

followHIM

Episode 12: Dr. Kerry Muhlestein

Doctrine and Covenants 27-28

"All Things Must Be Done In order"

Show Notes

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 Sunday.

Podcast Episode 112 Description:

Part 1:

In the Church's infancy, Joseph receives the Vision of Moses as he begins what he calls the "new translation" of the Bible. Join Dr. Kerry Muhlestein, Hank, and John as we learn what happens when Joseph, Emma, Oliver, or others ask questions. We discover how the early Saints learn about the ordinance of the sacrament (do the emblems matter?), the power of the Abrahamic Covenant and how the Lord has much more in store for the entire human family via covenants via Elijah. Learn about our place in the Kingdom of God, why President Nelson constantly mentions the Gathering of Israel, and what great things the Lord has in store for His people.

Part 2:

Dr. Kerry Muhlestein continues to discuss the restoration of the New and Everlasting Covenant, and they discuss the importance of personal revelation and corporal revelation. Hiram Page (who marries a Whitmer) has proclaimed he is having revelations for the entire Church. Emma's confirmation is disturbed by riotous crowds, and the Joseph Smith Translation begins with Moses 1. The JST process is vastly different from the Book of Mormon translation and the word transformation (think: transfiguration). Join us as we discuss the sacrament, the Abrahamic Covenant, revelation, transformation, and how the Tabernacle Choir can be like a seer stone.

Timecode:

Part 1

- 00:00 Introduction
- 00:46 Dr. Kerry Muhlestein is Introduced
- 03:18 Vision of Moses
- 04:21 Joseph's "New Translation" of the Bible
- 07:04 Moses Chapter One
- 09:29 Emma Smith and Sally Knight Confirmations Disturbed and the Sacrament Instructions Delivered by a Heavenly Messenger
- 11:08 Much of the Doctrine and Covenants is a Result of a Question
- 11:44 Do the Emblems of the Sacrament Matter?
- 13:39 "It Mattereth Not"
- 15:52 What is Most Important about the Sacrament
- 17:32 How Covenants Intertwine and Teach of Us of Christ
- 19:20 Elias: Person or Title?
- 22:10 "Hearts of the Fathers" Doesn't Only Mean Your Father
- 27:47 Jacob Wrestles an Angel and Fears Esau
- 30:09 Covenants and "Leveling Up"
- 33:55 President Nelson Reminds Us of the Abrahamic Covenant
- 37:52 Why We are Here (Not Just to Get a Body and Be Tested)
- 42:15 What the Birthright Means Today
- 46:32 Being Chosen is Like Being Chosen to Mow the Lawn
- 48:59 All Things Point to Christ (Sacrament Meeting then and One in the Future)
- 52:53 The Symmetry Between the First Vision and Joseph Receiving Priesthood Keys in Kirtland

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II Begins
- 02:23 Sacred Meals Associated with Sacrifice
- 03:19 Restoring the Gospel is Restoring the Covenant
- 04:46 The Sacrament and Living Water
- 06:17 President Nelson Still Excited About the Abrahamic Covenant
- 06:56 We Meet Hiram Page
- 09:06 Personal Revelation and Revelation for the Church
- 11:16 Moses 1
- 16:20 How the Mouthpiece of the Lord Works
- 20:27 Hiram Page Tells Others He Receives Revelation About Zion
- 23:42 The Early Church Stumbles and the Lord Corrects Them
- 25:19 Order and Sustaining Within the Church
- 27:26 Hiram Page's Seer Stone
- 28:35 The Celestial Room, Tabernacle Choir, and Seer Stones are Alike

- 31:25 The Lord Corrects and Encourages Hiram and Oliver
- 35:56 We are Grateful We Have a Prophet
- 37:41 Dr. Muhlestein Tells His Story

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Biographical Information:



Kerry received his BS from BYU in psychology with a Hebrew minor. As an undergraduate, he spent time at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies in the intensive Hebrew program. He received an MA in ancient Near Eastern studies from BYU and his PhD from UCLA in Egyptology, where in his final year he was named the UCLA Affiliates Graduate Student of the Year. He taught courses in Hebrew and Religion part time at BYU and the UVSC extension center, as well as in history at Cal Poly Pomona and UCLA. He also taught early-morning seminary and at the Westwood (UCLA) institute of religion. His first full-time appointment was a joint position in religion and history at BYU–Hawaii. He is the director of the BYU Egypt Excavation Project. He was selected by the *Princeton Review* in 2012 as one of the best 300 professors in the nation (the top .02% of those considered). He was also a visiting fellow at the University of Oxford for the 2016–17 academic year. He has published six books and over fifty-five peer-reviewed articles and has done over eighty academic presentations. He and his wife, Julianne, are the parents of six children, and together they have lived in Jerusalem while Kerry has taught there on multiple occasions. He has served as the chairman of a national committee for the American Research Center in Egypt and serves on their Research Supporting Member Council. He has also served on a committee for the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities and currently serves on their board of trustees and as a vice president of the organization. He is the co-chair for the Egyptian Archaeology Session of the American Schools of Oriental Research. He is also a senior fellow of the William F. Albright Institute for Archaeological Research. He is involved with the International Association of Egyptologists, and has worked with Educational Testing Services on their AP world history exam.

Courses Taught: Old Testament, Teachings of Isaiah, Pearl of Great Price, Book of Mormon, New Testament, Ancient Near Eastern Texts, Foundations of Ancient Scripture, Egyptian History, Egyptian Historiography, History of Civilization, History of the Near Eastern Empires, Ancient Egypt and Foreign Relations, and Marriage and Family

Areas of Expertise: Ancient Egypt, Hebrew Bible, Pearl of Great Price

Areas of Research: Dr. Muhlestein is the director of the BYU Egypt Excavation Project, and in association with this works on understanding the pyramid excavated there as well as the Graeco-Roman culture represented at the site, and the advent of Christianity in Egypt. In addition, Dr. Muhlestein's research focuses on the texts and iconography of Egyptian religion, international contact between ancient Egypt and her neighbors, the Egyptian juridical process, Egyptian literature, and the overlap of the biblical and Egyptian worlds, including the ancient and modern history of the Pearl of Great Price, among other things.

Languages: Exams passed in various phases of Egyptian, as well as Hebrew, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Moabite, Coptic, German, and French. Additionally, courses have been taken in Greek and Akkadian.

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EPISODE 12

Part I

Dr. Kerry Muhlestein

Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to Follow Him. A weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:08	And I'm John Bytheway.
Hank Smith:	00:10	We love to learn.
John Bytheway:	00:11	We love to laugh.
Hank Smith:	00:12	We want to learn and laugh with you.
John Bytheway:	00:14	As together we follow Him.
Hank Smith:	00:17	My friends, welcome to another episode of Follow Him, a podcast designed to help individuals and families with their Come Follow Me studies. I'm here with the greatest co-host on the planet John Bythway. Welcome John.
John Bytheway:	00:34	I've never been introduced that way, Hank.
Hank Smith:	00:36	Well, you are. Of all the co-hosts I've had on podcasts, John.
John Bytheway:	00:40	I'm one of them.
Hank Smith:	00:41	You are the-my favorite podcast host.
John Bytheway:	00:46	I am very excited to introduce Kerry Muhlestein. And I'm reading this bio and just going, I don't want to do any talking today. I just wanna listen. Let me read, and I can't even read the whole thing. There's so much here. But, Kerry received his Bachelor's Degree from BYU in psychology with a Hebrew minor. As an undergraduate, he spent time in the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies in the intensive Hebrew program. He

received an MA, Master's of Arts in ancient near Eastern Studies from BYU and his PhD from UCLA in Hebrew, no, Egyptology. So Hebrew and Egyptology, where in his final year he was named UCLA Affiliates Graduate Student of the Year. He's taught courses in Hebrew and religion part-time at BYU and UVSC Extension Center, which is now UVU. As well as in history at Cal Poly Panoma and UCLA. He also taught early morning seminary at the Westwood UCLA Institute of Religion. Early Morning Seminary from an Egyptologist. Sounds awesome. He's the director of the BYU Egypt Excavation Project. And I thought if that was an acronym, that'd be BEEP, which I think would be a cool acronym. If you go there twice, it's BEEP BEEP. He was, he was selected by the Princeton Review in 2012 as one of the three--best 300 professors in the nation.

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| Hank Smith: | 02:16 | My goodness. |
| John Bytheway: | 02:17 | He's published six books, over 55 peer reviewed articles, done over 80 academic presentations. He and his wife Julianne, are the parents of six children, and together they have lived in Jerusalem. He's the co-chair for the Egyptian Archeology session of the American Schools of Oriental Research. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 02:33 | Well, thank you. Thanks. It's good to be with you guys. I, I think we should add to the end of that the bio that I took a course on how to pad a bio, so and I, that's, that's the only A I ever got, but I got an A in that class, so. |
| Hank Smith: | 02:45 | Alright, Carrie, let's jump in. We are going to be in sections 27 and 28 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The date that I see here in the section heading is August of 1830. Our church is now just four and a half months old. I tease my students when I teach this. I'll say it was just a little baby church. Picture, a little four and a half month old. Right? It's just a brand new church. What leads up, can you tell us what leads up to this revelation? What's life like for Joseph Smith and his friends? |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 03:18 | There are, I think, a number of important things that are happening just before this. So, as you said, I mean, the Book of Mormon has just come forth. They've just organized the church. They're getting close to, so that organization is at the first conference of the church that's in April. Right. And, and this comes in August. In September they're gonna have the second conference of the church. So they're getting close to that. And another couple significant things that have happened that will affect a little bit Section 27, but even more Section 28 when we get there; sometime in June. So, you know, midway between April and, and, when the church is organized and this happens, |

Joseph Smith has a revelation that he calls the visions of Moses. We now call it Moses Chapter One. But that has just come to him.

04:09 Sometime in between there, we know sometime in between July and the end of September, most likely towards the end of September. And again, this may coincide with the reception of Section 28. He gets a second as he's working now on the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. He calls it the New Translation. So that's, that's a project he's starting, right, as these things are happening. And he receives the a kind of vision or revelation that will become Moses 2 and 3. That also happens. All we know is sometime between July and October for sure, but evidence places at most likely towards the end of August or, or probably towards the end of September. But that's the setting that's leading up to these things. So he's getting revelations that we put in the Doctrine and Covenants, but he is also getting revelations that we later put in the Book of Moses. For them, right now, they're just a whole bunch of revelations coming, from all sorts of sources, including working on the translation of the Bible. So that's some of the background.

Hank Smith: 05:12 I'll, I'll mention this. One thing that I, I don't think I understood, before, you know, looking into it, was the role of the Joseph Smith Translation project of going through the Bible and the Restoration. I don't think I understood that early on. But I think it's pretty instrumental for our listeners to understand. This was part of the process of the Lord saying, you're gonna go through the Bible and, and in going through the Bible, you're gonna start asking questions, and those questions are going to enable me to continue to restore the gospel. Is that, would you say...

Kerry Muhlestein: 05:49 Okay. That's absolutely true.

Hank Smith: 05:50 You can say it better than me.

Kerry Muhlestein: 05:51 Well, I think, I think a lot of the revelations we have in the Doctrine and Covenants are the result of questions that happen as they do the translation. So this is something you can discuss in your next week's podcast, because for example, it looks like we--we can't tell for sure--but it looks like there's a pretty good chance that Moses two and three are received right at about the same time that Section 29 is received. And section 29 is about the fall, two and three is the creation. And then the next thing he is gonna do is the Joseph Smith translation. So, I mean, all of this is interconnected. They're just, he's learning about creation and fall in a number of different ways, but all revelation from heaven. So they're absolutely interconnected.

	06:32	Very good. Yeah. I, you know, I think I would've thought early on, oh, the Joseph Smith translation, I'm getting a correct version of the Bible. Whereas probably that was maybe a side issue was, hey, we're gonna correct some things that have been lost out of the Bible, but more importantly, we're going to be asking questions that are gonna lead to the restoration of certain principles and doctrines.
	06:54	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	06:55	That, yeah, the Lord's, he's gonna soon read about Enoch, right? And he's, he's gonna start asking questions about Zion, and that's going to become a huge part of their lives.
Kerry Muhlestein:	07:04	Yeah. I, in fact, I think the revelations about Zion and Enoch also coincide, and we're gonna see that this, I think Moses chapter one casts light on section 28. So we'll talk about that when we get to section 28. But I think all of these things interact with each other in ways that we, because we compartmentalize them, we put them in little boxes. That's a D&C box, that's a book of Moses box. We sometimes don't recognize how well they interacted for as far as the Saints just receiving a flow of revelation that restored truth.
Hank Smith:	07:34	Yeah. It was when I, I think, if I remember it was when I met Bob Matthews and I thought, who's Bob Matthews? And then all of a sudden, this Joseph Smith translation project took on a new role. John, anything about Joseph Smith translation before we jump in?
John Bytheway:	07:47	Oh, I'm so glad you mentioned that. I know that Joseph McConkie used to tell us, he said that for Joseph Smith, translating the Book of Mormon was Gospel 101. It's so strong on first principles, faith in Christ, repentance, baptism, holy Ghost. And when he went into the JST, it was graduate school. That's the way Joseph McConkie put it. And I think that's a wonderful thing for people to see. It reminds me of the line in the spirit of God, like a fire is burning the Lord is extending the saint's understanding. And I feel like it's almost like the funny metaphor of trying to drink from a fire hydrant where it's all coming at once and, and now we've had years to go over and pour over these things. Yeah. But imagine the volume of it coming all at once, and, and trying to, as Kerry said, we're putting it in boxes, but they were getting it all at once.
Hank Smith:	08:41	That's a really cool idea. Right. The the moment, they just get one, here comes another one out the, you know, out of the pipeline. I...

Kerry Muhlestein:	08:48	In fact, to tie that together with your Book of Mormon thing, sometimes we forget this timing right. That, so they translated the Book of Mormon. It took 'em a little while to get it published, but for the Saints receiving it, the Book of Mormon comes in spring of 1830. Book of Moses starts in summer of 1830. Right? It's just the Lord doesn't, he is not giving him a break. He has given them plenty to try and digest.
Hank Smith:	09:09	Yeah. That--we've had, we've had decades, you know, decades, centuries to, to look at these things while they're getting them hot off the press. Literally off the press. Anything else before we get into Section 27, Kerry, that you'd say, Hey, you need to understand this as background?
Kerry Muhlestein:	09:26	Yeah. And, and I think some of this you can get, I, I even brought this, my picture to see. But some of this you can get from the Come Follow Me manual. So at the time, Joseph and Emma just before Section 27 is received, they've visited the Knight Family. The Knight Family, as you know, were some of his earliest supporters. They were in New York. They were involved with the translation of the Book of Mormon and as a support and so on. So just before this, Emma and Sally Knight, that's, Newell Knight's wife had been baptized. And they were going to confirm them, and make the--give them the gift of the Holy Ghost when there were some threats from mobs. And they kind of had to stop and break up at that point.
	10:10	So they weren't confirmed for a period of time. So, now Joseph and Emma are in Harmony, and the Knights are going to visit them, and they decide, let's confirm Emma and Sally. Let's give them the Gift of the Holy Ghost and, and get this done. And so they're going to do that at a meeting they're gonna have, it's kind of like we did recently. They're gonna have sacrament meeting in their home, but they want some wine to do that. And, and so Joseph is on his way to get that wine. And it's, as he's doing that, that this revelation comes to him a messenger. He says, A Heavenly Messenger meets him and, and delivers this information.
Hank Smith:	10:47	It's almost, I hate to say this, but it's almost old hat to say this now--Joseph Smith talked to a Heavenly Messenger, right? Yeah. Like at this point...
Kerry Muhlestein:	10:56	I was on my, I was on my way to the forum and to get some wine, and an angel came, right? So, yeah, that's just how it goes. Another day at the office.

Hank Smith:	11:03	That's just Joseph's life. Just Joseph's life's interacting with divine beings.
John Bytheway:	11:08	You know, I, I think that it's significant too, that I like to tell my students, and I, almost all of the sections of the Doctrine of Covenants came as a result of a question.
Kerry Muhlestein:	11:19	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	11:19	There are some exceptions. John Taylor announcing the martyrdom and this one, I think, 'cause it wasn't, it was just, I'm going to get some wine. And he's interrupted in that process, which makes this kind of unique. Would you, would you say?
Kerry Muhlestein:	11:30	Yeah. Oh, yeah.
John Bytheway:	11:31	Well, let's jump into the section itself and maybe give us big picture. What is the message to Joseph and the church, and why is this important for us to have today?
Kerry Muhlestein:	11:43	So I think there are a couple of different messages. They're intertwined, but we'll miss some of them if we don't look carefully for them. So, I mean, the first message is really about the symbolism of the sacrament. And that it doesn't always have to be the exact same thing that will convey that symbolism, right? So he's on his way to get wine. And if we look at verse two, well, verse one is worthwhile. This is—we've had this a couple times. We've got it in this verse. We're gonna get a whole string of sections in, or in the Doctrine of Covenants, where the first verse is always Christ introducing himself and telling us something about his nature or who he is, right? So in this one he says, he's your Lord, your God, and your Redeemer, whose word is quick and powerful. So all of those are things that tell you something about who he is, and he just does that in section after section to make sure we know who he really is. And I think that's worth looking at.
Hank Smith:	12:36	That word, quick. If one of my children said, what does he mean that his word is quick? Is that the same quick as you see in both the quick and the dead? That idea?
Kerry Muhlestein:	12:47	For many people take it that way. I mean, he doesn't give us a definition, right? So typically it, scripturally, when we talk about quick or being quickened, it means life, right? It means that you've got some kind of power and life to it. And so there's probably something to that here, but it may also be because often this quick and powerful word is associated with the sword

that cuts through things. And there may be something to the fact, you know, I think that word can play a double purpose here, because it is a live power, but it also is something that, you know, a sword that's gonna cut through joint and marrow, that's the kind of thing that's associated with his word frequently. That's moving quickly, right? So I would guess that there's more than one meaning intended here.

Hank Smith: 13:31

Yeah. And that's a Book of Mormon idea, right? Mormon love that idea of the word is like a sword.

Kerry Muhlestein: 13:37

Yeah.

Hank Smith: 13:37

It will pierce you to the soul.

Kerry Muhlestein: 13:39

But the next verse is when he's really gonna move into talking about the sacrament. And, and I love this phrase. We actually get this phrase a number of times in the Doctrine and Covenants as well, where he says it mattereth not, and then, you know, sometimes it's mattereth not to me, whether you go by land or by sea or whatever else. It just gives you this idea that some things matter and some things don't matter, right? So for him, it doesn't matter exactly what we're gonna drink, if it so be that you do it with an eye single to my glory, remembering unto the Father, my body, which was laid down for you and my blood, which was shed for, for the remission of your sin. So those, here we have Christ telling us what the key elements of the sacrament are, that we have to do it in remembrance of what he's done for us.

14:22

And with an eye single to the glory of God. Whether it is wheat bread or like we've just started using gluten-free bread in my ward. Whether it's wine or grape juice or water is not the issue. Now, there's symbolism actually in all of those things, and it's worth looking into the symbolism. I love the symbolism of the water, and I love the symbolism of wine. They're both great. I don't want us to stop taking the symbols seriously, because there's a power in symbolism. And I think we don't address that enough. The actual thing we're taking, he's telling us is less important than our intent as we take it. And I think that's one of the key elements of this revelation.

Hank Smith: 15:03

I like that. I like that a lot because it helps me in my own, in my own home to try to say, okay, what's the most crucial point here? Some things are important, some things are crucial. To me, that's, yes, the symbols are important, but why we do it is crucial. I've read in war to in Europe, World War II, they, there was no bread to be found, so they had to use potato peelings.

Kerry Muhlestein:	15:28	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	15:29	And I think the Lord would say it mattereth not, right. That's right. It mattereth not, it's okay. It's okay. I think I've you know, to some soldiers, all they could find was a candy bar. Right? And my kids would love that. Yeah. If it was a candy bar.
Kerry Muhlestein:	15:42	And if I remember correctly, sometimes they use shell casings to put the water in to partake of, of the sacrament. Right? That's okay. What, whatever, whatever works.
Hank Smith:	15:52	Right? I love it. I mean, it, the actual items themselves are important, but they're not the most important. I really like that.
John Bytheway:	16:00	Yeah. I'm intrigued with things that the Lord has us repeat. And the sacrament is a weekly thing. And the word remembering, I just had to remember in there, and I love quoting this. I think it'll change the way my students read the Book of Mormon to watch for remember. And it's opposite, forget. And there's an old President Spencer W. Kimball quotation where he said when you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is? He said, it could be remember, because all of us have made Covenants to remember. And we think Nephi saying, how could you have forgotten three times in a row to his brothers? We think of Helaman saying, oh, remember, remember? And how quickly that pride cycle goes up and down. And here's a weekly remembrance, and keep your eyes single to the Savior. What's important. And there's a hierarchy, like you said, yes, the symbols are beautiful, and we can draw meaning from them, but it's all about rerepeating Christ.
Kerry Muhlestein:	17:00	Yeah. And I think, I think as you say that, you hit on a really key element we often don't recognize that helps us see a theme that I think often is under-recognized in this chapter. And it's kind of fun that you talked about how often the Book of Mormon says remembering, because I have not quantified this for sure. So one day, maybe I'll sit down and count and, and say, but I tell my students, at least my impression is, if you're just gonna talk about the themes in the book Mormon that are talked about, most often, it would be number one, Christ and His atoning sacrifice. It would be number two, promises made to the House of Israel. And three, remembering. But two and three are actually intertwined because one of the covenantal obligations for Israel is to remember what God has done for them.
	17:45	And I find that really interesting because here we're talking about the sacrament, which is when we renew the covenant, right? And that's interesting because Emma and Sally are about

to renew the baptismal covenant so they can do the confirmation, but we're renewing the covenant. So this is the covenant. It's and this is another thing that I find members of the church are sometimes a little confused on. We talk about the new and everlasting covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, our baptismal covenant, and we don't know how they relate. They're all the same thing, right? So New and Everlasting Covenant, Abrahamic Covenant are two different names for the same thing. I mean, Abrahamic Covenant has some connotations of a specific time and place that the New and Everlasting covenant is renewed and so on. And baptism is the way we enter into that, right?

18:26 So it's not a surprise that right after we get him talking about renewing this covenant and remembering, and then he goes on to tell them that, that you shouldn't purchase wine from your enemies, right? So we have him still addressing this specific thing, and that's always a good idea. Don't, don't get drinks from your enemies. All right I'm just gonna throw that out as general advice. And then he says that the, at some point, He will come and partake of this with them. I think that's what he means when he says he'll drink of the fruit of the vine. And then he goes through this list of people who he will do that with. So who he will go through this covenant renewal ceremony with, and he starts with Moroni --tying it in with the Book of Mormon, but immediately says to stick of Ephraim.

19:17 So immediately he's tying that in with the Israel. And then he is gonna talk about Elias. Now Elias here is a title that's getting used for a number of people. So this is a part that can also be confusing to people. Elias is the Greek version of the name Elijah. So sometimes Elias means Elijah, but often it's a title for a forerunner, which Elijah is a forerunner, but so is John. So is Gabriel, actually. So is Zacharias, and they're all gonna be mentioned here, right? So he talks about the forerunner for John, which is Gabriel who comes, he's gonna talk about John being a forerunner. And then John, of course, is the one who was sent to Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith to give them the priesthood. You know the baptismal covenant, when they partake of the sacrament, that was, that ability was given to them by John the Baptist, right?

20:10 And then he immediately takes that into Elijah. And Elijah is an Elias who will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Now, this is an important thing to stop and think about as well, because we typically, as members of the church think of that as temple work, right? Turning--or family history work, turning to the

hearts of the children, to the fathers and the fathers to the children. And it is that, but I, I think that we're getting a smaller piece of the puzzle if that's all we think of. So I think and, and maybe, you know, right now, President Nelson has told us to look at the blessings promised to Israel and study that. And I've just written a book on that. And so, and people are asking about that a lot right now, because they're trying to figure this out. So maybe I'm just like super covenant focused right now, and I'm seeing it everywhere. And, you'll have to tell me if I'm seeing it where it's not. But...

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| Hank Smith: | 21:02 | I think being super covenant focused is probably a good thing. Okay. I'm just gonna throw that out there as a good, a general piece of advice. All right? Like you said, don't we have two now, don't buy drinks from your enemies. And Super Covenant focused is okay. All right. It's okay. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 21:16 | So we'll keep a list of good general advice today. |
| Hank Smith: | 21:19 | Yeah of good general advice. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 21:20 | Yeah. So this is talking about Elijah, but it's talking about Malachi's prophecy to Elijah, right? And if you were to go back to Malachi's original audience, the Israelites, and you say the fathers turn your heart to the fathers, the fathers they think of are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which by the way, is who is mentioned in the next verse, right? And so if you mention Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, what you're really doing is you're talking about the covenant God made with them. And that would've been clear to the original audience--Malachi's original audience, the Israelites. I think when Christ comes and quotes Malachi to the Nephites who are Israelites and are very conscious of being Israelites, that it's clear to them. In our day we kind of--we're not quite as covenant conscious or, well, president Nelson's getting us there, but we haven't always been quite as covenant conscious-- and especially in Joseph Smith's day, that idea of a covenant had really been lost. |
| | 22:14 | And so it's interesting that when Moroni quotes this to Joseph Smith he quotes it differently than it is in the Book of Mormon or in the Bible. And he says, he will turn your hearts to the promises made to the fathers. Right now that's very clearly about the covenant and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And it, it's almost, it seems to me that he's, he is just, I mean, I don't know, but I would guess he's changing it a little bit because his current audience needs that change to know what they're talking about. The early audiences got it, needed a little help at that point. And again, it's in case we're missing it, when we read verse nine |

where it says, Elijah, unto whom I've committed the keys to the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with the curse.

22:58 In case we're gonna miss that. He immediately goes to verse 10. And also with Joseph and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, your fathers by whom the promises remain, right? You cannot get more clear than this, I think. He is telling them, you are part of the Abrahamic covenant. This is essential for you. And it's tied to the sacrament in this section, right? That's the covenant you entered into at baptism. So when you're taking the sacrament and renewing it, it's the same covenant. And so he's just walked them through how at some point he will renew that covenant with all of these key covenant players, including verse 11, also with Michael or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all the ancient days, which is again, crucial because when Abraham receives the covenant in Abraham chapter one, he's very, very specific that what he's looking for is the same covenant that Adam the first of all had, right? And so Christ is making that same connection here.

Hank Smith: 23:54 You're crucial--This is a crucial point that we call it the Abrahamic covenant, but really it was started all the way back to Adam. And like you said, it's all the way through till today. It might come by different names, but it's the same idea of I'll make you certain promises, right? If you will live up to these certain obligations that you've been, that you've been given.

John Bytheway: 24:17 And I think one of the kind of fun things about the Book of Abraham is when it begins, Abraham is saying, I sought for the blessings of the fathers. And you're like, wait a minute. You're one of the fathers.

Hank Smith: 24:28 You're the fathers.

John Bytheway: 24:29 You're Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And so, I think you're right. It's that God made the same covenant with Michael, with Enoch, Adam, with Enoch and others. And so we've called it the Abrahamic Covenant because he kept it so well-- modeled it so well, maybe it's similar to why we call the Melchizadek priesthood after Melchizadek 'cause he was such a great high priest. And we call this the Abrahamic covenant because he wanted the same thing that his fathers had, had received. Is that a fair way to put it, Kerry?

Kerry Muhlestein: 24:57 Yeah. I think so. I think there's another element as well, but I think that's absolutely correct, that that's one of the reasons.

But, additionally, there is a change that comes with Abraham, and that is that after Abraham, anyone who will become part of the covenant will be Abraham's seed, right? And so I think that's also part of the reason why we'll refer to it as the Abrahamic Covenant, because that's now the, the next source. We'll also talk about it as, and this is what President Nelson did in General Conference as the blessings promised to Israel. Because additionally, anyone who becomes part of this covenant will become part of the House of Israel. So the names Abraham and Israel get continually associated with this covenant from here on out, because that's the family that you will now belong to. And I think this is important to understand that salvation is a family affair.

25:47 God is saving families. And so what he's done is he's tasked a family with getting everyone else to become part of the covenant or become part of that family. And this ties into what I was talking about with the, you know, turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. And we think of that as family history. Well, it is, but we need to think of it as not just great grandma Joanne, who we should think of, but also great, great, great grandma, Rachel and Rebecca and Sarah and Asinof and, and so on, right? We need to think of this as a huge family history that ties us back to Abraham and then to Adam. And the idea is that God wants us all to become part of this family so that we're connected.

26:31 The covenant connects us vertically to God, but it connects us horizontally to all, to each other in a family, right? So that, I think that's fantastic. We talk about the human family, but he's wanting us to become on another level, the human family. To be sealed together through that covenant to each other and to him. Which is as beautiful. So, and again, I think as people, I mean, this has become such a big thing right now where people are trying to understand the blessings promised to the House of Israel. And sometimes they're struggling to find those blessings. Well, when you recognize what's going on here, you see this whole section actually is about blessings promised to Israel. And one of them is you can renew your covenant by partaking of the sacrament, and you'd be connected to everyone, right? So this section is absolutely about blessings promised to Israel.

Hank Smith: 27:20 Yeah. This is fantastic stuff. And I've, you know, when I explain this to my students, you'll see the light bulb go on. Oh, I didn't know that. You know? Oh, those are connected. Those stories are connected. For example, we use the name Israel, but a lot of people wouldn't know where that comes from. So let's do a little gospel 101 here, Kerry, where does the name Israel even

come from that? You use them interchangeably, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then you talk about the Israelites or Israel. Where does that come from?

Kerry Muhlestein: 27:47

And that's a great question. Again, the same talk, President Nelson kind of highlighted that, right? That when Jacob wrestles and I, man, we could go on. I could get into this wrestling with the angel story for an hour. I think it's so fantastic. When Jacob is there, but he's coming back into the land of Canaan because God asked him to, and he is afraid his brother is going to kill him and his entire family. So much so that he is sending gifts to his brother. He's divided his family in half so that if maybe half of them get killed, half can survive. I mean, it's a real concern for him that his brother might kill them all, but he's going anyway, not because he wants to, not because he's hoping his family will get killed, but because God asked him to.

28:25

So he's making an Abrahamic sacrifice, right? He's willing to sacrifice his entire family if that's what God is asking him to do. But then he prays once he's done everything he can think of doing, he prays and he asks, God, save me and save my family. And that's when he starts to wrestle with an angel. And again, that's that symbolism, right? And the text seems to make it clear. It's a real wrestle. 'cause his thigh gets thrown out of joint, but it's also a spiritual wrestle, right? And because he wrestles and the angel tries to leave and he will not let go, he's hanging on. He is not gonna let go until he gets the blessing he wants. Then God says, as a prince, you have prevailed. And so I'll change your name to Israel, which there you can, and translate that a couple of ways.

29:14

One is that he has prevailed with God. So that same part of that is wrestler, prevail, persevere, and the L is God, right? So he will prevail with God is one way of translating it. And another is that God will prevail. Right? And I think both are intended. I think it's a name that's intentionally just vague enough to mean both. And so that's part of what President Nelson has been talking about, that God will prevail, right? Or let God prevail and so on. And frankly that's why the book I just wrote on the Abrahamic Covenant, I called God Will Prevail. Because this idea is that when you make this covenant with God, you are allowing him to prevail in your life. And as a result, he will cause you to prevail.

29:58

And that's what Jacob's name has changed to. And so inherent with the name change, which denotes a change in nature, he's a higher holier being and so on is the idea that he is leveling up in the covenant. We could, if we're gonna use, you know, gaming terminology that my kids, my nephews-- Yeah, he's leveling up in

the covenant. He made the Covenant of Bethel. But here at Peniel, he levels up further into the covenant, kind of like we do. We enter in at baptism, but we level up as we go to the temple level up in temple marriage. He has demonstrated that God fully and completely prevails in his life. And as a result, God is promising him, now you're going to prevail. And that is available to us because we make the same covenant and we renew the same covenant in the way that it's being talked about here in Section 27.

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| Hank Smith: | 30:45 | Oh, I love that. That's excellent. And oftentimes, you know, someone might say, why did the Lord change Jacob's name to Israel? And I'll say, it happens in our life all the time. The Lord gives us a new covenant, and he changes our name. When we were baptized, we took upon us the name of Christ. When you go to the temple, you get a new name. And I've had students say, is that the name I was known by in the Premortal life? And I'll say, no, not at all. That's the name that it's a symbol. Just like you said, it's a symbol. 'cause you're a new person. Yeah, right? You're a new person. I hate to burst their bubble. But you're a new person. It's a, it's a symbol that you are, that you're brand new. You know, Kerry, I've noticed in the Book of Mormon, the parts that talk about the Abrahamic Covenant are the ones that everybody skips. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 31:26 | Yeah. |
| Hank Smith: | 31:26 | Um, Second Nephi, right? With all the Isaiah chapters, people are like, well, I don't really understand that. I'll just keep going. Then they get to Jacob 5. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 31:32 | And those are like completely about the Abrahamic Covenant. But anyway you're absolutely right. Yeah. Yeah. |
| Hank Smith: | 31:37 | Then you get to Jacob 5 and you're going, I don't, that's a lot of pruning. There's a lot of dunging going on. I don't know what's happening. I'll skip that. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 31:44 | And I don't like dunging anyway. Right? |
| Hank Smith: | 31:46 | Right. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 31:46 | Yeah. Yeah. Move on. |
| Hank Smith: | 31:47 | And then the, you've got the Savior's second day with the Nephites. Which, whenever I ask my students about the Savior's visit, they talk about him putting, you know, letting them come |

up and touch his hands, his feet. He blesses the children, which are all incredible events, but they never talk about the second visit the next day.

- Kerry Muhlestein: 32:02 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 32:02 Which is all House of Israel. So you could, if you read the Book of Mormon, skip Second Nephi, Jacob 5, and the Saviors' second day with the Nephites, you're gonna miss what we're talking about here. You're gonna miss the whole thing.
- Kerry Muhlestein: 32:13 Yep. Yep. That's exactly right. And I'll-- so it's dangerous to get me going on this topic 'cause I'll go for forever, but...
- Hank Smith: 32:21 Keep going.
- Kerry Muhlestein: 32:22 But I do see an interesting parallel. So I've actually, I have gone through and counted how many times something about the Covenant is mentioned in The Book of Mormon and, and which prophets are doing it the most. So you get covenant mentioned a ton, as you said, First Nephi, Second Nephi and Jacob are-- those are the places you find it the most. Then it really kind of starts to drop off. It's still pretty good in Enos and, and Jarom, but it really drops off so that by the time you get to Helaman it's barely mentioned at all. And the first part of Third Nephi is barely mentioned. Where it comes back is Third Nephi 10 with the voice of the Savior. And then, like you say, chapters 15 through 20 are all Abrahamic Covenant. 29 and 30 are all Abrahamic Covenant. I mean, it's a ton. It really feels like that Christ issues a little bit of a corrective to them and says, you haven't been thinking as much. So I'm gonna talk about it. And again, Christ talks about the covenant more than any other theme when he's with the Nephites. By far, it dwarfs every other theme.
- Hank Smith: 33:22 It always makes me laugh. In Third Nephi on the Savior's first day he starts to quote Isaiah to them, and then he says, I notice you're getting...you're getting a little sleepy.
- Kerry Muhlestein: 33:34 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 33:34 Why don't you go home and we'll talk about this tomorrow?
- Kerry Muhlestein: 33:38 And we do the same thing in our classes. Right?
- Hank Smith: 33:40 Yeah, I know. I was gonna say, those of you who are listening to this going, I'm kind of lost. I don't understand it. Don't worry,

don't worry. Yeah. It happens to everyone, including right in the Book of Mormon from Jesus himself. So keep going, Kerry.

Kerry Muhlestein: 33:51

I almost feel like, and this is just my opinion, this isn't doctrine or anything, but I almost feel like we're seeing the same thing in modern church history. At the beginning of this dispensation. Joseph Smith, Parley P. Pratt, John Taylor, these guys are talking about--Brigham Young. They're talking about the Covenant a ton. And they're tying us in with Abraham, with Isaac and Jacob all over the place. And it's really strong at the beginning. And then it slowly kind of starts to go down. And President Nelson is bringing us right back up.

34:19

Just like that same curve we saw in the book of Mormon, President Nelson is serious about us understanding the Abrahamic Covenant and what it has to do with our lives. And he tells us this is the greatest cause on the earth today. And he says that two or three times. Right? And yet I'm finding that a lot of saints, that they catch the enthusiasm he has for it, but they're not quite sure what to do about it. So that's kind of become one of my little missions of late is to like, I've created websites with this--written, a book, written articles. I'm just trying to help people understand what President Nelson is doing with all of this.

John Bytheway: 34:52

Well, when I teach Book of Mormon, I love to just joke about--Hey, if you're gonna write a book or give a talk, here's a formula. Tell 'em what you're gonna tell 'em and then tell 'em, and then tell 'em what you've told him. And I'll put the title page of the Book of Mormon next to the last page. And on the title page, it says, which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel, the great things the Lord hath done for their fathers, that they may know the Covenants of the Lord, that they're not cast off forever. And then convincing Jew and Gentile, that Jesus is the Christ. And the last line: Ye may be found spotless at His judgment seat. And then I show 'em the last page. And in verse--the Book of Mormon ends with Moroni 10:34. Moroni 10:31: ...that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O House of Israel, may be fulfilled. And then: come unto Christ, be perfected in him. And then end of verse 33: that ye may become holy without spot. Christ, covenants, and you can become spotless through the atonement. Title page, last page, and every page in between. I think it was Elder Bednar that said, the central recurring theme of the Book, Mormon is the invitation to come unto Christ, but covenants are in there constantly. And I tell them the same thing with Isaiah. Watch the Isaiah chapters, watch for Christ, watch for covenants.

Kerry Muhlestein:	36:11	Yeah. And Moroni, actually twice equates the covenant with Israel, with the glory of God. Right. And then we have in Moses where he says his work and his glory is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Well, the covenant is where we're promised eternal life. Right. I mean, it's all intertwined here, but sometimes we miss a part of it. So it's fun stuff.
John Bytheway:	36:30	It is. And I didn't think we'd be talking Book of Mormon, but that's fun because I think that, can I say this? In the modern day, we talk more about I am a child of God. And I like to say we are, and so is everybody, but we have another level of understanding. We are also Abraham's seed. And what does that mean? And that's when we can talk about the covenant. And the last part that all the families of the world can be blessed. I mean, I just love that part, as you've talked about so beautifully, Kerry. That's what it's about. We're gonna unite this family and bless all of the families of the world. Because of the Abrahamic covenant.
Hank Smith:	37:10	Right. And I think one part that we, that is missed on us, is that we don't understand the quote "Gathering of Israel" because we probably don't understand the scattering of Israel. Yeah. And if you go back, if you do a little bit of your history, and you look at what happened when Israel decided they wanted a king, right? They come into the Promised Land with Joshua, centuries later, they want a king. And Samuel says this is a bad idea, but they go for it anyway. And they choose Saul, David, and Solomon. It just kind of, you know, I told you it was a bad idea. There's a lot of, I told you so's along the way. And then it divides into two separate kingdoms. You have the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. The northern kingdom is called Israel. The Southern Kingdom is called Judah.
	37:49	And they eventually both are taken. And what we don't recognize is that Lehi, Nephi, Jacob, they're all part of the scattering of Israel. That's why they talk about the gathering so much. They love Isaiah. 'cause he talked about the future gathering. I gotta read, I gotta --I do this with my students. This is from Elder Bednar from Ensign-- from the General conference of 2005. He said, I give them this part of the quote and see if they can finish it. We were foreordained in the Premortal existence and born into mortality to--and I'll stop it right there. What, why were we born? And the typical answer is to get a body right. To get a body and to be tested. And that's not what he says. I'll show them the end. We were foreordained in the Premortal existence and born into mortality to?

	38:38	<p>...fulfill the covenant and promise God made to Abraham. I have two nine-year-old twin boys. It'd be funny if they, their primary teacher said, why did we come to Earth? Right? And they say, to fulfill the covenant and promise God made to Abraham. Right? Because that, that we've, we've forgotten it, Kerry. You're exactly right. We've forgotten it. And we've, some of us have missed it in the Book of Mormon entirely. That we're not just here to do that. We are here to bring to pass the promised gathering made by Isaiah. Right? And I wanna ask you, Kerry, about this verse, and we've already read it. But, and please fill in any thoughts that you just had come to you. Section 27 verse nine about Malachi, the prophecy of Malachi, about Elijah, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think this is probably one of the most, if not the most quoted verse. It's in all of our standard works. It keeps coming up over and over again. And yet when I see it, I don't know if I quite understand it. Moroni quoted it to Joseph Smith. Jesus quotes it to the Nephites. This verse isn't going away.</p>
Kerry Muhlestein:	39:44	This is the second time it's in the Doctrine and Covenants. Right.
Hank Smith:	39:47	So how would you understand it? And then one other thing is why does he list of all the tribes, but why does he list— he lists Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But you also see Joseph there.
Kerry Muhlestein:	39:58	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	39:59	One of the 12 tribes. And I'll ask my students, I'll say, who saved the family from the famine? And they all know, it was Joseph. And I'll say, who's gonna save them from the spiritual famine? And again, I think the Lord has called on the tribe of Joseph or his sons Ephraim and Manasseh to save the children. All right. I'm gonna turn it over to you. What else? What are you thinking?
Kerry Muhlestein:	40:19	So there are some really important elements in there. So let's, first of all, we'll do the first part of the question, then the second. So with the promise or, and note how he says the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, right? These are keys that were bestowed. And we know in the Kirtland temple that Elijah and Moses come to restore keys and they're both associated with the covenant and the gathering of Israel. Both of their keys are. We usually think of it as just sealing keys to perform temple marriage. But it's more than that. Again, temple marriage is specifically about sealing us together as a family with Abraham. It's entering or leveling up more in the Abrahamic Covenant, right? So, this idea is really, I mean, so let's take the way Moroni quoted it to Joseph Smith.

41:07 It is that our hearts are turned to the promises made to the father. We have to become more covenant conscious. We--family history is absolutely part of that. And doing temple work is absolutely part of that crucial parts. Let's not forget that I'm not, I'm not dissing that, right? But we lose some of the power in doing it if we don't recognize that it's part of this great overarching covenant that God wants us to turn our hearts to. So that, again, I hope people read Genesis and Exodus as family history, every bit, as much as they read their grandma's journal, right? I hope we think of Sarah as much as we think of our pioneer ancestors or ancestors that joined the church in Zimbabwe or wherever else, right? I hope that we understand that what we're trying to do is have our family be part of this covenant and participate in the blessings promised to Israel.

42:05 That's what I think those keys are about. And then it's interesting that you mentioned Joseph. Joseph is mentioned in there along with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, right? He's that next line in. And then as you said, the next line down is Ephraim and Manasseh. So what happens is, and and if we're gonna talk about this, I think we need to have a little bit of a larger discussion and make sure we understand it correctly. Because the world doesn't want us to understand this correctly. And it's been trying to get us to misunderstand this, alright? Joseph receives the birthright blessing, now Judah kind of does too. That's another story. But Judah kind of does too. And he's gonna have kings come through him, most especially Christ, right? So let's not ignore, that's a pretty important thing, right? But Joseph receives the birthright blessing.

42:46 And when we hear birthright, we think power, privilege, prestige, right? It's, it's a called a leadership. It's for sure a called a leadership. But when we hear leadership, same thing. The world has conditioned us to think power and prestige, right? It's conditioned us so much that Joseph Smith later. So you'll do this in a, in a podcast at the end of the year where it says, as soon as you get a little authority you use it for your vain ambition, right?

Hank Smith: 43:10 Yeah. Unrighteous dominion.

Kerry Muhlestein: 43:11 That's exactly right. That is not what authority, or that's not what leadership is about. Leadership is a call to service. So Christ explains this well, when he talks to James and John who come to him and they say, let us sit on your right and your left hand. And he says to them, and I think this is an exact quote, he says, you guys don't get it. You just, you're not getting this.

Hank Smith:	43:30	This is an, that's an exact quote.
Kerry Muhlestein:	43:32	Yeah. That's the exact quote.
John Bytheway:	43:33	That's in my version.
Kerry Muhlestein:	43:34	It was lost in translation that King James translators put it a different way, but I think it originally he said in English, you don't get it. So, and then he says, the princes of the Gentiles want to exercise authority over them, but that's not how it should be with you. Whoever would be greatest should be least. whoever's going to, you know, be --I can't remember now exactly--but you have to be the servant of all is what he says. Right?
Hank Smith:	43:57	Right.
Kerry Muhlestein:	43:57	That's what, according to Christ, leadership really is. It's not authority or prestige. It's you serve, you're the lowest, you're the least. You serve everyone else. So when Joseph is given a call to leadership, it's not to say you are better than everyone else. And when he is given blessings of great posterity and all sorts of other things, it's not so he can be more cool. It's so that he has enough people to do what he's being asked to do. And what he's being asked to do is to gather all of Israel, and then as Israel has gathered, they need to gather all the world. And that's part of the benefit. They're scattered because they're wicked and they need to be humbled. But the side benefit, and I think it's an intended side benefit, is that once you're scattered to all the world, when you're gathered, you can bring the whole world with you.
	44:42	And that's exactly what they're supposed to do. And Ephraim and Manasseh as well. And Ephraim will be the lead of those two. But they both receive this charge and this blessing. And President Nelson's been specific. They both have this charge to lead out in gathering Israel. And if you compare their blessings, they're given the same blessings and Ephraim is told he'll be given more of it. But the more seems to be like literally more people, more descendants, numerically so that you can do what I'm asking you to do. So basically, and that's what the birthright always was. The birthright child was given a lot of things he was supposed to do to take care of the family. So he was also given an extra inheritance or portion of the inheritance so that he was given the tools to do what he needed to do. And so that's exactly what this birthright or leadership call is for Joseph and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, is that they are given a task and God has given them enough people and ability to go

out and do that task. And that task is, get the whole world to be part of this family, get them all sealed to me and to each other so that we can be exalted together and have the kind of relationship that we should have with each other.

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| Hank Smith: | 45:53 | And God promised Abraham he would do that. And he's using the latter day Ephraim and Manasseh and others--those who can be adopted in--to go out and be the net. I like what you said there, the scattering is like a big net. I'm gonna throw you all over. So when I gather, you grab onto people 'cause I'm gonna, I'm gonna bring you home. And what it, I think it's Nephi who says, they carry them on their shoulders, right? They carry them in their arms as if they're these service oriented people. Same in the gospel of John, the Savior washes their feet. This is how we lead in this church. |
| John Bytheway: | 46:31 | I like to... |
| Hank Smith: | 46:31 | In my kingdom. |
| John Bytheway: | 46:32 | I like to tell my students, being chosen doesn't mean to sit on a throne and be admired. It's more like being chosen to mow the lawn. And then we talk about the-- to bare the ministry is one of the phrases in the Abrahamic Covenant. So it's obviously a blessing because we have the blessings of the priesthood and the gift of the Holy Ghost and everything that comes with it, but it's a burden as well. And so they're calling it now a lot of times, President Nelson, the work of salvation. And any time you do anything that helps anyone to come closer to Christ, make a covenant with him in the temple, you're helping to gather Israel. You're doing the greatest work in the world. So, I'm excited to, I wanna get your book, Kerry. I wanna read it. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 47:19 | I hope you do. And I, it may put you to sleep, but I hope not. |
| Hank Smith: | 47:23 | John, I'm just gonna have to say this, that I was reading up on my timeline of world history and August of 1830, which is when we're receiving this exact section, the Doctrine Covenants--is when the lawnmower was patented by Edwin Beard Budding the exact same time. So I think you're inspired to talk about chosen to mow the lawn. |
| John Bytheway: | 47:45 | You're being chosen to mow the lawn. |
| Hank Smith: | 47:47 | Kerry let's get back into the section. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 47:49 | Okay. Sounds good. |

Hank Smith:	47:49	We did do a little tangent there off into the house of Israel, but I think it was an important tangent. For people to understand it.
Kerry Muhlestein:	47:55	It's actually the central part of the section, but yeah.
Hank Smith:	47:57	Right.
Kerry Muhlestein:	47:57	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	47:58	Yeah. You just can't, the Lord's just not saying, Hey, we're gonna have a big sacrament meeting and look who's gonna be there. It's gonna be star studded, right? He names these people on purpose because this is the covenant of Abraham.
Kerry Muhlestein:	48:10	And, and it goes with the next verse as well, right. Peter, James and John, who are apostles. But again, those are people who restore the keys of the covenant. So anyway, sorry. Keep going.
Hank Smith:	48:19	No, I think you're right on here. This meeting when you, when we said in 27:5 when the Lord said, I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you. I thought of my New Testament, Luke 22. This ties in beautifully when the Saviors with his last evening with the apostles. This is Luke 22:18. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come. To me that's a big verse. Yeah. 'cause the kingdom of God, here we are, the Doctrine and Covenants, the kingdom of God is coming.
Kerry Muhlestein:	48:50	Yeah. And, and I think it's a clear illusion. I think when Christ says this in verse five of section 27, he is absolutely alluding to what he told his apostles. And he wants us to make that connection
Hank Smith:	48:58	In Luke 22. Yeah. Yeah.
John Bytheway:	49:00	I think sometimes I've taught my students, oh, isn't this great? All the sacrifices that were offered, pointed to the, those events of the atonement and now the sacrament points backwards to those events of the atonement. But now I'm seeing, as I'm reading these, it's, there's also a future sacrament meeting that it is pointing to. And I like verse 14. And also with all those whom my father hath given me out of the world, that, yeah, those people are gonna be here, but it sounds like we are too, or maybe have that opportunity that all of us will be there. Speaking of blessing all of the families of the world. And there's a future sacrament meeting.

Hank Smith:	49:44	Let's have Kerry answer that. But John, I really like that-that idea of the sacrament isn't now just about looking backwards to the atonement.
John Bytheway:	49:51	We're looking forward to it.
	49:52	It's looking forward to the second coming of the Lord. Here he comes. I think that's a crucial point that could really change your sacrament experience. Not just looking backwards, but also looking forward to the Lord's coming and, and having the sacrament again. Alright, Kerry, over to you.
Kerry Muhlestein:	50:08	To, oh, no, that's all right. And to the full fulfillment of the covenant, right? Because again, we're renewing, the Abrahamic or all of our Covenants at the sacrament, and the full culmination of that is exaltation. But this is an important step along the way when we do this with Christ, right? All those whom my father hath given me out of the world, which again, I think is a clear to both John 17 and, and John 6, where he talks about those whom the Father has given him. Right? So, this section alludes to scriptures all over the place, including the next part. Right. The next part is all an Ephesians 6 allusion.
John Bytheway:	50:45	Before we go there, just wanted to mention that the manual has you go to D&C 110, and I thought yeah, because a lot of these, wonderful, individuals who have been mentioned, showed up personally at the Kirtland Temple to restore keys.
Kerry Muhlestein:	51:02	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	51:02	And so I thought, Hey, I'm looking at the list here. This list sounds familiar.
Kerry Muhlestein:	51:07	Yep. That's, well, I think this is the prophecy that those keys will come and be restored. Yeah. Right. It's gonna be a few years, about six years, but still, they're working towards that.
John Bytheway:	51:20	If anybody listening is able to go on a church history tour, hopefully they'll start those up again and open the sights. Make sure you see the painting just inside the door at the Kirtland Visitor Center area of-there's a line of angels coming down one at a time, and Joseph and Oliver there behind the pulpits of the Kirtland Temple. It's beautiful.
Hank Smith:	51:45	Is that the, that's the Walter Rane, right?

John Bytheway:	51:47	I don't know if it's a Walter Rane. I not would be surprised. It's beautiful. But its- just when I saw it and I think of 110, I think of that, that line--the visions and blessings of old are returning and angels are coming to visit the Earth--and the look on Joseph's face in that painting, you've gotta see it right inside the Kirtland Visitor Center there always reminds me of this. Sorry.
Hank Smith:	52:09	Oftentimes I feel like, you know how you watch a fitness video and there's two really good ones, and then there's a modified version. I feel like the modified version sometimes in this podcast, because I had never realized that each one of these people that are listed in this section were part of the Restoration. And if you--I probably had never realized it just because of the inclusion of Joseph, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. But now Kerry's taught us, this is part of the Restoration is the covenant. Then you've got Adam, Peter James, and John, Elijah, John, Elias. Right? This is a restoration. We're gonna bring everybody back at once and have a big sacrament meeting.
John Bytheway:	52:52	You know what, it's elegant and it makes sense. It's symmetrical. I mean, to me. It wasn't just the First Vision. It was--that was the beginning of this delegation of all these others with keys, which just makes me go, I love the symmetry, I love the elegance of that. To use a couple of lofty words.
Kerry Muhlestein:	53:11	And even in the First Vision--in one of the accounts of the First Vision, Christ says that the reason he's appearing is because they've broken his everlasting covenant. And then in one of the versions of Moroni's visit, he says that he's there to restore the everlasting covenant. And, and it's all aiming, I mean, in many ways, the First Vision, the Book of Mormon, the building of the temple, are aimed at being able to have this covenant fully restored. And that's what all the people here are associated with covenant and keys. All the people listed in here, right?
Hank Smith:	53:41	Here, they are in northern Pennsylvania and Joseph has no idea, I don't think. Maybe he has some idea at this point that this meeting is gonna take place--at least to my knowledge at a place he's actually gonna set foot out in the middle of Missouri. I wonder, in his mind, if he's going, I wonder where this meeting's gonna take place and the Lord's going. Well, funny. You should ask about that. Yeah. Because we're gonna take a long trip, right?
Kerry Muhlestein:	54:07	Yep. I'll tell you later. But, but it's gonna take a while. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	54:10	Yeah. Just, yeah. It's gonna be a few years before all of this, this pans out. And I've noticed that in all of these opening sections,

Kerry, as the Lord kind of drops little hints here and there. Of things that are going to come later.

Kerry Muhlestein:	54:23	He's always preparing. He's always just getting you ready for the next thing, and then ready for the next thing and ready for the next thing. Right?
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John Bytheway:	54:30	Please join us for part two of this podcast.
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EPISODE 12

Part II

Dr. Kerry Muhlestein

John Bytheway:	00:02	Welcome to Part two of this week's podcast.
Hank Smith:	00:06	Now, let's jump into what you said about Ephesians.
Kerry Muhlestein:	00:10	<p>Yeah. And again, I see this as tying in, and I don't know that we need to spend a long time on this, but he's got this beautiful bunch of verses about girding up your loins and taking on the breastplate of righteousness and your feet shod with a preparation of the gospel of peace and the helmet of salvation and sword of my spirit. All this is really coming right from Ephesians. But the interesting thing is, and again, covenants on my brain, but I'm gonna feel okay about it 'cause you told me I could. So, the promises in the covenant include words like, I will be your shield. I will be your protector. Right? I think the idea is that protection is one of the blessings promised to Israel. If we're gonna look for those blessings, it's one of the blessings promised. And so, again, I see this as a logical transition. We're talking about the covenant and the keys to the kingdom that have been committed as part of this, and as a result, I want you to gird up and be ready, both to be protected, but to go out and do the battle that will bring other people into that protection. A cohesive section, I think that helps us understand what God wants us to do, and how it's tied into the sacrament and doing the sacrament with an eye single to his glory.</p>
John Bytheway:	01:22	<p>I can't not equate the armor of God with the sacrament, because I think of the priests up there saying that they may always have his spirit to be with them. And I think of the sword of the spirit and how we go, and we re-arm every time we go to the sacrament table. And as my mind is racing here, I'm thinking about looking back to the sacrament table. Like it's an altar, the body and the blood of Christ--looking forward as if the sacrament table is a table of communion, where we will have a sacrament meeting again with Christ, as we've just talked about. And I see it both as a table and an altar, kind of.</p>

Kerry Muhlestein:	02:03	That works because anciently, I mean, often sacred meals were associated with sacrifices. And the idea is that you're--this is a communion. You enter into this together. Right? So I think it's intended to be understood that way.
John Bytheway:	02:14	I love it. And I love to tell, I used to tell my ward when I was a bishop that, you know, it says in the handbook, we shouldn't have visual aids for Sacrament meeting, but there is a visual aid and it's bolted right there to the floor. And every week that you come in, you have a visual aid of the savior's mercy and his love and his sacrifice for us. And I just think it's--how do you miss this visual aid of the sa--. And it's not, we don't wheel it in at Christmas and Easter. It's right there every single week. And how beautiful and merciful that is, that the Lord would say, come back, let's do this again.
Hank Smith:	02:51	Wow.
Kerry Muhlestein:	02:52	And I think it does give us that protecting power. It's talking about, and that you talked about. That covenant renewal, gives us both the sword of the spirit, but all--just protection, right?
John Bytheway:	03:01	Yeah.
Kerry Muhlestein:	03:02	That renewing that covenant is protection.
Hank Smith:	03:06	This is amazing to me because here's Joseph on his way to get some wine, right? He's like, we gotta get some wine. And the Lord's going, okay, yeah, wine. Wine's important. Actually, let's talk about the reason we do all this. And I like what you said, Kerry, 'cause I had never tied in the armor of God with the covenant, but it almost as if the Lord is saying, you gotta, we're gonna restore the gospel, we're gonna restore the covenant, and we're gonna gather Israel, and it's gonna be a battle. So put on your armor, with the sacrament. Put on your armor, take on your covenants, and be ready. This spiritual protection that comes. I, man, this to me is a beautiful section. You know what's funny is I see these sections one way, and then we talk about 'em. And now I am like, this is the best section ever. Right? Like, this one is the best one.
Kerry Muhlestein:	04:00	I just always like to picture Joseph when he gets home to Emma and Emma says, so where's the wine? Right? This happens to me all the time. I sent you out to get some, where's the wine? But he's got a good excuse. And he says, well, I met someone. Let's talk about this. Let's talk. Right? Hey, you know, great family conversation.

John Bytheway:	04:16	Why not finish this? What did happen? Did they go back? Did they finish the meeting?
Hank Smith:	04:21	Sounds like it.
John Bytheway:	04:22	Did they get confirmed? Were they able to take the sacrament?
Kerry Muhlestein:	04:25	Yeah, they made grape juice, right? They made it right there. So it clearly ends up not being fermented because--So it's, I mean, sometimes we say, oh, yeah, wine when it talks about in the scriptures is not fermented. No. They--and they use fermented wine many times after this as well. So that's not what it is. But in this case, they just squeeze some grapes, right? Then made their own grape juice, and they did the whole thing.
Hank Smith:	04:46	That's so fantastic. And you know what? I've often thought in the gospel of John, when the Savior has his talk with the woman at the well, that he was preparing the world for a sacrament that uses water. Because he calls himself living water.
Kerry Muhlestein:	05:02	Yep.
Hank Smith:	05:02	Right? And so he makes-- I often think that was kind of just squeeze in there, because yes, we're gonna use wine for a while, but we're going to, we're gonna use water because it mattereth not, like you said. Oh, and by the way, that is a great symbol of me. Look at John chapter four. Yeah. Right? Yeah. It's--I've got it all prepped.
Kerry Muhlestein:	05:19	And John chapter seven, living water, and then, is it in Alma somewhere-- it talks about parting of the bread and waters of life freely? And I've always thought, oh, is that an illusion to the sacrament right there?
	05:29	Right? Yeah. Yep.
Hank Smith:	05:31	Oh, you, for those of you listening, who wonder why we get so excited? This is our idea of a good time. Just so you know. Like, if you're going, wow.
John Bytheway:	05:40	This is why our kids think we're strange.
Hank Smith:	05:41	Yeah. It really is. Dad, can't we just finish the chapter? I'm like, no, no, no. This is amazing. You're gonna want to see this. Right. It reminds me of Alex Baugh--well, he's gonna come on the podcast soon-- saying to his kids, that is where Wilfred Woodruff was ordained an apostle. You put your hand on that. I'm gonna

take a picture. Right? We as dads get so excited about these, about these things, but they're exciting. Yeah. Once you catch the vision of Section 27, once it clicks, it's exciting stuff. The covenant is exciting. You can see why President Nelson is so excited. How old is President Nelson? And here he is still so excited about the Abrahamic Covenant.

Kerry Muhlestein:	06:23	Oh, man. You can feel it when he talks.
John Bytheway:	06:25	The greatest work you could ever be involved in. Yeah.
Kerry Muhlestein:	06:29	Yeah. You shouldn't take those kinds of words lightly, huh?
John Bytheway:	06:32	Yeah. He uses really strong words, doesn't he? When he talks about it.
Hank Smith:	06:35	He said, I think, at one point he said to the youth, in that youth meeting with Sister Nelson, he said, this ought to be the most important part of your life. This ought to be the most important part of your life. Right? And to me, I mean, that's a -- we can't, like you said, Kerry, we can't miss that.
Kerry Muhlestein:	06:53	Yeah. You can't let those words fall to the ground, as it were. Right?
Hank Smith:	06:56	Let's move into Section 28, Kerry. The heading tells us that a church member by the name of Hiram Page, who we've heard of before. He is one of the eight witnesses that we talked about. He claimed to be receiving revelation from a certain stone, which we've talked about Joseph Smith's seer stones here before. But for the entire church. And it seems like the Whitmers, who I believe Hiram Page was a member of the Whitmer family.
Kerry Muhlestein:	07:20	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	07:21	I think he had influenced the Whitmers, including Oliver Cowdery, who is also a member of the Whitmer family.
Kerry Muhlestein:	07:27	Or about to become one. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	07:28	Is he not married yet? He's...
Kerry Muhlestein:	07:30	Not, not quite yet.
Hank Smith:	07:31	Okay. How do you explain--Explain to us what was happening and what led up to this revelation?

Kerry Muhlestein:	07:37	<p>Yeah. So there are so many fascinating things here, but you're right. So they've been in Harmony with Emma's family, and things are getting dicey there. There's a lot of persecution. That's why they couldn't do the confirmation and so on right there. There's a lot of tough stuff going on there. And even Emma's father and mother are no longer so thrilled with having them there, and they're not able to shield them as much. And so they're thinking of going back to Fayette, and that's where they decide to have--and Fayette's where they'd lived and kind of finish translating the Book of Mormon and so on. Right? But, that's where they're going to have this conference. So they're going back for this second conference--the first one in April, this one's in September. And as they get there, they've heard about this stuff, that Hiram Page he's been receiving through this stone-</p>
	08:25	<p>Some inspiration revelations, particular about Zion. And as you said, Hiram Page has married one of the Whitmer daughters. Oliver Cowdery will soon marry a Whitmer daughter. I think about a year and a half later, somewhere in that range. But he has become very good friends with the Whitmers. I mean the Whitmers are a key family in the church. Right? And that's why they're all part of the eight witnesses. And that's why Hiram is because he's the brother-in-law, right? And so on. And I don't think Hiram has any bad intents here. The fact of the matter is the church is still figuring out what's going on. Like you said, this is the four month old church. Right? This is the little baby church trying to figure out what's going on. And it's so wonderful to have the principle of Revelation restored and inherent in there.</p>
	09:14	<p>And we still get this today. We preach this, everyone should be receiving revelation, everybody. Right? And in fact, the way Moses puts it is he wishes that everyone in Israel would be a prophet. And it's interesting because in the days of Moses, they actually have the same problem. Moses--revelation is restored, things are going for them. Right? And Moses is the prophet receiving revelation. He tells everyone, be a priest. Everyone receive revelation. Aaron and Miriam come to and say, Hey, we received revelation. You're taking too much upon yourselves. And God has to kind of set that right. A little while later, Korah and a bunch of Levites say, Hey, we receive Revelation. You're taking too much upon yourselves. It seems to be inherent, this idea that once Revelation is restored, and the idea that we should all receive revelation, that we all start receiving them for everyone in every sort of way.</p>
	10:05	<p>Right? And then God has to say, hang on, personal revelation is for you. I need some kind of order in my church or in my</p>

kingdom. And so we can't have everyone receiving revelation for everybody else. We're gonna have a structure where this works. And I don't think you can blame anyone for not getting that until God teaches it. And God could have taught it at the very beginning, and he didn't. Now, I can't read God's mind, but I just kind of make the assumption it's because he doesn't want to quash the idea that people should receive personal revelation. He wants to encourage that idea.

John Bytheway: 10:38

Wow. Yeah.

Kerry Muhlestein: 10:39

He just doesn't want them to say that they can all receive it for the whole church. And that's really what Section 28 is about, is establishing how Revelation works organizationally for the entire church, which is separate from how Revelation works for you as an individual. Right?

John Bytheway: 10:59

And I love that he brings up Moses.

Kerry Muhlestein: 11:02

Yeah.

John Bytheway: 11:03

And what do you think that means, Kerry? That Joseph--let's see the end of verse 2--Joseph Smith, Jr.: For he receiveth them even as Moses. He's better at it? Or what does that mean exactly?

Kerry Muhlestein: 11:16

Well, I think, again, we wanna look at the context, because this is hot on the heels. In June, he's gotten Moses chapter one, which expands your view of who Moses is. Right? This is Moses who has a vision where he sees every soul on earth and has this deep communion with God. And then Satan comes and he has a tussle with Satan, and then Satan leaves, and Moses has a more comprehensive vision of seeing every soul and every particle on earth, right? After Moses chapter one, you have a different understanding of Moses than you did before that. And they've just received that. I don't know that everyone has read it, but I'm convinced that lots of people know Joseph has received it, and that some people have had the chance to read it. So they've got a new conception of what it means for Moses to be a prophet.

John Bytheway: 12:05

I have never connected that before, that. Oh, that's so cool. That Moses is brought up here, and they just received the book of Moses. And maybe some have even read Moses chapter one, which is amazing.

Kerry Muhlestein: 12:18

Yeah.

Hank Smith:	12:18	Let's make sure that everybody understands this, Kerry, that the book of Moses is Joseph Smith's. He's going through the Bible and it's Genesis.
John Bytheway:	12:27	It's basically the JST of Genesis. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	12:29	However, Moses one is brand new. So can you kind of explain where the book of Moses, you know, its structure, where it comes from? And how it's connected to the JST?
Kerry Muhlestein:	12:38	Yeah. So I would say Moses 1 is the preface to Genesis, like section one is the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, right? So somewhere in that same time period that Joseph receives the visions of Moses, as he calls it, that will eventually be compiled in what we call the book of Moses. But somewhere in there, as he receives it, he's also told to go and translate the Bible. We don't know if he has that vision, and then is told now go translate the Bible. Or if he's told to translate the Bible, and then the next step is this, and then, and so on. But he does immediately after that start to sit down with an English copy of the Bible to go through and, and correct it, and make additions to it by inspiration. And that's when he's going to get what we call Moses two, three, four.
	13:24	All of those are the Joseph Smith translation of the Bible. So the book of Moses is, well, we call it the Joseph Smith translation. He called it the New translation. Others call it the inspired version. The book of Moses is the Joseph Smith translation of the first several chapters of Genesis. And it had so much new material that it doesn't work as an appendix or a footnote. Right? Joseph--It was so much new material. He published it in the church's newspaper. And then eventually that gets compiled into a booklet called The Pearl of Great Price, that eventually becomes the scripture of the Pearl of Great Price. But really all it is, is, well, I say all it is, that makes it sound like it's not much. It's amazing and a ton. But we understand it best if we understand this is the Joseph Smith translation of Genesis and Moses one is the preface.
Hank Smith:	14:10	Yeah. Oh, that's wonderful. And I want to remind our listeners of something. Do you remember John, Dr. Janiece Johnson said about translation? She said, be careful when you hear that word that you don't automatically assume translation, because this is Joseph taking it from English to English.
Kerry Muhlestein:	14:25	Yeah. And giving us something that wasn't there in the first place, right?

Hank Smith:	14:27	Right.
Kerry Muhlestein:	14:28	Right. And it's brand new, so an English version he's looking at. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	14:30	Right. So I like the term she gave us with translation. She said, think of translated beings of perfecting them. Of, what did she say, John? Of transforming. Right. Bringing something to a higher level, a higher plane.
John Bytheway:	14:45	They're clarified.
Kerry Muhlestein:	14:45	And if you look at the Webster's dictionary definition of translate, in Joseph Smith's day that's actually its first definition.
Hank Smith:	14:53	Its first definition.
Kerry Muhlestein:	14:54	Yeah. Transforms is to transform or change. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	14:57	Because we use that term Joseph Smith translation, and my students will ask, what language was it in before? Yeah. I'm going. No, no, no. That's a different definition of translation, I think, in this case. So, let's get back into section 28 then. Was it, do you think, do you think it was an awkward moment for Joseph Smith because he didn't want to discourage people from receiving revelation? I know something in my reading of Joseph, it was always go to the Lord yourself.
Kerry Muhlestein:	15:25	Yep.
Hank Smith:	15:25	You can receive your own answers. And yet here he is saying, well, yes, and, but we gotta have stewardship. We've gotta have who can receive revelation for who Right? Involved in this work.
Kerry Muhlestein:	15:37	It's especially awkward because, his closest friend, and in a way, ally, is Oliver Cowdery and Oliver Cowdery is close with Hiram Page, and Hiram Page has convinced Oliver. Oliver believes that these are revelations from God, and so does the whole Whitmer family. And so it's kind of Joseph against everyone else in saying, yeah, this stuff isn't so good.
Hank Smith:	16:00	I think I read it this time. It's, there's a whole 62 members of the church at this point. Right?
Kerry Muhlestein:	16:05	Yeah.

Hank Smith:	16:06	Now it's 10 times what they had in April. Don't get me wrong. That's wonderful. I would love to go 10 times, right. Yeah. I dunno if we could handle that kind of growth. But, that had to be an odd, you know, an awkward moment of yes and no.
Kerry Muhlestein:	16:20	Yeah. And, and I think it can't be easy. Joseph is often put in the position of being the Lord's mouthpiece to say, my mouthpiece is important. Don't mess with him. Right. That's, that's an awkward place just to be. Yeah.
John Bytheway:	16:31	Yeah.
Kerry Muhlestein:	16:32	Let me be the one to say this about me, but really it's from God and it's true. It is. Right? But that's just gotta be a little bit awkward as well. And especially, he has to take Oliver aside and convince him of this before he presents the revelation to everyone. And in a lot of ways, he is doing exactly what he will later receive revelation to do. Which is take thy brother aside and between he and the alone work this out. Right? Don't do this in public. So he works with Oliver, and he gets Oliver to work with Hiram so that by the time they will read this revelation, which we understand was received just days before the conference. So by the time they get to the conference, Oliver and Hiram are okay with this revelation. Again, it's just a fantastic example of Joseph doing things under correct principles. He could have easily just gone to the conference, read this revelation and how horrible that would've been for Hiram and Oliver to--but when they're prepared and ready to support him ahead of time, then it's a great unifying experience.
Hank Smith:	17:37	Wow. That just tells you about the inspiration of the prophet, but also tells you about his character, that he wasn't out to make people feel foolish publicly or-he just wanted to do things right. I think.
John Bytheway:	17:50	And that advice is in the revelation. Go alone in verse 11. Again, thou shalt take thy brother, Hiram Page between him and the alone. And I, you know, that's like the Lord dismissing the group. The woman taken in adultery in John chapter eight, dismissing the group, and then he talks to her one-on-one and has such respect, for someone even in that position. I like that. Okay, we've mentioned some of these verses. We've jumped into it. Kerry, do you have any specific ones you want to highlight and look at in section 28 and talk about?
Kerry Muhlestein:	18:28	Yeah, I mean, I think that the key is given is, we've already mentioned verse two, but let's make sure we read the second part. Let's make sure we get that first part. No one shall be

appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church, excepting my servant Joseph Smith, Jr. That's a principle that is still true today. Right? The only one who can give direction for the entire church. The only one who can receive revelation for the entire church is the presiding high priest or president of the church. And that's just how it is. Now, typically in our day, he's going to do that in conjunction with the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, right. But it has to come from there down. And so verse two is, in some ways, one of the most important verses for church organization in all of scripture.

19:11 This is the way it works, right? Now, verse four, if thou art led any time, at any time by the comforter to speak or teach, or at all times by way of commandment of the church, thou mayest do it, but thou shall not write by way of commandment, but by wisdom. Right? So the idea is, as you receive inspiration, go do it. You're inspired to preach, preach repentance, go do it. You're inspired to do this, go do it. But don't say you're doing it by way of commandment to the entire church. You don't have the rights or the prerogative to do that. There's only one person that can do that. And that's still in, you know, applicable to us today. If you're inspired to say something to someone--do it. Right? Don't pretend though that you have stewardship over them unless you really do. Right?

Hank Smith: 19:54 Right. I like that. I like how you translate the verse into a way I can understand, and the Lord is saying it, but by wisdom, I think he's saying. Yeah. Yeah. You can definitely give advice to other people. You can speak, right? I'm a gospel doctrine teacher in my ward right now. I can speak and teach, and I hope I'm speaking and teaching by the spirit, by the comforter. But I would never say this is revelation for the people in my class. God told me to tell you this.

Kerry Muhlestein: 20:20 That's right.

Hank Smith: 20:20 The Lord is saying, Ooh, temper that a little bit. Just, let's just, let's help each other. Let's teach each other.

Kerry Muhlestein: 20:26 But your bishop could do that. Right?

Hank Smith: 20:27 Right.

Kerry Muhlestein: 20:28 So that's, and that's the, that's the thing we need to understand. So in verse nine, this is interesting because this is where he is saying, so Hiram Page, part of his revelations were about where

Zion was going to be established. Now, that's interesting. 'cause we haven't had a lot of talking about Zion up to this point, although it is possible. We don't know. It seems like it might be just after this, but it is possible that, , some of the revelations that have to do with Enoch are being received. It seems like that's coming after that. But, it could come right before, and, and in one way or another, either this just precedes it, or it is just preceded by. But this, this idea we were talking about earlier, that, , the we're getting step by step god's just given him a little bit more and a little bit more, somehow this idea is interacting with what they're gonna learn about Zion by learning about Enoch, right?

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| Hank Smith: | 21:19 | Yeah. The Lord has dropped little hints along the way, the cause of Zion. I have seen his weeping for Zion and going, what's Zion? And now we're gonna hear, |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 21:28 | Yeah. |
| Hank Smith: | 21:28 | We're gonna cement it a little bit more. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 21:29 | And it's mentioned a little in the Book of Mormon, but not a ton, right? So... |
| Hank Smith: | 21:32 | Right. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 21:33 | But that's what Hiram has been, receiving revelation for, but it's false revelation, right? So God's letting him know, well, you don't know where the city of Zion is. I know, and I'll tell you at some point, but I'm not telling Hiram I'm gonna tell Joseph. Right? And that's, that's kind of the key to this whole thing. And so in the meantime, he's saying, don't go off building Zion anywhere that anyone is telling you until I tell Joseph where it's gonna be. And that's really what the next couple verses are until we get to verse 12. So I don't know if one of you would like to talk a little bit about verse 12 then, or... |
| Hank Smith: | 22:09 | Well, yeah. I wanna come back just to verse six, where he says, thou shalt not command him, who is at thy head and at the head of the church. It's interesting to me that Joseph maybe to some people seems like someone you can overstep a little bit, right? Just kind of someone, yeah. Yeah, Joseph, I'm gonna do that, and then I'm gonna take over from here. And the Lord's, everybody back up. He's still, the one I'm talking to. And this would be, like you said, Kerry, a really awkward place to be, but it's an important place to be. To say we can't have more than one person receiving revelation for the church, because then |

we're gonna be serving two masters, right? We're gonna be trying to go east and west at the same time. So the Lord is saying, listen, this is a, not so much a, he's more important, but he's the one I've chosen. This is how we're gonna do this. And that's the same thing with my bishop, my stake president, right? I might...

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| Kerry Muhlestein: | 23:07 | Mission president. |
| | 23:07 | They might not, right? They might not have the personality where I can, you know, I can go get running ahead. But the Lord's saying, easy, easy. Don't do that. Don't do that. Don't command him that is at thy head. |
| | 23:18 | Yep. He'll later say this by saying, my house is a house of order. Right? It's the same idea. We can't just get too confused here. |
| Hank Smith: | 23:26 | Yeah. So maybe our little baby church has stumbled a little bit, but that's okay. All children stumble all, you know, I never got mad at my toddlers for stumbling. I was like, how dare you in this house we walk, right? They are, they're learning. They're learning as they go. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 23:41 | And I do think that this was part of the process of learning about revelation and that revelation was the first important principle, and then stewardship and order was the second important principle. And it was taught that way. And teaching it that way, you're gonna have to stumble. So verse 12, for behold, these things have not been appointed unto him. Neither shall anything be appointed unto him. And this is Hiram Page, who in the verse before it says, Satan has deceived Hiram. So not gonna be appointed unto Hiram. Neither shall anything be appointed unto Hiram, unto or unto any of this church, contrary to the church covenants. And I do think, while we've been talking about covenants a lot, I think this is specifically referring back to section 20, which is the Articles of Covenants of the church. This organization. |
| | 24:23 | So this is another crucial step of organizing the church. And this is something we're just gonna have to keep our eye on throughout this year of studying church history. That the Lord organizes it just a little bit at a time, right? So to begin with, it's a first and second elder. It will eventually become a First Presidency and then a First Presidency and Quorum of the 12. But it's not all of that all at once. He's given him, we could quote Isaiah line upon line precept upon precept. He's just given him a little bit. And as they're ready for the next step, then the next |

step and the next step. And so this is one of those next steps in understanding church organization that started with Section 20.

- Hank Smith: 25:04 Ooh, I like that a lot. All things must be done in order and by common consent in the church. That's this idea that everybody takes part, right? That everybody gets a, I wanna say a vote, but everybody has a voice, right?
- Kerry Muhlestein: 25:19 Well, and it is in a way, it is a vote, but not the way we think of voting, right? And we had this actually in section 20. It says the same thing that when someone is appointed to do something, then it's by consent of the whole church, right? And that's exactly why. So we actually read that in my Come Follow Me family scripture study with my family this morning. And I told them, you remember on Sunday when we sustain so and so, this is why we do it. It's by Revelation. And it's there in section 20, and it's here in section 28. It is by revelation that when someone is appointed to something, we all get the chance to say, we sustain that, or we don't sustain it. If we don't sustain it, then we can go talk about why.
- 26:02 But in the end, it comes down to the person who's in charge. So it goes back to that stewardship thing, right? So this is that same tension we were talking about. We all get personal revelation, but there's someone who receives revelation for the whole church. That person can put someone forward and say, we'd like to sustain this person to do this. We all get to say whether we support it or not. That doesn't mean we're making that determination, but we get to be part of this. And it gives us the opportunity. If we think there is something that presiding authority should know, then we can go tell them, right? Which is what happens even in General Conference where they say, if there was as a dissenting vote, please talk to your stake president. The stake president can bring it to the general authorities, and so on and so on, right? So that everything is done in order.
- John Bytheway: 26:44 The name of the church itself is instructive. It's the Church of Jesus Christ. And then there's another of, there's two of--of Latter Day Saints. It's His, and it's ours in a way. We have a participation in it. And there's a hierarchy in it too. It's the Church of Jesus Christ, but it's, we don't vote in people or vote people out. It's not that kind of thing, as you've just talked about. But I've always loved the double of, in the title of the church. It's ours too, by common consent.

Hank Smith:	27:15	I like that a lot. John. Yeah. What was Hiram Page's reaction to Joseph? Oliver seems like, humbled himself and said, okay, I'll follow you, Joseph.
Kerry Muhlestein:	27:26	And then Oliver went and, and convinced Hiram. And Hiram also said, then, okay, I'm okay with this. And they agreed that they would get rid of the stone. We actually have two different accounts of what happened to the stone he was using. So we don't know, which is correct. One says that they ground it up into powder and got rid of it. But then another guy later says, oh, yeah, well, we had that stone for years. We just got rid of it later on. And so, who knows exactly what happened? But it is clear that they all said, okay. Oliver convinced Hiram. Then when the two of them were on board, then everyone else was easier to get on board, and that he would forsake this stone and that it was of the devil. And that brings up another important point.
	28:07	Joseph had a seer stone, right? And the Urim and Thummin are seer stones. So again, this is just kind of natural for people to think, well, he has one. You know, should I, I could have one. And so on. Joseph was not opposed to the idea of people having seer stones. He thought that was great. In fact, he was trying to tell Parley P. Pratt where he could go find one. And he described it for him. I think it was some tree in Buffalo, if I remember right. And Parley never went and got it. So maybe we should get a field trip and go find one.
Hank Smith:	28:32	We should go look. I go to Buffalo a lot. I'll have to go.
John Bytheway:	28:35	But-- so he wasn't opposed to this idea. And really in the end, a seer stone is an object that helps us with inspiration, right? Helps us receive inspiration. In their day and their culture. That's how they're expecting to find it. In our day--so for us, we think of a seer stone as, listen to the Tabernacle Choir and go to the celestial room, right? It's the thing that helps us focus and be open to inspiration. I think when the Lord says he speaks to us according to our language and culture, that means not just whether it's English or Portuguese, but it's also, this is how you expect me to speak to you. Someone else expects it in a different way. Maybe they're expecting a dream. So it can be dreams. And I'm expecting it when I'm in the temple.
	29:15	So it comes to the temple. He'll work with us where we are. For them, seer stones was part of that, but it was easy to be deceived. And he was deceived, and fortunately he took--Hiram Page should be a role model for us. I would guess at some point we're all deceived on something. I'd be shocked if that doesn't happen. Hiram Page accepted correction. And this was probably

pretty tough. He'd been public about this. He had things written down. A lot of people are following him. This is kind of prestigious for him. It's kind of exciting. And then he gets some correction and says, actually, you're, you were deceiving. You were believing stuff from Satan. Right? That's gotta be a little bit humiliating. And I know I'd have a hard time if, you know, if the prophet said that to me, well, you know, that was a nice book, but it was actually from Satan.

29:59 Thanks for writing it though. And so that would be, that would be tough, but Hiram Page accepts it. And he says, let's get rid of the stone. I will try and do things the way that you're teaching me to. And he's unfortunately, the, the sad ending of the story is that eventually the whole Whitmer family has some problems and leaves the church. And as part of the Whitmer family, he leaves as well. And that's a sad thing. But he never, ever, ever denied his testimony as one of the eight witnesses. Neither did any of the other Whitmers. And so, while he left the church, he didn't really ever leave his testimony. And that's a comforting thing.

Hank Smith: 30:38 Oh, I really like that, that idea of I will be humble and I will take correction. I love that he should be an example for us. But we need to make sure that the person giving us that correction is the right person right. To offer that correction. Because, you know, I can't go over to John, pull him aside and say, I'm gonna give you some correction. I've tried a couple of times.

John Bytheway: 31:00 Just last week he did that.

Kerry Muhlestein: 31:01 He told me that.

Hank Smith: 31:01 Yeah. But, you know, I can see people taking that idea of I am at the head so I can start doling out correction where Joseph wasn't that way. I don't get the feeling that Joseph was here, let me correct everyone in everything. So I like the, we're kind of, we're walking a, a beautiful tension, like you said, Kerry.

Kerry Muhlestein: 31:24 And, I love the way the Lord ends it on a positive note as well in this revelation. Right? So, we get verse 14: Thou shalt assist to settle all these things, according to the covenants of the church. So this goes back to this idea, help help the church do things the right way. Right? And that's before thou shalt take that journey among the Lamanates. This is the, this precursor to this really important journey that's gonna end up. Yes it takes the gospel to the Lamanites, which is part of what's the promise in the covenant, and especially the covenant made to the Nephites, but it's also gonna end up in the starting of Kirtland, right? So,

but I love verse 15 and 16, and it shall be given thee from the time thou shalt go, until time that thou shall return.

32:04 And what thou shalt do. So he's saying, sometimes I'm gonna tell you to go out and do things, and then I'm gonna tell you when to come back. You're gonna be given callings, you're gonna be given assignments, you're gonna be given missions, and, and so on. Verse 16. And thou must open thy mouth at all times, declaring my gospel with the sound of rejoicing. Amen. Right. That's the positive encouragement. Yeah. Hiram, you got deceived here. Oliver, you got deceived here. But you know what? I've still got some good things for you to do. And if you're willing to follow, you are still gonna receive revelation. It just won't be for the whole church. But you are gonna receive revelation from me. I'm still gonna talk to you. You follow that revelation and great things will happen, and you'll teach my gospel and you'll do it with rejoicing. That's a great message.

Hank Smith: 32:49 Yeah. It's a very positive idea. Right? And I keep, we come back to this idea of a little church, but I think of when I was a, a young dad and trying to give those little kids some encouragement, right? Yeah. Yes. Do some correcting, but not, don't, don't, what did you use the--don't quash their excitement.

Kerry Muhlestein: 33:07 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 33:07 Right. For what they're doing. 'cause this seems to me to be the result of maybe some excitement of this unfolding of a revelation. John, anything else?

33:15 Yeah. And that's, that has to keep going.

33:16 Yeah. We don't wanna stop that. I don't want to--this is a good, this has really actually has been a good parenting lesson for me to be careful in my correction. Right? I think I remember President Faust saying, your correction may be worse than the behavior you're trying to correct.

Kerry Muhlestein: 33:36 Yeah. I've been guilty of that any number of times.

John Bytheway: 33:40 I just think, this is a great point that, right now, not only are we getting an emphasis from President Nelson about, letting God prevail and being Covenant Israel, and gathering Israel this great work of Covenant Israel, but also of how do you hear him? And everyone can learn to hear him and receive personal revelation. And I like that you brought that up, Kerry that this was great. Don't want to quash that, but things are done in wisdom and

order, and who has the keys and who has the stewardship, that had to be figured out. And it was, sounds like it was figured out fairly early in this--what'd you call it, Hank a toddler church.

- Hank Smith: 34:24 Yeah. I like that and I like this, that the Lord is still every section he seems, Kerry, you were exactly right. He says, okay, let me answer this question. Oh, by the way, we're gonna go on a little trip to the borders of the Lamanites. Let me drop that at you a little bit. We'll talk about that later. Everyone's gotta be thinking, wait, what? Huh? What we're, we're, we're going somewhere. Yeah. That's fantastic stuff.
- Kerry Muhlestein: 34:44 I mean, so we've talked about President Nelson with the Covenant and President Nelson, with Hear Him. I mean, don't you just have such a feeling of gratitude that we have a prophet like Joseph Smith or like Moses that is receiving revelation, and that's revelation for the entire church. And wow, during this last you, I mean, well, during Covid, but the period leading up to Covid and so on. I just keep getting overwhelmed again and again with how inspired President Nelson is in giving us exactly what the Lord would have us have and exactly what we need. I'm so grateful for that.
- Hank Smith: 35:20 Yeah. When he said, the next conference we attend, this was a while ago. The next conference we attend, will be unlike any you have ever attended. I'm going, wow. Are we gonna have a new video? Right? And it was...
- Kerry Muhlestein: 35:33 And we did.
- Hank Smith: 35:33 Yeah. We did have a new video and Wow. Was different than any other conference we have ever attended. It's just, yeah. Wow. You're right. Exactly right. Kerry. How blessed. How blessed we are. I feel like, you know, Brigham Young saying, every time I think I knew the prophet Joseph, I wanna shout Hallelujah. Right. And I think that same thing about President Nelson.
- Kerry Muhlestein: 35:56 Yep. And in the end, that's really the message of section 28. Be grateful you have that prophet.
- John Bytheway: 36:02 And that maybe, is that the, what's the, the very last word? Well, the last word in section 28 is Amen. But the one before that is rejoicing. And as we were looking at that, I thought about, you know, say nothing but repentance. Well, that's a joyful message. That's a fresh view about God, about oneself.

And here the gospel ought to be a sound of rejoicing. I like, that's good, good way to tie things up.

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| Hank Smith: | 36:26 | You know, oftentimes when we, when we have conflict like this, we either avoid the conversation altogether because we don't like the awkwardness of the conversation, or we come at it too hard and we create a negative. We think we basically have two choices, right? Either I can continue to have a good relationship with this person, or I can ruin the relationship by telling them the truth. And I think Section 28 is an example of, you can both be open and build the relationship. It's a little bit more difficult to do. I think it's called, have those crucial conversations. I don't know if you've ever read that book. But it seems the Lord is saying, it's--you can have conflict, you can resolve it and be better off. And everybody's rejoicing, everybody's, everybody's happy. To me, that's a, I don't know about you two, but I sometimes avoid difficult conversations. Because it just seems like, oh, I don't wanna upset the, I don't wanna upset 'em. Where the Lord's saying, no, it's okay. It's okay. Go take him between you two and go have this talk. It's okay. It's gonna work. Trust me. It's okay for us to talk about you here for a second, I think. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 37:38 | Are, are you gonna swear or what? |
| Hank Smith: | 37:41 | You're one of the most brilliant minds in the church. You've spent, I don't know how old you are, Kerry, you look like you're 25. But, you've spent decades studying and teaching from the scriptures. Can you walk us through the life of Kerry Muhlestein, Dr. Kerry Muhlestein, the Egyptologist, and tell us what the restoration has done for you? And what it means to you personally in the life of the prophet Joseph Smith? And tell us a little, maybe a little bit about your life as a scholar and a believing Latter-day Saint. |
| Kerry Muhlestein: | 38:16 | I did not want to be a teacher because I felt like they didn't get paid well, which turns out to be true. But, I felt led to, first of all, to be a teacher. I wanted to be a seminary teacher to begin with. And then I can remember sitting in a class one day in the same building that I'm sitting in now--the Joseph Smith building at BYU. And we had a guest teacher who had, just, was just finishing a degree from the University of Harvard. And, I mean, not Harvard, Chicago in biblical studies. And they were kind of interested in hiring her. So she came and taught our class. And when I saw what she could do with the scriptures because of the training she'd received, I realized I don't wanna spend the rest of my life wishing I could be better at what I do, but not having paid the price. |

- 39:06 And so I decided, and, and I'm not saying that that's what everyone should do. I think that was a direct prompting for me that I needed to pay a price to learn about these things in a, in a different way, right? We each have our own role that we play, and it became clear to me that was the role that I needed to play. And so I started studying. That's why, you know, when you introduced me, I was already a psychology major, but I started studying Hebrew. That's how I got the Hebrew minor, because I started studying the ancient world, and I just got hooked. And I also realized that as much as I enjoyed teaching, I enjoyed researching. I liked both, and I liked writing. In fact, my original, I was a communications major as a freshman.
- 39:47 My original desire was to be a writer and maybe a newspaper writer or maybe fiction, kind of both and so on. I liked writing so when I found that I could research and teach and write about things that I cared about more than newspaper articles or fiction, then I realized that there was only one job that I could do all of those really well. And so I set my sights on teaching at one of the BYU's, and I had some experiences that I won't get into that kind of led me to Egyptology and led me specifically to UCLA, where I had some fantastic advisors. And one of them loved to talk about the church. He was one of the top Egyptologists in the history of Egyptology, just fantastic.
- 40:39 He left UCLA to direct an Egyptological program in Switzerland. And then was made the president of that university, and then the president of a consortium of universities. I mean, just a really intelligent guy, but he loved to talk about the church and about the Book of Abraham and so on. And in fact, later, so he went to the University of Basel, which also has a great theology department, and he used to go to their theology debates to represent the Mormon point of view. So I was blessed to have a fantastic couple of teachers that taught me. My first job was at BYU Hawaii, teaching in both the religion and the history department, which allowed me to kind of do both elements of what I love. And I would say just things keep getting dropped in my lap.
- 41:23 I did not intend to direct an excavation. That got dropped in my lap. In fact, I told, when it was offered to me, I said no, and then I made the mistake of praying about it. That's got me any number of times. I have to say that there is a thrill. So I'll say this, I, as you said in, in the little bio I taught history at UCLA, I taught history at Cal Poly Pomona, and that was specifically--so it was Egyptian history at UCLA. It was a history of the ancient Near East and the Iron Age at Cal Poly Pomona. So that's the age that we get the biblical stories in. I loved those experiences, but

as I did it, I found myself constantly frustrated that at the state schools, I couldn't talk about the things that meant the most to me.

42:13 And I would have students, right? We're talking about Assyria or Babylon doing things with Israel, and students would ask me, it was clear some of those students were Christian and they wanted to, they were asking questions about that, and I could not answer them the way I would've liked to have answered them. And it is so thrilling to be at a place where I can say what I think, where I can say what I believe, and conversations like what we've had today are what we, and we have these same kind of conversations with students. That's just exciting, right? Literally, 10 minutes before I was on with you guys, I was teaching the plagues and the Exodus story with my Old Testament students, and I bring it in, you know, Egyptian religion and Israelites symbolism and some Hebrew and all of it to try and make sense of this picture.

43:00 And it is just so fun to have a wide arsenal to use, to say let's see what we can make sense of. But in the end, the lesson we're taking away from this is God can deliver you. And if that was the only thing I was able to teach, I would've been happy with that. I was glad to teach Egyptian religion and about Ma'at and Isfet and so on, but it's great to be able to have the more important thing at the end, which is to say God will deliver you. In fact, I taught what I, the part of that lesson about the Egyptian symbolism was a paper that I wrote as a graduate student that I won an award for then, but I couldn't put that ending in. And it's so,so thrilling to be able to, put that ending in and to have comfort when things are tough.

43:50 So this is the great thing about doing things because you feel like the Lord has asked you to do them. I won't get into a long, detailed story, but there was one time, as I said, I'm only involved in this excavation. I love it. I love everything about it. You know, I publish on this, it is just fantastic. But, I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't felt inspired to do it. So there was a time where some things went fairly wrong. Some, some crazy things happened. It was some false reports in the media that caused some crazy things to happen. And I had a couple, a couple of weeks that were really felt kind of dark because it seemed like I had, not through something I'd done wrong, but just the way things had happened that I was causing some problems for the university and all sorts of things.

44:34 And I didn't like that. But the thing that got me through was that I could, each night as I was going to bed, and as I was thinking

about this, I could say, well, I am doing this because I felt inspired to do it. I've only ever been trying to follow inspiration and do my best. I'm sure I've made mistakes, but I trust that when I'm doing my best to follow inspiration, that the Lord has a plan and he'll take care of it. So right now, I can't see how this particular thing's gonna work out, but I know it will, because I'm just trying to do the Lord's will. And sure enough, it worked out. And there are all sorts of times where something happens. You're like, oh, man, what a mess. What am I gonna do about that? And each time you can say, huh well, I'm doing my best, so I'll just leave the rest up to the Lord. And He always comes through. And that's a thrilling, well, again, to go back to the covenant, that's a blessing I can count on because I've made, and I'm doing my best to keep covenants. And I'm part of that Abrahamic covenant. I can count on that. The Lord has my back. And that's a, that's a good way to get good rest when you know that the Lord has your back.

Hank Smith:

45:38

Thank you, Kerry, for being here and thank you, John, of course, for being here again. Like I said, you're my favorite co-host I've ever had. And I hope you take that the way it's meant to be taken. We're grateful for you, our listeners, for your support. Thank you so much to our producers, Steve and Shannon Sorenson, thank you to our production crew, David Perry and Jamie Nielsen and Lisa Spice, and we hope we'll see you on our next episode of Follow Him.