



## Show Notes & Transcripts

### Podcast General Description:

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

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

### Podcast Episode Descriptions:

#### Part 1:

Discover how Mormon employs the power of storytelling to teach essential values of deliverance, faith, and the importance of seers. Dr. Stephan Taeger's insightful perspective on the subject is essential for anyone interested in understanding the potency of stories in shaping our beliefs.

#### Part 2:

Dr. Stephan Taeger explores how our stories inform our possibilities through the story of Zeniff leaving Zarahemla and how the Lord creates miracles from our overzealous mistakes.

# Timecodes:

## Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Stephan Taeger
- 00:42 What’s ahead
- 01:57 Introduction of Dr. Stephan Taeger
- 03:20 Use of stories in teaching
- 04:48 We need deliverance
- 06:30 Stories and being human
- 08:27 Mosiah 7 - The Story of the Lost Nephites
- 09:22 Mosiah 7:3 - Going up
- 12:18 Mosiah 7:11-19 - God is aware of us
- 15:30 Mosiah 7:20 - Teaching with scripture
- 16:49 Profane, mundane, grand and beautiful
- 20:06 Mosiah 7:26 - Man of God = prophet whose every word comes true
- 21:05 Mosiah 7:27 - The condescension of the Son is the heart of the story
- 25:54 Mosiah is Third Person POV
- 27:47 Mormon is inspired storyteller
- 29:03 Mosiah 7:28 - Jesus Christ the Deliverer
- 30:50 Mosiah 7:31 - the East Wind
- 33:04 Elder Holland: Do we see the sacrament as our Passover
- 34:18 Mosiah 8:2-3 Zarahemla recap
- 38:28 Mosiah 8:9 A record of people who were destroyed
- 39:31 Limhi believes rescue is impossible
- 41:24 Mosiah 7:12,19 - Identify which scripture stories may help us
- 44:58 Elder Ballard and horse training
- 47:57 Mosiah 8:16-18 - Limhi needs a seer
- 52:20 Mosiah 8:18 - Search your memories
- 53:06 Mosiah 8 to Mosiah 9 is jumping back 80 years
- 55:27 End of Part 1 - Dr. Stephan Taeger

## Part 2

- 00:00 Part II–Dr. Stephan Taeger
- 00:14 Why Mormon includes the flashback with Alma the Elder
- 01:11 Mosiah 9:1-3 - Contentions and being over-zealous
- 07:01 Mosiah 9:6-11 - Zeniff makes a deal with the Lamanites
- 08:55 Our story determines our possibilities
- 10:23 Mosiah 8:18, 10:6 - Remembering the Lord
- 12:46 Elder Holland’s “A Prayer for the Children”
- 16:06 Elder Edgley “The Rescue for Real Growth
- 19:44 Mosiah 10:12-14, 17 The story the Lamanites tell their children
- 27:18 Elder Bednar on being offended
- 29:07 Mosiah 10:17 - Elder Groberg story

- 35:41 Mosiah 10:19-22 Zeniff's struggles since leaving Zarahemla
- 36:36 God can create miracles out of our mistakes
- 38:02 How Joseph in Egypt applies to Mosiah 10 and God's mercy
- 44:26 End of Part II– Dr. Stephan Taeger

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## Biographical Information:



Stephan Taeger was born and raised in Western Massachusetts. Following a mission to Las Vegas, he received a bachelor's degree from Utah Valley State College, a master's degree from the University of Utah, and a PhD in Instructional Psychology and Technology from BYU. Before coming to BYU, Stephan worked for Seminaries and Institutes for about 17 years. Stephan is married to his wife Kirsten and they have six children.

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## Miracles from Mistakes

GUEST: STEPHAN TAEGER



- Hank Smith: 00:04 Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith, I'm your host. I'm here with my zealous co-host, John Bytheway, and our guest, Dr. Stephan Taeger. John, we are past King Benjamin now, and we're looking into the rest of the Book of Mosiah, where things get a little complicated. All of a sudden, the storyline changes quite a bit.
- John Bytheway: 00:24 Yeah, it's kind of fun. We have a portion of the Book of Mormon where there's Nephites in Zarahemla, and Nephites in the land of Nephi, and then there's, later on, Lamanites in the land of Nephi, and it can be kind of confusing, so this will be fun to sort it all out a little bit.
- Hank Smith: 00:38 We got to look at how Mormon decides he's going to go do a flashback technique. It's a good thing we have an expert here to help us out. Stephan, what are we looking forward to today, Mosiah 7 through 10?
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 00:51 Yeah, like you both mentioned, what we're going to see here is a flashback. We're actually going to see a little bit of an adventure story. In fact, we're going to see the power of story itself, that's going to kind of act as sort of a motif as we go through this. And, of course, we're going to focus on the most important story, that is that God sent His Son to give His life for the world, and the implications of the stories and narratives we take up, and how they change the way we see the world, and how we live and act in the world.
- Hank Smith: 01:18 Yeah. I've noticed with at least the classes I've taught on the Book of Mormon, that as you get past King Benjamin, it becomes less and less familiar to Latter-day Saints. Most of us know the stories of 1 Nephi. We know the Isaiah chapters, and we know they're there, anyway. A lot of us know the story of King Benjamin, but after that, things start to go, "Wait, how many Ammons are there? How many Moronis are there? I better figure this out."

Dr. Stephan Taeger:	01:44	Actually, I was talking to Jared Halverson today in the hallway, and I told him, just in passing, what chapters I would be doing on followHIM today, and he said, "Oh yeah, that's right between King Benjamin's sermon and the Abinadi sermon, so you have that stuff in between."
Hank Smith:	01:57	Yeah, whatever it is. There's something there. John, Stephan joined us last year in the Book of Acts, and it was fantastic. However, maybe not everyone was joining us last year, so introduce him to us.
John Bytheway:	02:11	Yes, we're delighted to have Dr. Stephan Taeger. He's an assistant professor of ancient scripture. He received a PhD from BYU in Instructional Psychology and Technology. His research focuses on homiletics, which is the study of preaching, narrative instruction, and ancient scripture. So, I loved he mentioned the power of story, because I think we all love stories, and we love learning lessons from stories.
	02:35	Dr. Taeger and his wife Kirsten are the parents of six children. He also has a podcast called the REVIVAL podcast, which he does with David Butler. You might want to check that out. Also, a book called Ears to Hear: Mini Sermons That Make You Think. Stephan, you said that was mainly like mini parables from the Book of Mormon, is that right?
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	02:55	These are a collection of narrative sermons that are designed to create the same effect as a parable, so they slowly lead you up to a point, the sermon ends in such a way to invite thought. And ideally, as you think deeper, you'll receive your own insights from the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, and the Lord will teach you exactly what you need to learn as you study these little mini sermons that are connected to different Book of Mormon texts.
John Bytheway:	03:20	I'm looking at your bio here, instructional psychology, and I have to ask, what have you been taught about the use of stories in life and in scripture that might be interesting to our listeners?
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	03:31	First of all, it's interesting that the Lord inspired His prophets to primarily fill the scriptures with stories, rather than just a list of point one, go to church, point two, pay your tithing. There's definitely places for that, there's times for direct discourse. But one of the reasons why stories are so powerful is that they're experiential. You can actually feel something, experience something alongside with a story. And stories also bring down our defenses. We start to identify with certain characters in ways, maybe if someone was speaking to us directly, we might get a little defensive about. And we'll talk more about that

today as we dive into Mosiah 7 through 10, because there's some really powerful lessons here about the possibilities that stories open up for us, and also the ways that if we take up certain narratives, it closes down our capacity to have joy and happiness.

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|--------------------|-------|---|
| Hank Smith:        | 04:20 | That is fantastic. John, tell me the names of the podcast again and the book, I want to write them down.  |
| John Bytheway:     | 04:25 | Yeah. The podcast is called the REVIVAL podcast, and Stephan does that with our friend David Butler. And then that book was called Ears to Hear: Mini Sermons That Make You Think. And I've tried most of my life to avoid thinking, so that's one I need to pick up, to make me think.   |
| Hank Smith:        | 04:43 | Ears to Hear. That sounds like something Jesus would say.   |
| Dr. Stephan Taege: | 04:46 | I got it from Him. I did.   |
| Hank Smith:        | 04:48 | Hey Stephan, let me read from the manual, and then let's turn it over to you, find out where do you want to go. This is what it says, opening paragraphs. "While King Mosiah's people were enjoying continual peace in Zarahemla, their thoughts turned to another group of Nephites, who many years before had left to dwell in the land of Lehi-Nephi. Generations had passed, and Mosiah's people had heard nothing from them." You would expect, someone's gone for that many years, you might check in. "Mosiah asked Ammon to lead a search party to find the Nephites who had left. The search party found that these Nephites, 'because of iniquity', were in captivity to the Lamanites. But with the arrival of Ammon and his brethren, suddenly there was hope for deliverance." |
|                    | 05:29 | "Sometimes we're like these captive Nephites, suffering because of our sins, wondering how we'll ever find peace again. Sometimes we're like Ammon, feeling prompted to reach out to others and eventually find that our efforts have inspired them to 'lift up their heads and rejoice and put their trust in God'. No matter our circumstances, we all need to repent and 'turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart,' with faith that 'he will deliver us.'"   |
|                    | 05:54 | Beautiful. Stephan, with that, we're Mosiah 7, 8, 9, and 10. These are long chapters. We've got a lot to cover here. We're excited for you to walk us through it.   |

- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 06:04 Thank you. Sometimes, people discuss what it means to really be a human. What is it at the heart of what it means to be a human? For example, some people might say we're primarily thinking beings. That's probably helpful on some level. Other people might say no, the best way to understand a human is through their biology. What is the genetics, the DNA that they're made up of? Some people say no, maybe what a human is is you can really understand who someone is based on the culture that they come from.
- 06:30 And all of those are maybe helpful on some level in telling us something about what it means to be human. Now, of course, as Latter-day Saints, and as our dear prophet has reminded us, we are primarily children of God, and when we join His church, we then become children of the covenant, and disciples of Jesus Christ. That's first and foundational, and that's the primary way that we see ourselves. Some scholars have pointed out that humans are also storytelling creatures as well. That might be another element of what it means to be human, is we see the world and live in the world in stories. In fact, I have a quote from a scholar that says this: "Man or woman is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a storytelling animal. I can only answer the prior question of what story or stories do I find myself a part."
- 07:22 It's amazing, because I've noticed that with my own small children. They're very active, but one of the ways that they'll really stop and engage and listen is when I read them a story or tell them a story. There's something about that that really is at the heart of what it means to be a human. Some of the sweetest moments are front porch, summer night, crickets, stars, and you're laughing and telling stories. Or you're at a restaurant and there's bread, oil, vinegar, and you're laughing and telling stories. Or maybe there's a youth group sitting around a fire and they're telling stories of faith.
- 07:56 Today, we're going to look, really, at how stories influence us, how they change us, how they determine the way we act in the world, in a lot of ways. And these aren't just powerful stories we're about to read, but as these chapters unfold, we're going to see how the stories we choose to take up and believe affect us in profound ways. So, the little refrain I'd like to say throughout our time together is, and I got this from another scholar I'll quote later, "Your story determines your possibilities." Let's get into the story.
- 08:27 Mosiah 7 takes place around 121 BC. And you mentioned this earlier, Hank, about 70 to 80 years earlier, in 200 BC, a group of

people, a group of Nephites, wanted to return to the land of Lehi-Nephi, and the group that went south to try to find their original land of inheritance had not been heard of in a while. People in Zarahemla began to ask about this group that went south, and King Mosiah granted that 16 men would be allowed to try to go search for these lost Nephites.

08:59 So, right now we have this little adventure story that we're starting off with. If we're going to make this into a movie, it would be The Story of the Lost Nephites, or something like that. Sometimes people have said that every story is either a person going on an adventure, or a stranger coming to town. And what we get in Mosiah 7 through 10 is actually both. We're going to get both of these kinds of stories here in these chapters.

09:22 We'll start off in verse 3. "And it came to pass that on the morrow they started to go up." Now, it's interesting the text says to go up, when they're going south. The reason why it says they're going up is because they're going up to the land of Nephi, which is higher in elevation, and the Book of Mormon is perfectly consistent on that. "Having with them one Ammon." Now, this is not the Ammon that we see as the missionary in Alma 17. This is a different Ammon. "He being a strong and mighty man and a descendant of Zarahemla." He's a Mulekite. "And he was also their leader."

09:56 "And now, they knew not the course they should travel in the wilderness to go up to the land of Lehi-Nephi; therefore they wandered many days in the wilderness, even 40 days." As soon as a scholar of ancient text sees the number 40 in a text, they're going to start thinking of a few things. It could be that it was just 40 days, right?

Hank Smith: 10:16 40, yeah.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 10:17 And this is just a coincidence. But however, the ancients love numbers, they love to think about them. One scholar says 40 represents, quote, "important transitions." Another scholar that I found said it represents, quote, "divinely ordained periods." Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness and, interestingly enough, that story, that narrative is going to be talked about in this chapter. We're going to see that reference.

10:41 "And when they had wandered 40 days," distances in the Book of Mormon are measured by time, not by some measure of distance, but it's this amount of time passed, and that's how they traveled. "And they came to a hill, which is north of the land of Shilom, and there they pitched their tents. And Ammon

took three of his brethren, and their names were Amaleki, Helem, and Hem, and they went down into the land of Nephi. And behold, they met the king of the people who were in the land of Nephi, and in the land of Shilom." Both of these were given to a man named Zeniff, who we'll talk about later when we go to our flashback moment. "And they were surrounded by the king's guard, and were taken, and were bound, and were committed to prison."

11:24 Limhi is living in fear and worry and concern, and he's very anxious about the situation he's in. "And it came to pass when they had been in prison two days." Okay, so these three men were thrown in prison. "They were again brought before the king, and their bands were loosed; and they stood before the king, and were permitted, or rather commanded, that they should answer the questions which he should ask them." It's like, thank you for the clarification, Mormon.

John Bytheway: 11:53 "Okay, you are now permitted... No, let me change that. You are commanded."

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 11:58 That might show how careful Mormon is about the language he uses as he's telling these stories, his desire to be honest, and also help us to understand really what's going on here.

John Bytheway: 12:09 What we hear in the church sometimes, "Did you volunteer or were you voluntold?" They were voluntold to answer the question.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 12:18 Eventually, King Limhi says, "I desire to know the cause whereby you were so bold as to come near the walls of the city, when I, myself, was with my guards without the gate?" This is an intense moment. "Who do you think you are? Showing up, and being so bold to come near me when I'm without the walls of the city?" Afterwards, Ammon says, "I am Ammon, and am a descendant of Zarahemla, and have come up out of the land of Zarahemla to inquire concerning our brethren." If you were to pan on King Limhi's face when he realizes, "Wow, this is the moment. This is the moment we've been praying for, hoping for, this is the deliverance we've been looking for."

13:02 It's interesting that the way that God answered their prayers was by sending the search party. That sort of happened indirectly. There wasn't this glorious revelation, per se, but the Lord was, we would assume, involved on some level. President Kimball, he said, "God does notice us, and He watches over us, but it is usually through another person that He meets our needs." One of the most beautiful ways we can recognize the

hand of the Lord in our lives is to look for it in the goodness of others towards us. Not only is it that person, but it's the Savior Jesus Christ working through them to be a blessing in our lives.

- Hank Smith: 13:43 So, oftentimes, I might see, where's the hand of God? I haven't seen Him in my life. You're saying, look around you. All of these other hands are the hands of God.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 13:52 In that sense, small, little acts of kindness can be the Lord reminding us. He notices us, and He's aware of us. So, Limhi rejoices, he gathers the people together all at the temple, and he says, "Rejoice." Verse 19 of Mosiah 7. "Lift up your heads, and rejoice, and put your trust in God, in that God who was the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob." Grant Hardy, a really well-known Book of Mormon scholar, he points out how this title is connected with Moses delivering Israel from bondage. "And also, that God who brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and caused that they should walk through the Red Sea on dry ground, and fed them with manna that they might not perish in the wilderness; and many more things did He do for them."
- 14:42 Now, what's interesting is Limhi is drawing on the story of the Exodus. He says, "See? God used Moses, and He used great power to deliver Israel from bondage." And the implication, we can assume, at least on some level, is that he might be pointing to say, "Hey, He's going to deliver us. He's going to deliver us." I've even read some scholarship that... In the same miraculous, non-forceful, non-violent way that God delivered Israel from Egypt, He's also going to deliver these Nephites from being in bondage to the Lamanites.
- Hank Smith: 15:19 What a great point, that he's even studying this story beforehand, saying, "What did they do? How did they get out of bondage? Here it is. Here's our Moses."
- John Bytheway: 15:30 And then in verse 20, "that same God" also, I'm adding the also, "has brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem." He's saying, "Look, He did it for them, He did it for us, our fathers, and He can do it again." I just love that he's using a scripture story to build up faith, which tells us something about Limhi.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 15:50 Yeah, absolutely. And to quote another scholar, they say this, "Stories open possibilities to our imagination. The quality of those possibilities is vital to the quality of our future. A person without access to certain stories is a person without hope, without social vision." So, to go back to our little refrain, your story determines your possibilities. This is one of the reasons

why it's so important to deeply feast upon the Word of God, because as we study the scriptures, not just in a general way, but specifically, with meaningful study practices, we will be open to the ways that God can work in our lives, and new and exciting possibilities that He'll do that. I'd love to hear you think about this and talk about this, but if there was one scriptural story you wish you thought about more, that you wish you remembered more, that you wish you drew upon more, which scriptural story do you wish was a little bit more planted in your heart and mind? "I wish I remembered that more."

John Bytheway: 16:49 I was thinking of the story of Adam offering sacrifices, and the angel coming and saying, "Why are you doing this? Why are you offering sacrifices?" Adam saying, "I know not, save the Lord commanded me." I want my kids to know that story. We want everything to make sense; because so many things in the gospel make sense, we want everything to make sense. The "Nephi went forth", 1 Nephi 4:6, "not knowing beforehand". "I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand", and sometimes we get the benefit of knowing why we're doing things, but only after we do it. That's what I learned from Adam, and I need to remember and teach that story more. That's one that comes to mind.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 17:26 That's so beautiful, especially because we live in a culture that says, "Everything has to be explained to me. I need to know all of it. I need you to explain it from beginning to end." In a sense, if that's the way we think about the world, then explanation and reason becomes our God. But if God is really the ultimate source of our life, and truth, and everything, then it's enough if He commands it. It's enough, if He's really the source of what I'm going to do in this world. I agree, John, that's a beautiful story, and goes against some of the cultural currents we see in our time.

Hank Smith: 17:59 I've been searching my mind as you ask this question. This is a fantastic question, Stephan, and when a teacher asks such a good question, this is just to throw this out there to those of you who are teachers, ask great questions, but then give time. So often in the church, we ask a great question, then we don't like that awkward pause. "Here's this awesome question, what scripture story would you wish stuck with you in your heart more?" And then we wait for three and a half seconds and say, "Okay, nobody? Let's move on."

18:29 What came to my mind is the story of the brother of Jared, and how he was very flawed. He's a flawed guy, as you read through. He petitions the Lord and the Lord says, "Whatever



you do, don't stop when you get to the other side of these waters." And he stops. And then he doesn't pray. Yet he has this incredible, transcendent experience that basically becomes the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. Elder Holland said it was declared that ordinary people with ordinary challenges can pass through the veil, and have transcendent spiritual experiences. I think I would love to keep that in my mind more, that I can go from the profane, the mundane, to the grand and beautiful transcendent.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 19:19

For me, that's at the heart of the Restoration, is this idea that revelation and access to hearing God's voice, and sometimes even in profound ways, is available to anyone who's ready to receive it, paraphrasing the prophet Joseph there. So many times, we put footnotes on our own capacities, and say, "Oh, I'm not the kind of person that could really hear the voice of the Lord." But our beloved prophet has reminded us, seek to really hear His voice in your life. King Limhi continues, Mosiah 7:20, "And again, that same God has brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem, and has kept and preserved His people even until now; and behold, it is because of our iniquities and abominations that He has brought us into bondage." He's going to be more specific in a second about really what happened there.

20:06

He continues, we'll skip to verse 26. "And a prophet of the Lord have they slain; yea, a chosen man of God." Grant Hardy suggests that man of God, in the Old Testament, refers to a prophet whose every word comes true. "Who told them of their wickedness and abominations, and prophesied of many things which are to come, yea, even the coming of Christ." So, what's one of the most fascinating things about the Book of Mormon is that in the Book of Mormon, the wicked are often religious people who are not centered on Jesus Christ, and they ignore the living prophet. What's interesting is those two characteristics you often see, they're very religious, but they don't place their faith in Christ, and they cast out the living prophet. And central to our belief is faith in Jesus Christ and listening to a living prophet. These people, they killed a prophet who was testifying of Jesus Christ, and King Limhi thinks that is at the heart of why they were punished in such a serious way.

21:05

"And because he said unto them that Christ was the God, the Father of all things, and said that he should take upon Him the image of man, and it should be the image after which man was created in the beginning; or in other words, he said that man was created after the image of God, and that God should come down among the children of men, and take upon Him flesh and

blood, and go forth upon the face of the earth." Sometimes we read a text like this and we think, "Man, this is not the way I normally talk about the Godhead." But it seems like the ancients were really interested in showing that the Father and the Son are one, on some level. This idea that the Son of God came to Earth, that's the heart of our story. Yes, there are lots of beautiful and powerful scripture stories, but the heart of our story is that the Son of God came to Earth to redeem us, and when that's central to our story, it changes everything. It changes everything.

22:04 For example, if someone gets their worth from their work, they're always going to feel like there's someone better at work than them, or they'll always feel tired. They've got to do more and more and more. If they get their worth from their beauty, as they get older and older, and feel the effects of age, they're going to feel deeply threatened. If they get their worth from their wealth, they'll always be trying to find ways to make money, or compare themselves to other people. But if we get our worth from the fact that God loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us, that is enough to build a life on. That will always be true. That's the kind of foundation that says, "This is what I'm worth to God, that He loves me that much." Or some people feel deep guilt for mistakes or sins they've committed, and they don't know what to do about that.

22:50 If, central to their story, is the idea that God sent His Son to die for us, there's a way for them to feel deeply clean and pure again. Or at a funeral, of course, death is sad, and we mourn for those we love, but if the center of our story is that Jesus Christ came to die and was resurrected, then death is not the end of the story. And also, people are looking for meaning and for purpose, and if the center of our story is Gethsemane and Golgotha, that means that I'm loved by God so much that He sent His Son to come to this Earth, and that's the center of my meaning, is to return love to God, and to embody that love out into the world to others, to love God and to love others. Truly, our story determines our possibilities.

Hank Smith: 23:43 This is fantastic.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 23:45 A scholar named Alister McGrath from Oxford, he says this, "We are called," he's speaking as Christians. He says, "We are called to out-narrate the dominant stories that shape our culture, by exposing their weaknesses, or showing how they are enfolded by our own, or how they are eclipsed by a more luminous and compelling story." We could go out in the world and show people evidences for the resurrection and for the Book of

Mormon, and that's fine and that's okay. But I think what's more powerful is if we tell people how the gospel story, and specifically the restored gospel story, is not only true, but it's the most beautiful and illuminating and powerful way to live in this world, that it gives meaning and depth and purpose to our life, and it fills us with light and love, and truly shows us how we can live in a way that will fill our life with joy.

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| John Bytheway: | 24:41 | Beautifully said, Stephan. I'm glad you said that, because sometimes we might repeat the storyline, but boy, don't miss that comment that he's making in 26 and 27. This is, as you put it, the heart of the story, that God will come among men, and He will come upon the face of the Earth, and He'll die for our sins. When you've got the storyline and then the doctrine, boy, there's the heart of the doctrine. I'm intrigued what you guys think. Verse 26, "a prophet of the Lord have they slain." I'm like, "It was your dad." He calls him "they". So, in comes Ammon, and says, "I'm so glad I'm yet permitted to speak, and we've come to inquire after Zeniff." And Limhi goes, "Grandpa?" "That's your grandpa?" "Yeah." "Oh, I'm so glad that you're here. Now, I know my brethren are yet alive, and I'm going to rejoice, and on the morrow, I'll cause my people to rejoice, and we killed a prophet." "You what?" "Okay, that was dumb, I know. It was my dad." That's the way I can think of it happening. |
| Hank Smith:    | 25:39 | "You what?"   |
| John Bytheway: | 25:42 | "I sent a group out to try to find Zarahemla, they couldn't, but they found this." And it is such an interesting story. But you have helped me to see, don't miss the heart of the story right there.   |
| Hank Smith:    | 25:54 | Speaking of stories, Stephan, one thing I really try to point out when I teach the Book of Mormon is that we have a storyteller in the small plates that we've been studying so far. 1 and 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, we're hearing a first person account. When we pick up the Book of Mosiah, it's now a third person account. We have someone telling this story. And he's so good at it, we almost forget he's there. Everything is coming through the lens of Mormon, who's living hundreds of years after this event. When I personally read the Book of Mormon, I've learned over the years to try to see it with new eyes, like fresh eyes, like you're a brand new reader.   |
|                | 26:39 | So, as we got into chapter 7 here, there are some names, if you're a new reader, you've never even heard. "I am Limhi, the son of Noah, who was the son of Zeniff." If you're a first-time reader, I have no idea who any of these people are. I guess back   |

in Omni, Amaleki told us about a large group of people that left, got in some sort of contention, came back with less people than they left with, and then he says they took another group and they left again. As I get to, like you said, King Mosiah, son of Benjamin, says, "Let's go find those people." And now we're, all of a sudden, hearing names, Limhi, Noah, Zeniff, and as you pointed out, "We killed a prophet." Those of us who've read the Book many times, we know who that is, but if you're reading through fresh eyes, this is an exciting chapter that's opening up what has happened, who are these people, and what happened to them? I like that we're talking about stories. I've grown this obsession with Mormon, the storyteller. How is he doing this? Why is he organizing it this way?

- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 27:47 That's really important what you're saying, Hank. We'll go into this more in chapter 9, but there is an inspired author who's making decisions about how this story should be told. And he wants us to gain certain insights, and see certain things. In a real sense, prophets are storytellers, they're inspired storytellers, and they help us to see both the story of God, and here in these scriptures, they unfold the scriptural narrative for us, and they do it in ways that open up how we can see God working in the world.
- Hank Smith: 28:18 I'm guessing half our listeners, as you just said that, it happened to them what happened to me, which a picture of President Monson came into my mind. Prophets are storytellers. Much like the Savior, that was a gift that President Monson had.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 28:31 Yeah. And we see that throughout the Restoration, and throughout all dispensations, is the prophets will use inspired storytelling to change the hearts of people and to testify of His Son.
- Hank Smith: 28:43 As a teacher and as a trainer of teachers, I frequently tell people, if you can give a lecture or tell a story, tell the story. I know that you could spit out exactly what you want your students to know and think, but if that story covers that same idea, tell the story.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 29:03 Yeah. We have it on good authority, at least with the synoptics, but the scholars say that about a third of what Jesus said were parables, were stories. Okay, Limhi, he continues his speech, verse 28. "And now because he said this," speaking of Abinadi, "they put him to death, and many more things did they do which brought down the wrath of God upon them. Therefore, who wondereth that they are in bondage, and that they are smitten with sore afflictions? But if you will turn to the Lord

with full purpose of heart, and put your trust in Him, and serve Him with all diligence of mind, if you do this, He will, according to His own will and pleasure, deliver you out of bondage."

- 29:47 At the heart of the story of Gethsemane and Golgotha and the garden tomb is we believe in a God of deliverance, who will save us, who will take us out of addiction and anger and fear, and I don't know if it's in this life or in the next, but the hero of the story, the Lord Jesus Christ, is a deliverer. And if we do what King Limhi is saying here, if we turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, deliverance will happen someday, in the Lord's timing.
- John Bytheway: 30:16 I like that Limhi's not considered a prophet, he's a king in a tough circumstance, but look at him testify. Wow. Sure sounds like a prophet. If the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, then by that definition, this guy has a testimony of Christ, doesn't he?
- Hank Smith: 30:34 Yeah.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 30:35 Absolutely.
- Hank Smith: 30:37 You're right on, John. Ammon's got to be hearing this story saying, "I got to know more. What happened?" And that's us as the reader, are going, "I hope they explain these things."
- John Bytheway: 30:50 Sometimes I've been asked this question, like in verse 31, okay, this is a little off the beaten path of what we're talking about, but "again he saith, 'If my people shall sow filthiness they shall reap the east wind, which bringeth immediate destruction.'" And I'm like, what is the east wind? In my own reading of commentaries, I found this. "East wind is an old world cultural symbol. The north wind," now think you're living in the Holy Land. "The north wind is cold, the west wind, from over the Mediterranean Sea, is moist, the south wind is warm, and the east wind, which crosses the sandy wastes of the Arabian Desert before reaching Palestine, can be violent and destructive." That's from Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon. It's interesting, they still were remembering that phrase, the east wind, as another way to describe here comes trouble.
- Hank Smith: 31:47 Exodus 10:13, "The Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out thy hand over Egypt over the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land.' And Moses stretched forth his rod over Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind

upon all that day and all that night and that morning." East wind brought the locusts. Nice.

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| John Bytheway:      | 32:08 | Maybe that just became a metaphor, because I'll tell you, I think in our Old Testament year, somebody made the comment that the Exodus story, that deliverance story, is repeated more than any other story throughout the Old Testament and the New. And here we are in the Book of Mormon, talking about it again, how the deliverance of Moses, how the Lord helped him deliver Israel.  |
| Dr. Stephan Taeger: | 32:30 | Yeah, it's interesting you say that, because one of the beautiful things about the gospel story is how it alludes to other stories. In fact, Jesus could have chosen Day of Atonement to be sacrificed, and to offer atonement for our sins, but He chose Passover, which points us back to the Exodus. Every single week, when we partake in the sacrament, we're echoing the Exodus. If, at the heart of our story, is the idea that God is a God of deliverance, then the Exodus story has to be one of the central stories we take up in our identity, that this is the God we believe in.  |
| John Bytheway:      | 33:04 | Elder Holland said, once asked the question, "Do we see the sacrament as our Passover?" Which I've always loved that statement. This is our Passover. "These feasts and things were to help us remember, because we're forgetful."  |
| Hank Smith:         | 33:20 | Stephan, as we move from 7 to 8, King Benjamin dies. Mosiah, probably named after his grandfather, sends Ammon. "Hey, these people have been gone 80 years. Go find out what happened." He heads down to the land of Lehi-Nephi, where those people that left 80 years ago, that's the direction they were heading. You would think that after 80 years, if your neighbor leaves, give or take 70 or 80 years, you might think, "What happened to them?" He goes to find them, he gets arrested, and finds out that the king who arrested him is the grandson of the guy who left 80 years ago, and all sorts of things have happened in the last 80 years. |
| Dr. Stephan Taeger: | 34:02 | Yeah, that's right. Absolutely. Great recap, Hank. You're a good storyteller.   |
| Hank Smith:         | 34:06 | Yeah, hey.  |
| John Bytheway:      | 34:07 | You should give talks and stuff.  |

Hank Smith:	34:09	Yeah, I should try that one day. Dozens of people will listen. All right, Stephan, where do we go from here, then?
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	34:18	So, we're in Mosiah 8, and we'll pick up in verse 2. It just keeps going, flowing on. It says, "And he," Limhi "caused that Ammon should stand up before the multitude, and rehearse unto them all that had happened unto their brethren from the time that Zeniff went up out of the land even until the time that he himself came up out of the land." Where they say, "Hey, tell us a story. What's happened back in the homeland since we've been gone? Recap that for us."
	34:43	Now, thankfully, Mormon's a good storyteller, and he doesn't make us listen to everything that we've just read in the Book of Mormon again, he actually cuts that out, and says this in verse 3. "And he also rehearsed unto them the last words which King Benjamin had taught them, and explained to them to the people of King Limhi, so that they might understand all the words which he spake." This is more evidence that King Benjamin's speech is central to Book of Mormon thought and belief. You're going to see it here, later on in Mosiah 26. The reason they're going to say that some people fall away from the church is, "Oh, they didn't hear King Benjamin's speech." This is a central sermon in the Book of Mormon.
	35:20	We then learn that King Limhi had sent 43 people to try to go back and find the land of Zarahemla, so when they were down south, at some point they sent 43 people to go back and try to find the land of Zarahemla. Instead, they went past Zarahemla accidentally, and found a land full of bones and a land of desolation, and they found a record and they couldn't translate it. King Limhi, he says this. "And I say unto thee again: knowest thou of anyone that can translate? For I am desirous that these records should be translated into our language." This is verse 12 of chapter 8. "For, perhaps, they will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people who have been destroyed, from whence these records came." This is a very meta moment in the Book of Mormon. "Or, perhaps, they will give us a knowledge of this very people who have been destroyed; and I am desirous to know the cause of their destruction."
	36:22	Quite literally as we're reading the Book of Mormon, we're reading the history of a people that were destroyed, and in that history, they find a record of a people that had been destroyed. And the thing that they're interested most in is what caused their destruction. I could be wrong, but maybe perhaps the reason why Mormon is highlighting this is because later on in

the Book of Mormon, he's going to tell us the kind of thing that's going to lead to the destruction of the people.

36:50 For example, in Helaman 2, Mormon says it'll be the Gadianton robbers that will prove the destruction of this people. And as we know overall, it's the pride and the wickedness and the secret combinations that Mormon wants to highlight that cause the destruction of these people. This is one of the most powerful aspects of scripture study, is when we start to identify with scriptural characters or scriptural events. Often as gospel teachers we'll say, "Hey, let's get to application." And that's really important, but perhaps identification precedes powerful application. When I start to identify with the events or characters, it will convict me, sometimes, in very powerful ways.

37:32 There's a quote from Richard Lloyd Anderson, speaking of parables, and let's read this, but apply this to the true stories of scriptures. Watch what he says. "The parable is a teaching method, recognizing the fact that one sees his own weaknesses better by viewing others who display the same weaknesses. Even the Lord was sparing in confrontation, generally reserving it until He had offered many other opportunities to understand. Even then, His final warnings to His enemies use the case system to force them to think about His message. This technique should be remembered. An effective method is to use third person examples that hit close to home. The technique works on the premise that stimulating thought is the most effective teaching tool. It avoids one-sided scorn that too often triggers the self-defense reflexes and helps induce desired self-analysis instead."

38:28 Here we are, reading this story about a people who find a book, and they're like, "Wow, what caused their destruction?" Hopefully, hopefully, as modern people, we don't miss a potential message from that, that there is a book that contains the destruction of a people, and it's a warning, an indirect warning to us to not fall into pride, to not fall into the kinds of sins that cause the Nephite civilization to be destroyed.

Hank Smith: 38:52 Stephan, do you think these plates that become the Book of Ether, Mormon, he knows he's going to abridge those one day? And he dies before it can be done, so Moroni does it. I wonder if he's, "I'm going to throw this in here, a little teaser for what might be coming."

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 39:10 That could be it, absolutely. Interestingly enough, Moroni chooses to highlight things in the Jaredite record that really resonate with the rest of the Book of Mormon. Again, to quote



Grant Hardy, it might be that Moroni is trying to highlight some of the main stories and ideas that Mormon was trying to highlight in his record as well, with the Jaredites.

- Hank Smith: 39:31 Stephan, Limhi's saying, "We fell into slavery, bondage to the Lamanites, and we sent a group to look for Zarahemla to get us out." Did they think they actually found Zarahemla, or did they think, "Oh, we didn't find it, but we found this other city"?
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 39:48 Yeah, they actually thought it was Zarahemla. They found this land of desolation and bones, but then they found this record, and now they're interested in getting it translated.
- Hank Smith: 39:57 It must've been surprising for Ammon to show up from Zarahemla when they're like, "That can't be. We've been to Zarahemla, it's been destroyed." And Ammon's thinking, "I don't think so. I was there."
- John Bytheway: 40:11 We have evidence of that. Mosiah 7:14 when King Limhi says, "Now I know my brethren are yet alive." Because, maybe I thought they weren't, because we found the land covered with dead men's bones. Well, there goes our rescue. But now I know my brethren are yet alive.
- Hank Smith: 40:28 Stephan, that plays into even more of Limhi's response that you showed us, that the camera pans on his face, when he probably had lost all hope. Because maybe finding Zarahemla was their last hope to get out of bondage, and he's thinking, "It's over." And then Ammon comes. The impossible happens.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 40:52 Right, we believe in a God who works through seemingly impossible situations.
- John Bytheway: 40:57 He's really good at the impossible, yeah.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 40:59 Right? Yes, yes. This is why the daughter of Jairus story, because when things absolutely look like there's no possible way that things could get better, our Father in heaven finds a way to provide, and He always will. He always will.
- Hank Smith: 41:14 I love what you've done here, in letting us see Limhi's situation when Ammon shows up. No wonder he's kind of angry, that some guy's walking outside his city.
- John Bytheway: 41:24 "Who are you, and why were you so bold as to approach me?" I want to add something else, too. At the end of verse 12, Stephan, you mentioned, "I have desires to know the cause of

their destruction." I'm thinking of, listen, I'm a king over this people. I am new at this. I inherited a mess. I don't want my people to be destroyed. I want to know how these people got destroyed, and then I have an arrow that points me to the next page, some people scroll, I actually have ancient pages, to verse 19, the king, responding to Ammon, says, "Doubtless a great mystery is contained within these plates." And that's repeating. "I need to know what happened to them. I'm trying to be a king. What happened to these people?"

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 42:09

Yeah, and that makes sense. And Limhi is identifying with this story. Before he could really apply it, he's seen how he might fit into it in some way, and start to see himself into it. This is one of the most powerful ways to teach our families and friends, and even to study ourselves, is to identify which scripture stories, or stories from living prophets, or church history, might help in a specific situation.

42:33

For example, let's say that someone's going through an impossible situation that seems a very difficult task. They might study 1 Nephi 3, with Nephi getting the brass plates. Let's say that someone's preparing to serve a mission. They might study Alma 17 through 22. Let's say someone's struggling with faith. They might look at Alma 32. Or, let's say a family has too much contention at home. They might study 4 Nephi. And then rather than directly coming at people and saying, "Hey, these are the ways we need to change." Let the Word of God do the heavy lifting. Let the scriptures point out places where we could get better. And their defenses will go down, they'll read these ancient stories that they know are not directed to them, and then they'll start to identify with the characters and situations, and the Holy Spirit will be able to work in their hearts, and show them ways that they can get better.

Hank Smith: 43:21

Like you said, a family has a lot of contention. Instead of studying 4 Nephi, let's say they go right at the cause of contention. What is it about human beings, that we're less receptive to that?

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 43:34

That's a really good question. The best I can tell is the nature of our defensiveness is to always have readymade excuses on why we're not a certain way. When we are acting in ways that are not in line with gospel principles, we almost always, if not always, have justifications or rationalizations on why we act like that. So, when someone brings it up, we have readymade reasons why we're not acting that way. And often can cut through that self-deception if we can discover it for ourselves, rather than having someone point it out to us.

- Hank Smith: 44:10 A family has a lot of contention. You're saying, let's not go directly at these kids, let's study 4 Nephi. Would it be a mistake to study 4 Nephi and then go at them, or do I leave it out there? Do I leave 4 Nephi out there hanging, or do I bring it back and say, "How can we apply this to our family?" Which is a little more like, "Hey, you got a problem."
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 44:30 That's a really good question. It sort of depends on how the situation goes. If the defenses go down and the Spirit comes there, then of course people can be more open and more direct. But it doesn't do much good to be very direct with people if we know they're going to be defensive. So, we have to read the situation, the state of their heart, and hopefully, there will be other things that will soften and open up doors for people to be open and honest about ways we can be better.
- Hank Smith: 44:58 It reminds me of a story Elder Ballard used to tell about a man who had never worked with horses. Oh, he decided he would show his wife how to teach a horse to be led, so he figured all he would have to do is attach the rope to the horses and just pull, and horse will just come right along. But he said to his friend's surprise, the horse resisted. He pulled harder, and the horse resisted even more. And then he pulled so hard and he said, after they repeated this process several times, he had successfully taught the horse how to fall over. All he had to do was pick up the rope and not even pull, and the horse would fall on its side. I've always thought about that as a parent, that when we come at people, when we go to force, it's automatic, right? Automatic. I'm going to stand my ground. Even though probably not the smartest thing to do, I'm going to stand my ground. So, I like what you said here, is that.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 45:58 The defenses, yeah. And part of the reason, that, is because we are agents, and we want to own our own decisions. If we feel like we're doing something because someone else told us to do it, we don't feel like we're doing that because we want to. A story allows me to make righteous decisions for myself.
- John Bytheway: 46:15 I've learned over the years that when you ever have the words "you should" or "we should" or "we ought", that's one of those you're feeling. Instead, as Stephan said, you tell a story, you hold up, "Look at how this person behaved." And all of us supply our own, inside, internally, unspoken, "I need to do that. I need to be that way. I should be that way." Then you don't have to say anything, you just, "Is that an amazing story?" That's all you have to say. And everybody, "Wow." They do it themselves. And I think the Spirit nudges us, and that's easier to take than some other imperfect person saying "you should" or "we should".

Dr. Stephan Taeger:	46:57	Yeah. This is why regular scripture study with our families, or by ourselves, is so important, because if someone perceives that I'm telling them a story to try to get them to change, it's as if I'm talking to them directly. That's why consistent scripture study naturally let these things seep in and start to work upon us. If I say, "All right, everyone, we're having a special scripture study on 4 Nephi." And we haven't had scripture study in six years or whatever. "Wait a minute." That might-
John Bytheway:	47:26	"Okay, what's he trying to tell us?"
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	47:27	Right, right, right.
John Bytheway:	47:29	I think it's one of the reasons that EFY/FSY works, is those kids don't know each other; often, the teacher, the counselor, doesn't know them; and they know there's not a motive behind this story. "Ah, he must have talked to my dad, that's why he's telling..." They don't, that's not there. And they evaluate everything they hear more honestly. I think it's one of the reasons it works.
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	47:51	I agree.
John Bytheway:	47:52	Is because they will listen to that story differently, knowing, "That person doesn't know me."
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	47:57	Yeah, I love that. I love that. Okay, so speaking of stories, Limhi, he desires to know the story of this lost civilization, the Jaredites, and he needed someone who could translate. Ammon says, "I know someone." So, speaking of King Mosiah, back up in the land of Zarahemla, back north there, Ammon says this in Mosiah 8:16. "And Ammon said that a seer". Now, this sounds really obvious, but let's do some grammar really fast. When we put "E-R" at the end of a word, it means "one who". So, a swimmer is one who swims. A runner is one who runs. A seer is one who sees.
	48:34	And Ammon said that a seer is "a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have." That's quite the statement right there. "Except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; yet a man may have great power given him from God. But a seer can know of things which are past." In this case, it would be the record of the Jaredites. But we also see this in our dispensation, Joseph Smith learning of the Book of Mormon, or the Book of Moses, or the Book of Abraham. "Also of things which are to come." Think John the Revelator, or many of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants. Or think

about the Family Proclamation as well. "And by them shall all things be revealed, or rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known." What a tremendous blessing it is, to have seers among us today.

49:34 Verse 18. "Thus God has provided a means that man, through faith, might work mighty miracles; therefore he becometh a great benefit to his fellow beings." Which is such a beautiful principle, that when God calls seers, prophets, seers, and revelators, their primary responsibility is to be a benefit to their fellow beings, to teach us in such a way that they are a blessing to us. The prophets and seers and revelators, the text says they're going to be a great benefit to their fellow beings. And if you think about the sacrifice, and time, and effort, and energy the leaders of the church put into leading us and guiding us by the voice of God, how grateful we are that they have sacrificed so much to give us the Lord's guidance in these latter-days.

50:18 The job description of a prophet probably has some tough parts about it. For example, throughout scriptural history, prophets are there to keep people and cultures and societies within the bounds that the gospel has set. And sometimes that means they have to warn us. Elder Christofferson, he says this. "I have long been impressed by, and have also felt, the yearning love of the prophets of God in their warnings against sin. They are not motivated by a desire to condemn. Their true desire mirrors the love of God; in fact, it is the love of God. They love those to whom they are sent, whoever they may be and whatever they may be like. Just as the Lord, His servants do not want anyone to suffer the pains of sin and poor choices."

51:10 In my own life, I feel the closest to people who are not afraid to be honest with me, even if that means being a little tough with me. The people that are just always nice, it's sort of superficial, but when I know someone, and they can go to tough places with me, and tell me some things that are kind of hard for me to have to hear, that's how I know that someone really cares about me, and is someone that's close to me. I'm thankful that the prophets are not seeking the approval of the world, but they're willing to teach the truth, even if it's tough to hear sometimes.

John Bytheway: 51:41 I think that almost every General Conference, we're going to hear some talks that Jacob might describe as that "healeth the wounded soul". And we might hear others that tell it like it is, and tell us we got to step it up, and I love that. What a blessing,

to have somebody love you enough to be willing to say, "You can do better, and you know you can." That's a blessing.

Hank Smith:	52:06	I can hear President Faust's voice. President Oaks, that Good, Better, Best talk. I bet we all remember where we were when Elder Holland gave that Book of Mormon talk, Safety for the Soul, right?
John Bytheway:	52:19	Oh, man. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	52:20	These are life-changing things. So, that verse, Mosiah 8:18, I'm glad you brought that up, Stephan, go search your memories. For me, all of these wonderful feelings of gratitude come up for prophets and apostles of the latter-days.
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	52:36	We live in a world where people have rejected the idea of authority or authority figures, but no matter what, everyone chooses prophets. Everyone looks to someone to say, "Hey, this is what I'm going to look at as sources of truth and insight." And I'm so thankful that the Lord has called faithful and humble and meek servants in a world that is increasingly losing a lack of quality leadership. I'm grateful for a steady voice, a steady voice to point us to the Savior.
Hank Smith:	53:06	Love it. I'd follow those 15 men and their wives anywhere. Something happens here, Stephan, that's kind of strange. When I'm in chapter 8, I'm in 121 BC. When I'm in chapter 9, I'm in 200 BC. I went backwards 80 years.
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	53:24	Yeah. So, here we get quite the dramatic flashback, and the flashback is actually going to last from Mosiah 9 all the way through 22. This is a side note, this is some evidence for the historicity of the Book of Mormon. I love the Prophet Joseph Smith, but when you read his own handwriting, he will often misspell some of the most basic words. The idea that he could make up this story on the spot with all of these complicated backstories, and plot twists, and connecting names, and geography, and even elevation of geography we've talked about, seems very, very untenable. I know scholars who have been scholars for a long time, and they have not written 533 pages over years and years of doing research and study. The fact that people claim, "Yeah, that farm boy from upstate New York came up with 533 pages of storyline." Seems pretty untenable to me.

## Zealous Zeniff from Zarahemla

GUEST: STEPHAN TAEGER



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Stephan Taeger, Mosiah chapter 7-10.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 And Stephan, as you go throughout the entire book of Mosiah, it gets complicated. There's groups of people moving all over.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 00:14 Absolutely. Why does Mormon give us a flashback here? Again, I'm quoting from Grant Hardy from a book called Understanding the Book of Mormon. This is just one reason. I think Brother Hardy's onto something here. He says, "Mormon knew that this settlement," the one we're about to read about, "was the origin of both the Nephi Christian Church and the line of prophets who would dominate the years leading up to the coming of Christ." These leaders included the two Almas, the two Helamans, and the later two Nephis as well. This is not a random story that Mormon's trying to highlight here. This flashback is going to help us to understand where Alma the Elder came from and hence where Alma the Younger came from and then Helaman. In chapter nine, it starts off, this was written on the original plates, the record of Zeniff, an account of his people from the time they left the land of Zarahemla until the time that they were delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites.
- 01:11 We mentioned this earlier, but this is just the story of this group of people who left Zarahemla to try to come back to the land of first inheritance or near there. Mosiah 9, verse one. This is Zeniff speaking. Mormon puts his first person record into the plates so that we can read this. As a historian, Mormon will do that. He'll often include the sermon or the first person record or letters even we see in third Nephi. It says this in verse one, "I, Zeniff, having been taught in all the language of the Nephites and having had a knowledge of the land of Nephi or of the land of our father's first inheritance, and having been sent as a spy among the Lamanites that I might spy on their forces, that our army might come upon them and destroy them. But when I saw that which was good among them, I was desirous that they should not be destroyed." It's interesting that he sees some

good among them and it seems to cause a little bit of hesitation. Verse two, "Therefore, I contended with my brethren in the wilderness for I would that our ruler should make a treaty with them. But he being an austere and bloodthirsty man commanded that I should be slain. But I was rescued by the shedding of much blood, for father fought against father and brother against brother until the greater number of our army was destroyed in the wilderness, and we returned those of us that were spared to the land of Zarahemla to relate that tale to their wives and their children."

02:38 They have this battle, a small little lesson, the ugliness of contention. They have to go back and tell the people in Zarahemla what happened, and then we get this key principle and that we're going to see here in verse three. It says, "And yet I being overzealous to inherit the land of our fathers collected as many as were desirous to go up to possess the land," again up in elevation, but down south, "and started again on our journey into the wilderness to go up into the land. But we were smitten with famine and sore afflictions for we were slow to remember the Lord our God."

03:15 Overzealousness, it might lead to bad judgment. When we obsess about one thing in our lives, one aspect of our life or one aspect of a certain story, then it leads to bad judgment. If our story determines our possibilities, if we focus in on one aspect of it, one scene, we won't see things clearly. President Packer, he has this analogy that I love. He says, "The gospel might be likened to the keyboard of a piano, a full keyboard with a selection of keys on which one who is trained can play a variety without limits, a ballad to express love, a march to rally, a melody to soothe, and a hymn to inspire. An endless variety to suit every mood and satisfy every need. How short-sighted it is then to choose a single key and endlessly tap out the monotony of a single note or even two or three notes when the full keyboard of limitless harmony can be played."

04:15 Elder Packer is teaching us something really powerful. What's one way that we overcome overzealousness, is to play the rest of the keys, to see the gospel story in its fullness and to see our life experience in its fullness. We don't just teach grace, we also teach truth. Sometimes people need grace and sometimes they need truth, and we make sure we're teaching both of those things as much as we can. Yes, we believe in tradition, but we also believe in innovation. Sometimes the leaders of the church say we're going to do things differently, and that's okay. And also sometimes it's important to say, do you know what? This is tradition. We believe in a sanctification that we can slowly



become more like Christ over time through his grace, but we also believe in justification which the church defines as you are declared guiltless, legally clean before God right now.

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|                     | 05:01 | We believe in diversity and having a variety of gifts and backgrounds, but we also believe in unity. The way that we prevent ourselves from becoming overzealous is to play all the keys on the piano, to be balanced and make sure that we're seeing all the facets of the restored gospel.   |
| Hank Smith:         | 05:17 | Wow, that is wonderful. If we lean to one side, we will lose some wonderful things on the other side, and we get too zoned in on this one thing and it becomes a problem. What was once great is now a thorn, a problem.   |
| Dr. Stephan Taeger: | 05:36 | If our story determines our possibilities, we have to consistently ask ourselves, is my story balanced? Am I getting the full picture or am I just narrowly becoming overzealous about one thing?  |
| Hank Smith:         | 05:47 | This is wonderful. I work with quite a few college students, as do both of you. I'll ask them when we get to this verse, when have you been a little overzealous about something? And they'll say, "What do you mean?" Have you ever looked back and said, I really missed some obvious red flags, and they all raise their hand, this regret of I jumped in too fast. I could have been more careful. I think of sometimes of jumping into debt, I was overzealous. I wanted that thing so badly. I jumped in and now I regret it. Or a relationship, I jumped in too quickly, pushed forward too fast, because doesn't it sound like to you both, he has a bit of regret as he's writing this. He's like, it was a good thing, but I missed some cues. When the Lamanites say, "Oh yeah, sorry, this is yours. We'll give it back." You would think- |
| Dr. Stephan Taeger: | 06:42 | You have to wonder if it's his overzealousness that caused him to misjudge that situation.   |
| John Bytheway:      | 06:47 | I love that Zeniff would say at the end of verse three, we were slow to remember. Sounds like he picked up a lesson from it all. I put in my margin Zeniff was a just man, because we're going to hear that description of him later.  |
| Dr. Stephan Taeger: | 07:01 | Well, eventually, Zeniff and the people with him, they return south to give back their land of first inheritance or nearby and Zeniff approaches the Lamanite King and Zeniff writes this about that moment. He says, "And I went in unto the king and he covenanted with me that I might possess the land of Lehi-Nephi and the land of Shalom." The king of the Lamanites has all  |

the Lamanites leave that land. Zeniff and his people, they begin to build buildings and rebuild the walls of the city of Lehi-Nephi, and Shalom. They plant crops. They grow and multiply in the land. It says in verse 10, "Now, it was the cunning and the craftiness of King Laman to bring my people into bondage, that he yielded up the land that we might possess it." Like we said a second ago, you have to wonder if maybe he had not been overzealous, if this would've prevented this poor decision-making. But it's interesting because this decision is going to affect a lot of people around Zeniff.

Hank Smith: 07:59

His children and his grandson. We've already talked about, Limhi.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 08:04

In verse 11, "Therefore, it came to pass that after we had dwelt in the land for the space of twelve years, that King Laman began to grow uneasy. Lest by any means, my people should wax strong in the land and they could not overpower them and bring them into bondage. Now, they were a lazy and idolatrous people," which means they worshiped idols. "Therefore, they were desirous to bring us into bondage, that they might glut themselves with the labors of our hands. Yea, that they might feast themselves upon the flocks of our fields." Some of the Lamanites then attack. Zeniff is called upon for protection, and he writes this in the first person, "Yea, in the strength of the Lord, did we go forth to battle against the Lamanites. For I and my people did cry mightily to the Lord that he would deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, for we were awakened to a remembrance of the deliverance of our fathers."

08:55

Again, in this moment of difficulty, they draw on a powerful story. If we fill our life with stuff that can't nourish the soul, superficial spirituality, or only the stories of this world, then we won't have the powerful gospel narratives to draw upon in the moments of our most trying times. He says, "They were awakened to a remembrance of the deliverance of their fathers." Truly, our story determines our possibilities.

Hank Smith: 09:27

My scripture study, Stephan, almost becomes like a food storage that I build up. So in those times of need, I have these friends to call on.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 09:35

Absolutely. In fact, Elder Richard G. Scott, he recommends memorizing certain passages and he uses that analogy. So like friends, you can call upon them at the right time. How many times is just the right scripture come to your heart and mind in a moment of need because you've previously studied it.

Hank Smith:	09:54	Stephan, this is fascinating to me because way back in the beginning of the chapter, he does not want to hurt Lamanites. He's a good guy, but now he's fighting Lamanites like in the strength of the Lord. Oh, how it's turned. The poor guy, I really feel for Zeniff, he didn't want to kill the Lamanites. He was a little overexcited, missed some red flags, and now he's in serious trouble. He's living his life in bloodshed.
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	10:23	Yeah. And verse 18, thankfully it says, "And God did hear our cries and did answer our prayers, and we did go forth in his might. We did go forth against the Lamanites, and in one day and a night we did slay 3,043. We did slay them even until we had driven them out of our land."
	10:42	Flipping over to chapter 10, Zeniff's people prosper and they have continual peace in the land. But then verse six, "And it came to pass, that King Laman died and his son began to reign in his stead and began to stir his people up in rebellion against my people.
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	11:00	Therefore, they began to prepare for war and to come up to battle against my people." Zeniff's overzealous plan is proving to be problematic, and not just for himself, but for a lot of the people around him as well.
Hank Smith:	11:15	I've told John this before, this is something that really hits home to me. Well, I'm going to try not to be too overzealous, but I want to show you both something.
	11:26	If you go all the way back to Omni, and you look at Omni 1, there's only one chapter, verse 12, and this is Mosiah, this is Benjamin's father, Amaleki says, there's this king, Mosiah. The Lord warned him that he should flee out of the land of Nephi, and as many as would hearken unto his voice. You've got to get out of the land of Nephi.
	11:50	They get up and they find the people of Zarahemla. We've talked about that, and then you have Zeniff, who wants to go back to the very place that the Lord had told Mosiah to get out of, and I can't tell you how much this frustrates me because this decision that he makes... And Zeniff, you guys, is a good guy.
	12:14	You wouldn't read 9 and 10 and go, "Yeah, Zeniff, he's not a believer." He is a believer. He is a good guy, but this decision to leave the prophet is one, going to cause him and his people to miss King Benjamin entirely when they could be in Zarahemla having this miraculous experience with Benjamin.

- 12:36 They're not, they're down here fighting Lamanites, not because Zeniff is a bad guy. He's not a bad guy, but because he just didn't think this through.
- 12:46 I mentioned earlier that I have two grandpas who died of alcoholism. They have their own reasons and I don't think they're bad people, but if I could grab them, I'd probably just shake them for a second and say, "Do you have any idea how your decisions are going to affect your children, my parents and me? We are all going to suffer because of these decisions, and you're not a bad guy."
- 13:16 I got to calm down. Stephan's going to say, "You're a little overzealous there, Hank," but I was deeply touched by a talk that Elder Holland gave because it hit so personally way back in 2003. I can't believe I'm saying way back in 2003, but Elder Holland, the talk is called A Prayer for the Children.
- 13:36 He says this, he talks about parents and grandparents who drift a little from the prophet. He says, "I speak carefully and lovingly," because he knows these are not people who do not believe in God or want to fight against God. But he said, "Please be aware that the full price to be paid for such a stance does not always come due in your lifetime. No sadly, some elements of this can be a kind of profligate national debt with payments coming out of your children's and your grandchildren's pockets in far more expensive ways than you ever intended to be."
- 14:19 He tells this story, he says, "Not long ago, sister Holland and I met a fine young man who came in contact with us after he had been roaming around through the occults, sorting through a variety of Eastern religions, all in an attempt to find religious faith. His father, he admitted, believed in nothing whatsoever, but his grandfather, he said, was actually a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but he didn't do much with it. The young man said he was always pretty cynical about the church."
- 14:50 From a grandfather who is cynical, to a son who is agnostic, to a grandson who is now looking desperately for what God had already once given his family. Don't you just want to grab Zeniff and say, "You're walking away from a place that your grandson is going to spend his entire life trying to get back to, and you're willingly walking away from that?"
- 15:21 I try to be vulnerable on our show, talking about my childhood. It was not ideal and we suffered immensely. My siblings, my parents, extended family, we suffered immensely because of

the decisions of past generations, and I'm sure that they had their reasons, but it takes a grand level of spiritual maturity to say, "How are my decisions here going to affect my children and my grandchildren?"

- 15:54 Because you might be just fine, right? You might say, "I'm going to take this journey over here," not thinking through who might have to pay the price for that.
- John Bytheway: 16:06 I want to give a second witness to that story with another story. Do you guys remember Elder Richard C. Edgley-
- Hank Smith: 16:15 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 16:15 ... presiding bishop at the time, a talk in 2012 called The Rescue for Real Growth, he said, "A few months ago after meeting with new converts and less active members, a reactivated gentleman about my age came up to me and said, 'I am one who has been less active most of my life. I fell away from the church early in my life, but I am back now and at work in the temple with my wife.' To let him know that everything was okay, my response was something like this, 'All is well, that ends well.' He responded, 'No, all is not well. I am back in the church, but I have lost all of my children and my grandchildren. I am now witnessing the loss of my great-grandchildren, all out of the church. All is not well.'"
- 16:59 "In our family," Elder Edgley continued, "We have an ancestor who joined the church in Europe, in the early days of the church. One son became inactive. Sister Edgley and I have attempted to track the inactive descendants of this ancestor. It was easy for my wife and me to conclude that during the following six generations and with reasonable assumptions, there could be a loss of up to 3,000 family members. Now project two more generations, the loss could theoretically approach 20,000 to 30,000 of our Heavenly father's children."
- 17:33 That's one of those talks that I remember, all is not well, no. Motivating to me to stay the course and to shout out to my dad who did not tell his parents he was getting baptized because he thought his mother would be against it. Fortunately, my grandparents were, my grandmother in particular was baptized and my grandfather reactivated.
- 17:59 So wow, those decisions Hank have an impact. Man, thanks for, like you said, being vulnerable and sharing that, and I hadn't really applied that to Zeniff before.

Hank Smith:	18:10	Yeah, and Zeniff's a good guy, it would be easier almost if Zeniff was an evil guy, but the fact that he's such a good guy...
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	18:20	It's clear that we don't make decisions in a vacuum, and there is an intergenerational element to the gospel, when you think about Malachi chapter four, ultimately when things will be set right is when the human family is sealed together.
	18:37	Truly, our decisions can affect generations, and that includes the positive ones, that includes the small acts of goodness and obedience and love, love of God and love of others, and those too will set a ripple effect for something holy and sacred to happen in our families. There is a lot at stake in every decision we make.
Hank Smith:	18:58	Mike Wilcox, who we've had on the show many times, he talked about once growing up on the ranch, and he said the adult cows would push against the fence. They just didn't like that fence, so they would push against the fence and they could never make it out. They'd just push against the fence. But he said they'd lift up the fence enough for the calves to get out, and he said he would find the calves devoured by predators.
John Bytheway:	19:26	And there was grass right there, they had what they needed right there, but they would push against the fence.
Hank Smith:	19:33	It hits close to home for me. Stephan, should we keep going?
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	19:37	Yeah. Thanks for that Hank. That was powerful and thanks for being open and real with us there.
	19:44	Zeniff, because they're getting ready for battle. He tells the old and the young men to prepare for battle, and then the women and children, they are hidden in the wilderness. And then interestingly enough, Zeniff starts to tell us the Lamanite side of history.
	19:59	Remember as we go through this little theme we've been talking about, that our story determines our possibilities. We'll start in verse 12, "Believing in the tradition of their fathers, which is this, believing that they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem because of the iniquities of their fathers, and that they were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren, and that they were also wronged while crossing the sea, and again, that they were wronged while in the land of their first inheritance after they had crossed the sea. And all this because that Nephi was more faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord."

	20:36	Now, the story that this group of Lamanites is telling themselves is much, much, much older than Nephi and Laman and Lemuel. In fact, this kind of story, it goes all the way back to the garden of Eden.
	20:49	If you remember, Adam and Eve partake of the fruit, the Lord approaches Adam, Genesis 3:12, he says this, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat."
	21:03	Then when Eve is asked about it, quote, Genesis 3:13, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat."
	21:11	Adam says, "It was Eve's fault." And Eve says, "It was the snake's fault. It was the serpent's fault."
	21:18	Elder Lionel Kendrick, he said this in general conference, "It has been from the beginning and it will be till the end, that the natural man will have a tendency to rationalize and to blame his behaviors on others or on certain circumstances."
	21:35	A spouse gets home from work and they say, "Why can't you keep the house clean?" And they forget how maybe they don't help out a lot.
	21:43	Or a young woman in college, she says to her roommates, "Hey, whenever people come over, you guys treat me different." But she doesn't stop to think that maybe she's not the most warm or friendly person socially.
	21:55	A student walking around a maybe BYU campus and says, "No one ever comes up and says hi."
Dr. Stephan Taeger:	22:01	And it is true, and we have to be really, really clear about this, that people can make decisions that seek to inflict harm on other people. But a very common and restricting story that humans tell ourselves is that someone else is ultimately the reason for my sadness and difficulty in life. It's absolutely true that humans can hurt each other, but when we take that too far and say, "Another person is the ultimate reason why I'm not happy." That's when it starts to cross the line into blame and accusation. It says in verse 14 that Nephi's brethren were wroth with him. Zeniff says, "Because they understood not the dealings of the Lord. They hardened their hearts against the Lord. They claimed Nephi had taken the ruling of the people out of their hands because Nephi took the records which were engraven on the plates of brass." This is obviously a very

different version of history than we read earlier in 1 Nephi, but some of these people have taken up the story of their primary identity has come from they have been wronged, that someone has wronged them.

23:12 Again, it is true that people can wrong others, but it's dangerous if we take that up as our primary sense of identity. One of the things that I'm very interested in is self-deception and how humans have a tendency to blame and to rationalize. I quoted a Terry Warner story the last time I was on this podcast, and I'd like to read another one and unpack this phenomenon for a second. I believe all of the stories in Brother Warner's book, *Bonds that Make Us Free* are true stories. "Carol hated Saturdays because her husband yelled at the children when he supervised their household chores. She said this ruined her hopes for a day of cooperative work and loving play. When he would begin to yell, she would roll her eyes and say, under her breath, or sometimes a little louder than that, 'Here we go again,' or, 'He's ruining everything, just like every Saturday.'"

24:03 "As a victim of this domestic autocrat, she would often cry. Then she came to a realization that astonished her. In a flash of understanding, she saw that the Saturday morning problems were not entirely her husband's fault. I told myself I was trying with all my might to make sure we had a good time together, but in reality, I was looking hard for evidence that he was making it impossible. That's what surprised me so much. What was most on my mind was, 'How can I be a good mother when the father acts like this?' Ironically, I could tell that my criticism not only hurt him, but seemed to make him even more agitated and impatient. My criticism was contributing to the problem." And then Brother Warner writes, "Carol's story shows clearly how three aspects of the self-betrayer's conduct always go together." And this is one of the most brilliant insights that Dr. Warner has to offer.

25:06 He says, "These three things go together: one, accusing others, two, excusing ourselves, and three, displaying oneself as a victim." Because these happen in the same emotional move ... If I remember correctly, and we're going to get technical for a second, but Dr. Warner calls this a unitary act of self-deception. I don't notice that it's happening, but at the same time I blame someone, I'm also excusing myself and displaying myself as a victim. Now we need to be really clear. If people are wrong, especially in serious ways, then it is perfectly the Christian thing to do to set boundaries and to seek justice and to tell the truth. It is not Christian to allow evil to continue, but even when we have to stand up for what's right and sometimes do that in



tough ways, we have to be cautious that we don't let the poison of anger that is coming our way infect our own souls and our own spirits.

26:09      Otherwise, we get what Hank was talking about so beautifully a few minutes ago and verse 17, "And thus they had taught their children that they should hate them and that they should murder them, and that they should rob and plunder them and do all that they could to destroy them. Therefore, they had an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi." Hank, you modeled that for us beautifully about being honest and vulnerable about maybe some of the complexities that have come into your own family life without becoming bitter. It doesn't mean we bottle up our emotions and hide how we really think and feel about situations that is deeply unhealthy, but it means we don't let the bitterness of another infect our own happiness. We refuse to let that happen.

Hank Smith:      26:55      Yeah, I'm grateful for that. I don't think my grandparents and great-grandparents are bad people, and I don't want to be a victim and say, "Well, I have no possible way out of my situation because of them." But you're telling me it's okay to acknowledge, "Wow, we got handed a difficult situation."

Dr. Stephan Taeger:      27:18      Yeah. I want to read a quote from Elder Bednar, that is for me incredibly liberating and deeply, deeply profoundly true. It's a little hard on the natural man and woman, but ultimately it is incredibly liberating. He says this, "It ultimately is impossible for another person to offend you or to offend me. Indeed, believing that another person offended us is fundamentally false. To be offended is a choice we make. It is not a condition inflicted or imposed upon us by someone or something else."

27:55      Obviously we could be tempted, right? We could be tempted to be offended and to be agitated and annoyed, but Elder Bednar says, and he's teaching the truth here. We have a choice if we're going to lean into that or turn away from it. I'll quote our beloved prophet, President Nelson, "The Savior's message is clear: his true disciples build, lift, encourage, persuade, and inspire no matter how difficult the situation. True disciples of Jesus Christ are peacemakers." The antidote for accusation and blame is to be a peacemaker, and we have all of the resources we need to do this. Why? Because if Jesus went to Gethsemane and Golgotha for us, if we are that loved, if we are that forgiven, if Jesus really rose from the dead and we will also rise from the dead, there is no human on this planet that can permanently hurt us. The faithful will prevail in Christ. And because that's the

heart of our story, we have the most beautiful possibilities in Jesus of Nazareth.

- John Bytheway: 29:07 This mindset that they grew up with being taught by their parents, "We were wronged here. We were wronged there. We were wronged there." And then in verse 17 that you read that you grimace when you hear this, "they have taught their children that they should hate them." And I don't think hate comes naturally to children. I think they were taught that. I put in my margin that this idea went for so long that way into the middle of the war chapters, when Ammoron, the brother of Amalickiah writes a letter to Moroni, he says, in Alma 54 verse 24, "This war hath been waged to avenge their wrongs."
- 29:48 He's got the same list of wrongs in his mind that has persisted generationally. "We were wronged, we were wronged, we were wronged." And it reminds me of Stephen Covey who said he found this quotation in a book in Hawaii. I think I've mentioned it before that you'll love it. It reminds me of C. Terry Warner, but, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. And in that space lies our freedom to choose our response. And in that space lies our growth and our happiness." That's like what Elder Bednar's saying, you get to choose because we have that space, and animals and physics and action/reaction, they don't have that, but we have a space to choose our response. I'm glad you brought up the Elder Bednar quote because he said that beautifully.
- Hank Smith: 30:38 I'm sure both of you remember this story, but if not, let me tell it to you, and I would love for you, Stephan, to analyze this with all the wonderful research you've done and all that you've read. This is a story from John Groberg, Elder Groberg, what did they call him, John?
- John Bytheway: 30:53 Kolipoki.
- Hank Smith: 30:54 Yeah, Kolipoki. He was in Hawaii when he met a man who told him this story. He met a husband and wife and, "They were willing to accept a calling," he says, "And I was very grateful." And he said, "The husband told me of an experience he had when he was 12 years old that stayed with him throughout his life. In the early 1900s, his family joined the church in Hawaii. They were faithful members and after two years, he and his father received the priesthood. The family prospered, enjoyed the fellowship of their little branch, and they anxiously looked forward to being sealed as a family in the nearly completed Laie Temple."

	31:30	"Then as it happens, adversity crossed their path. One of the sisters became ill with an unknown disease and was sent to the hospital. At this time, people in Hawaii were wary of unknown diseases as disease had wrought great havoc in the islands. The concerned family went to church on Sunday hoping to receive strength and understanding from their fellow branch members. The son and his father had responsibilities of blessing and passing the sacrament that Sunday. They reverently broke the bread while the congregation sang the sacrament hymn. When the hymn was finished, the father started to kneel to offer the sacrament prayer. All of a sudden, the branch president realized who was at the sacred table and sprang to his feet. Pointing his finger he cried, 'Stop. You cannot touch the sacrament. Your daughter is ill and you may get the rest of us sick. Leave immediately. Someone else will fix new sacrament bread. We can't have you here. Go.'"
	32:25	"The stunned father slowly stood up. He looked at the branch president then at the congregation. Sensing the anxiety, tension, and embarrassment of all of it, he motioned to his family and they quietly filed out of the chapel. Not a word was said as they moved along the dusty trail to their small home, their heads hung. The young son noticed his father's firmly clenched fists. When they entered their home, they all sat on the floor in a circle and the father said, 'We will be silent until I am ready to speak.'
Hank Smith:	33:00	All sorts of thoughts went through this young boy's mind. He envisioned his father coming up with different ways of getting revenge. Would they kill the branch president's pigs? Burn his house down? Quit going to church? Join another church? He could hardly wait to see what his father would decide. Five minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, not a sound. He glanced at his father. His eyes were still closed, his mouth set, his fingers clenched, but no sound. 20 minutes, 25, still nothing. Then he noticed a slight relaxing of his father's hands, a small tremor on his father's lips, then a barely perceptible sob. He looked at his father and saw tears trickling down his cheeks. Soon, his mother was crying also. Then one child, then another, and soon the whole family.
	33:49	Finally, the father opened his eyes, cleared his throat and announced, "I am now ready to speak. Please listen carefully." He turned to his wife and with deep feeling said, "I love you." Then he turned to each child and said, "I love you. I love all of you. This is not the branch president's church. It is the church of Jesus Christ. We will not let any man or any amount of hurt or embarrassment or pride keep us from staying actively involved

in God's kingdom on earth. Next Sunday, we will go back to church. We will stay by ourselves until the illness is known. We will let other people look at us however they will and say whatever they want about us, but we will go back." Stephan, does that fit what you've been talking about here in chapter 10?

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 34:45

It was when he thought of Jesus and it being his church that softened his heart, and what an example of true fatherhood. What an example of saying that's real strength. Our culture tells us that strength means he would've exploded and gotten mad and spoke up. But the real strength is I will do the simple loving thing. It doesn't mean we can't tell the truth about a situation. It doesn't mean we can't express how we feel, but we're still going to do the right thing, whatever that is. I think the balance here is to be honest about other people's decisions, and people can do wrong and they can do wrong towards us. Absolutely. And people can wrong us, but that can't be as an excuse to wrong others. Even if we have to be tough with people, we do it in a way that shows respect to their humanity and shows love, even if we have to set boundaries.

Hank Smith: 35:41

And Zeniff, he finishes here in chapter 10, I, Zeniff, having told all these things to my people concerning the Lamanites. We battled with our might. We put our trust in the Lord. They return to their own land and start to tend their flocks. Zeniff has had a tough life since leaving Zarahemla.

John Bytheway: 36:02

But I love what you brought up, Stephan. Grant Hardy said, "Why is this story in here?" Because through this story and through what happens in the land of Nephi, comes Abinadi, comes Alma, and you can start at Alma and watch the plates, the records get passed down all the way to Moroni starting at Alma. Abinadi changes the world. And Alma that listened to him, Alma the Elder, that was interesting to me. Why is this story in here? Why did Mormon say, "We got to tell this story?" Because this is where the plates start getting handed down.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 36:35

Yeah.

Hank Smith: 36:36

Yeah. Let me ask you both before I let you go, Stephan, Zeniff's decision to leave Zarahemla, go down to the land of Nephi, causes a lot of problems. But as John is saying, some good comes out of it.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 36:49

One of the most beautiful stories, and if our stories determine our possibilities, this is an example of what you're teaching there, Hank, is with the last 116 pages, that God can take the mistakes of others and even ourselves. But if we repent, he can

redeem those. In the words of Isaiah, we can get beauty for ashes, but we have to allow him to do that through our faithfulness and our repentance. And that's when he can take difficult situations and redeem them and make them better for us and actually teach us powerful, powerful lessons.

- John Bytheway: 37:21 I love that. Anyone who is listening, who's in a tough spot, tough place, tough situation, even with consequences of their own choices, with regrets, whatever, look what God can do. God can turn that, and he is so good at it. And so much of what we read in these stories is evidence of he'll take anybody where they're at and he'll make it better.
- Hank Smith: 37:48 And I'm seeing what Stephan taught us here, John, is that if you don't open your heart to that, you can allow anger and resentment to poison you. And that poison goes to maybe the next generation.
- John Bytheway: 38:02 And the next and hundreds of centuries. If they're still talking about in the war chapters, "Hey, we were wronged back in 600 B.C.," imagine if verse 17 had said, "Thus, they were taught to love, to forgive, to choose the right even when they've been wronged, to go forward, even when injustices happened to them." I mean, imagine how different that verse could have been.
- Hank Smith: 38:28 It's interesting in verse 17, Stephan, "Therefore, they had an eternal hatred."
- John Bytheway: 38:34 Yeah, what a phrase.
- Hank Smith: 38:35 Yeah, that's a powerful phrase. Stephan, as we walk away from Mosiah 7 through 10, let's say I'm on my commute and I've been really impressed and touched by what you've said. What's my action item? Give me a, therefore, what should I do? I'm going to pull into my driveway. I walk into my house. What do I do?
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 38:59 Hank, can I answer that indirectly?
- Hank Smith: 39:01 Please do.
- Dr. Stephan Taeger: 39:02 I'm going to tell a story and I want you to hear it for the first time. And Joseph dreamed a dream and he told it his brethren, and they hated him yet the more. Now, if someone was talking to Joseph's brothers, they might say, "Hey, I know Joseph is difficult. Forgive him. Forgive him. Be patient with Joseph.

Forgive him." But what Mosiah 10 is indirectly teaching us is that's not the problem. Eventually they throw Joseph into a pit. Genesis 39, verse 28. Then they're passed by Midianites, merchant men, and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for 20 pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph into Egypt. They thought Joseph was such a problem, they felt completely justified in doing this horrible act to him because they thought Joseph was the issue. Later in life, in Egypt, the tables are turned. Joseph is now successful and in power. Joseph's brothers show up. They need food. Joseph knows it's them. He knows it's them, and they don't know it's him. And at one point they say this. Genesis 42:21, "They said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brethren, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear. Therefore, is this distress come upon us." They refused to see Joseph's humanity. They didn't see that his thoughts, his feelings, his wishes mattered as much as their own. All those years, people might've been like, "Oh, just forgive Joseph. Forgive Joseph. Be patient with him." That's what they could have said to Joseph's brothers, but to draw on a principle from Terry Warner, in order to be set free of their anguish, they didn't need to forgive. They needed to repent.

41:09 And when I say repent, I mean they need to repent for their harsh and unkind feelings towards their brother for all those years, for seeing him less than human. So, there are two stories that we are taught about our interactions with others. One is true and one is false. The first one I'm going to tell you is false. The story goes like this. My resentment, my bitterness and anger are someone else's fault. The other story, the true story, is I am free to love all people, including my enemies. Our story determines our possibilities.

Hank Smith: 41:52 Stephan, thank you. Thank you for that. That answered that question perfectly. What a great day. Dr. Taeger, thanks for spending your time with us.

Dr. Stephan Taeger: 42:01 Thanks for having me. I appreciate it.

Hank Smith: 42:03 Yeah, we loved it. John, I've got all sorts of new notes.

John Bytheway: 42:07 Me too. What a blessing. Thank you.

Hank Smith: 42:10 We want to thank Dr. Stephan Taeger for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen, and we always, every episode, we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope

you'll join us next week. We're going to cover more chapters in the book of Mosiah on FollowHIM.

42:31

Before you skip to the next episode, I have some important information. This episode's transcript and show notes are available on our website, FollowHim.co. That's FollowHim.co. On our website, you'll also find our two books, Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament and Finding Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Both books are full of short and powerful quotes and insights from all our episodes from the Old and New Testaments. The digital copies of these books are absolutely free. You can watch the podcast on YouTube. Also, our Facebook and Instagram accounts have videos and extras you won't find anywhere else. If you'd like to know how you can help us, if you could subscribe to, rate, review, and comment on the podcast, that will make us easier to find. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, and Annabelle Sorensen.

President Russell M. Nelson: 43:25

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

## YOU DON'T EVEN SPEAK GERMAN!



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. John and I are telling a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, I have a story for you. Mosiah seven, eight, nine, ten. it's the story of Limhi and he has tried for so long to get out of bondage to the Lamanites. He's tried to fight his way out. He sent a search party to go find Zarahemla. He's tried everything possible and I think he thinks that's it. It's over. We have no other options. It's not going to happen, and I wonder if the people of Limhi were thinking "There are no miracles. God does not answer prayers." So I had a story. This is from Elder Bruce Hafen.
- John Bytheway: 00:44 We've had him on the podcast.
- Hank Smith: 00:45 Well, back in 1979, Elder Hafen was at BYU and he told this story. He said when he was younger, he was on his mission in Germany, and he had a bit of a hardened heart because he wasn't teaching very many people. "It was rare," he said, "to see anybody join the church and not a whole family." He got a new companion, and this guy was a brand new missionary. He was not just fresh in the mission. He was fresh in the church. He was ready to convert people. "He thought he had converted," Elder Hafen says, "all the flight attendants on the plane from New York to Germany."
- 01:23 He said, within a couple of days of his arrival, "I was called into a meeting in another city, so I had to leave him with another inexperienced missionary. And I went with that missionary's companion to the city for this meeting." He said, "I got back late. So the next morning I asked him how the day was. He broke into a big smile and said that he had found a family that would surely join the church." And like I told you before, he said it was rare to see anybody join the church, let alone an entire family.
- 01:53 He says, "I asked him for more details, but he had forgotten to write down the name or the address. All he could remember was that the family lived on the top floor of a big apartment



house." "Great," he said as he contemplated all those flights of stairs. He explained that he knew so little German that he had just exchanged a few words with the woman who answered the door, but he did say she wanted us to come back and he wanted us to go find her that day.

02:27 I explained to him that the people who do not slam the door in our face are not necessarily planning to join the church. He says, "But we went to find her mostly to humor him. He couldn't remember the right street either, so we picked a likely spot in our area and began climbing up and down the staircases." After a frustrating morning, I leveled with him. "Elder, based on my many months of experience, it is not simply worth our time to try to find that woman. I have developed a tolerance for the reality of missionary work. I know more about this than you do." His eyes filled with tears. His lower lip began to tremble.

03:17 I remember it so well. He said to me through his tear-filled eyes, "Elder Hafen, I came on my mission to find the honest in heart. The Spirit told me that that woman is going to join the church, and you can't stop me from finding her."

John Bytheway: 03:33 Wow.

Hank Smith: 03:33 I decided to teach him a lesson. I raced him up one staircase after another until he was ready to drop, and so was I. I turned to him, "Elder had enough?" "No, we're going to find her." I began to smolder. I decided I would work him to death until he pleaded for me to stop. Then maybe he would get the message. Then at the top of a long flight of stairs, we found the apartment. She came to the door. He thrashed my ribs with his elbow, "That's her Elder, talk to her. Talk to her."

04:13 And then Elder Hafen says, "Brothers and sisters, not long ago, up on Maple Lane, just a few blocks from here at BYU, that woman's husband was sitting in our living room. He was here for General Conference because he is the bishop of a ward in Germany. His two boys are preparing to serve missions. His wife and daughters are pillars in the church." "I hope," he says, "I will never be so aware of reality that I become unresponsive to the whisper of heaven."

04:48 Isn't it great? His missionary companion was Elder Keeler. I just love that story that you might think, "There's no way. There's no way. We have tried every single thing," and then the people of Limhi, who shows up, John? Who shows up around the corner?

John Bytheway:	05:04	Ammon the Explorer, Ammon the Scout. What do we call him? Yeah.
Hank Smith:	05:08	Yeah, Ammon from Zarahemla saying, "I think you prayed me here."
John Bytheway:	05:14	Now what do you want with me?
Hank Smith:	05:14	Yeah. What do you want with me? So thank you Elder Hafen for sharing that story so long ago.
John Bytheway:	05:21	Absolutely.
Hank Smith:	05:22	We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. Come back next week. We're going to tell another story for followHIM Favorites.