



“They Overcame ... by the Blood of the Lamb”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

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

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

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

Have you wondered how to interpret and apply Revelation 6-14? Learn how Jesus has already won the battle against sin and death as you explore this enigmatic passage with seasoned scholar Dr. Christopher Blythe.

Part 2:

Dr. Christopher Blythe continues to unravel the mystery and meaning in Revelation 6-14 and encourage and excite listeners about living in the Last Days.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1–Dr. Christopher Blythe
- 00:28 Review of last week’s episode
- 03:29 *Angels and Seerstones*
- 04:46 Overview of Revelation 6-14
- 07:48 The Lamb and the Throne Room
- 09:41 The Four Horsemen
- 16:01 The Roman Empire and John’s audience
- 17:25 Martyrs
- 21:53 Seventh Seal
- 25:02 A bittersweet book
- 28:01 144,000 as a symbol
- 30:45 Using the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) as a key
- 36:04 Blood washing robes white
- 39:08 John shares a personal story about the Provo Temple
- 40:37 President Nelson on temple attendance
- 46:07 Great and Terrible
- 49:15 Abinadi and two prophets
- 54:07 Eucatastrophe and Handel’s *Messiah*
- 59:16 His kingdom to come
- 1:00:32 End of Part I–Dr. Christopher Blythe

Part 2

- 00:00 Part II–Dr. Christopher Blythe
- 00:07 Heaven
- 03:48 Architecture of the Nauvoo Temple
- 08:07 Lucifer falls
- 11:45 Review of woman and the symbolism
- 12:53 “We Need an Endowment” by Anthony Sweat
- 16:42 “The Point of No Return” by Dieter Uchtdorf
- 20:49 The Number 666 or 616
- 25:18 Moroni flying or standing
- 29:36 Mark in the forehead
- 32:47 Elder Holland and the victory has been posted
- 34:11 Heavenly Father is in control
- 35:01 Final thoughts
- 37:10 End of Part II– Dr. Christopher Blythe

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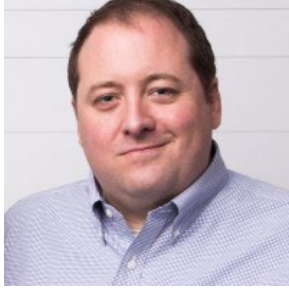
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Biographical Information:



Christopher James Blythe is an award-winning scholar of apocalyptic literature, reception, and Latter-day Saint folklore. He is an assistant professor of folklore and literature at Brigham Young University and the co-editor of the *Journal of Mormon History*. Dr. Blythe is currently writing contemporary commentary on life in 2020 inspired by Daniel Defoe's eighteenth-century historical fiction, *A Journal of the Plague Year*. He lives with his wife, three sons, and a tiny Yoranian in Springville, Utah. You can learn more about his work at christopherjblythe.com.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:04	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name's Hank Smith, I'm your host. I'm here with my conquering co-host, John Bytheway. Welcome, John. We are back for another week of FollowHIM.
John Bytheway:	00:00:14	Thank you, Hank. If I could conquer your cold, I would send you something. But you sound great a little bit deeper.
Hank Smith:	00:00:20	Yes, I do have a cold. I think this is the first time in three years that I've had a cold when we've recorded, but the show must go on.
John Bytheway:	00:00:28	That's right.
Hank Smith:	00:00:28	John, we are in the Book of Revelation again this week. Last week we were in chapters one through five. We did an introduction with Dr. Frederick and went through chapters one through five. What did you learn?
John Bytheway:	00:00:39	What I remembered was him talking about how we have to be careful and I think he used the word responsible in how we interpret these. One of the things I remember hearing Richard Draper talk about was maybe that John the Revelator put these things in code so we wouldn't mess with them. A code called apocalyptic and so that they would stay, but then it opens up to so many interpretations, but I remember that idea of being careful and responsible with it.
Hank Smith:	00:01:08	Yeah. I really like towards the end we did a description of the Savior, if you remember, we talked about the lion. John hears about a lion, but he turns and it's not a lion, it's a lamb. A lamb that had been slain. What an interesting way to describe the Savior using these beautiful symbols. John, we're joined today by a wonderful scholar, Dr. Chris Blythe. We're taking on the next section of Revelation, chapters six through 14. Are you looking forward to anything? What are we going to hear about?
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:01:36	Absolutely. This is a section full of symbols, just like you said, Hank. And symbols that are designed to reveal. We're going to

talk about symbols that many Latter-day Saints will know a little bit about. We're going to talk about the seven seals, the 144,000, the woman in the wilderness, even a figure that sometimes people call the Antichrist. All of that is wrapped up into this section. Through it, there's a lot of powerful passages about how the Saints can follow Christ even when things get really, really difficult.

- Hank Smith: 00:02:09 Fantastic. I am looking forward to this. John, as I was looking through these chapters, I thought I definitely need a guide. It's going to be fun to have Chris with us. He's new to our audience. We haven't had him on FollowHIM before, so John, I think we need to learn about him.
- John Bytheway: 00:02:23 Absolutely. Dr. Christopher Blythe is an assistant professor in the English department at Brigham Young University. He's a scholar of American religion with a specialty in Latter-day Saint history and folklore. He got his PhD in American religious history from Florida State University in 2015. Before that, received a master's degree in history at Utah State University and bachelor's degrees in religion from Utah State University and anthropology from Texas A&M University. He worked as a historian and documentary editor for the Joseph Smith Papers for a few years. He was also a research associate at the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at BYU and co-editor for the Journal of Mormon History. He wrote a book called Terrible Revolution: Latter-day Saints and the American Apocalypse, it was published by Oxford University Press. And he started a podcast this summer called Angels and Seerstones, which Hank we've heard is wonderful. So we're really glad to have you here, Dr. Chris.
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:03:26 Oh, thank you so much. Really appreciate that.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:29 This is going to be great. Angels and Seerstones, I just subscribed to the podcast, Chris. What am I looking forward to when I listen to these episodes?
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:03:38 Every episode is commentary for me and my wife, but most of the episodes are really focused around dramatized stories from the saints. Each episode is a different theme. You can learn about stories about Moroni or people who talk to their children as spirits before they're born and then we analyze it.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:55 Okay. Does that fall under the umbrella of folklore?
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:03:59 Absolutely. Folklore means stories people tell.

Hank Smith:	00:04:04	Stories people tell.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:04:06	Informal stories that we passed by word of mouth.
Hank Smith:	00:04:09	Wow. Chris, has there been a moment in your academic career where you went, "Okay, that might be the pinnacle. That might be the best story I've ever heard," has anything come to mind?
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:04:19	Our last episode was on stories of the Savior and the temple and some of those stories are word of mouth. We're not getting all these things at general conference, so sometimes we get them a hundred years later from a descendant. It's really family stories I love.
Hank Smith:	00:04:34	In this podcast of yours, do you delve into is this true, is it not true or do you just say, "Hey, look, here's the story"?
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:04:42	If it's a dangerous story, then we might question it, but for the most part, I just want these stories to sit there. I want people to be proud of being Latter-day Saints. I want us to delve in and say, "Hey, this is our culture," and the story's a really important part of that.
Hank Smith:	00:04:56	Oh, that's fantastic. Chris, let's jump into our lesson today. Revelation 6 all the way through 14, you come highly recommended by your peers. How do you want to start? What kind of lens are we going to put on as we go through these chapters?
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:05:13	Both of what you and John said about these chapters are really important. Do we need a guide? Are these symbols kind of difficult? Joseph claimed, he told us that this was a plain book or this is supposed to be easy to understand text. If I can be personal for a second, I was a 12-year-old Episcopalian boy when I first read these chapters in the Book of Revelation, I feel really blessed to be on here talking about them because these were the chapters that really made me puzzled in 1993. In fact, I wrote a list of questions from them and I brought them to my priest and I asked him, "What do I do with these 144,000? What's the tribulation? What is this angel here?" And at the end of our meeting, he said, "Chris, I don't think this is the most important scripture. I'm not sure it should even be in the Bible." They troubled me as a 12-year-old.
	00:06:08	I met sister missionaries the next year as a thirteen-year-old. They gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon. In first Nephi, I found that this book was really important. Not only is giving us a

reading of the Book of Revelation in his beautiful vision of his father's dream, but there's a passage that says John's foreordained to give this revelation. I believe the Restoration is a guide to understand the Book of Revelation. And there's four things as we go in that I think would provide our lens.

00:06:43 Certainly the book itself, but we have Doctrine and Covenants 77. This is Joseph's Revelation in 1832 that offers answers to questions he had or those that were with him had particularly about these chapters. We also have the Joseph Smith Translation, which gives us a beautiful explanatory retelling of chapter 12. Certainly we have 1 Nephi and we also have Joseph's sermons. Living in the moment we do, where Joseph Smith papers are so available. If any of your listeners go and type Revelation or different symbols, 144,000, any of the things they're interested in, you're going to find that Joseph actually spoke a lot about it. This material meant a lot to him. I want to look through the lens of the Restoration because that's really what brings these chapters open.

Hank Smith: 00:07:37 That's important to recognize what lens we're bringing to the text. We're not going to look at this as a New Testament scholar might, but let's bring the Restoration and take a look at it.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:07:48 That is right. Back in chapter four, we're in the throne room vision. The Book of Revelation is sometimes wrongly called the Book of Revelations, but that's not really that misleading because it actually is a series of revelations that John's going to have. And the throne room moment, John's brought there. He sees the angels around the throne of God. He sees the lamb, which is of course the symbol of Christ. He sees the resurrected saints. Beautiful imagery and this sort of temple imagery. The Ark of the Covenant is there. All those things are the key because we don't have those descriptions in chapter six, but that's where we're at still. There was this book, the Sealed Book, seven seals and the Lamb is worthy to open it and the seals open one at a time, and chapter six is the telling of these seals. And probably there's no image in the book of Revelation that is more influential on art and popular culture, renderings of the last days and so on than these seals.

00:08:52 Joseph tells us in section 77, it starts out verse seven, "What are we to understand by the seven seals with which it was sealed? We are to understand that the first seal contains the things of the first thousand years and the second also of the second thousand years and so on until the seventh." We're being shown world history. This is really important as we think of this, but I also think Joseph at the end of his life is speaking about

these events as last day's experiences as well. As we talk about each seal, these are also sort of a second fulfillment in the last days, we're also going to have situations that are predicted here that are going to come forth then, which will make sense as we go on since the other chapters actually detail those.

00:09:41 The first seal is the conqueror. This image, we call them the Four Horsemen and they come one at a time for the first four seals and the first one is that the wonderful conquering horseman. It says, "And I saw and behold a white horse. And that sat on him had a bow and a crown was given unto him and he went forth conquering and to conquer." And then the next seal there's a red horse and it's a symbol of warfare. And then the third is a symbol of famine, black horse. And then the fourth horse, it's a pale horse, it's an image of death. It tells us hell will fall after it. Pretty scary images of these four horsemen, there's great art on this. In fact, I chose one when I did my book, Terrible Revolution, one of the covers is an image that Joseph Smith had in his office of these four horsemen, an image that he thought a lot about.

00:10:46 The first horse. If we take Joseph literally and say, this is a symbol of the opening of this world is really kind of mysterious, something that conquers. I've really wrestled with what Bruce R. McConkie said about this, but I actually think it's really insightful. He said that this is a symbol of Enoch. My first thought was, "Wait a second. The majority of readers of this book don't have access to the book of Moses that I have. Is that really an effective symbol for the Lord to use?" But just think of this, here is a symbol of conquering in the beginning and other than John, who's a greater conqueror, and that's Enoch who actually found a way to show that there's a way to create a society on earth under Christ that's going to live despite all the temptation and all of the rough things we're going to read about in the Book of Revelation, but actually have that symbol immediately of someone who conquered. When people think about this figure in art, sometimes it's portrayed as Jesus Christ himself and I like that. Enoch is of course a symbol of the Savior.

00:11:53 The second and third horses, this war and famine, describe hardships that people faced in the past and of course continue to face. And then something happens with the fourth horse. The fourth horseman is a symbol of death. I mean this is a scary symbol. It's a symbol that shows up again in a passage in the Doctrine and Covenants that is really mysterious to me until I understood this. It's section 61, about the destroyer on the water and we're told he's riding on the water. Well, why is he riding? I've wondered this forever. Finally, when I was working

for the Joseph Smith Papers, I realized this was a reference to the destroying angel or to death. And how's he getting around? Well, according to John, he gets around on a horse, he rides. It became a symbol of what was going on on the water there. It's important to know that in the Doctrine and Covenants and throughout revelations of our time period, it's often drawing on symbols including in our most sacred place, right, the temple, are drawing on symbols that are first pointed out here in the Book of Revelation.

- John Bytheway: 00:13:04 I remember hearing Richard Draper talk about the color white, which we normally think of as purity. We have the white cloth at the sacrament table and the baptismal clothes and temple clothes and Book of Revelation talks about walking with Jesus in white. He said that to John the Revelator, it could mean victory. I really loved the idea of going to the temple in a victorious white, maybe like Enoch being conquering the wickedness of the earth. That idea of victory over temptation through repentance. Does that fit?
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:13:37 Oh, absolutely. I really do believe the Book of Revelation is the backdrop to so many symbols in the temple. Remember, we've already started out in chapter one being told that Christ makes us kings and priests, victorious role both over political situations, we're going to find those are really tough here, and religious situations, that we're going to find are really tough at this moment. And then that white robe is given to those kings and priests later on that we'll talk about chapter seven. So yeah, absolutely. These are those who have overcome.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:11 Hank knows sometimes I see lyrics for hymns in some of these verses. The one that comes to mind is, "All arrayed in spotless white, we will dwell 'mid truth and light," and I think about white being victory. It sounds to say, like NASCAR it's the checkered flag, but in Revelation it's victorious white, which I like that.
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:14:32 Oh, I think that's wonderful. Thank you.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:35 Chris, let me ask you, if I'm looking at chapter six and I see conquest, war, famine and pestilence, it feels to me a little like...
- John Bytheway: 00:14:45 Junior high. Yeah. What's your statement about junior high? I quoted you the other day, Hank.

Hank Smith:	00:14:55	I just think it's a terrible idea. Junior high, let's take all the most insecure people in society-
John Bytheway:	00:15:00	Put them in the same building.
Hank Smith:	00:15:00	... put them in the same building together for six or seven hours. It's like an emotional hunger games.
John Bytheway:	00:15:05	And see who survives.
Hank Smith:	00:15:06	Yeah, who comes out with a self-esteem? Is it okay for me to think in the history of the earth there has been conquest, war, famine, poverty and pestilence and death, the difficulties of mortal life and how overwhelming life can be? When I look at the news and I see conquest, war, disease, death, I'm like, ah, someone needs to save me from this.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:15:35	Absolutely. A lot of Christians want to read these symbols as all last day's symbols, but we're going to find that this is really our mortal existence. John's going to see the fall of Satan. He's going to see the great apostasy. He's going to see all these things that represent our time here on earth. Yes, let's think of these passages as how they affect us and certainly we are facing in the world today all four of these things.
Hank Smith:	00:16:01	I think of John's original readers too. This has to be all around them, living in the Roman Empire. Nick talked a little bit about this last week was living as a Christian in the Roman Empire, you're the minority,
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:16:16	Which leads us to that fifth seal. The fifth seal is, and I'll read this out loud, it's quite the image. Now remember we're in the throne room and this is God's throne room. I imagine this is really large. "When he'd opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the Ark of the Covenant, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, 'How, long, oh Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.'" This is an image of these martyrs. Now we think of them because it's the fifth Seals as these Christian martyrs and the thousand years after Christ. They're reign of and Nero and others who persecuted the early saints. But they're asking, they're saying, "Hey, when's it time for the second coming? When are we going to have that turn of power? Right now, the God of this world is Satan. When can we turn it and have the Savior here?"

Hank Smith:	00:17:12	Well, yeah, that's verse 10.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:17:13	Right.
Hank Smith:	00:17:13	"How long, oh Lord, holy and true dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth," that sounds a lot like 1-21. Joseph Smith in liberty Jail.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:17:25	Absolutely. "And white robes were given unto every one of them and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." This is a pretty scary image. It's an expectation of martyrdom. One of the early stories that's associated with the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph is that while he was in Carthage jail, he sent out a request for the saints to read chapter six of the Book of Revelation. I don't know if that actually happened. This is a story that circulated that Joseph did this. But the early saints associated this passage with Joseph. Here is the idea that the Lord, there's going to be a certain number of martyrs and they hoped Joseph was going to be the last of these. It was the final waiting moment because that's kind of what the passage is saying. We're waiting for that last martyr and then it's time.
	00:18:24	We see this idea of martyrdom show up all over the Book of Mormon, certainly the Doctrine and Covenants, as the Book of Mormon has a pattern, people get wicked, secret combinations starts. And what do the secret combinations do? They kill the prophets. And it's then when they kill the prophets, that God acts. 3 Nephi 11 happens after an era of secret combination, the persecution of the prophets. And this is the same point being made here in Revelation, that before God can act, people have to be ripe in iniquity. This moment has to occur. The early saints wrote poetry about this moment. They talked about it a lot. There's a great poem called the Martyr's Cry, which refers to this section here. Eliza R. Snow wrote one, Parley P. Pratt and others. In this image that we're waiting for what's going to happen, martyrdom was really important to the Latter-day Saints.
	00:19:20	As much as people want to imagine that Latter-day Saints have a persecution complex, we really haven't taken advantage of the stories that would make it so we emphasize persecution. We might talk about being judged, but we actually have a lot of saints who have been murdered for their testimony of the gospel, not just Joseph and Hyrum. But Joseph's standing, we have about eight or nine that were killed in the American South during the 1800s. Martyrdom is important. It's not something

we talk about in the church except for the experience of Joseph and the Savior and maybe people in Acts, but really we kind of avoid those topics. That's where John's leading this here, pay attention. Martyrdom is something that's important and it's important to these people in John's time because this might be what their life mission is. The souls under the altar.

00:20:10 It's something that we overlook, but to the early saints, particularly reading Revelation and the early saints of our dispensation, this was something they could really identify with. In fact, there was an expectation that there would be a lot of early Latter-day Saint martyrs. And one of the sermons after Joseph's death is a lot's been paid here that we won't need to have a lot of martyrs, that Joseph has this special role. They imagined that he was the last, or at least a really significant, answer to this question, who are we waiting for? We're going to learn that there's more martyrs coming in this chapter. That's the fifth seal.

00:20:52 The sixth seal goes on and talks about something that has not happened, although in all of these there's lots of speculation, but these are sort of cosmic events. Right? There's going to be a great earthquake, the sun's going to turn black, the moon's going to become blood and the stars of heaven are going to fall like a fig tree casting its untimely figs when it's shaken in a mighty wind. And here we have this moment where people are going to want to hide. Hide themselves in rocks because they know it's judgment. I remember the first time I read this just imagining this scene of people in verse 16. And they're going to hide in the mountains and they're going to say to people, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath has come and who shall be able to stand." This is such an image of people realizing, "Wait a second, what are we going to do now?"

00:21:53 Chapter seven is going to tell us what happens next, and I would imagine if we ended it with chapter six there, there's not a lot of hope. This is a lot of people that are absolutely hopeless. The seventh seal opens, remember, this is the beginning of the millennium, and in that there's a silence in heaven. People have debated what this silence means. And then there's some last events happening. But what's really important about chapter seven is this conversation between angels. In verse one it says, "And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind shall not blow on the earth nor on the sea, nor in any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east having

the seal of the living God and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea saying, 'Hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees til we have sealed the servants of our God in the foreheads.'"

00:22:57 This is a conversation, here we have four destroying angels, at least symbolic individuals who are positioned there to bring to pass God's judgments, and then a fifth angel shows up. This is a really mysterious passage, but fortunately, Doctrine and Covenants 77 breaks it down. If we go to verse eight, what are we to understand by the four angels spoken of in the seventh chapter and first verse of Revelation. Answer, "We are to understand that they are four angels sent forth from God to whom is given power over the four parts of the earth to save life and to destroy. These are they who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred tongue and people having power to shut up the heavens to seal up unto life or to cast down to the regions of darkness." I like that, there's something going on here earlier. They're not just destroying angels. These are they who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. They're important. We don't know the identity of these four angels, but we do know the identity of this fifth angel.

00:24:07 What are we to understand the angel ascending from the East? Revelation 7:2, "We are to understand that the angel ascending from the east is he to whom is given the seal of the living God over the 12 tribes of Israel. Wherefore, he cried from the four angels having the everlasting gospel saying, hurt not the earth until we've sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." If you go down to the next verse, "You'll receive it. This is the Elias who's going to restore all things." This is a special figure that's given a beautiful symbolic title. I want to talk about those 144,000, but let's jump forward to chapter 10 because we're going to be told that this angel is actually John. At the end of chapter 10, John has a special ordinance performed for him in this vision beginning in verse eight of chapter 10, John is going to do something that the prophet Isaiah has done before.

00:25:02 He's going to be beckoned to eat a book and it's a bittersweet book. Verse eight, "And the voice, which I heard from heaven spake unto me again and said, 'Go and take the little book,' which is open the hand of the angel, which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth, and I went unto the angel, said unto him, 'Give me the little book.' And he said unto me, 'Take it and eat it up and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth, sweet as honey.' And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up and it was in my mouth sweet as

honey and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." I wonder if this is John's translation. Translation, it sounds really great to be immortal, but it's probably really rough to bear the suffering of the world as we read about the three Nephites. "And he said unto me, 'Thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.'" So here John is getting his commission.

00:25:54 It's not just going to be for your life here on earth. This is going to be something you're going to do again. Joseph describes this chapter, when the Divine describes this chapter in 77:14. It's the question, what is this little book? And the answer is we are to understand that it was a mission and an ordinance for him to gather the tribes of Israel. "Behold, this is Elias," remember right before we were told Elias was a name for that ascending angel from the east who as it is written, "must come and restore all things." We don't really understand all of John the Revelator's role, what he's doing, but there's a moment here that says he's going to be in charge of making sure people are safe, the righteous are safe during this calamities that's going to happen, so stop the judgment before it happens. Let's take care of those that the Father needs to do his work during this time.

Hank Smith: 00:26:52 I see that, Chris. Doctrine and Covenants section 77:9, "Who is the angel?" In 7:2, "This is Elias, which has come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things." And then if you go down, this is what you pointed out, verse 14, same section Doctrine and Covenants 77. "What's the little book as eaten by John? This is the ordinance for him to gather the tribes of Israel," and it says it again, "This is Elias," who as it is written, must come and restore all things. Doctrine and Covenants 77 is the one that ties Revelation 7:2 to Revelation 10:9.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:27:29 10.

Hank Smith: 00:27:32 10-10. Did I get that right?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:27:34 You have that absolutely right. This is John all of a sudden realizing, well, maybe he doesn't realize it, Joseph realizes, that this angel that's going to do this great work is none other than John who's watching it unfold and who as we know by Nephi has been set apart to have this revelation himself to bring forth this book that we're reading. Something happens, he needs a seal to be placed in the heads of his servants.

Hank Smith: 00:27:58 That's back in 7:3, right?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:28:01

Yeah. We're jumping back to seven. Chapter seven of Revelation is going to tell us that a sealing has to be placed in the servants of our God and their foreheads, and he hears the number of them which were sealed, and it's 144,000. It's 12,000 from each tribe of Israel. This should resonate with us. This is the restoration of the House of Israel in the last days. People learning that they're Ephraim and that they're Manasseh and so on and so forth. They're part of this restored house of Israel that the Apostle John is seeing. 144,000 we often talk about as this symbolic number. As Latter-day Saints, we're not really hung up on this being a specific group of people. I know Nick mentioned the Millerites and others that have come up with all sorts of interpretations of what the 144,000 are.

00:28:56

Joseph gives us some insights on it. I can remember the first Richard Draper talk I ever saw. He said the 144,000, these are the senior missionaries. We're going to have young missionaries until this point. And then because Joseph in section 77 is going to tell us that these are high priests. Verse 11, "What are we to understand by the sealing the 144,000 out of all the tribes, 12,000 out of every tribe." Says, "We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests ordained unto the Holy Order of God to administer the everlasting gospel for there they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred tongue and people by the angels to whom has given power over the nations of the earth to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn." This clues us in, right, so the 144,000 are people selected at this time?

00:29:47

They're going to be protected, but they got things to do. They're high priests and they are, I mean, we don't really know exactly how this is working, but when we describe them as missionaries, I think that's a fun way to gain the concept of what they're doing. They're going to go out in the middle of these events that we're going to see, the events happening, that the angels are going to bring about and they're going to administer the everlasting gospel. Just because these last days events are occurring doesn't mean it's over. That's going to happen later on. Next week's episode, you'll have a scene where it says, "May the wicked be wicked still, but this isn't the time." That we're going to have missionaries out there working really, really hard and God is specially preparing them so they can go to dangerous places and be A-okay. Just like John would, they're going to have power to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn. That beautiful title for the Savior.

Hank Smith:

00:30:45

One tool that Nick gave us last week was to watch for when John harkens back to the Old Testament as he's writing. If you

can pick up on some of these, there's a couple that I picked up and I'll let either of you comment if you want to. The idea of sealing the servants of God in their foreheads brought me back to Deuteronomy 6 that talks about the frontlets, the phylacteries. You would write the scrolls of scripture and then attach them to your forehead. Then Ezekiel 9 has something similar where, Ezekiel, which is also apocalyptic literature, this is Ezekiel 9:4, "Go through the midst of the city through the midst of Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that have done in the midst thereof."

00:31:37 So it seems, and again I can't go much further than this, but it seems that John is harkening back to some of these old Jewish traditions of showing who you are by what is there between your eyes, this physical phylactery, maybe it's symbolic here, but to the old, Old Testament Israelites, it was an actual item, box on your forehead.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:32:03 Oh, I love that. When scholars describe this, or church scholars do, they'll often compare it to marks placed on non-Israelites about people who take whatever God there is and make a mark about him on their foreheads. Yeah, I love that example of the phylacters there. So this is representing who they are and it's right there in their minds and their essence of who they are is going to have the name of God written on it.

Hank Smith: 00:32:28 Whose property, that idea of.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:32:30 Absolutely, this is who they are. They're heirs of God. Joseph gets this. As he interprets this to the saints, he doesn't really speak about this much from the time 1832 when we have his revealed statement about the meaning of the 144,000 and then after he begins to reveal temple ceremonies in Nauvoo, Joseph begins to reference this passage and he does so on several occasions. We're fortunate to have lots of copies of Joseph's sermons through this period, and I'm just going to read you a couple quotes from different sermons. Here's one from August, 1843. He says, "In this image there's covenant sealed on the foreheads of the parents secured the children from falling that they shall all sit upon thrones as one with the Godhead joint heirs of God with Jesus Christ." He sees a symbol of this seal in the forehead as literally the sealing that's being performed in temples.

00:33:32 February of 1844, he's going to say, this is in his journal, "That the selections of persons to form that number had already commenced." Wandle Mace is going to say quoting Joseph

Smith, he's going to say, "Pray that you may live to go into the temple and be sealed in your forehead." Another sermon from Joseph, "The necessity of the temple that the servants of God may be sealed in their foreheads, that the four angels would not be permitted to destroy the earth till this is done." We don't need to talk what that means specifically in the ordinances, but this is temple stuff. As a kid, as I was reading this passage, "What does that mean?" I imagine an angel showing up in my bedroom or something, but an angel did show up in a bedroom. It was Moroni, right?

Hank Smith: 00:34:18 Right.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:34:19 This authority's been revealed. The specific 144,000 who are selected are going to be given power in their priesthood, but the ordinance, that sealing, is something that I think is going on. It's been revealed. It's something that's occurring already and maybe Joseph misspoke when he said the 144,000 were already being selected in his day, but the method of that, selecting that number by which these 144,000 would be selected from was occurring. It's really important to see that these figures are temple related as we read about new names and stones and dressing in white, John wants us thinking about the temple. And certainly the Father does today as he's revealed how we should be reading these passages.

Hank Smith: 00:35:05 Chris, it's also fascinating to me in chapter seven that the tribes of Israel are listed. Judah in verse five, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naftali, Manasseh, Simeon, Zebulon, Benjamin, Joseph. To me, it seems all encompassing, that all of Israel is involved.

John Bytheway: 00:35:23 Except for Dan, which is an interesting side note.

Hank Smith: 00:35:28 Yeah. Poor Dan.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:35:30 I had a friend who was identified as Dan in his patriarchal blessing and he really hurt that Dan wasn't listed in this passage. What does that mean? Am I not a good person? And I think it is meant to be all encompassing. I think this is meant to be that God is restoring his people.

Hank Smith: 00:35:47 Every tribe is counted.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:35:49 That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:35:51 John and Dan met later and he's like, "Hey, oh, sorry, did I miss you?"

Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:35:55	What's going on here?
John Bytheway:	00:35:57	I couldn't remember how to spell that.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:35:58	Yeah. That's right.
Hank Smith:	00:36:04	I want to just point out verse 14, John, we talked about this last week with the strange symbol of robes being washed in blood but being made white.
John Bytheway:	00:36:16	Yeah, it's interesting that of all the references to blood throughout the scriptures, being stained with blood, but when we're talking about the Savior's blood, it's a cleanser, which speaks of his mission as the atoning one.
Hank Smith:	00:36:31	"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," John is harkening back to the lamb from chapter five here at the end of chapter seven. Let's go to verse 15, "Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in his temple and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They don't hunger, they don't thirst." Verse 17, "And the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them." So we're still in the throne room or at least we return to the throne room and God shall wipe away all the tears from their eyes. At least at the end of chapter seven there there's something that as a non-Bible scholar I can at least pick up on that. The Lord and his saints are together, that he's cleansed them and they are doing his work.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:37:21	This is such an important parallel from what's going out there, going on outside where there's really peace in the throne room. This is a place where God is wiping away the tears from his saints eyes and we're going to see eventually next week that when the millennium comes, this is something God is going to do for all of the saints, wiping the tears from their eyes, removing suffering. As we read the Book of Revelation, particularly as we read the next two chapters, it's some hard reading. These are verses that really focus on what the tribulation is going to be like, about things that are going to happen, earthquakes, persecutions, terrible diseases.
Hank Smith:	00:38:03	The reason I like the end of chapter seven is perhaps I don't know what all these chapters mean to John's original first century audience. As Chris is pointing out, here's the lens of the Restoration on these chapters. But for me personally as I'm just reading through the Book of Revelation, that speaks to me, the

end of chapter seven, "These are they, which came out of great tribulation, washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They serve God in his temple. God dwells among them." That's verse 15, "They don't hunger. They don't thirst. The Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, feeds them and leads them under the fountains of living waters and God wipes away the tears from their eyes." I don't know what the first century saints would've felt with this, but I can feel the power of that while I'm in the middle of tribulation and difficulty and pain. There are places like the temple that I can go to and have that peace, where I feel fed by the Lord, I feel my tears being wiped away.

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| John Bytheway: | 00:39:08 | <p>I was a young single adult and I needed some answers and I went up to the Provo temple and I don't remember why, but it was closed. Somebody in the little parking booth there said, "Well, why don't you just go around the back on the grounds." And I did. And the way the Provo temple is designed, you go back there. I could just hear the sounds of the city and everything just go, whew, and just completely disappear. It reminded me of recently when President Ballard spoke about if you can't go, just go to the grounds. It's sacred ground and you can have a revelatory experience on the grounds if you want. Also, Chris and Hank, when I saw, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," in verse 17, "and these shall come out of great tribulation," just letting us know this is going to be hard, but there's hope. There's something wonderful at the end.</p> |
| | 00:40:00 | <p>"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," I was like, "Wait a minute. I thought that was at the end of the Book of Revelation," and I saw the footnote and yeah, it is. And listen to this in Revelation 21:4, "And God," which is pretty amazing, God himself, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain for the former things are passed away." For the moms and dads out there trying to teach this, you can always focus on this hope and good things to come. That beautiful verse, Revelation 21:4.</p> |
| Hank Smith: | 00:40:37 | <p>President Nelson said just recently, 2021 General Conference, he says, "If you don't yet love to attend the temple, go more often, not less. Let the Lord through his spirit teach and inspire you there. I promise you that over time the temple will become a place of safety, solace and revelation." And then I feel like this quote fits Revelation seven so well. Whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your life, which sounds like the four horsemen, conquest and war and poverty and famine and disease, death, whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your</p> |

life, the safest place to be spiritually is living inside your temple covenants.

00:41:23 "As you are true to your covenants made in the temple, you'll be strengthened by his power." Doesn't that sound like verse 17? "The Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters and God shall wipe away the tears from their eyes." "When spiritual earthquakes occur," says President Nelson, "you will be able to stand strong because your spiritual foundation is solid and immovable." I don't know what the first century audience heard, but to me, the end of chapter seven says have you been to the temple lately? Have you made your appointment and gone in?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:42:00 I think that's really powerful. I lost my mother this summer. My parents weren't members of the church and I can't imagine a greater sorrow that I've experienced. I'm still experiencing. But the temple does. It makes me feel closer to the Lord. I know by keeping those covenants, I was able to feel his presence in these moments that everything wasn't going well. And I think finding that in the temple is a wonderful thing we can do. It's a thing he wants for us. Revelation reminds us that. But the temple also brings us solace through its ordinances including work for the dead, that means a lot to me. As I think about wiping away tears right now, those are the tears that I am grateful that he helps me wipe away and one day will completely literally wipe away because of the ordinances of the temple.

Hank Smith: 00:42:51 That's awesome, Chris. It sounds like chapter seven, we've sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. Now, it seems to me, as I've read, this is where things get really dark. Is that right? Chapters eight and nine?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:43:05 Yep. We're going to have some angels with different judgments that they're going to pour out on the earth, which it gets a little dark there. If someone says the Book of Revelation is scary, they're probably talking about these couple chapters. Something that I think is important when we read Revelation is one of the criticisms of apocalyptic literature, sometimes people imagine that the reason these stories are told or these descriptions are given is because we're supposed to rejoice in the suffering of our fellow men. And I don't think there could be anything less true. Section 109 of the Doctrine and Covenants is Joseph's dedication of the Kirtland Temple, and it has a verse there that I'd like to read.

- 00:43:55 Section 109 gives us a lot of wonderful material just like in temple dedications today, the prayer is about the building, but it's also about the world. It's about all sorts of things. We're meeting together to pray with the prophet or one of those he selected to dedicate the building. What I love in 109 is it's really the answer to this. There have been people that read the Book of Revelation and think, "This sounds great. Let's get those bad guys." What Joseph says, he says he's praying similar to that prayer we saw in section six, "How long, oh Lord, deliver thou O Jehovah, we beseech thee thy servants from their hands," those untoward generation he talks about, "and cleanse them from their blood." But then in 43 it says, "Oh Lord, we delight not in the destruction of our fellow men. Their souls are precious before thee, but thy word must be fulfilled. Help thy servants to say with thy grace assisting them, thy will it be done, oh Lord and not ours." And then he goes on and talks about this judgment that we're reading about here.
- 00:45:05 That's really important to remember that our role is to share the gospel. Our role is to never delight in the destruction of our fellow being. We're hoping that people repent. We're hoping that people change. The Book of Revelation is the story of a world that's fallen and how it's going to be redeemed. And that does mean as we read on here, that wicked governments are going to collapse, just like Daniel prophesied in Daniel 7, all the thrones will fall. The world's going to get messy, and the reason it gets messy is so the Savior can return and redeem it. Other things have to fall that a new situation can be brought about. That's really the key to apocalyptic literature. Different people are going to read it and recognize different settings and say, oh, this is that government, Rome in this case, toppling so that the Savior can come back and bring forth a new Rome or a new Jerusalem, a redeemed people.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:07 When the Savior comes, the only way to contrast it is to talk about how awful and terrible it is without him.
- John Bytheway: 00:46:15 It's a great and terrible thing.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:17 Yeah.
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:46:18 Great and terrible. And we're used to pointing that out in Isaiah. We have these prophecies that come, the destructions and then the blessings. And the Book of Revelation functions really the same way. For most of our conversation today, we're having God's work. God is preparing that great things can come even though destructions have to happen. He's going to prepare John, he's going to prepare the 144,000. And then we have to

talk about some of the hardships that can occur as we finish the Book of Revelation, we're going to see that contrast that these great things are going to be brought about. Particularly those last two chapters where the Savior himself at the Perugia, he's there with his people. Let's jump to chapter 11. Here is a scene that is a beautiful type of certainly the Savior's life story told this way.

00:47:08 Here we have persecution of two witnesses, of two prophets, messengers who are serving in Jerusalem. We don't know the identity of these two great prophets, but the Lord tells us in section 77, Doctrine and Covenants, this time we're in verse 15. He says what is it to be understood by the two witnesses in the 11th chapter of Revelation? Answer, "They are two prophets that are to be raised up to the Jewish nation in the last days at the time of the Restoration and to prophesy to the Jews after they're gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem and the land of their fathers." So important to remember, and the Book of Mormon makes this clear, that the events of the last days have two main theaters, two main capitals, eventually the old Jerusalem and the new Jerusalem, the new world and the old world. And in this we're being told here we are Joseph explaining to his American listeners. And we're focused on the Book of Mormon. Right?

00:48:17 We're focused, it's 1832. We want to find where the new Jerusalem is going to be built. We're really focused there and now he's pulling us and saying, "Look, this section here isn't about us. It might be us as witnesses, but this is about the Jewish nation in the last days." This is before Orson Hyde gets sent over to dedicate the holy land. We're already learning that things are going to occur there. And this is a powerful chapter in chapter 11, these two witnesses, here it says, "I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy 1,203 score days, three and a half years clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth, and if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devour their enemies. And if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." All right? This is a different sort of missionary work.

00:49:15 I think of the prophet Abinadi, I have to give my message, this is what I'm doing. You don't have power to hurt me until I've given my testimony. And this is what they're experiencing there. They're facing a real persecution. Eventually in the story, they're allowed to be killed. Verse seven, "And when they shall finish their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them and shall overcome them and

kill them. And their dead body shall lie on the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom in Egypt where our Lord was crucified." And people are rejoicing. They're so excited that they're able to kill these two prophets that have caused them a lot of trouble. And now we have a moment of triumph where two men who are bearing their testimony, two witnesses, there is their resurrection. They are literally brought back to life.

00:50:09 "After three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet and great fear fell upon them which saw them and they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, 'Come up hither.' And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud and their enemies beheld them." I think this is the fulfillment of that prayer of the last martyrs because now wrath is going to come. Now is the moment. The same hour, there's this incredible earthquake. In heaven, they know what's really happening, not what we're seeing on earth. "And in heaven, the seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven saying, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever.'" This is the taking the power back, the great revolutionary, which is Jesus Christ, restoring the earth like it was before. This is that turning point. It's very powerful.

Hank Smith: 00:51:07 Chris, I'm tying this back to chapter six when we were talking about those who had been slain because of their testimonies, and they're asking this question, "How long, oh Lord, until you avenge our blood on them that dwell in the earth." And he said, "Rest a little season." So that was Revelation 6:10-11. And now you're tying that to chapter 11, when it's now time to avenge the blood of them.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:51:32 Their brethren has to be called and brought there to, so these two are the last. Can you just imagine this? That two martyrs go three days, their bodies are defiled and then they're resurrected in the presence of all their persecutors. I think that people are very aware that they've done something wrong at this point. Things are going to change. A lot of John's visions, they jump back and forth. Just like Nephi, he's seeing a moment in history, kind of an overview. This is the sixth seal, the seventh seal, people saying, "Let the mountains fall on us." Now we're turned back there in this moment. We had kind of an overview and then we're digging deep again or we're zooming in again. "The temple of God was open in heaven and there was seen in his temple the Ark of his Testament. And there were lightnings at voices and thunderings and earthquake and great hail," and that's the end of a vision, at least a major component of a vision.

Hank Smith:	00:52:33	I can see a lot again of Old Testament references in 11:4, the two candlesticks, the two olive trees, that's Zachariah. Verse six seems to me a little bit like Elijah, the power to shut heaven. It won't rain. It seems like a little bit of Moses in verse six, power over the waters to turn them to blood smite the earth with plagues and then the bottomless pit, Daniel 7. Again, to really understand the Book of Revelation I'm seeing, man, I really got to understand my Old Testament that he's harkening back to some of these stories that I think his readers would automatically pick up on, but those of us who don't spend a lot of time in the Old Testament, we might miss.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:53:20	There are some Christians who see these similarities and they think, "You know what? This must be the prophet Elijah returning," one of these two figures because they see those similarities the same way. Not how we view it. These are prophets like Moses and like Elijah.
Hank Smith:	00:53:35	Even though I don't know what all these symbols exactly mean as we've gone through them. Is it fair to say so far, and either of you can comment on this, please do, that so far, John is saying things are really terrible and difficult for the righteous, God is blessing them along the way. Things get even darker and more difficult for the righteous chapters eight, nine, and 10. Chapter 11 is kind of this culminating martyrdom and now we're going to turn it around.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:54:05	Yes.
Hank Smith:	00:54:07	It seems like a really good movie where things are going well and then they go really dark and then you think they're going to go well, but they go even darker and then comes the moment where Gandalf comes over the hill and saves the day.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:54:21	I love that J.R.R. Tolkien calls this eucatastrophe, the positive catastrophe, which his example is Gandalf doing that, but also the Savior. Things get really, really dark and then the light breaks forth and were hinted in that exactly in that verse that said, "The seven angels sounds, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord."
John Bytheway:	00:54:44	We had a tradition in our family, we need to start it up again, of going to the Handel's Messiah Sing-In, where everybody brings their own music. And there's a Utah Symphony and an Utah Symphony chorus, but then sometimes the conductor turns around and invites the whole audience and the chorus to sing together. I had done that a couple of years and just thought, "Why is this so powerful?" I kept noticing in the musical score,

scripture references. So the next time I brought my Bible and was following along. I just can't help it, verse 15 are the lyrics of the Hallelujah Chorus. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and of His Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.

Hank Smith: 00:55:30 Oh, yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:55:33 And he shall reign forever and ever, and he shall reign and he shall reign. And everybody in the whole building is just singing this. Nobody's performing for anybody at this point. That part is in the Hallelujah Chorus and at the very end, the coolest thing happened. You stand for the Hallelujah Chorus anyway, that's the tradition, is you stand for that, everyone is clapping for the conductor and he has the orchestra stand up and we clap for the orchestra, and then he looks at the chorus and we all clap for the chorus, and then he kind of points to the audience and the chorus kind of claps for the audience, like, "Oh, bless their hearts. They did the best they could."

00:56:14 And then the coolest thing happened when the conductor picked up the score of Handel's Messiah and held it up and the place went crazy for George Frederick Handel and the Hallelujah Chorus, and I'll never forget that moment of this really inspired music of the conductor holding up the score. Thank you, George Frederick Handel for this. And I was just really touched when it just hit me, "Oh, the reason this is so powerful, all of the lyrics are scripture." That was why. So that's my little story about Revelation 11:15. That's the Hallelujah Chorus right there.

Hank Smith: 00:56:57 That's a great story, John,

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:57:00 As you sing it, I realized that was true, that it is in the Hallelujah Chorus, but I didn't know that. That's very powerful. Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:57:07 Oh, I have to tell you something funny along with that. At the very end of the Hallelujah Chorus, forever and ever and ever and ever. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. And then there's our fermata.

Hank Smith: 00:57:18 John, you're giving us a whole concert.

John Bytheway: 00:57:20 A whole concert, right.

Hank Smith: 00:57:21 This is great.

John Bytheway:	00:57:21	And then there's a fermata and you all have to wait, and one time my father-in-law came in too early on the final Hallelujah.
Hank Smith:	00:57:32	So the whole place is silent.
John Bytheway:	00:57:33	And he's so funny because he tells people, "Yes, I soloed with the Utah Symphony." So we all learned watch the conductor during the fermata.
Hank Smith:	00:57:46	Chris, before we get to chapter 12, I can see, and maybe you guys can just chide me here, but I can see a little bit of human gratification from the first century saints, Rome's going to get it. We're going to get them and God's going to get them. And there's a little bit of that in the last days too. Like, "Oh, I'm so tired of sin and evil and on the earth and it's going to get it." Isn't that a little bit what John's after?
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:58:12	I don't speak German, but there's this word, was it schadenfreude? It's taking pleasure at someone else's suffering. This makes me feel good. I think people, at least the way they read it, could walk away feeling that. It's a test in the text. It's like reading Psalms and there's moments where they're applauding the suffering of people. I like what Joseph is telling us, that we should never delight in the suffering of our fellow men.
John Bytheway:	00:58:41	It reminded me too of when you read that verse from Section 109 of the Dedicatory prayer, "Their souls are precious." That phrase was Alma's phrase when they were about to go teach the Zoramites. And when he begins his prayer, he's like, "How long do we have to behold such gross wickedness?" And by the end of the prayer, he kind of softens and he says, "Behold, oh Lord. Their souls are precious. And many of them are our brethren," maybe softens during the prayer. But he uses that same phrase, their souls are precious, all souls are precious. Which reminded me of that.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	00:59:16	Let's not say, when are you going to get the bad guy? When are you going to make him suffer? But the prayer of God's kingdom coming, I think is really the undergirding of this, that we're hoping, the world is unjust. As Latter-day Saints, we don't need to wait for a corrupt world to come in. We recognize it's already has a lot of problems. We're not waiting for more. God's going to fix this. Joseph says that for 6,000 years, mankind has their efforts to build a kingdom, to build peace on earth. We're ultimately not going to be able to do it. And so for the 7,000 years, it's the Savior himself that takes the reins. I want that. I

		know we all want that. Unfortunately, it leads to some darkness.
Hank Smith:	01:00:04	Yeah. Instead of seeing in 11:15, "The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of the Lord," it's not the destruction per se that we're looking forward to of those kingdoms, but the coming of the kingdom of Christ.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	01:00:17	We're not excited about the demolishing the old house, we want the new one.
John Bytheway:	01:00:20	That is the repeated prayer in the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come and here it is."
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	01:00:25	Keep this in mind, "Thy kingdom come," because this is what we're about to read.
John Bytheway:	01:00:32	Please join us for part two of this podcast.



John Bytheway: 00:00

Welcome to part two with Dr. Christopher Blythe: Revelation 6:14.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 00:07

John sees a vision now. It's again in heaven. It's a symbol. It's a series of symbols that have a meaning on earth, and we can read this meaning. I'm just going to stick to the King James here. I'm going to tell you what it says in the Joseph Smith translation. "And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of 12 stars. And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pain to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and 10 horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

01:16

We know what Joseph says about these symbols and that's really important, but just the images that we're watching; here's a woman that's precious, she's a wonder in heaven. She's giving birth and a dragon wants to get her baby. If we don't read this just as symbols, this is the Savior. If Revelation is being told in Nephi 1, which I believe it is, Nephi is seeing parts of the same vision, here he sees the Virgin Mary. He sees the condescension of God, and I believe this is the parallel here. He's seeing an image of the Virgin Mary who, when the Savior is born, we have the slaughter of the innocents. We have people trying to prevent him from coming to earth, but the Lord's going to protect him and eventually he's going to be caught up unto God and to his throne. He doesn't get to rule yet, but he's going to be caught up to his throne.

- 02:16 There's a literal way to read this. This is a direct thing. You have the Virgin Mary, you have the Savior, and we have this conflict. As Latter-day Saints, Joseph tells us that this woman should be read as a symbol, at least when we're giving it in its millennial fulfillment. This is a symbol of the Church and that the Church is going to be in labor trying to bring forth a child and that child is the Kingdom of God. This is the great coming forth here. The Kingdom is going to happen, but the woman has to finish her thing. It's going to face persecution. We'll see here that as an early Latter-day Saint would read this, they would think of the woman fleeing into the wilderness after the Savior ascending to heaven as a symbol of the apostasy. The woman is taken into the wilderness where there's a place and she waits there a while, because we're going to have an apostasy.
- 03:14 I'm not certain on that interpretation, but this is how it was often read among early Latter-day Saints. She's gone somewhere else for a while, and she's going to come back. Then we switch here and I think maybe we should stop and go here. So early Latter-day Saints loved this passage. The Prophet Joseph loved it. Revelation 12 is really the only place in the Book of Revelation that the Joseph Smith translation offers us an extensive new reading of the text, which is important, but it also shows up in other things.
- 03:48 Do you guys know about the architecture of the Nauvoo Temple and how it relates to this passage?
- Hank Smith: 03:52 Yeah, it's amazing.
- Dr. Christopher Blythe: 03:53 Isn't it amazing? We have this in one journal entry, but because it actually shows up in the architecture, it makes a lot of sense that this is what Joseph intended. Joseph was hands-on about the structure of the Nauvoo Temple. Just like Brigham Young, he said that it had been revealed to him. Wandle Mace, one of the laborers on the temple, actually records what the architecture is intended to represent. He says, "The architecture of the temple was purely original and unlike anything in existence, being a representation of the church, the bride, the lamb's wife." And he refers to this passage in Revelation 12 and goes on, "The Nauvoo Temple beautifully shows this at the bottom of the structure." Remember the woman is standing on the moon, so the moonstone is at the bottom, not like in the Salt Lake Temple, but the bottom in the Nauvoo temple. And then there are pillars and the pillars have a sun on top of them, so cloved in the sun and then the stars are on the very top. Specifically, some people have pointed out that the top of the Nauvoo

Temple has a crown structure, made as part and 12 stars are right there.

05:05 Here is a symbol of the Church and out of the Church, the Temple gives birth to the Kingdom of God. All of these are temple symbols. The temple is what's going to bring forth the millennium on earth, is Joseph or the Father's message through the building of the Nauvoo Temple. It's powerful. This is a really powerful idea. So much more in Nauvoo begins to be a conversation about how to bring together the millennium. We are fortunate that the Joseph Smith papers, that has brought more of these documents to life, but one of the things that's occurring in Nauvoo is Joseph builds up a group, the Council of Fifty, which he calls the Kingdom of God. The Church just five years ago about, released a set of hundreds of pages of documents of conversations between Joseph and this group of 50 men who are asked to imagine what the millennial government will look like. Joseph is so eager to help bring this about.

06:09 The reason I bring it up, it's kind of fun, is that there's a debate over what the flag of this Kingdom should look like. People give a variety of different ideas. Brigham Young is going to actually tell us the flag of the Kingdom of God should have the American flag and then every nation that joins should be added to it in a small square and we're just going to have this ginormous flag. But one person in the Council of fifty wanted a flag that was this woman in the wilderness. It was the symbol of the Kingdom of God, even though it's actually the symbol of the Church, that's what's going to bring the Kingdom of God, the same way with the 12 stars around her head and the moon at her feet and the sun through her. So this symbol is really important. It is the symbol of the coming of the millennium.

06:54 Now, as John's having these revelations, he moves back. He just saw the woman who he would've recognized as Mary symbolically, and then a dragon attack her. In verse seven, it picks up again here. These are very important verses. If we had an Old Testament scholar with us, they might point out that the figure of Satan, the Satan Lucifer, the fallen angel doesn't appear clearly in the Old Testament. Now, we of course read Isaiah 14 to be a comment about Lucifer and I think that's true, but from a secular point of view, people argue that you just can't find that story there. Well, even if it wasn't, it's revealed right here in the sacred writ in verse seven. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And the great

dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him."

08:07 Here is the moment, we saw this moment with first part of the vision, we see the Savior, what he went through, the Savior ascended to heaven, his Resurrection. We saw an apostasy story, the narrative, and now we're jumping back to see what happened in the pre-existence, where Lucifer falls and he's going to deceive the whole world. We know that Joseph has a vision of this exact scene in section 76, where he sees Lucifer fall, an angel in authority, a similar thing of course that the prophet Lehi has in Nephi 2, seeing this moment. But Joseph describes it and he sees a moment where, "And while we were yet in the spirit, the Lord commanded us that we should write the vision." It's going to use the same language or revelation here. "For we beheld Satan, that old serpent, even the Devil who rebelled against God and sought to take the Kingdom of our God and his Christ." That's what we're seeing. "Wherefore he maketh war with the saints of God, and encompasseth them round about."

09:11 This is how Joseph describes it and John describes it as Satan deceiving the whole world. It's going to go on here and talk about how that scene, and remember this is a parallel with Nephi 1. So, if you're thinking where is this showing up in Nephi 1 now?" Think the great abominable Church, all the things that are occurring there with the persecution of the saints, as that's what we're about to see, the great apostasy. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength in the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore rejoice, O Heavens, and you that dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil has come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath, but a short time."

10:09 There's that line, when you think of, "Is the devil upping his tactics in the last days?" This is that line there. I think this might be the perspective just from the pre-existence in general. He knoweth he only has a short time, he's going to do what he can, but Heavenly Father has a plan and, "When the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child." The Church he persecutes. And so, "The women were given two wings of a great eagle, that she

might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away with the flood. And the earth helped the woman and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon had cast of its mouth."

10:53 I love this. Here is an image of the persecution of the devil and this eucatastrophe thing. When things are going to be bad, the flood's coming and the Lord had a plan. The earth opens its mouth and takes in the flood. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keeps the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." Chapter 12. I think chapter six meant a lot to Joseph, but we know chapter 12 did too. He is thinking about this passage and I think it gives him a lot of hope. This is the message of; what is the mission of the Restoration? It's to bring forth the Kingdom of God on earth, to recognize that yeah, there's going to be persecution. God's got a plan, He's in control of this the whole way and our job is to keep the commandments and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Hank Smith: 11:45 This is a great lens to put on chapter 12, because this is how the prophet Joseph Smith saw this chapter. Let me see if I caught you right here, that this woman represents the Church and you talked about the Nauvoo Temple and there it is with the sun is right in the middle of that temple, those big beautiful sun stones, maybe a little bit further than halfway up. And the moon stones are at the bottom and then the stars are actually above the sun stones and they go around the rim of that Nauvoo Temple. So here she is, a woman clothed with the sun in the middle, the moon at the bottom and the stars at the top, where I might look at the Nauvoo Temple and say, "Oh, that's the Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom and the Telestial Kingdom." That's not what Joseph was talking about here.

12:29 He was talking about this woman in Revelation 12:1, and the Church is trying to give birth or build Zion. This child is Zion, trying to build Zion on the earth and Satan wants to stop that. Could I say in the temple, the covenants I make in the temple are, you can pick up on this language there, to build the Kingdom of God?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 12:51 Build Zion, yeah.

Hank Smith: 12:53 To build Zion. There I am inside that temple, which is represented here in chapter 12, verse one, this woman that's trying to build Zion. I want to quote here from our friend

Anthony Sweat. This is a BYU Devotional called, "We Need an Endowment." And he says, "The temple teaches us at its highest pinnacle covenant to consecrate our entire lives to God, dedicating and making holy our time, talents and means to do His will and build his Kingdom. It teaches us to love and serve others, offering of our abundance to help those in need." He says, "There is power in consecrating our lives in service of God and His children that enables us to find our personal path and purpose." What a fascinating tie-in that I can read chapter 12, verse one, see the temple. I think the Salt Lake Temple has the similar symbols of the moon, stars and sun.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 13:52

It's a different order. Joshua Matson explained this to me the other day actually where he said, "This is set up for the Book of Abraham, a different symbolic structure." So our temples are amazing that they give us different messages in different places.

Hank Smith: 14:06

But the Nauvoo temple, that's here in Revelation 12?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 14:09

Yes.

Hank Smith: 14:10

There I am in the temple, concentrating to build Zion and I should see that there is a dragon who wants to destroy Zion and me apparently, because he is wroth with the woman, the Church in verse 17, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, those who keep the commandments of God and have a testimony of Jesus. So I can see myself in Revelation 12.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 14:37

Absolutely, you're part of this. We're a precursor to it, but we come out of the temple a royal priesthood, we come out kings and priests. This is the message of the Millennium. The temple is how the revolution begins and eventually it's going to have this beautiful fulfillment with the coming of the Savior, but we're definitely part of these passages.

Hank Smith: 14:58

Oh, that's a great way to view this. Again, I don't know how the first century Saints would've viewed this, but I love that lens.

John Bytheway: 15:06

I'm impressed by this nickname for Satan or this description, "The accuser of our brethren." It was just in my class the other day, we were talking about how Satan just doesn't play fair, because he'll tempt you to do something, "Do this," and everyone does it and nobody cares and no one will know. And then as soon as you do it, he's; "Oh, how could you possibly have done that? You terrible... And he becomes that accuser. And I wrote in my margin, we can follow our advocate or our accuser, because he doesn't play fair, tempts you to do it and

then accuses you. What an interesting name for him. Why would anyone want to follow somebody who accuses them?

15:50 Then in verse 11, we often talk about the war in Heaven, referenced in verse seven. I like to ask my students, "Did we have spiritual F-16s?" Because an F-16 is a beautiful thing, but what were our weapons? Verse 11 tells us more the nature of this war. "They overcame by the blood of the lamb," was the atonement active in pre-mortal existence? And the Book of Mormon speaks about the Atonement which was prepared from the foundation of the world. So yes it was, and by the word of their testimony, perhaps our weapons were the blood of the lamb and the word of our... It was the Atonement and our testimonies.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 16:30 It's powerful. I think that's right.

Hank Smith: 16:33 John, that's a fascinating idea, the accuser. That could be our culture today as well. I'm going to find things. I'm going to accuse other people.

John Bytheway: 16:42 Let me quote from President Uchtdorf. This was a talk called "The Point of No Return" in April of 2007, and he said the scriptures call him the accuser, because he wants us to feel that we are beyond forgiveness. Like I said, tempts you to sin and then tells you how awful you are when you do exactly what he said. He's an accuser.

Hank Smith: 17:02 The opening paragraph of the Come, Follow Me manual mentions this chapter, chapter 12. It says, "Imagine a woman travailing in birth and pain to be delivered. Now imagine a great red dragon having seven heads and 10 horns hovering over the woman, poised to devour her child as soon as it was born. To understand these verses of John's revelation, remember that these images represent the church and Kingdom of God, and the peril they would face. For the saints who experienced intense persecution in John's day, victory over evil may not have seemed likely. This victory can also be hard to foresee in a day like ours, when the adversary is at war with the saints and has power over all kindreds, tongues and nations." That's from the next chapter, chapter 13.

17:49 "But the end of John's revelation gloriously shows that good will prevail over evil. Babylon will fall and the saints will come out of great tribulation with robes of white, not because their robes were never stained, but because the saints will have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

What a great paragraph to sum up what we've talked about here in chapter 12.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 18:15

I like that a lot. The manual is very good for chapter 12 and for 14, I definitely think it is essential for our reading of these passages. Very helpful resource. Chapter 13 is a highly symbolic chapter, if we're thinking about Daniel and the coming of these corrupt kingdoms. This is a similar thing happening here in chapter 13. It's discussing a beast that's come forward. Now the beast is described in different ways in different revelations, but this represents corrupt government, corrupt apostate church, corrupt government. The beast has this power given to him where the dragon, meaning the devil, is... What do we call this in Nephi 1? This is the great and abominable church of the devil and described as a beast in this passage here. It is a representation of the great apostasy. Many conservative Christians are waiting for a last day's tyrant. Certainly, that's very possible.

19:21

When it discusses this beast in 14, "He deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This is a false prophet that comes, the messenger of the beast, "Saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the wisdom of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six."

20:15

I remember a little kid reading this and I actually heard a rock band have this quote within their song and thinking, "This is the scariest thing I've ever read in my life." Beginning in the middle-ages this begins to be read as a son of the devil born, a literal anti-Christ figure that appears on the earth and will lead the earth and then Jesus has to fight him. There's nothing in here that suggests anything like that popular culture idea. Is this the son of the devil? No, there's nothing here that comments on that.

20:49

This is a tyrant that's apparently in this causes the world to wander off them, has great mysteries and then he's given this

weird number: 666. This is where biblical studies can really help us. I remember Richard Draper is the first person that gave this insight that readjusted the way I was thinking about this passage and he said, "666, or in some manuscripts 616, is a reference to the Emperor Nero who persecuted the saints." So either literally a reference to that historic moment in time or a reference to, just like how these two prophets will be like Moses and Elijah, there'll be this figure in the last days that's like Nero.

21:37 The key thing for us and particularly if we're going to focus on how the restoration is interpreted in this passage, this is out of Nephi. This is the great abominable Church of the Devil. What is the number? 666. I think probably our biblical studies scholars are right, but when early apostles tried to interpret this, they recognized it was the apostasy. They thought the beast was the apostate Christian Church and the 666 number is a reference to apostate branches of Christianity, which it was saying there's 666 of them.

22:12 Now, that's probably not a correct interpretation, but understanding that this was both then and now by the Church understood not as a concern that we're waiting for an Antichrist, that's never been our vision, but that the apostasy occurred. It was a real thing and that the Lord is going to fix that and he's going to fix it in chapter 14. Chapter 14, we immediately have an image of Mount Zion. Great. Think Malachi here, the saviors from Mount Zion. "And I looked and lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from Heaven as the voice of many waters." The Savior's voice described as many waters in chapter one, and, "As the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne." Look up that new song if you're interested. The Revelation gives us some comments on that too.

23:10 "And before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song, but the 144,000, which were redeemed from the earth." It describes that they're not defiled with women, so these are people that keep their chastity covenant. They're redeemed among men, they're the first fruits of the Lamb and in their mouth there's no guile. They're without fault before the throne of God. All this is being talked about here and then we have a reference in verse six, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach it unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people." This is that beautiful reference to the

restoration in the last days. We've had a lot of references to apostasy and now we have the great restoring angel mentioned here.

24:04 There's a debate sometimes among even Church scholars on whether this passage refers to Moroni or if this is something that we've come up with over time. Did Joseph really think this? Joseph really thinks this. In section 1:33, he refers to this verse here and he says, "The angel has flown through the midst of Heaven." It's a past tense. "The angel has come and restored." And he uses that same language of everlasting gospel. It only appears here in his discussions or Revelation, and in reference to the angel Moroni. He associates this verse with that great angel who was prepared, who John may have known very little about as he wrote these verses, but that we know something about, because of the Restoration, as he was prepared to play this role to get the everlasting gospel started again and through what means, what's the great resource that God is fighting the apostasy, if you read 1 Nephi or this, it's through the Book of Mormon, great witness of that everlasting gospel found in the Book of Mormon, that is how God is going to combat that beast in the previous chapter. I love that.

John Bytheway: 25:18 Speaking of the Nauvoo Temple, what was the original Moroni on the Nauvoo Temple? Was he standing or was he flying?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 25:27 He's flying.

John Bytheway: 25:28 Yeah. He was a weathervane and if you look at the Washington DC temple, the design, the sculpture of the Moroni there, on the Salt Lake Temple, a trumpet in one hand, nothing in his left hand, but in the Washington DC temple, a trumpet and the plates in the left hand. I always think of that when I see this verse having the everlasting gospel, and that's, footnote 6C, it says Book of Mormon. You're saying that's how Joseph saw that, that was Moroni?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 25:58 Absolutely. Section 1:33 and the way he describes Moroni coming in the Pearl of Great Price, both has allusions to this same passage. This isn't something that we've come up later on as a folklore tidbit. This is something that Joseph believed and it's a beautiful thing when you read the Book of Revelation and you think of Moroni being this angel here and John being the ascending angel, the 144,000 who are in heaven being prepared, it really does remind us that we're going to do these hard things here, but this is Heavenly Father. He's got his hand in it the whole way. He's really making sure. This is the coming for the Kingdom. This is what we're waiting for. I love what John

said saying, "Remember the Lord's prayer here; thy Kingdom come." The Lord has paved the way to bring about his Kingdom and he's using figures, in this case both the last book of the Book of Mormon, our prophet there is being called in as one of these great angels and the last book of the Bible, he's being called in to play their role.

- 27:03 And that's what the Book of Revelation is. It is a book of hope. Even if we came forward and we read about Babylon falling, all of this is pointing us to these great things. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me," This is after the Millennium started here, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." And then we have it, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man." Think Daniel seven, "This is one like unto the Son of man comes on a cloud, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand, a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat in the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time has come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple," which is in heaven, he also had a sharp sickle.
- 28:15 Goes down, verse 19, "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden without the city, and the blood came out of the winepress." We're going to leave it with a really, really disturbing verse there, but the actual message here is that the Savior appears, he comes and the judgment comes forth. The patience of the saints, we're waiting for this moment. The main point is that the system of government and religion and cruelty that's been allowed to spread on the earth, that we saw in chapter 13, is going to be no more. Babylon, a great symbol is fallen, is fallen. We see right after the reference to the angel when I read before. This is a message of great hope and great peace. We're part of this story. We are through the temple and we are waiting for that final moment.
- 29:14 What Nick told you guys before about the problems of extremism or misinterpretation is really important and we talked about how we could look forward to the suffering of other people, but I don't think we should lose track of who we

are. We're members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is our hope. This is our message.

Hank Smith: 29:36

Chris, so would I be right in saying in chapter 13 and 14 that I've got evil versus good? As I look at this beast, even in verse four, the people around it are saying; they worship the beast, "Who is like unto the beast? Who could even try to defeat the beast?" He's making war with the saints in verse seven. I found verse 11 interesting. He tries to look like a lamb or maybe John is describing it this way. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spake like a dragon. Maybe this deception, because the Savior's been the lamb throughout this book and here the beast is trying to be a counterfeit lamb. Verse 14, he deceives them that dwell on the earth and he's marking people and then chapter 14 is almost the exact opposite. Here's another mark that's happening, chapter 14 verse one. It's a different mark. They have the father's name in their forehead, so there's almost two marks. You can have the mark of the beast or you can have the mark of the father, and you've got this list of what it's like to have the mark of the father and then the end of 14 is this showdown between good and evil. The sickle is coming to... You got to make the choice. Did I read that correctly?

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 30:53

Yes. This figure, traditionally, people have called the Antichrist. This last tyrant, he's a scholar. Even we, probably when we teach these verses in our classes, probably say, "The Antichrist is not a scriptural term. This is a term used like it is in the Book of Mormon as a figure that's against Christ and could be any number of people." But this is a false Christ figure, isn't it? In the way it's described, exactly as you suggest here, he looks like a lamb, but speaks as the dragon. He's deceiving us. Pretty scary. And then who is like unto the beast? He's who you want to be. He's the one that your worship, you should be turned towards to.

Hank Smith: 31:34

No one can defeat this beast.

John Bytheway: 31:36

I was listening to Brother Jeffrey Marsh talk about this idea, Hank, of a counterfeit. I look in Revelation 13:11, "I beheld another beast coming out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb." Well, I don't know about you, but every lamb I've ever seen does not have two horns. And he was saying maybe this, he's trying to look like the real lamb, but he's a counterfeit. Maybe that plays into the same idea right here of a false messiah being coming forth.

Dr. Christopher Blythe: 32:07

This is just for fun, because we're talking, but I think 13 is really so interesting on his ability to deceive, "So that he maketh fire

come down from heaven," and this reminds us of the Elijah scene. They can't bring fire down from heaven, but this guy is a real deceiver. He can bring fire from heaven.

- Hank Smith: 32:23 John is clothing him in language, it makes him seem unstoppable, done on purpose. Chapter 13, he's an unstoppable beast and yet chapter 14, verse one, here's this unstoppable beast and then here's the lamb. "A lamb stood on the Mount Zion." I just love the imagery. Here's this unstoppable beast, who's going to stop him? The lamb.
- John Bytheway: 32:47 Hank, what you just said reminds me of this idea that the history of the world has already been written, that Nephi saw it, the brother of Jared saw it, Moses saw... Prophets have seen it, and here's John is seeing it right up to the end and it gives us hope. And there's a statement that Elder Holland made, which I just love this. I love the imagery of it. He said, "The future of this world has long been declared. The final outcome between good and evil is already known. There's absolutely no question as to who wins, because the victory has already been posted on the scoreboard. The only really strange thing in all of this is that we are still down here on the field trying to decide which team's jersey we want to wear."
- 33:28 It shouldn't be a hard decision if the score's already on the scoreboard. I heard a Christian comedian once and he was joking about people that are devil worshipers and he said, "Well, where would they learn about the devil?" He said, "Well, they'd learn about it from the Bible. Well, did they read how it ends?" Which is what we've just done here. We know that there's an ultimate triumph. Yeah, let's decide which team's jersey we want to wear.
- Hank Smith: 33:53 Yeah. I really like that. Here comes the final battle. It reminds me of C.S. Lewis saying, "The second coming was not a time of choosing. It's a time you find out what you have chosen." You have already done your choosing long before the Savior comes.
- John Bytheway: 34:08 Wow. That's good.
- Hank Smith: 34:11 Chris, this has been fantastic. Going through these chapters with you and looking through the lens of the Restoration and hearing how Joseph saw these chapters and others, this has just been eye-opening and a lot of fun. Let's say I've been listening on my commute or I've been folding laundry or help mowing the lawn, might be a little cold for that I guess, I said, "Hey, I listened to the followHIM podcast. Here's what I learned."

Dr. Christopher Blythe:	34:36	Yeah, that's such an important question. I hope people walk away with the sense that the Book of Revelation, it has some scenes, they're a little dark, but this isn't a hopeless book. This isn't a scary book. This is a book about how Heavenly Father is in control and really when we recognize how the prophet Joseph used it, this is a message of the Restoration. This is about the temple. This is about how you and I can participate in the Kingdom of God even before it's about to unroll. It hasn't come yet, but we're already blessed to be able to participate in it right now.
Hank Smith:	35:13	Fantastic, and we can take part. Even right now, I can take part. I can get myself to the temple. I can get myself doing the work of the Lord in my very own home.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	35:24	That is right. You can be like these 144,000 saviors on Mount Zion in chapter 14. We already are commissioned and called to play that part.
John Bytheway:	35:34	We get to be part of the winding up scene. That's another thing I love about these visions. When Moses saw it said, "He beheld all the inhabitants of the earth." That means he saw us. That's just fascinating to think about as a huge, huge family of God, we get to be part of that.
Hank Smith:	35:51	Wonderful. Chris, thank you for being with us. We've just enjoyed our time with you.
John Bytheway:	35:56	And yes, I've got to start following Angels and Seerstones, and I'm going to enjoy that hearing from you again, Chris. Thank you.
Dr. Christopher Blythe:	36:03	Oh, thanks John.
Hank Smith:	36:05	Yeah. We want to thank Dr. Christopher Blythe for being with us today. What a treat. It's been really fun. We want to thank our Executive Producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and we always, every episode, remember our founder Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We're talking Christmas on followHIM.
John Bytheway:	36:26	Today's transcripts, show notes, and additional references are available on our website, followhim.co. That's followhim.C-O. You can watch the podcast on YouTube with additional videos on our Facebook and Instagram accounts. All of this is absolutely free and we'd love for you to share it with your family and friends. We'd like to reach more of those who are

searching for help with their Come, Follow Me study. If you could subscribe to, rate, review and comment on the podcast, that will make us easier to find. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra and Annabelle Sorensen.

President Russell M. Nelson: 37:05

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

HOW DO OUR TESTIMONIES OF JESUS CHRIST HELP US OVERCOME THE ADVERSARY?



Hank Smith:	00:02	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with the awesome John Bytheway.
	00:08	John, we're getting down to the last couple of lessons in the New Testament. We're in the Book of Revelation. Let's take on a single question from this week's Come, Follow Me lesson. This is from Revelation 12. Where it talks about the church overcoming the adversary, the dragon, with the word of their testimony. That's in verse 11.
	00:28	The question is right from the manual. How do our testimonies of Jesus Christ help us overcome the adversary? What would you say, John?
John Bytheway:	00:36	Boy, isn't that a great question? I love the idea that a testimony isn't something we gain. We use that phrase all the time, but it's something that we remember. We had that in the war in heaven. That was our weapon, our testimony in the blood of the Lamb it says in that verse you mentioned. We began to gain experiences of choosing the right and seeing the fruits of that.
	00:57	And sometimes we have really beautiful feelings in the temple or in a wonderful meeting. And sometimes we just look around and we see the fruits of the gospel in front of us and the kind of people that trying to live the gospel creates. And all of those things add to our testimony. And sometimes we hear things and they just sound familiar to us.
Hank Smith:	01:16	The scriptures tell us that the Spirit can show us things as they really are. And in the Book of Revelation, you have this dragon that speaks like a lamb, almost a counterfeit. I know you want to listen to the lamb, so I'll pretend I'm the lamb. Yet a testimony through the Spirit can show you things as they really are.
	01:39	Perhaps that's part of what a testimony is meant to do as we see here in the book of Revelation, is you can see the adversary for who he really is. The deception doesn't work on you, the

promises of freedom, the promises of happiness. You are able to look down that road and say, "I don't think it works out the way you say it's going to work out."

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| | 02:02 | You can see the temptations that are offered to you are going to limit your happiness and freedom if you continue further down that road. I like what you're saying here is it's something that grows and maybe perhaps gives me the vision to see things as they really are. |
| John Bytheway: | 02:17 | I'm glad you used the word really. I know that there's a definition of truth in Section 93. Things as they are, as they were, as they are to come. But it's Jacob 4:13 says, "The Spirit speaketh of things as they really are." There's so much information out there in the world on social media and the internet and everything, but tell me the way things really are. Who does that? The Spirit does. |
| Hank Smith: | 02:41 | Yeah, and I have friends and loved ones I think who have been deceived because of the loss of the Spirit, and then they can no longer see things as they really are. |
| John Bytheway: | 02:50 | As they really are. |
| Hank Smith: | 02:51 | That's something that the Spirit can return. It says, "The prodigal son came to himself." Alma, the younger, saw things as they really are and able to make decisions to turn life around. |
| John Bytheway: | 03:01 | Prayer we can have in our heart to have the Spirit with us so that we can see things as they really are. |
| Hank Smith: | 03:07 | One of the keys here to our question is how do you overcome with a testimony? It's the Holy Ghost that gave you that testimony is going to help you see the adversary for who we really is, and you won't get caught up in that trap. |
| | 03:19 | We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. We're in the book of Revelation again this week for a couple of hours, so come join us. We're with Dr. Chris Blythe. You're going to love him and his personality, his humor. And then come back next week. We're going to do another followHIM Favorites. |