



“Great Shall Be Their Reward and Eternal Shall Be Their Glory”

Show Notes

Podcast General Description:

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

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

Podcast Episode Description:

Part 1:

Steve Harper shares why the Saints referred to this section as “The Vision.” Before the First Vision was shared widely, “The Vision” of the Three Degrees of Glory changed the soteriology of salvation. Dr. Harper explains how this series of visions and commentary was not only controversial but how God has provided a way for most of His children to return. This expansive revelation changes the Saints’ view of grace and salvation forever.

Part 2:

Dr. Harper returns with Hank and John to discuss how Section 76 elaborates when Paul says that we can be “joint-heirs with Christ.” We hear Dr. Harper share why he reveres Joseph Smith and what Dr. Harper feels are Joseph’s greatest gifts. Join us with one of the Church’s foremost historians to discuss one of the most profound revelations of this dispensation.

Timecode:

Part 1

- 00:00 Welcome to Part I, Episode 28: Dr. Steven Harper
- 02:14 Dr. Steven C. Harper Bio
- 04:32 Introduction to Section 76: Protestantism in America
- 07:49 Soteriology of Heaven and Hell in 1830s America, the Book of Mormon and Section 76
- 12:04 Section 76 was referred to as The Vision: Brigham Young struggled with the revelation
- 15:16 Universalism in the 1800s
- 20:34 Eternal life or damnation vs. multiple glories
- 22:45 Additional background to Section 76 and Sidney and Phebe Rigdon
- 28:33 John shares story of the John Johnson home
- 29:50 The Vision occurs then tar and feathering of Joseph and Sidney
- 31:59 Prophets are called by God but are fallible: Story of Ezra Booth and Symonds Ryder
- 34:19 Bad assumptions lead to poor faith and require more study. CFM requires you to lead your own study
- 38:49 First ten verses of Section 76 are introduction by the Lord
- 42:46 Verse 11 is the voice of the visionaries and then answers to Joseph and Sidney's specific question about the Resurrection of the Just and Unjust
- 47:13 Notice the sensory descriptions and witness by the Visionaries in Section 76
- 48:27 The scriptures testify of many seeing God
- 50:49 Discussion about Lucifer and Perdition
- 54:18 We choose glory or perdition
- 55:23 End of Part I

Part 2

- 00:00 Welcome to Part II
- 00:08 Who will be resurrected?
- 01:54 Calvary and Gethsemane are part of the Atonement

- 04:11 Everyone will be saved unless they don't choose it
- 13:13 Not every Saint loved the Vision and how it sounded like Universalism
- 15:44 God commands us to not speculate on perdition
- 16:46 We should record the hand of God in our lives
- 21:01 The Resurrection of the Just and Unjust
- 22:47 The most important thing we can do is make covenants
- 27:47 The Lord teaches about the temple in D&C 76
- 29:01 The Celestial Kingdom depends upon agency not perfection
- 32:19 Repent relentlessly and the new Young Women Theme
- 37:08 Those who die without the Gospel will have their chance
- 42:17 What is hell?
- 46:22 God asks, "What do we love?"
- 49:40 Who inherits the Celestial Kingdom
- 54:15 We can do nothing without Jesus Christ
- 58:12 What happens to people of other denominations?
- 1:03:22 Jesus Christ is the protagonist of Section 76
- 1:10:48 Dr. Harper's thoughts about the Restoration and the Prophet Joseph Smith

Sources:

Benson, Ezra Taft. 2021. "The Laborers In The Vineyard". *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2012/04/the-laborers-in-the-vineyard?lang=eng>.

"Chapter 28: Doctrine And Covenants 76:50–119". 2021. *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/doctrine-and-covenants-student-manual-2017/chapter-28-doctrine-and-covenants-76-50-119?lang=eng>.

Cornish, Devn. 2021. "Value Beyond Measure". *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2017/10/value-beyond-measure?lang=eng>.

"Doctrine And Covenants 76". 2021. *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/doctrine-and-covenants-historical-resources/28?lang=eng>.

"Doctrine And Covenants Historical Resources: Ezra Booth". 2021. *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/doctrine-and-covenants-historical-resources/people/bio-ezra-booth?lang=eng>.

"Doctrine And Covenants Historical Resources: Simonds (Symonds) Ryder (Rider)". 2021.
Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org.
<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/doctrine-and-covenants-historical-resources/people/bio-symonds-simonds-rider-ryder?lang=eng>.

Eyring, Henry B. 2021. "O Remember, Remember". *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2007/10/o-remember-remember?lang=eng>.

Eyring, Henry B. 2021. "Revelation Book 2, Page 0". *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-book-2/1>.

Fear, Michael J. 2021. "He Could Not Merit Anything Of Himself: A Brief Comparison Of The Teachings Of John Calvin, John Wesley, And Joseph Smith On The Fall Of Man | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc-Legacy.Byu.Edu*.

<https://rsc-legacy.byu.edu/archived/selections-2005-religious-education-student-symposium/he-could-not-merit-anything-himself>.

Griffiths, Casey Paul. 2021. "Universalism And The Revelations Of Joseph Smith | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*.

<https://rsc.byu.edu/doctrine-covenants-revelations-context/universalism-revelations-joseph-smith>.

Harper, Steven C. 2021. *Amazon.Com*.

<https://www.amazon.com/Making-Sense-Doctrine-Covenants-Revelations/dp/1590389212>.

Harper, Steven C. 2021. "Come, Follow Me: Doctrine & Covenants 76 - Steven C. Harper". *Steven C. Harper*. <https://stevencraigharper.com/come-follow-me-doctrine-covenants-76/>.

Harper, Steven C. 2021. "Home - Steven C. Harper". *Steven C. Harper*. <https://stevencraigharper.com/>.

Harper, Steven C. 2021. "Joseph Smith's First Vision: A Guide To The Historical Accounts". *Amazon.Com*.

https://www.amazon.com/Joseph-Smiths-First-Vision-Historical/dp/1629727466/ref=pd_lpo_14_img_1/135-9631323-6597221?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1629727466&pd_rd_r=a6c6add9-f8a0-4ea9-a149-ab67ca1e3e28&pd_rd_w=zCvet&pd_rd_wg=QsWNc&pf_rd_p=3b5203d9-bdd0-47f6-97e5-387010fc3251&pf_rd_r=ADVCDWSGN1TPEVE8Z59F&psc=1&refRID=ADVCDWSGN1TPEVE8Z59F.

Hilton III, John. 2021. "Considering The Cross - John Hilton III". *John Hilton III*.

<https://johnhiltoniii.com/considering-the-cross/>.

"History, 1838–1856, Volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844], Page 1867". 2021.

Josephsmithpapers.Org.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-e-1-1-july-1843-30-april-1844/239>.

Holland, Jeffrey R. 2021. "The Laborers In The Vineyard". *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2012/04/the-laborers-in-the-vineyard?lang=eng>.

Jensen, Devan. 2021. "Philo Dibble, Faithful Friend Of The Prophet". *Devanjensen.Blogspot.Com*.

<http://devanjensen.blogspot.com/2013/10/philo-dibble-faithful-friend-of-prophet.html>.

Jones, Joy D. 2021. "Value Beyond Measure". *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2017/10/value-beyond-measure?lang=eng>.

"July 5–11. Doctrine And Covenants 76: “Great Shall Be Their Reward And Eternal Shall Be Their Glory”". 2021. *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/come-follow-me-for-sunday-school-doctrine-and-covenants-2021/28?lang=eng>.

"Kirtland Through The Eyes Of The John And Elsa Johnson Family". 2021.

History.Churchofjesuschrist.Org.

<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/content/historic-sites/ohio/kirtland-through-the-eyes-of-the-john-and-elsa-johnson-family>.

"Letter To William W. Phelps, 27 November 1832, Page 4". 2021. *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-william-w-phelps-27-november-1832/4>.

Lundwall, N. B. 2021. *Amazon.Com*.

<https://www.amazon.com/Vision-Degrees-Glory-N-Lundwall/dp/B002Z378FA>.

McBride, Matthew. 2021. "“The Vision”". *Abn.Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/revelations-in-context/the-vision?lang=eng>.

Nelson, Russell M. 2021. "Hear Him". *Churchofjesuschrist.Org*.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2020/04/45nelson?lang=eng>.

Nyman, Monte S. 2021. "Six Visions Of Eternity | Religious Studies Center". *Rsc.Byu.Edu*.

<https://rsc.byu.edu/sperry-symposium-classics-doctrine-covenants/six-visions-eternity>.

Packer, Boyd K. 2021. "Fledgling Finches And Family Life". *BYU Speeches*.

<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/boyd-k-packer/fledgling-finches-family-life/>.

Porter, Larry. 2021. "Visions Of Joseph Smith - The Encyclopedia Of Mormonism". *Eom.Byu.Edu*.

https://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Visions_of_Joseph_Smith.

"Revelation Book 1, Page 0". 2021. *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-book-1/1>.

"Revelation Book 2, Page 0". 2021. *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-book-2/1>.

"Revelation Book 2, Page 1". 2021. *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revelation-book-2/11>.

Robinson, Stephen E. 2021. "Believing Christ: The Parable Of The Bicycle And Other Good News - Deseret Book". *Deseretbook.Com*.

https://deseretbook.com/p/believing-christ-parable-bicycle-other-good-news-stephen-e-robinson-3355?variant_id=109199-paperback.

Robinson, Stephen. 2021. "Following Christ". *Goodreads.Com*.

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1102940.Following_Christ.

Smit, Laura. 2021. "Salvation In Christ: A Calvinist Perspective | Religious Studies Center".

Rsc.Byu.Edu.

<https://rsc.byu.edu/salvation-christ-comparative-christian-views/salvation-christ-calvinist-perspective>.

Sperry, Kip. 2021. "Religion And Ethnicity In The Western Reserve | Religious Studies Center".

Rsc-Legacy.Byu.Edu.

<https://rsc-legacy.byu.edu/archived/regional-studies-latter-day-saint-church-history/religion-and-ethnicity-western-reserve>.

"Swedenborg Foundation – Explorations Of Spiritual Love And Wisdom Inspired By Emanuel

Swedenborg". 2021. *Swedenborg.Com*. <https://swedenborg.com/>.

"Vision, 16 February 1832 [D&C 76], Page 1". 2021. *Josephsmithpapers.Org*.

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/vision-16-february-1832-dc-76/1>.

"What Converted Sidney Rigdon To The Book Of Mormon?". 2021. *Book Of Mormon Central*.

<https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/knowhy/what-converted-sidney-rigdon-to-the-book-of-mormon>.

Woodford, Robert. 2021. "Joseph Smith And "The Vision," 1832 | Religious Studies Center".

Rsc.Byu.Edu. <https://rsc.byu.edu/joseph-smith-prophet-seer/joseph-smith-vision-1832>.

Biographical Information:



Steven C. Harper is a professor of Church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. In 2012 Steve was appointed as the managing historian and a general editor of *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*. He was named editor in chief of *BYU Studies Quarterly* in September 2018. He served in the Canada Winnipeg Mission (1990-1991) and married Jennifer Sebring (1992). They graduated from BYU (1994). He earned an MA in American history from Utah State University, where his thesis analyzed determinants of conversion to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the 1830s. Chapters were published in the *Journal of Mormon History and Religion and American Culture* and awarded by the Mormon History Association with the T. Edgar Lyon Award for best article of the year and the Juanita Brooks Award for the best graduate student paper. Steve earned a PhD in early American history from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He began teaching courses in religion and history at BYU Hawaii in 2000 and joined the Religious Education faculty at BYU in 2002. That year he also became a volume editor of The Joseph Smith Papers and the document editor for *BYU Studies*. He taught at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies in 2011–2012. His first book was *Promised Land* (Lehigh University Press, 2006), a study of Lenape or Delaware Indians' responses to a fraudulent 1737 land deal in colonial Pennsylvania. He also authored *Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Deseret Book, 2008), *Joseph Smith's First Vision* (Deseret Book, 2012), and *First Vision: Memory and Mormon Origins* (Oxford University Press, 2019), along with dozens of articles.

Fair Use Notice

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* may make use of copyrighted material, the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright holder.

This constitutes a “fair use” and any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this podcast is offered publicly and without profit, to the public uses or the internet for comment and nonprofit educational and informational purposes. Copyright Disclaimer under Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976, allowance is made for “fair use” for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. In such cases, fair use is permitted.

No copyright(s) is/are claimed.

The content is broadcasted for study, research, and educational purposes.
The broadcaster gains no profit from broadcasted content. This falls under “Fair Use” guidelines: www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html.

Note:

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* is not affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints nor Brigham Young University. The opinions expressed on episodes represent the views of the guest and podcasters alone. While the ideas presented may vary from traditional understandings or teachings, they in no way reflect criticism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day leaders, policies, or practices.

EPISODE 28 • PART I



Dr. Steven C. Harper

D&C 76

Hank Smith:	<u>00:01</u>	Welcome to followHim, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come Follow Me stuff. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:09</u>	And I'm John Bytheway. We love to learn, we love to laugh. We want to learn and laugh with you. As together, we follow Him.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:20</u>	Hello, everyone! It's a good day here at the followHim podcast. My name is Hank Smith, and I'm your host. I am here with the delightful John Bytheway. Welcome, John.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:31</u>	That's an adjective I don't hear with my family, but thank you.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:35</u>	You are delightful in every way. We want to remind everybody that you can find us on social media. We have a great Instagram and Facebook page that are run by the wonderful Jamie Nelson. You can get show notes, transcriptions at followhim.co , and please rate and review the podcast. That really helps us out when you do that.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:58</u>	I look forward to every week, to be honest. I mean, we've just had some brilliant experts on. But way early on in our podcast, I don't know if you remember, back when we weren't podcasters. We didn't know what we were doing. We invited Dr. Steve Harper on to the podcast. He graciously came when we didn't know what we were doing. Tell us about Steve.
John Bytheway:	<u>01:19</u>	He will be so surprised that we still don't know what we're doing. We're so excited to have Steve back, and I am excited to have him back especially for this section. In fact, I'm going to read his bio. I have a book. I bought this like 10 years ago called Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants. And what I love about this book that Dr. Harper wrote is, sometimes books sound like they're written for other scholars, and sometimes they sound like they're written for the rest of us.
John Bytheway:	<u>01:49</u>	And this is one of those that is so easy to understand and has helped me tremendously in addressing these sections. I always read this before we do our podcast and before we look at each

section. And in the back of making sense of the Doctrine and Covenants, we've already had Steve on before, so I'm going to use this little shorter bio, the about the author on the back jacket cover here.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| John Bytheway: | <u>02:14</u> | Steven C. Harper is an associate professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University, and one of the editors of The Joseph Smith Papers. After serving a mission in Canada, he told me that was Winnipeg, and graduating from BYU, he earned a PhD in Early American History from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and taught for two years on the faculty of BYU Hawaii. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>02:37</u> | Brother Harper has received several fellowships and awards for scholarship and writing, including the T. Edgar Lyon and Juanita Brooks Awards from the Mormon History Association. He and his wife, Jennifer Sebring Harper, are the parents of five children. And we understand he's currently serving as a bishop. So, thank you for being with us. Dr. Harper, and welcome. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>03:00</u> | Thank you, gentlemen. It's a pleasure. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>03:01</u> | I would say if Edward Partridge was reincarnated, he'd be Steve Harper. He's just brilliant and wonderful. I will say this to everybody listening, if you haven't, some of you have joined us halfway through. Because your friends, thank you for recommending us, recommended the podcast to you. I would highly encourage you to go back to our very, it's our second, I think it's our second interview that we did on the First Vision with Dr. Harper. It is enlightening. It will just fill your soul with joy and incredible knowledge about the prophet and what he was going through at the time. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>03:41</u> | There's nobody, and Steve will disagree, he always does. But there's nobody on the planet that knows more about the First Vision than Steve Harper, there really isn't. Maybe his mentors, he would say. A couple of his mentors like Richard Bushman, and he's always giving credit to his mentors. And I think that's wonderful. But I hope you'll go back and listen to that episode. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>04:02</u> | Hank, I'm glad you said that. And I read some turning around because I'm looking at my, I have a shelf over there of church history. But Steve's book, I think it's called Joseph Smith's First Vision, and that was great because he went through all of the different accounts and spoke about each one of them. But boy, so one of those last chapters about being a seeker. I still remember, in fact, I think I e-mailed you, I don't know how |

many years ago and told you thank you for that, Steven. So, I'm glad you said that.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 04:30

That meant a lot to me. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 04:32

Steve, let's jump into this week's lesson. It is one section of the Doctrine and Covenants. It's Section 76 of the doctrine covenants. I've noticed just even in the heading, you read, Revelation Given, Revelation Given, Revelation Given. And then you get to 76 and it doesn't say revelation given to Joseph Smith, it says a vision given to Joseph Smith, the prophet and Sidney Rigdon in Hiram, Ohio. So, let's go back as far as you want, and set us up to read this section with the right context in mind.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 05:08

In the beginning, the Gods created the heavens and the earth.

John Bytheway: 05:11

Go back as far as you want.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 05:15

There are all kinds of religious ideas in the air, but it is overwhelmingly a Protestant country. And that means that it is very biblically based, but the Bible is read in particular ways you might, I sometimes use the metaphor of glasses. Everybody has glasses that they wear when they read the scriptures. And those glasses change how you read, what you see what, you're able to discern, and that's true for everybody.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 05:52

So, Protestant, early American glasses mean that people read the Bible as the Word of God, and that they see in it salvation through Jesus Christ. I'll over simplify here a lot but, but that comes by faith. Faith in Christ who gives His grace to believers, and saves them from sin and death. Those who receive Christ as their Savior go to heaven, and those who don't, go to hell.

Hank Smith: 06:28

Can you do us a quick favor for those of our listeners who are listening who have heard the word Protestant, and going, "I don't know quite what that is." It comes from the word protest, right?

Dr. Steven C. H...: 06:40

Yes, that's right. So, Protestants are Christians. They originate in Europe. They are dissatisfied with Catholic Christianity. There's much that they love about it, but also much that they disagree with. And so, in one way or other, they reformed Christianity, and begin to preach their own versions. They publish their own versions of the story.

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>07:11</u>	So primarily, followers of John Calvin's teachings come to the Atlantic shores of New England, Massachusetts, Connecticut. Joseph Smith's ancestors are among them, and they bring a version of Christianity that is what we sometimes call Puritanism, Congregationalism, or Reformed. And it has lots of important doctrines that concern us.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>07:49</u>	But today primarily, what we're concerned about noticing is that it's heaven and hell, kind of soteriology, that is doctrine of salvation. So, Christians will go to heaven if they are faithful to Christ and accept Him as Savior and he accepts them in some versions, and they'll go to hell if Christ is not their Savior. And in many of these theologies, heaven is very, very small and hell is very big. In other words, most people are going to hell, deservedly so. And very few relatively will go to heaven.
Hank Smith:	<u>08:31</u>	That's kind of a depressing ideology, but okay.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>08:37</u>	Yeah, I'm grateful for the restoration for many reasons. But one of them is that it radically, radically revises that soteriology, that doctrine of salvation.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>08:53</u>	And what might be interesting for folks to notice is that Section 76, which is really a series of visions that are narrated, and then commented on, as well. It goes well beyond anything that had been restored before that.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>09:12</u>	In other words, think of the Book of Mormon. There's no reason that a Protestant, couldn't read the Book of Mormon and agree completely, with its soteriology. And some have, there's famously a Baptist Book of Mormon, a Baptist person who weighs in and says, "There's nothing wrong with the Book of Mormon. It is perfectly in line with biblical teaching." And the reason for other Christians sometimes to reject it is the way we get it, not anything it says, in particular.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>09:45</u>	So, the Book of Mormon says, there's heaven and hell. There's two ways. When you die, you go back to the God who gave you your life and then you're separated into heaven or hell. So, what we want to notice is that Doctrine and Covenants Section 76 is a little bit like going into higher math. I'm always uncomfortable using math metaphors. I have no idea about math.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>10:17</u>	But you learn pretty simple math early on, and know the basics. And then if you keep at it, you learn that math is more sophisticated, more complicated. It doesn't invalidate the basics you learn, those are still the building blocks. But there's more to

it than what you learned. And Section 76 is the beginning part of the restoration that says, there's more to it than you've ever heard before. It is the first of what we sometimes call the exaltation, revelations.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>10:53</u> | President Nelson's terms, he's talked a lot about salvation. Salvation is what we've been talking about so far too. That's Christians being saved by Christ to heaven. And Latter-Day Saints things believe in salvation. But because of the restoration, we also believe in exaltation. We believe in heavens beyond heaven. We believe in conditions of salvation that are more than just not being damned or going to hell. In fact, Latter-Day Saints are the only people I know of who think you can be saved and damned at the same time. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>11:28</u> | That's exactly right. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>11:31</u> | And when you ask a Latter-Day Saint, "Are you saved?" It takes half an hour for us to answer that question. We're just being asked for a yes or no answer, but it takes half an hour. The reason it does is because of Revelations like the one beginning in Section 76. It is spectacular. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>11:53</u> | It is. But I've heard you say before that if you join the church in 1830s, 1840s, they didn't talk about the First Vision. You talked about The Vision. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>12:04</u> | The earliest manuscript that we have of Section 76 begins with the great big words at the top, The Vision, and this comes February 1832. So, this is months before Joseph, as far as we can tell, records his First Vision. So, The Vision in the early days of the church meant Section 76. It was controversial from the beginning. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>12:32</u> | It essentially says, Christianity as we received, it is perfectly fine, but it is kindergarten. And we're advancing into higher math. And there's more to the story of salvation than the simple version we've been told. And so, as you might expect, that throws people for a loop, even Latter-Day Saints. Later in the early 1850s. As I recall, Brigham Young will give a talk and he'll say, "Man, when the vision came along that was tough for me to swallow. That was way outside anything I'd ever been taught before." And he did a wise thing. He said, "I did not reject it. I couldn't just accept it all at once, but I decided to think and pray and pray and think." |

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>13:28</u>	And as he did that, he learned by the Holy Ghost that the vision was right and good. So, I'm grateful that he didn't just reject it because it was unfamiliar. You remember Joseph saying things in January of 1843. He said, "The saints fly to pieces like glass every time I tried to teach them something new. Well, Jesus Christ."
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>13:51</u>	Brigham Young was open right? Brigham Young was wide open to the restoration through Joseph Smith and he struggled to internalize Section 76. He recognized that it was just so different from what he'd [inaudible 00:14:05] from the top.
Hank Smith:	<u>14:05</u>	So, for our listeners, they need to get out of the mindset of, "Oh, I've been taught this since I was two, right, about The Three Degrees of Glory. We need to get to, "Okay. This is brand new," for these people who think...
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>14:18</u>	Brand new.
Hank Smith:	<u>14:19</u>	Think heaven is small and hell is big. Is that a lot of the Latter-Day Saints?
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>14:24</u>	Yeah. Oh, yeah. These people are Protestant for their whole life. So, Brigham Young, for example, comes from the Methodist tradition. And he brings with him the idea that you can influence your salvation, you can come to Christ and receive his prevenient grace, a gift of His grace, but that'll qualify you for heaven, and otherwise, you'll go to hell. And that's pretty much all there is to it.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>14:51</u>	I have that line. Are you guys old enough to know the 1976 First Vision movie where they got the Protestant minister saying, "Saved or damned? That's all there is to it."
Hank Smith:	<u>15:03</u>	Yeah.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>15:03</u>	All right. That's a way of capturing [crosstalk 00:15:06].
Hank Smith:	<u>15:06</u>	I remember the newer first version movie where the man looks at Joseph says, "Be careful, boy, your eternal soul is at stake." Right?
John Bytheway:	<u>15:16</u>	Hey, Steve, could you comment on the idea of universalism?
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>15:23</u>	You bet. Universalism is certainly a thread that is running through and under and around Section 76. Universalism is a

response to versions of Protestantism that are especially emphatic about God's plan being to damn most of his children.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 15:49

And Universalists, including Joseph Smith's father, who joins a universalist society in the late 1700s. They read the scriptures. They read the same Bible with a different pair of glasses, and they focus on lots of passages that show that God is love, right? They like the teachings of John and other places that say, "God's not a damning God. That's not his dominant nature. God is full of love. God wants to save his children. He will. It's only reasonable that He's going to save all of his children. Now, they may deserve some punishment for their bad behavior, and they'll get it, but in the end, God will save his children, all of them."

Dr. Steven C. H...: 16:38

That's Universalism in a nutshell. And as you can see, it's a response against, it's a reaction to versions of Protestantism that are considered by Universalists to be unreasonable and overly harsh readings of the Bible.

Hank Smith: 16:54

You can see then why he doesn't go to church. Joseph Smith Senior.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 16:58

Yeah, right. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 17:00

Because the Presbyterian Church, if God doesn't choose you, sorry, right? That's the Presbyterian version that Lucy Mack joined.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 17:08

What we're noticing then is that the revelations that Joseph Smith receives are in conversation with teachings that are in the air, right? The revelations don't come in a vacuum. They come because people have questions and concerns. And there are ideas colliding with each other, right? There are arguments that are ongoing and different versions and visions of what the future holds. And it's not that there's nothing out there to think about and Joseph needs to fill the void. It's that there are lots of things out there to think about and competing, and he needs to know which of them is right. He needs to understand.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 17:55

And he, particularly in this instance, is revising the Bible. He's reading the Bible through very, very carefully. And here, in the early part of 1832, he with his scribe, Sidney Rigdon. And Rigdon himself is a reformed Baptist minister. So, he's steeped in this argument about what the nature of God's salvation is. Rigdon knows it well. He knows the versions of it well, the alternatives to it. And he's argued for a salvation through Christ, for sure.

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>18:39</u>	And Joseph and Sidney are reading the Bible carefully, By now, they're in John, and they're in the fifth chapter of John. And they're reading the part that says that, "The just will be resurrected to glory and the unjust resurrected to damnation." And you can't live in their time and place without wondering what that means, right? It's pretty black and white. And as Joseph reads it, he thinks, "Well, what does that mean? How exactly does it apply? Who qualifies as the just and who qualifies as the wicked?"
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>19:22</u>	And he knows enough about human nature and behavior to think that's there's no nuance in that. And of course, those are reflected in the various versions of churches and doctrines of salvation in the day. So, it's overly simple to say, he's just got John 5 on his mind and nothing else is in there competing with John 5. The fact is, he's in John 5, but he's got a whole bunch of other ideas colliding with and allying with and bumping off what he reads and that's the reason he needs more light, more understanding.
Hank Smith:	<u>20:04</u>	And to me, you just described the process of revelation for a lot of us. Ideas, thoughts, competing, what am I supposed to do here? John 5. This is the Lord speaking, correct? He says, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>20:35</u>	So, there's either eternal life or damnation. And Joseph's history tells us that, at this point, he reflects and he says, "Well, what does this mean? What does this passage mean?" If everybody is rewarded for the deeds done in the body during their mortal life, then how will this actually work out in practical reality? Well, there's not just people who are purely great, and then purely evil, there's not just two camps.
Hank Smith:	<u>21:08</u>	To get an A in my class, you have 930 points. And those who get 929, those are the ones you're like, "I'm so sorry." Right? But we have to put the line somewhere. Oh, that would be so hard to see salvation, your one work away, right?
John Bytheway:	<u>21:25</u>	There's this razor thin line that divides it.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>21:28</u>	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	<u>21:28</u>	And that's why this whole thing just tastes good. But could I ask you, Steve, the JST changes, resurrection of good and evil in

John 5:28 and 29, to the resurrection of the just and the unjust, what is the timing of the JST? Is that before Section 76?

Dr. Steven C. H...: 21:50

So, Section 76 is the reason for that revision, right?

John Bytheway: 21:55

For that change, cool.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 21:56

So, they're reading John 5, as they're revising the Bible, thinking about this is how...

John Bytheway: 22:03

Simultaneous.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 22:05

Yeah, they read slowly and deliberately. Sometimes you can read past whole books and no real engagement, nothing really much at stake. But here, there's a lot at stake. So, we're reading slowly, deliberately, and we're wondering what it means. Right? We're very interested in knowing more. And so, this revelation, this series of visions is the catalyst for making changes in that passage.

Hank Smith: 22:35

Before we get into the verses themselves, can you give us, can we just back up a little bit? It's February of 1832, can you give us just a little background?

Dr. Steven C. H...: 22:45

Yeah, it's been almost two years since the church was organized in New York. And then at the end of that year, Joseph is commanded to leave New York with all of the saints in New York and gather to Ohio. So, he and Emma have moved to Northeastern Ohio. And one of the converts there is Sidney Rigdon, Sidney and Phebe Rigdon.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 23:07

Sidney had been a very influential minister in a reformed Baptist tradition. He and like-minded people are looking forward to, they'll even sometimes use the word restoration or restoration of Christianity. They're careful readers of the Bible. They believe in faith in Christ, repentance, and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 23:36

Now, when the Book of Mormon comes through, and the missionary say, "You're right there and just add to that the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and you're most of the way home." They recognize that this is what they've been looking for. Sidney Rigdon reads the Book of Mormon carefully for a couple of weeks and comes to the conclusion, there's no possible way a mortal person wrote that, at least not one in the 19th century. It is God's work and he decides to forsake his ministry. His congregation had just built him a house. And so,

he's homeless because he embraced [crosstalk 00:24:13] to the gospel.

Hank Smith: 24:13

That's something we haven't mentioned. He says something to his wife, right? "Are you ready to go into poverty with for this?" Right? And she says, "Yes."

Dr. Steven C. H...: 24:25

She really is a lovely, faithful Christian. They've counted the cost. She says, "I know what we're in for and I'm all in." And that made it possible for him to be all in and he becomes a major asset, right? He immediately travels to New York and meets Joseph Smith. And there, the Lord gives section 35 of the Doctrine Council which calls Sidney to be a scribe, to help Joseph Smith in this project of reading the Bible very carefully and closely and making substantial revisions to it.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 25:01

And so, here we are now, almost a couple of years later, they've moved back to Ohio. And they've moved South, about 35 miles South of where Sidney Rigdon was living and where Joseph and Emma found short term housing when they arrived. They've been invited to live with Alice or Elsa and John Johnson in their home. They have a lovely home, the large family that's mostly grown up now. And so, they've got some space, and they invite Joseph and Emma to bring their twins and come and live with them. And Sidney moves down and lives in a home next door. And this is to make it possible for them to have time and space to really go to work on their revision of the Bible. So, that's where they're living and that's the setting here.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 25:55

You may know the wonderful story of Sister Johnson. She has rheumatism in her arm. And several of the members of this Campbellite church it's sometimes called because the main leader of it is Alexander Campbell, his father before him. And so, these Campbellites or disciples are some of the ones who are most interested in and likely to convert when they hear the restored gospel. And a group of them and others visit Joseph Smith, and that includes Sister Johnson, and they raised the question in that meeting.

Dr. Steven C. H...: 26:38

Here's Sister Johnson, "Has God given anyone power on earth today, like the ancient apostles had to heal the sick?" And while that conversation is going on, Joseph walks across the room, gives her a healing blessing and she is miraculously healed, and they all know it. One of our very best sources for this is a book about the disciples of Christ in the Western Reserve, that is this area of Northeastern Ohio. It says, "There's no way around it. She was healed. She was sick and now she's not." And it says it

was the mental and moral shock produced on our system by Joseph Smith's audacity that did it.

- Dr. Steven C. H...: 27:18 And so, the fact of the matter is, she was healed. And then the interpretation is up to you, you can decide. I decide it was the power of God that was manifested through Joseph Smith. So that's the setting. No wonder Sister Johnson and Brother John Johnson are wanting Joseph and Emma to come and live with them. They want to foster the restoration as best as they can. They can help by providing some housing and offset some costs. And that will buy Joseph some time to do the Lord's work and it's in their home, we think. We're nearly certain it is in their home where Joseph, we know that's where he receives many revelations, and that's where Section 76 comes. This is when we wish we had a magic school bus, right?
- Hank Smith: 28:10 Yeah.
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 28:10 We'd load all the people listening on the bus...
- Hank Smith: 28:13 Go to visit...
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 28:13 And go to the Johnson home and sit in that room and feel as people have felt. I've felt, you've felt, feel the power that comes from realizing this is a place of revelation. Some of the greatest revelations of the restoration were given there.
- John Bytheway: 28:33 The first time that I ever got to visit there, I was like, I think I was in Cleveland at a youth conference and we took a quick break and drove down there and missionaries, senior couple told me that there was a couple of women who were there who weren't members of the church, and they were spending some time with them and I was with that group. When we walked into the room, one of these women looked at her friend and then looked at the missionary and said, "Whoa, what happened in here?"
- John Bytheway: 29:03 And I was just like, "Wow, there's a sensitive soul right there because she knows something happened here in this place." And the light is coming through the windows. It's beautiful. And yeah, it's one of those places you just want to sit there and soak it in for a while.
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 29:22 I hope everybody has a chance to go. The church has done a really wonderful job of restoring it to, it's as close as you can get to walking into Joseph Smith's world.

John Bytheway:	<u>29:34</u>	Yeah, well put, and it's not a city. It's a home out there in farmland. It's very, there's corn, it's very beautiful.
Hank Smith:	<u>29:43</u>	And the famous tar and feathering has yet to occur out there. Right, Steve?
John Bytheway:	<u>29:49</u>	But it's there.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>29:50</u>	Or one month away. About five weeks away until they're going to drag Joseph out of that house and it's the antagonistic wing who's, siblings and neighbors have converted to the restored gospel and they're pretty upset with Joseph and they break in and drag him out of the house and drag Sidney out of the house next door, beat them soundly. Cover them in hot pine tar that's laced with acid and then break a feathered pillow over their head to finish the humiliation.
Hank Smith:	<u>30:25</u>	And that's going to happen a month right after this.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>30:29</u>	Yeah, 24th of March. And the visions are on the 16th of February. So, you might think of, in some ways, the price Joseph pays and Sidney pays for receiving this revelation and the others, right? The price they pay for restoring the gospel is tar and feathers, beating, being hated by neighbors.
Hank Smith:	<u>30:53</u>	And Ezra Booth has a lot to do with this?
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>30:56</u>	Yep, he is a Methodist minister who has converted and he watched Elsa Johnson be healed. He knows she's healed.
John Bytheway:	<u>31:02</u>	She's right there.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>31:03</u>	He knows she was healed by the power of God. And then he went with Joseph all the way to Missouri and back and he decided that Joseph was a real person, and therefore no profit. People do that even today. But I don't understand that way of reasoning. Where in the scriptures are we told that profits aren't real people? We've got 100 stores in the scriptures. The profits are real people who do real stuff, make mistakes, have body odor.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>31:29</u>	And Booth for some reason decides Joseph Smith is just not prophetic enough, whatever bar that is, whatever standard that is. So, he bails out, and he and Simon's writer, and others then really antagonize the saints and Joseph especially including, violence on Joseph's person.

Hank Smith:	<u>31:54</u>	We haven't talked about Simon yet. You want to just give us a little bit on Simon's writer before we...
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>31:59</u>	He's another one of these disciples who converts and then it's really short lived. Some sources say one reason he gives for his defection is that Joseph misspells his name in a revelation. Man, if Joseph had to be held to that standard by everybody, if all prophets had to be, spelling bee champs, I don't know how many we really have over the course of history. That's not one of the criteria of being a prophet. You just have to be called by God.
Hank Smith:	<u>32:28</u>	Where do we get these? I mean, we might as well talk about this for a second, Steve, because where do we get these assumptions about profits? Some people, they should never get sick. They should probably win the lottery every time. I mean, where's the line?
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>32:43</u>	I call it hypothetical history. That's where we decide what the past should be like, based on nothing more than our imagination. Right? If he's a prophet, then he will always be nice to everybody. If he's a prophet then, and those things are not evidenced anywhere. There're no scriptures that say them. There's no reason to believe them, except we just decided that they should be true. They're just our imagination. That's a terrible, terrible way to do history because when you see the evidence, it's going to upset your hypothetical version of what the past should be like.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>33:25</u>	So those kinds of assumptions are subtle and dangerous. They're not real. They have no basis in reality or what's what actually was. The scriptures tell us that truth is things as they actually were, and will be and are to come. And that's what we ought to study, right? Our scriptures are clear, full of stories of prophets, who are real people whom God called, and they worked with them, and they struggled and faltered and he worked with them. And they accomplished his work miraculously because they were mere mortals who allied with him and overcame, and never, never did in this life become perfect, but who were called by God. That's the accurate historical view of what a prophet is. Any assumptions to the contrary are poorly founded and are going to be disrupted.
Hank Smith:	<u>34:19</u>	You said once in our earlier interview, I'm trying to remember the exact phrase, but if your faith is based on bad expectations, it will easily be overturned.

John Bytheway:	<u>34:31</u>	Well, and that was Ezra Booth, right? He went to Missouri and went "This doesn't look like any promised land thing." And then saw Joseph Smith's humaneness and maybe was converted to some degree by a sign, which isn't, that can maybe open your heart, but then you've got to get the real thing.
Hank Smith:	<u>34:50</u>	Steve, I was just going to say this happens a lot today, to our students, and to others who have some version in their head and maybe they say, "I got it from primary. I got it from seminary. I got it from this version in my head. And then I read the actual history and it's not as Disneyland as I thought it was, and so I'm out." But what you're saying is, change your expectations, analyze those assumptions.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>35:18</u>	Make them real, make them real instead of hypothetical. Frankly, it comes, in my opinion of having been somewhat lazy to begin with, and then all of a sudden paying attention and being jarred by that transition. Right? If you've been paying attention all along, it's not so shocking to find out that things aren't what you thought. And I'm also sometimes frustrated when people blame them or the church, right? Well, they didn't tell me this or they that... One of the principals, as you know of Come Follow Me is you are responsible for your own gospel learning.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>36:02</u>	You work hard to seek the truth. Don't blame someone else. Don't blame your seminary teacher. Now, if I were talking out on the other side of my mouth, I'd be wanting religion professors like me and seminary teachers to make darn sure they teach the truth and love by the power of the Holy Ghost. So, I'm not trying to skirt that obligation. But every person is ultimately responsible to seek and discern the truth for themselves.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>36:32</u>	And it frustrates me when people blame the church as if they're supposed to be a ultra regulation on primary lessons, right? There's somebody from correlations sent to sit in on every primary class to make sure nothing devious gets taught, that's just unrealistic expectations. And the Lord is, the Lord has placed the expectation on us to seek learning by studying by faith out of the best books. And if we don't do that, I don't think we can fault anybody else for not doing it for us.
John Bytheway:	<u>37:07</u>	I think that President Nelson's emphasis on Hear Him, on learning to hear the Lord. He's not saying even hear me, he's saying, "Hear the Lord. Get your own inspiration and learn to hear him." I love that emphasis. And also, the phrase that I think President Nelson has used the continuous restoration and this

whole thing is part of that. This is a huge example of the Lord wants to give us more, this whole section.

- Hank Smith: 37:40 And we don't want anybody to be discouraged. It's a good time right now to say, "You know what? I'm going to learn. What is that Steve Harper book. Let me look that up. I'm going to go. I want to learn right?" It's a good time today, whoever's listening to us right now to say, "Well, I want to become, I want to know, this kind of stuff." Because I'll tell you, the books have been written. There is plenty of them out there.
- John Bytheway: 38:04 Yeah. Have we ever had an easier time? Have we ever had more resources at our fingertips with our phones in our hands? I mean, this is an incredible time to live. And I think Hank, probably three or four times we have heard some of our wonderful guests say something like, "It's not that you know too much church history. It's that you don't know enough." You took one thing and you didn't say, "Now, wait a minute, I got to learn the rest. I want to know the context. Who was there? What they say?" And that's why I love this. We're trying to get as much as we can.
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 38:37 Yeah, that's really well said, I think.
- Hank Smith: 38:40 All right, Steve. I think, do you feel like we're ready to get into the revelation? Is there anything else we need to know about the players involved?
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 38:49 The Lord is the most important one. So, let's hear what he has to say. The first 10 verses are an introduction. I don't know exactly the nature of it. It might be a kind of a composition by Joseph Smith or Sidney Rigdon or both. Maybe it's revealed to them, hard to say for sure. But it's certainly a prologue to the visions that are coming. So, it's a very beautiful passage. The Lord is first person voice is there beginning from verse five on.
- Dr. Steven C. H...: 39:23 Let's notice this then. Let's notice that the first four verses are a kind of a prologue, probably appended afterwards, kind of attached as an intro. So, you guys got to really listen to this, here this, this is coolest stuff you ever going to hear. And then, we transition at verse five into the Lord's first-person voice, maybe we ought to read at least part of that five through 10.
- Hank Smith: 39:47 "For thus saith the Lord, I the Lord am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth and to the end, great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory. Unto them will I

reveal all mysteries. Yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old and for ages to come, will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things pertaining to my kingdom." This is really beautiful stuff.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>40:17</u> | Yeah, notice what it's telling us about the nature of God. Right? The very first thing he tells us is, "I'm merciful. I'm gracious. Anybody who shows any sort of love for me, I delight to honor them. I'll give you all the mysteries and all the glory you can imagine and more." It's a really wonderful disclosure. And remember that it's coming and the context hasn't been very long since the Reverend Jonathan Edwards, the most influential preacher in American history has said, "God abhors you. He hates your guts. He's dangling you over the pit of hell like a spider on a web. And any minute now, it might sever and you'll be dropped into the abyss." That's, that's the flavor of preaching. That is characteristic. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>41:05</u> | Wow. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>41:05</u> | And I don't mean to say that's all there is besides this. But everybody in this, who lives in this world of 1832, America knows that that's one version of God that's pretty pervasive and dominant. So, listen to the Lord, restore who he is, "I am merciful and gracious." So that first introduction of himself is very significant. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>41:33</u> | It's important, didn't Joseph Smith teach, in order to worship God, you must know what he's like. You must know his personality. You got to know his traits. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>41:42</u> | Okay, eight, nine and 10. "Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know and things to come while I show them. Even the things of many generations and their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach the heaven, and before them the wisdom of the Why shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to not. For by my spirit, while I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known into them the secrets of my will. Yea, even those things which I has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of men." |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>42:13</u> | So, what we have here is a loving God, a merciful and gracious God who delights to give us more. Right? There's a whole lot more, he says here in verses five through 10. I've got more to give you, and buckle up, because we're going to graduate school here in soteriological thinking that his plans of salvation are more complex and more beautiful, more vast than you've ever imagined before, and I want to give them to you. |

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>42:46</u>	So, a terrific prologue. Notice that verse 11, we transition back to the voice of the visionaries now. The voices of the visionaries. So, we're listening lots of times throughout this section to Joseph Smith and Sidney report what they see. This is characteristic of sections of the doctrine comes, the reporting on visions. There are really two that are like this, Section 76, and Section 138.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>43:15</u>	And as you know, 138 is a series of visions Joseph F. Smith experienced in the last month or so of his life, where he looked into the world of the spirits of the dead, and saw a variety of things there and then described what he saw, and then commented on what he saw, and then as the Lord also comments on what he sees.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>43:40</u>	So, the composition of 76 and 138, are different, because they are reports of visions by visionaries with commentary from them, and as we've just seen commentary from the Lord. So, we ought to look for those kinds of markers that tell us who we're hearing from and what the nature of what they're telling us is.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>44:06</u>	We also want now to be really mindful of the answer to the question, right, that evoked this revelation in the first place. Joseph is asking, "What is the nature of the resurrection of the just? And what's the nature of the resurrection of the wicked." And if we pay careful attention, we will notice that there clearly is a resurrection of the just and a resurrection of the wicked, but in between them, there is a whole bunch else. That it's instead of the black and white understanding that we start the revelation with when we're done, the Lord has restored an immense amount of more complex salvation. So, it's very useful to pay attention to that from the beginning.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>44:57</u>	All right, so verse 11, we hear from Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. They tell us, this revelation narrates itself, right? Most of the revelations in the doctrine covenants are you joining the middle of a conversation that's already underway, and it's easy to be lost. You just, "Does saith the Lord," and he answers a question and you weren't necessarily there for the question, and you're lost unless somebody explains it to you, not this one.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>45:25</u>	In this one, they tell us where they were, what they were thinking about, what they were doing. So, they narrate the vision for us itself. And they begin with this spectacular testimony of what happens when you read your scriptures carefully, and marvel about what they mean and wonder and meditate and seek, and then receive revelation. So, at verse 20,

they begin telling us what they saw. And the first thing I saw, is the greatest thing of all. So, we read 20 through 24.

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Hank Smith: | <u>46:05</u> | "We beheld the glory of the sun, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fullness and saw the holy angels and then who are sanctified before His throne, worshiping God and the Lamb who worship Him forever and ever. And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony Last of all, which we give of him that he lives. For we saw him, even on the right hand of God, and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the only begotten of the Father, that by him, and through him, and have him, the worlds are and were created and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God." Man. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>46:54</u> | Okay. That's pretty good, isn't it? |
| Hank Smith: | <u>46:58</u> | It's just, that's the Tenth of Heaven. Even just the cadence is nice. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>47:03</u> | It is very beautiful, and this may very well be Sidney's composition, I don't know. Nobody knows for sure. But Rigdon has much more of that gift than Joseph does. So, I don't mean to be definitive about that, I don't know. But as we'll see, the Lord tells him several times, write that down before you lose the spirit of it. And they certainly wrote a beautiful piece here. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>47:31</u> | Notice the several things. First of all, it's we, we bear this witness. And then notice how sensory it is, we heard, we saw, we felt. This is a witness that's unimpeachable. You've got two visionaries seeing this and you can reject it, but you cannot refute it. This is a powerful piece of testimony. Some people might be somewhat confused by this is the testimony last of all, which we give them. They might hear that as if it was chronological, as if they're done, they're never going to bear their testimony again. What they mean there is not chronological. They mean sort of ultimate, this is the ultimate testimony we give of him. He lives. We saw him. He is God's Son. We saw them standing right next to each other. |
| Dr. Steven C. H...: | <u>48:27</u> | Not long ago, I watched a little clip from a new website that is a very polite, new site that is antagonistic to the restored gospel. So, it's a new way to go about refuting the restored gospel. And that is by doing it with love and all sincerity. So, the people running this site are trying a new approach, but the little video they were doing was like, "Has anybody ever seen God?" And they said, "No. The Bible clearly says that nobody's seeing God in the Gospel of John." |

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>49:04</u>	And they knew very well that Exodus and other places said Moses saw God face to face, so they spun that and they said, "Well, it's poetic." That's euphemistic, right? That's how they did it in the Old Testament.
Hank Smith:	<u>49:16</u>	Isaiah, right? Isaiah said, "I saw the Lord." I mean, that's the exact phrase, "I saw the Lord."
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>49:24</u>	Yeah, but their interpretation of that was but it's, it's poetic. Isaiah also said he saw all kinds of things that don't exist and therefore... But I sat there waiting for them to say, "What are we doing with the Book of Acts where Steven sees the Father and the Son on his right hand?" And they avoided that one. A little harder displaying that one away. And that is the same testimony that Joseph and Sidney bear right here. "We saw Christ on the right hand of God. He is God's only begotten son. He is the creator of worlds without end and the inhabitants of those worlds are God's sons and daughters." That is the ultimate testimony and it's really a beautiful thing to have to remember.
Hank Smith:	<u>50:09</u>	We've mentioned this before John, but I think it's the fact that there's two people, a shared vision. Sidney is going to be the same way, isn't he, Steve? He's going to end up leaving, become distant from the church, but he believes this till the end what he saw.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>50:28</u>	Oh, absolutely he does. He'll actually use this to make his case. When he is making a claim to be the next leader of the church after Joseph, he'll say, It should be me by virtue of me being the shared visionary of the heavenly glories." Right? He makes other points too, but this is one of his main points.
Hank Smith:	<u>50:48</u>	Yeah.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>50:49</u>	So, he always will believe it. There's no reason to deny it. Notice the juxtaposition, right? What happens next, in other words, is we go from a vision of God and Christ to a vision of the Fallen Angel, Lucifer, perdition. It's a sad and a jarring reversal. And it's meant to be right? We're meant to have the ultimate testimony pick us up. And then a really depressing view of what happened in heaven after that. So, starting in 25, or so, and we go down through 35 or so 37, 38. And this is the saddest part of this whole thing. This is the vision of the fall of Lucifer and of those who followed after him. They become perdition, meaning lost, forever lost. That's the saddest word in the whole Doctrine of Covenants, perdition. In verse 26, he was called perdition for the heavens wept over him. Right?

Hank Smith:	<u>52:12</u>	Wow.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>52:12</u>	You guys are both parents. Yeah, we have a hard enough time when our kids are in trouble or hurt. And we really, really struggle when they stray from their covenants or something. This is the feeling that you have when there is no hope. No hope for them. Perdition that's what that word means. Gone utterly, completely lost.
Hank Smith:	<u>52:37</u>	I mean, that's, that's the saddest part is, you have this option ahead of you and you turned it down and you chose a different path.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>52:47</u>	Chosen knowingly too, right? It's not an ignorant choice, not a knee jerk reaction. It's truly sad. This is the saddest part of the whole revelation.
Hank Smith:	<u>53:02</u>	You would remember this, Steve, but Joseph Smith, there's a statement from him that says, "To comprehend God, you must go to the highest of highs and into the darkest abyss." And that feels like this, this section.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>53:13</u>	This is the darkest abyss. He has seen into the darkest abyss and it is depressing. Look at verse 34 concerning the followers of Satan in the premortal realm. There is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come. That's utterly lost. Now, people might say, well, that's harsh of God. Well, it's not God doing it. This is Satan and his followers doing it. They had a choice to make. I guess God could force them, but that's not who he is.
Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>53:54</u>	My children don't like it when we force them. I don't like, my parents never forced me to do anything, but I wouldn't have liked it if they did. I would have rebelled and resisted. So, God is loving. He's merciful. He's generous, as we've already seen. He would save them if they wanted him to. They don't. That's the point. That's why he's weeping. That's why it's so sad.
Hank Smith:	<u>54:18</u>	My daughter asked me once, she's just thinking about... We talked about outer darkness. And she said, "Why would God send anyone there?" And I'm going, "God doesn't send anyone there. They choose it." They look at him and say, "I want to be as far away from you as possible. Send me to that place where I am not close to you." And she said, "Oh." It just broke her heart. "Why would anyone choose that? Why would anyone choose that?" I said, "I don't know. I don't know."

Dr. Steven C. H...:	<u>54:52</u>	It can be hard to understand. I don't pretend to understand it. But there is this common thinking that if Socrates and others have, "If you know the good, you'll do the good." It's an optimistic assumption about human nature. Well, human nature doesn't bear it out. That's not true. There are people who know the good and who don't want the good. They know God and they don't want anything to do with him, and that's how it is, and heaven weeps because of it.
Hank Smith:	<u>55:23</u>	Please join us for part two of this podcast.

EPISODE 28 • PART II



Dr. Steven C. Harper

D&C 76



John Bytheway:	<u>00:00:03</u>	Welcome to Part II of this week's podcast.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:00:08</u>	Verse 39 can be confusing. I remember a Sunday School lesson years and years ago where there was quite a discussion about verse 39 and what it meant. It says, verse 39, "All the rest should be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead, that the triumph and the glory of the Lamb who was slain, who was in the bosom of the Father before the worlds were made." So I guess the important distinction to make here is those who follow Satan in the beginning, those who never do become embodied are never resurrected, but everyone else is resurrected. So here is one of the first distinctions, there's a resurrection of everyone who was ever embodied and there's no resurrection for those who never are embodied. So remembering that we're trying to chart the answer to.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:00:59</u>	Joseph's question, "What is the difference in the resurrection of the just and the unjust?" Here's a first installment. Here's a first part of an answer to that. "Everyone else is brought forth," verse 39 says, "by the resurrection of the dead through the triumph and the glory of the Lamb who was slain, who was in the bosom of the Father before the worlds were made." And then you hear Joseph and Sidney say, "This is the gospel, the glad tidings." That is Good News. So you asked a bit ago about Universalism, in a sense you remember Alma and the Book of Mormon, a resurrection at all is a form of salvation. So there is a universal salvation for anybody who was ever embodied in the first place. They will come forth in a resurrection, almost all of them, a resurrection to glory.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:01:52</u>	Okay.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:01:54</u>	Let's notice the testimony in verse 41. As you both know, John Hilton has been doing some really important work drawing our attention to the fact that the scriptures are pervasive in the

teachings of the prophets that Jesus was crucified for the world to bear the sins of the world, and verse 41 is one of the most powerful testimonies of that. He came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world and to bear the sins of the world and to sanctify the world and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We don't want to overreact against Protestantism, Catholicism and become the Christians who don't believe in the crucifixion of Christ. And sometimes we're at risk of doing that just because of cultural shifts, nothing that our scripture say.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:02:40</u> | Let's pay particular attention to the fact that our scriptures right here emphatically declare that Jesus Christ was crucified for the sins of the world and to cleanse it from unrighteousness so that all through him, now again, verse 42, notice the word "all." Notice how conspicuously that word shows up throughout this revelation. It tells us that salvation is pretty close to being universal. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:03:04</u> | Okay. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:03:06</u> | With exceptions, but all through Him might be saved whom the Father had made put into his power. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:03:12</u> | I'm loving this. I would recommend everybody go back and listen to our interview with Dr. Hilton. We did one over Easter, and he's just fantastic in the way he says, "We love Gethsemane. We love Gethsemane, but we can't love Gethsemane to the point that we don't talk about Calvary." Calvary is, "Oh yeah, that happened too." The Crucifixion is what comes up over and over and over in scripture and we should notice that indeed. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:03:44</u> | Indeed. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:03:44</u> | I was just going to say, 40 and 41 are a really nice summary statement. "This is the Gospel, this is the glad tidings that Jesus came to be crucified for the sins of the world, to bear the sins of the world, to sanctify the world, and cleanse it from all unrighteousness." That is glad tidings. That is great news. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:04:03</u> | The Good News. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:04:05</u> | And so I like when the scriptures do a little concise, here's the point? |

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:04:11</u>	Yeah, very well said. "His Atonement is the means to the end that through him all might be saved whom the Father has made." 43 continues, and again the word "all" jumps off the page to our attention. "Jesus glorifies the Father and saves all the works of his hands except the Sons of Perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed it." So again, salvation is nearly universal. Well, we might ask, "Well, why doesn't he save everyone? Why doesn't he save those few," who as President Packer put it, "defect to perdition?" And President Packer was drawing our attention to the fact that it's an act of agency. God would save them if they wanted to be saved. If there was one shred of them, one particle of them, that wanted his salvation, he has a plan for that and he has a Christ who's capable of it. So the fact that they're not saved is because He revealed the plan to them and they did not want it.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:05:15</u>	Yeah. Righteousness, Steve, is only righteousness if it's chosen, right?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:05:20</u>	Chosen, yeah.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:05:21</u>	By definition. If I force someone into righteousness, that's not righteousness. That's slavery. That's force. Now, Steve, if there's any moms and dads listening here saying, "Oh, that's my son or daughter," I would say, be careful there, right?
John Bytheway:	<u>00:05:37</u>	Yeah. This is a pretty high level of the Father has to reveal the Son to them and then go against it. And this gets to the idea of, what is the Unpardonable Sin, and the Joseph Smith statement. Is that what you're ... you guys were thinking?
Hank Smith:	<u>00:05:54</u>	Yeah. Well, I just don't want anyone to get discouraged here thinking is their child that is choosing not to be saved. The Lord is going to give ample opportunity.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:06:04</u>	Right.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:06:04</u>	Yeah, President Packer was in panic about that as well. This is relatively few. It's a tiny number of people, relatively speaking, and none of our sons and daughters, I don't think anybody we know probably is at this threshold. I don't know exactly where to draw the line, but the line is way far out there a lot farther than we have fathomed. Notice the emphasis. Another other way to say what we're saying is to notice the emphasis of 44, "Wherefore He saves all except them." The point he wants us to take away is he's going to save just about everybody, unless they absolutely look him in the face and say, "I don't want it."

And even that is not that. When your kids are defiant, what they really want is a great big hug, but there they're calling you names and stuff. That's not who we're talking about here either. Those aren't perdition. They're the ones that the Lord will wrap his arms around and say, "Come on."

Hank Smith: 00:07:09

Yeah, that's immaturity. That's emotional immaturity. And it happens in this home a little bit. Some from my children and some from their father. Not from their mother. I love that high percentage word there of "all". That makes me happy.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:07:29

Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:07:30

So this is flying in the face of everything in that current culture and theology, that he's going to save all, and then there's some very few exceptions.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:07:44

You can hear the Lord in conversation with that theology, with that world, with that culture. Is almost universal damnation the case, or is universal salvation the case? And the Lord keeps telling us here in these early verses, "Almost universal salvation is the case and the only ones who will not get it are those who exercise their agency to opt out, knowing thoroughly and fully well what it is that they're choosing."

John Bytheway: 00:08:12

Pretty hard for us to wrap our heads around why that would happen, but that's the exception there.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:08:17

Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:08:18

Steve, is God too merciful to some? Is that why? Is it, "No, I know I don't want everyone to be saved"? Is it the parable of the laborers in the vineyard? "They don't deserve it."

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:08:31

Yeah. I've had that response before, but it's always because I don't understand. It's when I interpret the parables and put myself, I'm the Good Son in the parable, that we have decided to call the Prodigal Son.

Hank Smith: 00:08:44

Right.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:08:44

That's not what the scripture calls it. Whenever I put myself in the wrong position, I think God's too merciful. Whenever I understand how it really is, I am the Prodigal. When I really understand how things are, I want the most maximum mercy possible.

Hank Smith:	<u>00:09:03</u>	Would some people in Joseph Smith's day say, "I don't like this vision because your God is too merciful?"
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:09:10</u>	Oh yeah. Oh yeah, absolutely.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:09:14</u>	Wow.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:09:14</u>	Absolutely. It goes too far. That was a common response to that, "That's just too far." And you'll sometimes hear Latter-day Saints do this, we sometimes misunderstand Evangelical Christians and we think, "Oh my gosh, all they have to do is say some trite prayer that they accept Jesus and then they're all in the kingdom. Not us. We have to bake bread for the widows and earn merit badges and all that." We don't understand our brothers and sisters very well. We're really not that far apart, and this revelation is emphasizing to us that loving Heavenly Parents created us because they wanted to save us. They're creating us right now, as we might say it, they want us to inherit all they have. And they are mighty to save. They are capable of saving every single last one of their children. The Infinite Atonement of Jesus Christ can do that. So why will some not be saved? Because they are the ones making that choice.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:10:25</u>	Steve, this is wonderful, honestly. Absolutely wonderful. It's interesting to me that I've seen this in Latter-day Saints today, even those on Twitter. If I say something like, "God loves all of his children," "Well, hold on." And I might go, "That doesn't mean he can bless all of his children because every blessing is tied to a commandment. But God loves all of his children." "But no, well, you're going a little far there. I don't know." It's like, "Come on."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:10:58</u>	"He delights to bless."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:11:00</u>	Yeah. What was that Elder Holland? "Surely the thing God loves most about being God is the thrill of being merciful."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:11:09</u>	We get the parable of the laborers in the vineyard at that point. "But wait a minute, you haven't done nearly as much work as I have and so it seems wrong to us to be so merciful." My dad joined the church when he was 24. And if you wanted to make him mad, just say something like, "Oh, you got to do all this before," which he didn't. He was a good boy, but as if wickedness was happiness. But I just think it's interesting when we suddenly become deciding what's fair and what's not when the greatest unfairness ever was the Savior's sacrifice for us, as Elder Renland just gave that talk. Why shouldn't it bother us?

That's the laborer in the vineyard. "Are you envious because I'm generous?"

Hank Smith:	<u>00:11:58</u>	And what's interesting is you get exactly what you expected to get. The Lord, in the parable, this is Matthew chapter 18, I think it is, or Matthew 20, one or the other, and the Lord says, "You've got exactly what we agreed to. It's yours. What is the problem?" And that goes back to President Benson's great talk on pride. I don't want the Celestial Kingdom, I want the Celestial Kingdom because I can look down on all a bunch of other people.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:12:28</u>	I want more than the next guy.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:12:29</u>	Yeah. I want more, ugh.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:12:31</u>	And you know what I love about that, to bring in a quick Book of Mormon reference? I'd love to look at the parable of the laborers in the vineyard and then Alma and Ammon when the brother and all get back together and it's like, "My joy was even more because of the joy of my brother," and there's there wasn't that, "Ah man, you guys did better than I did."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:12:56</u>	Is it the older we get the more merciful we want God to be, just because we start to ...? I don't know. For me, personally, the older I get, the more I'm grateful for his mercy.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:13:08</u>	I think so. And you just cut people slack and think, "They're doing the best they can."
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:13:13</u>	I don't know if it's a function of the older Joseph Smith, as you know, taught to the Relief Society in 1842, he said, "The nearer, we come to our Heavenly Father, the more merciful we are."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:13:26</u>	"The more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:13:30</u>	But that's interesting to me, Steve, that the people of Joseph Smith's day would not go, "This is awesome."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:13:37</u>	"This is awesome."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:13:37</u>	"I love how merciful God is."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:13:39</u>	"This is so great."

Hank Smith:	<u>00:13:40</u>	Instead, "Oh, what did you say, 'That the Saints fly to pieces'?" Is that what he said?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:13:46</u>	"Fly to pieces like glass." There are some of them who incline to universalism. The Knights do.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:13:54</u>	Interesting.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:13:55</u>	So there are some of them who do, and Joseph's dad likes the Universalist street. The next chunk of the revelation addresses another thing that's in the air, and that is speculation about the nature of Hell and punishment. So the Lord essentially says, "You guys' speculation is all nonsense. None of you have any idea of what you're talking about. And I'm not going to tell." So Joseph, after this, will write a letter to the Saints in Missouri and said, "Tell Brother that, that stuff he's teaching in a meeting or whatever is nonsense. He has no idea what he's talking about."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:14:35</u>	No kidding.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:14:35</u>	Wow. So the Lord, I can see it here, neither was it revealed. Neither is. Neither will be.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:14:43</u>	Yeah. So we still don't know exactly the nature of punishment. Thinking all the way back to Section 19, the Lord says, "Look, I use the words 'eternal punishment', but don't think that you necessarily understand what I mean by that. It can mean more than you might think."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:15:03</u>	I'm so glad I had these verses because students will sometimes ask, "What's Hell like," and the Lord's like, "Just stop." There's almost a, "Don't ask. I'm not going to tell you."
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:15:18</u>	How long it lasts, how hot it is, those things that were the subject of many, many sermons in Joseph's day. Here the Lord says, "You really don't know. And I'm not telling you that stuff. Sometimes I give you a little glimpse of it, but then I shut it up again." Verse 47 says and 48 says, "You really don't know how wide, high, deep, how much the misery is. You really can't understand it unless you actually end up there."
Hank Smith:	<u>00:15:44</u>	Don't speculate.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:15:45</u>	Don't think you can fathom it. And then 49, write this down, guys, this is really spectacular stuff. I used to think that they would stop at this point and write it all down and then envision some more. And that is a live possibility, but it is the case that

the earliest manuscript we have of this vision is the very first entry in what we call *Revelation: Book Two*. They went and bought a new book. They had just sent *Revelation: Book One* to Missouri for printing. So they're in Ohio and they go out and buy a new book and put this revelation in it. And so it might be that these repeated verses like 49 are the Lord saying, "Guys, before this evaporates from your minds, get a book and write it down." So both of those are live possibilities for how it gets recorded.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:16:43</u> | Steve, can I just jump in? |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:16:44</u> | Of course. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:16:46</u> | I have felt this before, how about both of you, that when something divine happened to me, I have, there's that prompting, write it down. It reminds me of President Eyring, his talk. The Lord said, "I'm not giving these experiences just for you. Write them down. Write them down." And I have noticed in my personal life, and I would love to hear from both of you, that if I do write them down, it's almost as if I'm showing the Lord I'm serious and I want more. I'm not a journal keeper of epic proportions, I've got to say that, but when something happens to me that I know is clearly the hand of God, I have just even a little note on my phone that I say, "I'm going to make a couple of notes here about this. Write it down. It's important." |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:17:38</u> | I think that President Eyring, you referred to that talk, and I think we're talking about the same talk and I won't get the words right. But it was, "Oh", a paradigm shift for me. I thought a journal was, "I went on this trip and I won this trophy," and he was like, "Document the hand of God in your life." It was a totally different reason and it dawned on me, that's a lot of what the scriptures are. It's people documenting the hand of God in their life and putting their testimony down. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:18:09</u> | You guys have made me feel a little better. I'm the world's worst journal keeper. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:18:13</u> | And you're a historian. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:18:15</u> | Yeah, well, I do believe that everyone else should keep a journal. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:18:18</u> | So you can study it. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:18:23</u> | But Joseph Smith was not too far on the list above me. He started a journal in November of 1832. It's not started yet at the |

time of Section 76. And it was only after the Lord really got on him in Section 85 for the second time and told him, "You've got to keep a record." So he bought a journal. He wrote in it dutifully for 10 days. Then he quit for 10 months and it was on and off like that for the rest of his life. We have about 1,500 plus pages of his journals, but only about 30 or 35 of them. I think 33 are in his hand. And when they are, they are about the role-

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:19:03</u> | And when they are there about the role of God, the hand of God in his life, when they're not, it's his clerk saying today, "He read this or went there or had this meeting," so even bad journal keepers like me can obey the instruction we've received from our prophets and from the Lord to keep a record in which people will be able to see the evidence of God's hand. Imagine what would have happened if they had not obeyed the command to write this vision. We wouldn't be sitting here today talking about the Good News of the Restoration. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:19:45</u> | I think one reason is, and this might be a silly example, I looked into a new car the other day called the Honda Crosstour, I'd never even seen it before, right? I'd never seen a Honda Crosstour before, but I was like, "Hey, that's a good looking car. I like that car, maybe I'll buy one." I looked on the Classifieds and said, "Oh," and then I started seeing that car everywhere. I had never seen it before and yet there it is in that intersection, in that parking lot and there it is there again. There's something about when you're recording things, I don't know, your mind is looking for them. You're paying attention to them. They've been there the whole time, right? It's not like everybody just started buying Crosstours, unless of course they were like, "Well, hang on a second, he's a trendsetter, right? He's interested, we're all going to be interested." I started to see it more. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:20:36</u> | And I think that's one of the reasons I think the Lord says write these things down because then you're going to see more of it. And it's there, it's already there. The hand of God is already around you, but you're just not seeing it because perhaps you're not writing it down, you're not taking notes. Anyway, thanks for letting me stop there on verse 49, write The Vision. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:21:02</u> | You bet. Verse 50 tells us, okay, now we're going to launch into the Resurrection of the Just, right? This was Joseph's question. "Lord, help me understand the difference between the Resurrection of the Just and the Unjust. Is it that simple or is there more complexity to it? Are there more layers, more |

levels?" Joseph and Sidney said, "We're going to bear record now of what we saw and heard the Lord show us about the Resurrection of the Just." And so it's a good exercise to do with students here to have them pay close attention and see when we transition to the Resurrection of the Unjust. And what we notice is there's not a clear line, there's not a black and white line. That is, we go from here to a variety of kinds of resurrection, some of the more just, some of the last just and some of the unjust.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:22:01</u> | And that's how Section 76 complexifies or complicates Heaven. I don't mean those in negative terms, right? The diversity of Heaven, let's use that word since it's a better word. There is a Heaven beyond Heaven, there are more levels of Heaven than we've thought. By the time we're done reading the revelation, we almost have the idea that there are as many heavens as there are people to inhabit the heavens. And we simplify it in a Celestial Heaven, a Terrestrial Heaven and a Telestial. But even as we read along, there are reasons to think that it's even more complex or diverse than that. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:22:40</u> | There appears to be plenty of room. When I look up in the night sky, it's like, there's a lot of space. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:22:47</u> | So verse 50 starts the conversation of The Vision, the description of the resurrection of the just, these are the ones who received the testimony of Christ, they are those who are baptized with him, baptized in the image of his burial, the manner of his burial, it says, buried in the water in his name. These are people who live making and keep covenants. My family has very short come follow me discussions usually and they're usually pretty one-sided. And the other day, while we were feeding our mouths at the counter, I said, "What's the most important thing we will ever do? I want you to pick one word, you can just pick one word. What's the most important thing we will ever do?" And my 16 year old son said, "Covenant," and he was right. The most important thing any of us will ever do is covenant. And that's what we're reading here. If we could sum up everything that the people who come forth in the Resurrection of the Just do, it is that they make and keep covenants. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:23:59</u> | If I understand, they're not necessarily superior quality people in any other way, right? They're not smarter than other people, they're not morally superior, they're not necessarily more righteous. They make and keep covenants. Covenants become the guiding determinant of their lives in Christ. And they're therefore overcome by faith. They are sealed by the Holy Spirit |

of Promise, which the Father sheds forth on all of those who are just and true. They become members of The Church of the Firstborn, the which in this section, Section 88, others will talk about the church, I'm not sure I have a good handle on what that church is.

- Hank Smith: 00:24:42 This is what he says in, this is Doctrine and Covenants 10:67, "This is my doctrine, whosoever repenteth and cometh under me the same as my church." I really like that statement. It's very inclusionary. And it makes it sound like a group of people that believe one thing versus they get together in a church.
- Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:25:05 Yeah. I think what we could say safely, and I, I don't mean to be too definitive about The Church of the Firstborn. It's a mystery to me, but Section 88 weighs in on it too, and what we can notice is that both Sections 76 and 88, especially in these passages are temple related. We're starting to use temple terms and thinking in temple concepts, we might even think of them as somewhat esoteric, that is sort of teachings and concepts that haven't been fully elaborated by this point in the Restoration and that only are elaborated the further and further we go in temple teachings, in temple doctrine.
- Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:25:52 So for example, notice the close proximity in both Section 76 and Section 88 to make and keep covenants that are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, right? I think we could safely say that those who are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise or the Holy Ghost in its role of being a verifier and a validator of covenant faithfulness, those are the ones who are members of The Church of the Firstborn. It's not the same as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this is a heavenly church for those who are faithful to their covenants and who receive all the promised blessings of their covenants. I think we could say that another way to say it is verse 55, "They into whose hands the father has given all things." We could read that in terms of temple.
- Hank Smith: 00:26:46 You mentioned Section 138 already, do you think 76, it was received in 1832 and you've got 138 not received until 19: 18, right? But do you see them as working together because some people won't be able to make covenants in this life, right?
- Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:27:13 Yeah. Certainly.
- Hank Smith: 00:27:14 So I would see these two in our day in 2021, we have the blessing of having them both and so let them kind of work together as in this life or the next.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:27:26</u>	Yeah, certainly we do. With only 76, we don't understand how vast this plan of salvation is. And with Section 88, our minds are blown again when we realize that God is a spectacular planner for happiness, salvation and exaltation.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:27:47</u>	Okay. Verses 56 and seven with their emphasis on priesthood and kings and priests emphasized to us again that we're talking about temple, ultimately here, we're talking about temple covenants making and keeping temple covenants and the promises of exaltation that come with. These folks dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever. These are the ones that come with him when he comes again in the clouds of Heaven, these are the ones who have part in the first resurrection. So clearly the First Resurrection is the Resurrection of the Just, that's what verse 65 says.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:28:28</u>	I want to know what you would say to someone who, we have this idea in the Church of like, well, Celestial Kingdom, celestial glory, that's kind of out of my reach, I'm shooting for Terrestrial Kingdom. And there's nothing in these two columns that I see that says, yeah, you're probably not going to make it. I see a lot of invitations here of repentance, fill your life with the Spirit if you want to be part of this.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:29:01</u>	Makes me think of the late great scholar, Stephen Robinson, right? In his book, <i>Believing Christ</i> , which begins with the story of his wife who has an all-wonderful Latter-day Saint woman in every way who gives up and says, "I just can't do this. I'm not celestial material." And they have a conversation where they realize there's no such thing as celestial material, there's just fallen mortals, imperfect people who get to choose what they want. This is not a list of inherent qualities, this is a list of people who choose one thing over another. You're faced with a choice to covenant or not, to be baptized or not, to keep the baptismal covenant or not, to make and keep the temple covenants or not. It really has very little to do with inherent qualifications. It all depends on an exercise of agency.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:30:10</u>	Gaining the Celestial Kingdom has nothing to do with being particularly inherently great, it has everything to do with what you really want. Look at verse 69, the people who get the Resurrection of the Just are imperfect people who were made perfect through Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant. He's the one who did the hard work through the shedding of his own blood. Our job is just to choose.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:30:40</u>	Choose Him.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:30:41</u>	Choose you this day.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:30:43</u>	Verse 52, "Washed and cleansed from all their sins," that means they had sins to be washed and cleansed from, right?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:30:50</u>	Absolutely.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:30:51</u>	They were repenting.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:30:52</u>	Yeah. And as sinful as other folks, but they just decided they want the blessings that got offered. And they opted for that.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:31:01</u>	I really like that idea. It's not a list of qualifications that you're trying to attain, but it's, where's your heart? And Stephen Robinson's second book after <i>Believing Christ</i> was called <i>Following Christ</i> and he had a phrase in there that I just love. He said, "The question is not, am I going to make it? The question is, do I want to stay?" Which I thought was such a good way to put it. And your 16-year-old son who gave that answer about making a covenant, yeah, you're in the covenant so the question isn't, am I going to make it? The question is, ""Do I want to stay?" That book blessed me a lot. Both of those.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:31:42</u>	I remember Dr. Robinson saying, "Mercy is only mercy if you don't deserve it. The moment you earn it, it's not mercy. It's justice, you earned it. So let God be merciful. Let him give you things you don't deserve." So would I be correct in saying, "Steve, that if someone is feeling this section and they're like, 'Oh, I'm just not celestial material,'" Hey, if you're repenting, if you are sincerely repenting and God has your heart, you are on the right path, you are headed?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:32:09</u>	Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And the way I sometimes talk about it is to repent relentlessly.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:32:17</u>	Ooh, I like that.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:32:19</u>	It's not that if you repent and then you're flawless from then on out. I don't know anybody like that. So a relentless repenter, somebody who every day or maybe every other day, or maybe once a year manifests that sincere, sincerity is crucial, you can't fake it, you can't repent if you don't mean to repent. But everybody who sincerely repents and comes to Christ is a candidate for the Celestial Kingdom. Everybody.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:32:52</u>	Repent relentlessly. I love that.

John Bytheway:	<u>00:32:54</u>	Well, that's a great phrase there.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:32:55</u>	It is.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:32:56</u>	The new Young Women Theme has a phrase in there, "I cherish the gift of repentance," and as they have gone around and interviewed young women about their favorite parts, at least Sister Becky Craven said that that's one that has come up again and again, the young women appreciate that phrase, "We cherish the gift of repentance." And I'm glad we're talking about this because it can sound like it's this one-time thing and then if you sin again, it all comes back and you're toast. To me, it sounds to me like most of the scriptures are what we're talking about, you keep repenting every day. You make course corrections every day. And the fact that the Lord has the sacrament table there every Sunday kind of tells us, yeah, you're probably going to mess up again.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:33:44</u>	That's powerful.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:33:47</u>	So come on back and we'll do this again next week and we'll do it the week and we'll do it the next week. Yeah.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:33:54</u>	Yeah. Well said, I wish everybody could know Steve Robinson, right? I wish everybody had to read <i>Believing Christ</i> and then they got to know him because I love his soul. He is a curmudgeon, he's passed now, wonderful, delightful, but sort of grouchy, didn't feel well, very much struggled with some serious health problems. And if they could realize that that guy knows very well that he's going to have celestial heaven because that's what he really wants. And then say, "Yeah, but he's not Mr. Rogers, he's sarcastic," or whatever, then they would really get what he's saying in the book, right? And I feel when I realize that, I think, well, then I'm going to make it too. I'm going to be all right, because whatever flaws I have, whatever sins I commit, I am sincere. I love Christ and I want to love him better. And I am sincere in my repentance, and those are the criteria that qualify us for him saying that I will make you perfect.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:35:09</u>	I think I'm going to repent relentlessly for the rest of my life.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:35:14</u>	Well, if you don't mind an airplane reference, I have airplanes behind me on my desk but you can't see them, but President Uchtdorf, I love that idea of an airliner is off course most of the time, but it relentlessly corrects itself. It's constantly correcting itself until it touches down on the runway, but the whole time the autopilot is fixing the winds and everything else that's going

on. So I like that metaphor. And it's not a one-time course correction, it's a daily, hourly and minutely.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:35:57</u> | Well, gentleman, notice that we make a transition between verse 69 and 71 from the Resurrection of the Just, and we learned in verse 70 that these people will be resurrected into celestial bodies. People who are made perfect through the Atonement of Christ, resurrected into celestial bodies and the glory of the sun is sort of the type for that. And then in verse 71, the visionaries, Joseph and Sidney Rigdon see a terrestrial world, and these are people who are resurrected into terrestrial bodies, and the moon is typical of that. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:36:34</u> | But what we don't see here is any clear indication that we have stopped talking about the Resurrection of the Just and are now talking about the Resurrection of the Unjust. Remember the text in John 5 that we with that we're curious about said the Resurrection of the Just, they go to Heaven, the Resurrection of the Unjust, they're condemned. And here we're getting a nuance, a layer, a whole different way of thinking about a resurrection to glory. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:37:08</u> | So this is added, this is all new materials, not even in the Book of Mormon and the Bible only hints at it. So this wonderful section that follows is a restoration of knowledge that was missing until February of 1832. These are people who die without the law, and this is where, as Hank was saying earlier, one Section 138 really helps us because if all we had was 76, we would be led to the conclusion that people who die without knowing the Restored Gospel and having accepted it can do no better than terrestrial heaven. But when we read Section 76 in combination with 138, we realize that everyone who ever lived regardless of when they died can receive all the blessings of a celestial heaven. So we can qualify these verses and say... |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:38:02</u> | So we can qualify these verses and say, these are people who don't accept the law on either side of death. Verse 73. These are folks who go to the Spirit Prison, the Savior visits and preaches to them there. So they can be judged just as if they were living in the flesh. "They received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but they afterwards received it." And I think when we put this in combination with Section 138, what we're learning here is these are people who knew better, who knew they should have received the gospel earlier, who didn't, for one reason or another. |

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:38:44</u>	I don't know what that threshold is. I was uncomfortable on my mission when one of my companions would reject people... to set the door and he'd say, "You're going to hell then." And I don't know for sure, but I think the threshold is higher than that. I think our loving Heavenly Father will make awfully sure that everybody knows the gospel and what they can do with it. And your agency's not fully activated until you know, and I'm not sure a couple of kids showing up on your doorstep and making one door approach is enough knowledge.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:39:29</u>	Let's come back to the opening, verse five. "I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious and delight in this."
John Bytheway:	<u>00:39:36</u>	I want to just tell you as a teenager, when I read this, I needed a better definition of the word receive because it didn't sound fair to me. Well, they didn't get it. That's not fair. And receive is choosing to receive, choosing to accept it.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:39:52</u>	Good, John.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:39:52</u>	And so I think you use the word accept. And I think if anybody's reading it the way I did, when I was a teenager, they received it not the testimony of Jesus. Well, what it means is they refused it. They refused to accept it. And that helped me make sense of it.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:40:08</u>	I like that insight, John, and in 74, you could replace received not with rejected.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:40:14</u>	Exactly. It's not that they didn't get a chance. It's that they willfully refuse it. They reject it. Thank you.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:40:22</u>	And what they did next was say, "I regret that, I should have done better, I'm happy to accept." So these are folks who wanted some, but not all of the glory that was available to them. And that's exactly what they're going to get. They want some, but oh, these are good people. These are fine people. There's nothing in the revelation that indicates that heirs of celestial heaven are somehow superior to these people. It just tells us that they want celestial heaven, whereas these people really don't. I'm guessing you know people like this, I do. I know people who are really terrific, wonderful people. And I say, "Well, would you like all these blessings of the gospel?" They say, "No, not really. That terrestrial stuff, that sounds great to me, perfectly content there. Happy as can be. So if I get that, that's all I'll ever ask."

Hank Smith:	<u>00:41:18</u>	I like what you said, people who want, who choose. Am I wrong in saying, I don't think anybody's going to go to the Terrestrial Kingdom who doesn't want the Terrestrial Kingdom. I don't think anybody's going to the Celestial Kingdom who doesn't want the Celestial Kingdom.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:41:34</u>	There is a Book of Mormon phrase about you would be more miserable to dwell. There's this idea of you're going to go where you feel comfortable.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:41:42</u>	And happy.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:41:43</u>	And as we're talking about, where you want.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:41:47</u>	Joseph taught that for sure. That same principle.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:41:51</u>	It seems as Latter-day Saints, we've moved the line between heaven and hell to it's now between the Celestial Kingdom and the Terrestrial Kingdom. Heaven is the Celestial Kingdom. And anything below that could be considered hell because I've heard that before. Oh, you believe that I'm going to hell. That's not this revelation.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:42:14</u>	No, you don't find that here. This revelation is about heaven. All of the things it talks about are heaven: Celestial, Terrestrial, Telesstial, these are heaven, these are degrees of heavenly glory. All of them. So you could think of Perdition as Hell. And Joseph will teach also that hell is a quality. It's what we put ourselves through. When we realized we didn't act as we should have acted, we didn't exercise our agency in the way we really wish we had. Hell is also a description for that state between death and resurrection. Even for the righteous, Section 45 teaches us they consider it a time of bondage. They're damned in a sense, they cannot make progress until the Resurrection comes. So there's a state there of hell. But what this revelation shows us is that there's a whole lot more heaven than there is hell and in some ways, it's a reversal of the notion that we start with where Hell's very, very big and Heaven's very tiny. When we come through Section 76, we realize Hell is pretty tiny and Heaven is, not only big, but it's quite diverse.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:43:33</u>	Steve, you mentioned at the very beginning about, and maybe this is a good place to fit this in, maybe not. But you mentioned at the beginning about some can say that we are saved and damned at the same time. Would this be one of those places to say that, that if I'm in the Terrestrial Kingdom, do I think I'm damned or do I think I've been saved?

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:43:56</u>	Both, right. You're going to be in heaven, it surpasses understanding the glory of telestial heaven, even surpasses understanding the revelation says, and at the same time, I think we'll probably be aware that there was more we could have had if that's what we really wanted.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:44:14</u>	So in that way then would I consider it being damned because there could have been more?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:44:21</u>	There's an ongoing conversation to which we don't have a good answer about whether there's progression between the kingdoms. Some of your listeners will say absolutely there isn't because so-and-so said so, and others will say absolutely there is because so-and-so said so. Frankly, it's an unsettled question. We really don't know the answer to that at this point. What we've been talking about makes me think of the line from Jonathan Edwards, the great Reverend Edwards Presbyterian minister in the 18th century, New England who used the words, "God's arbitrary, sovereign will." Why will some people go to heaven and some people go to hell? Because of God's arbitrary, sovereign will. And that's not what Section 76 is teaching us. These destinations are our choosing. Every child of God had the option of choosing any of them they wanted. And the reason we end up where we do is because of what we wanted, what we chose. It's not arbitrary. God is sovereign, but he uses his sovereign power to put that power to choose, in us. We get to decide.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:45:30</u>	I think maybe it's our education system because I want to get an A. I tried really hard, I got my score back, and I got a C. I really wanted the Celestial Kingdom, but I got the Telestial Kingdom and I did my best and I just didn't get it. And we've got to throw that out the window and say, these are all choices. This is what you want. I just wish, one thing if I could help my fellow Latter-day Saints is this idea of the anxiety over I've got to be good enough. I've got to be good enough. I've got to be good enough. And I'm saying just repent enough. Just keep repenting, just keep repenting and you're on the right path.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:46:17</u>	What we really have to do is want the right thing.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:46:21</u>	What's your desire?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:46:22</u>	"What do we love? What is your desire? What do you love? Do you love me?" Jesus asks Peter and Peter, "Of course I do." No, I mean it. I'm really asking, do you love... And as you know, this is in the context of these wonderful fat fish. Peter's just caught the biggest catch of his life. And those fish are money. It would

be like looking at a pile of 1,000 dollar bills and having a life choice to make. I've been called to the full-time ministry of the Savior, or I could go fishing and I could make a lot of money. And I just had the biggest jackpot of my life. And now I'm having breakfast with the Savior and he's saying, "Do you love me?"

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:47:12</u> | "Do you love me more than that pile of 1,000 dollar bills?" Yeah, of course I do. No, I mean it, think about it. I'm serious. Do you love me? Of course, I do. Do you love me? Yes. Well then, do the right things. "Feed my sheep. Show that you love me." That's the question that's really being asked of us. Not, "Do you check all the boxes for a celestial heir?" He takes care of that part. He makes us perfect through the shedding of his own blood. The question he's asking us is, do you love me? And Elder Holland says that so much more beautifully than I possibly can, but that's the question. We get to answer that question for ourselves. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:47:56</u> | "Comes ringing down through the halls of time," he said. "Do you love me?" And we get to answer that question every day. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:48:04</u> | I love the symmetry elegance of Peter's three denials and then Jesus giving him a chance to answer, "Thou knowest, I love thee." Three times and feed my sheep three times and how that he just gave him a chance to reverse course. And I was going to say that we need the Savior to help us want the right things. I think Joseph Smith talked about the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer his views, the greater his enjoyments, till he has lost desire for sin, but he says, but we, what's the word? We expect this is a station which no man ever arrived in a moment. And so that's another thing we ask for is for the Lord to help us want the right things. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:48:49</u> | That's part of the grace of the Atonement. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>00:48:52</u> | Absolutely. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:48:53</u> | To actually lose desire for sin and to not want sin, but to want the best things. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>00:48:57</u> | That's Mosiah 5. "The Spirit hath wrought a mighty change in us. We have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually." |
| John Bytheway: | <u>00:49:10</u> | Used to think, "Where's the order form for that? How do I sign up for that?" And I used to wonder, were they done forever? And then right after that, King Benjamin gives them a name to |

put on themselves. And I think, I don't think they were done. I think, at that moment. And I think we've all had moments where conference is over and the last amen and we're so fired up and that was awesome. And we have no desire to sin. And then we go back to work and school the next day.

Hank Smith: 00:49:36

We got to lose it again.

John Bytheway: 00:49:38

Relentless repenter.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:49:40

So to sum up, terrestrial heirs are the ones who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus. They have it, they just don't endure faithfully in it. They show that it's not what they ultimately really want most and that's fine. They get what they really want most. And verse 81 sums that part of The Vision up. And again, verse 80, they're told to write that before they forget it, while they're still in the spirit, while it's still clear in their minds. We transitioned from the Terrestrial to the Telestial Kingdom in verse 89. The two seers here are seeing the telestial heaven, which surpasses all understanding. We have a folk doctrine in the Church that we might dispel here. I heard it taught in my youth, that Joseph had said that if you could just see the Telestial Kingdom, you'd be willing to kill yourself just to get there. And that's not what he taught, that misses the mark. What he apparently taught, according to Wilford Woodruff, is that it's important for us to fulfill our mission on the earth.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:50:53

It's important for us to have a probation here, at least for many of us. And so God endowed us with fear of death. Even if we know the plan of salvation, none of us are eager to die. And we do just about all we can to prevent it. And only folks who are in utter despair get over that to the point of that extreme. So what Joseph taught is because we're supposed to finish our mortal probation on the earth, God implanted in us a fear of death. And if we could see what awaits us, that fear would go away. Joseph didn't say Telestial Kingdom. He said the other side of the veil. If you could see what's beyond this earth, there's no reason to be scared of death. So we don't want to misstate that. I made a wonderful student cry one day when I said, that's a bunch of crap.

John Bytheway: 00:51:52

Don't sugarcoat it.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:51:53

Utterly and sensitively. And I've felt bad ever since and I've wondered if that made me a telestial heir.

John Bytheway:	<u>00:52:04</u>	I'm really glad you brought that up though, and I'm glad you called it a folk doctrine.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:52:09</u>	So the terrestrial glory is pretty spectacular compared to the telestial and the celestial is exponentially more spectacular than that, like the sun is more glorious than the moon and the moon more glorious than the star. Then we launch into a section here where we review and we go back through all three kingdoms again. And the most striking thing about the heirs of the Celestial Kingdom in this passage is that God makes them equal, verse 95, equal to him in power and in might and in dominion. This is one of the things that is repugnant to most of the rest of Christianity. If the early converts had a hard time with it, this might be one reason why. And there are lots of our Christian sisters and brothers today who will say, "Oh, I was with you when you said that we're saved through the perfect Atonement of Christ that he worked out with the shedding of his own blood."
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:53:13</u>	But when you're telling me that he's going to make us equal to God in power and might dominion. They just think that is so objectionable because it's blasphemous to consider ourselves as of the same species as God, where we can't become like God. And of course, this is what I love about the plan of salvation. It's the very thing that repulses many of our brothers and sisters about the restored gospel is one of the things that's most beautiful about it to me. So we're going to have to disagree there. I love that the purpose of the plan is for God to raise his children to be like him, to be in his presence, to see as they are seen as verse 94 says that, "Know as they are known." That's going to be so great to be in God's presence and see and know how we fit in his family and to receive the fullness of his grace and to be made equal to him.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:54:15</u>	We're not claiming that we can do that on our own. That's one of the objections is that sometimes Latter-day Saints misunderstand or are perceived to think that they earn their way up to be like God. Nothing in this revelation says that. It's him who's making us equal to him. It's him who's giving us this power and might dominion. It's him who wants to endow his children with all of the blessings he has, with all the happiness he has. And so I love that truth. I'm very grateful that it's been restored in the latter days.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:54:52</u>	And you can see hints of it with Paul. We're made heirs, joint heirs with Christ. C.S. Lewis started to see it towards the end of his writing. He said, you see mere mortals, but these are potential gods and goddesses.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:55:11</u>	And there's not a thing in the Bible that objects to it or refutes it, it's only if you read the Bible through the lenses of some Christian philosophical ideas that you come to that conclusion. And this is my contention about traditional Christianity is that it's based too much on Greek philosophical ideas for its orientation to the Bible. And that's why we get ideas that make us so inferior that we could never become like our Heavenly Father.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:55:45</u>	And I think too, the last word you said, our Heavenly Father. We take that not as a metaphor. This is all about family. And of course we're going to become like our Father. Of course our Father wants to reward his children and it's not a metaphor. He's our father.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:56:05</u>	Indeed. Begotten sons and daughters unto God.
John Bytheway:	<u>00:56:08</u>	That phrase back there, we are all called begotten sons and daughters. And that Greek philosophy took that away too. We're a creation, we're metaphorically his children, but not really.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:56:22</u>	Absolutely. There can't be anything other than God originally. So we have to be created out of nothing by God and the restored gospel rejects that. And there are lots of implications either way, depending on what you decide to do with that original idea about who God is.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:56:46</u>	Section 76. Tell me if I'm right here, Steve, I think it was Richard Bushman who said "In swipes, Joseph Smith cut Gordian knots." Section 76 seems to be one of those. How can God be both merciful and just?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:57:02</u>	It certainly does.
Hank Smith:	<u>00:57:03</u>	God can be both merciful and just.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>00:57:03</u>	It certainly does, and other revelations too. I've heard that same phrase was used in Section 93. Truman Madsen used it in terms of Section 93, which describes how we can be both created by God and free? What's the nature of our agency, of our independence from God if we are extensions of God? That's an old and problematic question and Section 93 answers it really brilliantly. Section 76 similarly cuts through lots of arguments in

Christianity and sets forth a much more diverse and generous copious heaven than traditional Christianity has ever imagined.

Hank Smith: 00:57:55

I mean, I've always thought and I could be wrong, but I've always thought that Latter-day Saints, among all the theologies on the earth, have a very liberal view of Heaven and who will go.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:58:12

Let me tell you in practical terms what that means to me. There's a lot of people I love generally and specifically people I know in different Christianities, different denominations, and people I look to as examples of Christ-like love and behavior and devotion to God and so forth. According to some of their soteriology, I'm not going to make it. I'm not going to make it because I have chosen the wrong version of Christ in whom to put my faith. For them, salvation is a matter of propositionally choosing the right philosophy of who Christ is. Well, in the version of Section 76, I'm going to make it and so are they. This is what I love about it. This is a more generous view of salvation. It's hard for me to believe in a God who does save and damn people by his arbitrary sovereign will. Or even by saying, "If you believe the right exact ideas about Christ, you can get in." You could be Mother Teresa and spend your life serving, but if you believe the wrong ideas about Christ, you're not getting in. That doesn't work for me. That's not a God of mercy. That's not the God we were introduced to in the beginning of this section.

John Bytheway: 00:59:42

I hope I end up with Mother Teresa.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 00:59:45

I'll be so fortunate if it ever works out that way. Here we have in Section 76 a version of God's plan and plans for us that is worthy of a God who wants us to have all the blessings that are possibly available to us. Not because we deserve them. We don't deserve them. We don't earn them, but we get to choose them. We get to have them if we want them, because Jesus Christ, the Mediator of this plan, worked it out through the shedding of his own blood and he is capable of making us perfect. Even if I don't have exactly the right ideas about exactly who He is, I can make it. What I need to do is covenant. Covenant with God and grow by degrees and by grace that He gives me. If I'll do that, I'm going to make it in. I'm going to make it to whatever level of heaven I want. I want the one where I get to be with Jenny Sebring for all eternity. That's the motivation for me.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 01:00:59

Otherwise, I'm an introverted guy. I'd take it less to heaven if it surpassed all understanding and had an ESPN place that I could watch. That'd be okay with me. But it sounds satisfying now

because I want to be with my family forever and the way to get there is through the New and Everlasting Covenant of marriage and the highest of the heavenly glories.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| John Bytheway: | <u>01:01:24</u> | I'm glad you said that, because that takes us to another section and this is being revealed right now yet about eternal families. Would you? |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:01:34</u> | We talked in the beginning about how everything we've had on salvation before 76 is sort of like Third Grade Math. We've advanced up to that level and we have an understanding of the basic concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and then Section 76 says let's learn algebra and some trigonometry. Then, later sections are going to say, now there's some more beyond that. There's some calculus. Section 131 says, "In the celestial heaven, there are even degrees beyond that and the highest and holiest of all salvation is exaltation," where we get to be with our families forever. And so, that's the goal for me. That's the great prize to be with my people I cherish most for eternity is the greatest motivator of my life. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>01:02:33</u> | I love what you said there about it's Him. It's Him. He made it possible. He wants to give us everything that we want, that we choose. I think it kind of gives us that in 107, the end of the plan, the Savior says I have overcome. "I have overcome and have trodden the wine press alone. Even the wine press of the fairness of the wrath of the almighty God. Then shall He be crowned with the crown of glory, to sit on the throne of His power to reign forever and ever." If we realize that he overcomes, he is the one who does, that fear we have of, "Oh, can I earn it? Can I earn it?" He did earn it and now he has the right to give you what you want. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:03:22</u> | Jesus Christ is the protagonist of Section 76. He is the main character. He is the hero. In Act 1, we met Him in the premortal life. We saw Him there and we've watched throughout. In the midpoint of the revelation, He worked out this perfect Atonement through the shedding of His own blood. Here at the end, he says, "I did it all by myself. I trod the winepress alone and I will be crowned, you'll be crowned there with me." We see the culmination, the climactic fulfillment of Christ's redeeming work and the plans of salvation that He has brought to pass here in the verses that you were just referring to. It's really a Christ-centered revelation. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:04:14</u> | For people who say Latter-day Saints aren't Christians, really they're just saying, "We don't believe in the same philosophical |

premises about Christ that they do." But it's hard to read Section 76 and say a believer in that is not a believer in Christ.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| Hank Smith: | <u>01:04:29</u> | Is there anything to the story, Steve, of The Vision closing and Sydney collapsing or some sort? |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:04:38</u> | I think there is. No reason to disbelieve it. Again, we've got Philo Dibble who throughout the 1870s, '80s and early 90s gives us a few different accounts of having been present for at least part of this. As I remember, if I remember, he's our source for saying Sydney was sort of fatigued when it was over and Joseph said he's not as used to the design. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>01:05:03</u> | That's a great moment. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:05:05</u> | Which I think is really cool. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>01:05:06</u> | Yeah, that's a great moment. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>01:05:08</u> | I think it's consistent too. I always think of Joseph Smith saying, "When I came to, I was lying on my back." Apparently it wears you out or something. Maybe he grew a stronger process, but I liked that Sidney Rigdon had to be carried. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:05:29</u> | That's a cool one. We ought to come out of this revelation realizing that we still don't know the celestial math. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>01:05:39</u> | These last verses, 1:15. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:05:41</u> | 1:15, 1:16. They say, "You guys make sure you write all that down, but trust me, you still, you don't know anything." I have more to tell you about that. He told us at the beginning of the Revelation, He would very generously tell us all about this just as soon as we could internalize it. |
| Hank Smith: | <u>01:06:01</u> | That is good leadership style is giving people assignments that they're capable of, that are just a little outside their reach and letting them get there. Then, give them a little more just outside their reach, but don't give them, don't overwhelm them to the point that now they're now discouraged because they can't comprehend it all. By trying to do that as a parent, not try to overwhelm a child with so much that they're overloaded and can't move at all but just push a little bit further every time. A little bit further, let's reach a little bit more, every time. I can see the Lord doing that with these sections. To me, it's another testimony to the prophet Joseph Smith that he's including little tiny hints at future revelations. He would have to have the |

whole plan set out in his mind to be making this up, to throw in little hints there, here and there.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:06:55</u> | In his history, there's an entry right after this revelation that is one of the key things I think about when I realized he's not the inventor of these ideas. Because he sits back after he sees these series of visions and he marvels at it. The next passage in this history says, "That is so far beyond the narrow mindedness of man, that all of us are constrained to exclaim it came from God." He couldn't have conceived of this. |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:07:28</u> | There were other people, Alex Campbell, who we mentioned early on, he's playing with the idea of three kingdoms but nothing like this, nothing so sophisticated. He says the first two, you kind of experience on earth, and then there's the kingdom of glory after this. Emanuel Swedenborg a hundred years or so earlier is he's tapping into Pauline phrases in Corinthians and talking about three kingdoms of heaven and so on. But nobody, none of them come anywhere close to this. I wouldn't be surprised if Swedenborg had some inspired ideas, but then you get this text and you think that just blew the roof off of everything. That's Joseph himself says, "Dang, that is so far beyond me and everybody else. It came from God." |
| John Bytheway: | <u>01:08:17</u> | Because of what happened after this, did it have a big impact on the persecution? Because it was published in the paper or whatever? |
| Dr. Steve C. Ha...: | <u>01:08:26</u> | I don't know anything about that. I don't think it had anything specific to do with the March beating and tar and feathers. But I do know that Joseph told the missionaries, "Keep that on the down low. Do not start with, 'Hey, did you guys know that?'" Let's get to that calculus after we do addition and subtraction. Brigham Young had a hard time internalizing it. Wilford would have said it was the coolest thing I'd ever seen. I loved it. |
| John Bytheway: | <u>01:08:54</u> | A kind of a favorite statement of mine of Joseph Smith was the, "Could you gaze into heaven for five minutes, you would know more than by reading everything ever written on the subject." And here is all of this and then even at the end, and there's more which were commanded not to write. There's even more that it's not lawful to write and neither are men capable of writing them. I love that God is greater and grander than we have imagined. There's a good section for that, that statement about if you could gaze into heaven for five minutes, and he and Sidney did. |

Hank Smith:	<u>01:09:33</u>	The ending does seem to say that. It just says, "We're not even coming close to telling you what we saw."
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>01:09:43</u>	He wrote a letter where he said, "Lord, deliver me from the narrow prison of paper, pen and ink, and a crooked, broken, scattered, and imperfect language." Notice that some of this text is dictated. Some of it's in the first person voice of the Savior, but most of it is, "You guys describe what you've seen." I can imagine thinking, I don't have words for that. Neither is man capable of making them known. I don't know how to describe what we just saw.
Hank Smith:	<u>01:10:13</u>	I love it. Of anyone on the planet Earth today, there's a handful of people who know Joseph's life like you, who understand him like you do. I know that there are some of your mentors who you would give full credit to. At knowing Joseph Smith as well as you do, as well as can be from what's left, right? The documents, the evidence that's left. How do you feel about him and this Restoration?
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>01:10:48</u>	I love Joseph Smith because he opened the door to Jesus Christ. He is utterly inconsequential unless he receives these revelations that we've been reading about and talking about. There were literally lots of other people named Joseph Smith who farmed in upstate New York and other places and we are not having a podcast about them. They weren't the greatest revelators in the history of the world. They didn't commune with Jehovah, not in the way he did. I don't love Joseph Smith because he was handsome. I don't care. I don't love him because he was a good wrestler. I don't care. I don't love him because he was some sort of idealized perfect prophet. He wasn't. I know that he wasn't. He knew that he wasn't. The Lord knew that he wasn't as he's told us a few times in the Doctrine and Covenants.
Dr. Steve C. Ha...:	<u>01:11:51</u>	What is it about him? Why do we care? We care because he cracked the heavens open and revealed Jesus Christ. He heard him as he was commanded and he documented that unbelievably well. Those documents are now in our hands. I mean, would you revere somebody who gave you the greatest possible gifts? Who answered the terrible questions of existence? That's why I revere him. It's not some sort of ... I don't think I have misconceptions about who he is. He's a real guy and I don't expect him to be more than that. It's not remarkable to me that he's sort of ordinary in many aspects. What's remarkable to me is that an ordinary guy revealed all that he did about, from through, by the Lord Jesus Christ. The

Savior is my subject of study and I get to him through the texts that he gave to Joseph Smith.

John Bytheway: 01:13:10

Steve, we can't thank you enough for coming again to our podcast, right, John? When people come back, it gives us a boost of confidence.

Dr. Steve C. Ha...: 01:13:19

You guys are doing an immensely important work. Fifteen people are going to read making sense of the Doctrine and Covenants, but a million people are going to watch what you guys are doing. It wouldn't matter if it was me on here doing it with you or not, but I am pleased and thankful to be able to talk about these wonderful revelations.

John Bytheway: 01:13:39

That testimony was beautiful. I don't care if he was handsome and a good wrestler. I mean, that was beautiful. He opened the door to Christ. Thank you for that.

Hank Smith: 01:13:47

Well, everyone, we want to thank Dr. Steven Harper for being with us. We want to thank all of you for listening. We're grateful for your support. We couldn't do it without listeners. We're thankful to our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorenson. Our production crew, we have just an awesome crew that helps us. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Kyle Nelson, Will Stoughton, and Maria Hilton. Please join us on our next episode of followHIM.

followHIM Favorites
Episode 28
D&C 76

Hank Smith:	00:00	Hello everyone. My name is Hank Smith. I'm the host of a podcast called followHIM. I'm here with my wonderful co-host. His name is John Bytheway. You've probably heard of him. Hi John.
John Bytheway:	00:11	Hi Hank.
Hank Smith:	00:13	John, this little clip is called followHIM Favorites. Hopefully people have seen one by now. It's where we take this week's Come Follow Me lesson. And instead of doing our big podcast that we have, we decide to do just a small little clip called followHIM Favorites. Where you get to choose your one favorite. This week's lesson is Doctrine and Covenants, section 76. The whole thing, all 119 verses. And you get to choose one followHIM favorite. So, what is it? What are you thinking?
John Bytheway:	00:45	This is a tough one because I could have chosen lots, but I like verse 40 and 41 because it starts out, and this is the gospel. And a lot of times when we define the gospel or our friends do it, they define it by rules. Oh, I know what the gospel is. You can't drink. Oh, I know what the gospel is. You can't do this. You can't wear that. Or, oh, I know what the gospel is. Don't go shopping on Sunday. And it's like, ugh. No.
Hank Smith:	01:09	I heard a teenager say, John, I heard a teenager say once, I'm a member. I need a t-shirt that says I'm the member of the church, I can't. Right? Like, that's what it means to be a a to be part of the gospel. I can't.
John Bytheway:	01:23	Yeah. And define it that way, which is awful. And so here is the scripture defining, okay, this is the gospel. I love it. That's the quote. And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us. That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness. That through him all might be saved. I mean, that is the gospel. It's not about what you do on Sunday. The gospel is that Jesus came and loved us and died for us and cleanses us so that we can be saved. That's--so that's my favorite, right? Little thing right there.

Hank Smith:	02:09	That's a great followHIM favorite. Wouldn't it be great for a young person to just kind of memorize that? And if someone were to say, oh, you're a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, what do you believe? Well, there's a verse in our scripture that says this.
John Bytheway:	02:24	Let me tell you what I believe.
Hank Smith:	02:25	Right? This is what I believe because that sums it up perfectly. The good news is that all might be saved.
John Bytheway:	02:31	It's good. It's glad. That's--those are the words we're seeing here. This is good news.
Hank Smith:	02:37	And those of you listening all means you. Right? You're like, oh, I'm good. He's gonna save everyone. Oh, poor me. I won't be in. No. All means you. You're included in the word all.
John Bytheway:	02:47	Do the math.
Hank Smith:	02:48	Yeah. My followHIM favorite is very similar. It's all the way on the next page over in verse 69, it says these are they who are just men-and we'll add women-made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement--this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood. John, I've heard you talk about Moroni 10 before, where Maroni writes at the very end of the Book of Mormon, come unto Christ and be perfected in him. And you've said it's crucial. You get the order right. It's not be perfect so you can come unto Christ. It's come unto Christ so you can be made perfect in Him. Right? The order is important.
John Bytheway:	03:35	I can't go to church. I'm not good enough. I can't go to, I can't go. Yeah, exactly. It's, oh, that's why you come.
Hank Smith:	03:42	Right?
John Bytheway:	03:42	You come firs.
Hank Smith:	03:43	Perfected in Him. It's not you that's perfect. It's Him and his perfect atonement which will change your life. It'll change everything about you. In the words of one of my students, her name is Laura Cope. She said, Jesus can make your dreams come true and then some. And I think that's a hundred percent true. His perfect atonement can make your dreams come true and then some. We hope that you'll join us on the full podcast. We don't do followHIM favorites. We do followHIM everything

on the podcast. So, this week we're with Dr. Steven Harper, who just knows just about everything about Joseph Smith. So, we hope you'll join us. You can find us wherever you get your podcasts.