the last 10 years, I hope I can be a picture of hope, that there is hope. And that we can also say, "But if not, I know God knows us, and that he wants us to become, that Lord God, to become like him." I try to remember that. I think that that, for me, is this really helping my salvation and exaltation? I want to be like them and progress.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 49:30 I love Jesus. I love Jesus Christ. That's how you make it. That's the only way to make it.
- Hank Smith: 49:37 Beautiful. We are so grateful we were able to spend time with you today, Dr. Platt. Thank you for being here.
- Dr. Jennifer Platt: 49:47 Thank you.
- John Bytheway: 49:48 Yes, thank you.

Hank Smith:	49:50	Great are the words of Isaiah. We want to thank all of our listeners. We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, and our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. We hope all of you will join us next week. We have another week of Isaiah, one more left, on FollowHIM.
Hank Smith:	50:10	We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Nielsen, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

IS THERE HOPE FOR ME EVEN THOUGH I'VE MESSED UP?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. If you've been following us this year, you know that we take a single question from each week's lesson. I'm here with my co-host John Bytheway. Welcome John.
- John Bytheway: 00:17 Thanks Hank.
- Hank Smith: 00:19 And we are looking at Isaiah 50 through 57, and I thought a young person might say to me, "I feel like I've made too many mistakes. I feel like I've ruined my life. I feel like I've sinned too much. Is there any hope for me?" And that seems to be answered by some of these chapters, don't you think?
- John Bytheway: 00:40 Wow! I mean, I think it's answered hundreds of times in the scriptures. Of course there is. That's the whole message. And if you're not seeing that, go pick it up again. I noticed, not to switch over to the Book of Mormon real quick, but it's a kind of a fascinating factoid that the King James Bible nowhere appears the word plan. In the Book of Mormon though, I always ask my students, what's your favorite name for the plan of salvation? And they all say plan of happiness.
- John Bytheway: 01:07 But the one that's most frequently used in the Book of Mormon is plan of redemption. So look at that word. I've done too much. Oh no! You can be redeemed. And that is the most common. And it's used by Alma, four sons of Mosiah who were troublemakers out with Alma the Younger trying to destroy the church. And then what happened? They were redeemed. And so they used it the most, plan of redemption. And boy, that's the happy message. There is a Redeemer. Redeemer is in that word redemption.
- Hank Smith: 01:35 Excellent. Right out of the Come Follow Me manual this week. It says even though the Israelites spent many years in captivity, and even though that captivity was a result of their own poor choices, the Lord wanted them to look to the future with hope.
- Hank Smith: 01:49 And we could say that same thing to those listening. Even though some of the things we go through are a result of our

own poor choices, that's happened to me many times, the Lord wants us to look to the future with hope. He says in Isaiah 54, "I have called thee. Yes, things have been bad. But with great mercy, I will gather thee." Great mercies of the Lord are available to you. He wants to bless you.

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| John Bytheway: | 02:15 | And I think that's one of the wonderful things that we learn about the nature of God through the scriptures is how incredibly forgiving he is, and how he just keeps inviting over and over and over. And when we do dumb things over and over and over, he just keeps inviting over and over and over. It's like he said, "Yeah. You didn't like the consequences of that, did you? But come up to higher ground because I'm here and I'd love to take you by the hand and bring you back." |
| Hank Smith: | 02:42 | I think that's beautiful. I remember last year was we were studying the Doctrine and Covenants how often the Lord kept saying, "I forgive you. I forgive you." He was a relentless forgiver. He would pursue people, and find them, just so he could forgive them. And sometimes we think, "Oh! The Lord, he doesn't want to see me. He doesn't want to talk to me. He doesn't want to hear from me." |
| Hank Smith: | 03:00 | That voice is not the Lords. The Lord wants to talk to you. You're never unworthy to pray. You're never unworthy to go before your Father in heaven or go before your Savior and just talk. Talk out your feelings and let them know that you want to do better. And that you're weak. It's okay to tell them that you're weak. They know. They're filled in on your life. |
| John Bytheway: | 03:22 | Fully informed. |
| Hank Smith: | 03:24 | They're fully informed. Yet they still smile down upon you anytime you try to become more like them or try to draw closer to them. |
| John Bytheway: | 03:32 | Just the fact that you could get on your knees and just tell them, "Heavenly Father, I messed up." Just that right there is huge. He knows that you did. Go tell him and talk it out like you said. I think I've said it before, but a little quotation I heard years ago, Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees or upon her knees. So get on your knees. It just, tell him because what we've been reading, Hank, over and over again is that promise of, "I'm ready to take you back." |
| Hank Smith: | 04:01 | I will take you back. And he knows you're going to mess up again and again and again. And he still loves you. There's this |

great verse in Isaiah 54 where the Lord said, "The mountains shall depart, the hills will be removed, but I will still love you." You know how long it would take for a mountain to erode?

John Bytheway: 04:19

That's a lot of erosion.

Hank Smith: 04:22

He's like, "Do you see Mount Everest? Mount Everest will erode to nothing, and I will still love you. Are you convinced?" Even in verse 11, Isaiah 54, verse 11, he doesn't see you as a sinner. Look how he sees you. He says, "Oh thou afflicted, thou tossed with the tempest and not comforted." He feels bad for those who are stuck in sin or in difficult situations. He's not looking to punish you. He's looking to help you. He wants to be with you. He wants to help you. He says, "I can protect you. Come to me and I can protect you."

Hank Smith: 04:55

So to anyone out there who feels like, "Oh Hank, John, I've done too much. I'm lost." You're not lost to him. You're only a prayer away. Start doing the little things that you know you can do, reading a few scriptures, listening to the followHIM podcast. Maybe get rid of some of the accounts that you follow on Instagram or on TikTok, and just slowly make those changes. And you'll see the Lord come into your life. And he'll help you rearrange things. He's good at that.

John Bytheway: 05:25

Well said.

Hank Smith: 05:26

Awesome. Well, join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can find it wherever you get your podcast. We're with Dr. Jennifer Platt this week, and she does a brilliant job with these chapters of Isaiah. And then join us next week for another followHIM Favorites.