



## Podcast General Description:

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

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

## Podcast Episode Descriptions

### Part 1:

What do you do when God's plan looks nothing like the one you had for yourself? Professor Lori Newbold explores the timeless stories of Ruth, Naomi, and Hannah, uncovering what loyalty, grief, and a relational faith in Christ can teach us about trusting God through life's most unexpected detours.

### Part 2:

Professor Lori Newbold draws on her background in theology and mental health to illuminate Hannah's extraordinary faith, her meekness under provocation, her wordless prayers of grief, and the surprising truth that being a mother, like being a disciple, is not a destination we wait for but an identity we live now.

## Timecodes:

### Part 1 -

- 0:00 - Part 1 - Professor Lori Newbold
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- 6:43 *Come, Follow Me Manual*
- 7:24 Gratitude for unanswered prayers and Naomi
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- 11:45 Sitting with sadness
- 14:10 Emotional pain has no painkiller
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- 19:25 Ruth's declaration and Mosiah 18
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- 27:52 Part-member families and "I will go"
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- 35:25 The Goel-Redeemer and kinsman
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- 1:01:28 Bitter and sweet-Boaz as type of Jesus Christ
- 1:02:26 Meekness as a defining attribute
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- 1:08:12 What would Hannah want us to know?
- 1:12: 22 End of Part 1 - Professor Lori Newbold

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- 19:28 Jacob 1:11
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- 35:40 Motherhood identity and the Adversary
- 39:40 Recording the hand of the Lord
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- 1:03:18 Sister Beck and living in revelation
- 1:06:19 Samuel and the monarchy
- 1:07:51 Closing testimony of Jesus Christ
- 1:11:30 End of Part 2 - Professor Lori Newbold

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## **Biographical Information:**



Lori Newbold is from South Jordan, Utah. She received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Brigham Young University and her Masters of Science in Mental Health Counseling from the University of Phoenix. She has worked for Seminaries & Institutes from 2006 to 2025 and currently teaches in the BYU religion department. She also worked part-time as a mental health therapist for 8 years. She has 20 adorable nieces and nephews and one great-niece and loves to spend time with them. Her three great loves are the Savior, pickleball, and chocolate milk.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Sis. Lori Newbold:	00:00:03	It has just been a constant deconstruction by the Lord of my desires and plans and hopes, to a space of a constant okay, where are we going? I'll go where you want me to go. I don't always go happily at first, but I go. Then on my way, I work on my attitude. And eventually I can look back and see. Ruth has that eventually too. After when she does know Boaz and she's blessed with a child that she didn't get to have with her husband, I think it's a look back and say, I'm so glad I went.
Hank Smith:	00:00:39	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with my co-host, John Bytheway, a mighty man of wealth. John I read that and it was the, actually the only thing I could find.
John Bytheway:	00:00:54	Oh. Well, if wealth is measured in a number of tiny die cast airplanes I have in my office, yeah, I'll take it.
Hank Smith:	00:01:01	You are very wealthy. Do you know he that hath eternal life is rich, John?
John Bytheway:	00:01:05	Yes. And friends and family, yeah, I feel blessed.
Hank Smith:	00:01:09	John, we are privileged today to have with us Sister Lori Newbold. Lori, welcome to followHIM.
Sis. Lori Newbold:	00:01:14	Thank you. So glad to be here.
Hank Smith:	00:01:16	Yeah. Oh, Lori. I've been looking forward to this day for a long time. When I told my sister, Jennefer Johnson, she is the director of women's conference over at BYU. When I said, Jen, I'm going to have Lori Newbold. There was a hush that fell over the home. She gasped. She said, that woman is the greatest woman. That was a pretty good recommendation from my sister. John, we are going to be in Ruth and Samuel today. What

comes to mind? What have you been thinking about as you've been prepping?

- John Bytheway: 00:01:49 Hey, actually, I've been thinking about what I believe to be one of your favorite topics and that's expectations, how life doesn't unfold the way you expect and for Ruth. Wow. Naomi, it doesn't unfold the way they think and yet they find great blessings in moving forward. So that's what I was thinking about.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:09 Yeah. There are multiple examples in this lesson of perseverance in the face of difficult, difficult circumstances. Lori, as you've been looking at these two books, what are we going to do today? Where do you want to go?
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:02:26 John, if I could take what you just said, because that, that was on my mind as well and then maybe go one more step that then leads me to say, what do they know about the Savior and their Father in heaven that causes them to stay with him when life doesn't go like they planned? To me, both Ruth and Naomi and then also Boaz. And then when you get into 1 Samuel, Hannah's probably one of my favorite women in all of creation with her faith in God and I even love her husband Elkanah. So many different ways that faith in God is demonstrated when blessings aren't as forthcoming, maybe at the timeframe that we wanted, especially given sometimes my personal circumstance, these just have been really strong pillars to me of remembering how aware Father in heaven is and how much he's involved because I see while they're not mentioned many times in these chapters, I see the Savior on every page and throughout the entire story. So for me, that's what these chapters are about, is just evidence of his goodness and essentially hesed.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:34 Hmm, that's fantastic. Something I haven't thought of before, I'm sure both of you have, is that here's Ruth, not an Israelite, but brought into the covenant and I've wondered if this could be a symbol of someone coming into the House of Israel and being accepted by Boaz or by the Savior, a very wealthy man who is ready to bless people who want to join the covenant. And not only does she join the covenant, but she is, what, the great multiple great grandmother of the Lord showing up in the gospel of Matthew and the Savior's family tree there. John, can you tell us why in the world my sister would be so enamored with Lori Newbold and it's not just my sister. I've heard from many, many people that Lori Newbold is as great as anyone ever born. She is like the John the Baptist of church education. Talk to us, John, what do we know about Lori?

John Bytheway: 00:04:38 [Lori](#) is a lover of truth and all things about Jesus Christ. She's an awesome aunt of 20, a great aunt of one. She is currently a BYU religion teacher, a sun and beach lover, oh I like that, mediocre pickleball player, connoisseur of chocolate milk, chronic pain warrior, lover of people, disciple of Christ. She's from South Jordan, Utah, got her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at BYU, her master's of science in mental health counseling from the University of Phoenix. She worked for seminaries and institutes. Sometimes we call them [S&I](#) from 2006 to 2025, including seven years with seminary training services. She currently teaches at BYU, like I said. She's also worked part-time as a mental health therapist. I also learned she served a mission in Cincinnati, Ohio. Go Bengals. Are you an NFL fan? So welcome, Lori. And I used to see you down when you were on the [Young Women General Advisory Council](#) under President Cordon.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:05:45 Yeah, God's been kind and gave lots of opportunities, so.

Hank Smith: 00:05:50 And I think she's stake young women's president right now. Is that right, Lori?

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:05:54 I am.

Hank Smith: 00:05:55 Wow.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:05:55 Which I love.

Hank Smith: 00:05:56 You're a busy woman. Lori, this is going to be a treat today. You're a seasoned teacher and you love the Lord and you love to help people. We're going to have a great day. Let's start in the [Come, Follow Me Manual](#). The lesson is my heart rejoices in the Lord, Ruth and then the opening chapters of 1 Samuel. "Sometimes we imagine that our lives should follow a clear path from beginning to end. The shortest distance between two points is a straight line after all, and yet life is often full of delays and detours that take us in unexpected directions. Ruth and Hannah surely understood this. Ruth was not an Israelite, but she married one and when her husband died, she had a choice to make. Would she return to her family and her old familiar life or would she embrace the Israelite faith and a new home with her mother-in-law?

00:06:43 Hannah's plan for her life was to bear children, but she could not and that left her in bitterness of soul. As you read about Ruth and Hannah, consider the faith they must have had to journey these unexpected paths. Then think about your own journey. It's different from Ruth and Hannah's and anyone

else's, but throughout the trials and surprises between here and your eternal destination, you can learn to say with Hannah, 'My heart rejoices in the Lord.'" Lori, what a beautiful way to start. There's going to be listeners all over saying, that's me. My life has taken some delay and detour and it does not look the way I thought it would. With that, how do you want to start this?

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:07:24

I know this sounds kind of a weird way to start anything but to say that I'm really grateful for all of the things my life hasn't turned into that I initially wanted and prayed for when I was younger. I love that quote that, men and women who turn their lives over to God will find out that he will make far more of them than they ever could. It's a poor paraphrase. But I think we see that in so many circumstances like start with Naomi, for example. Even I wonder in [Ruth](#) chapter one verse one, there's a famine in the land which is going to drive them from Bethlehem to Moab in the first place. And if there's a famine that tells you something about hardship even with her husband and her children alive. Sometimes we pick up after the death of all of them and that's kind of where her story begins, but I think it actually starts in verse one where we can ask questions about what she understands about God and about trusting him in hardship.

00:08:27

It's interesting to me, one of the things that I saw between the two of them, by them I mean Naomi and Hannah is that in Ruth chapter one when she comes back, which we'll get to in just a second, but when she comes back to Bethlehem with Ruth in verse 20, she says, she said, "Call me not Naomi," which actually literally translates to pleasant, call me Mara, which is a name given to Naomi by herself, which means bitter or very sad. You capture just from the very beginning, those are in the footnotes, her emotion about her current circumstance. Then if you go to 1 Samuel chapter one and when it expresses when Hannah is at the door of the temple in verse 10 of chapter one, the description is, "And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the Lord and wept sore." Now a clarity, like bitterness can look at a couple things, but both of these tend to connect bitterness more to sadness or grief.

00:09:30

One of the things sometimes that we don't always recognize is that it's okay to feel emotion. You're going to get the mental health side of me coming out from the get go of this because one of the ways that I connect best is that when people are real in scripture, I think we have to be careful to not place emotion on them, but I also think it's okay to recognize when they declare it themselves to say, Naomi has had a lot to grieve. Hannah has had a lot to grieve. When life doesn't go like you

plan, it is okay to grieve the loss of dreams. It is okay to grieve the loss of expectations. In fact, in some ways, that's the healthier avenue so that you can create space in your heart for a new dream. Lots of whys, I think, tend to fly in there and I think that's okay.

00:10:17 The wrestling with God sometimes is to take that emotion to him and to recognize emotion doesn't have to determine. It just can be experienced. And we see that from the very beginning here imagining the grief and the pain of losing a husband and then losing two sons and especially culturally what that means too, because sons would be the continuation of her name, of their posterity to lose both sons and to have neither, you know, after 10 years and then to have no grandkids from either of those says, this is the end of our line because now I'm too old to remarry and have more children. In addition to just losing her sons and her husband who you know she loves and adores is pretty evident, even by the [relationship](#) with her daughter-in-laws. I could see that pain in verse three when it talks about it, and Elimelech, Naomi's husband died and she was left and her two sons and then they took wives of women of Moab, the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth, and they dwelled there about 10 years.

00:11:21 And then those two sons died also both of them and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. I don't currently have children on the earth. I always joke that I have them. They're just on a play date with Heavenly Father in the premortal life. So maybe the two of you could speak a little better to the imagination of losing two of your sons or two of your children. And what she might be feeling with that loss.

Hank Smith: 00:11:45 Lori, I spend my life with Latter-day Saints, so I imagine people of other faiths are like this, but especially the college students I work with, they don't like to feel sadness. It's... I had one student just this last year said, Brother Smith, I'm sad. And I said, well, why are you sad? She was attending an event at UVU that was tragic. I said, yeah, you're going to be sad. I don't want to be sad. I think she wanted a scripture or a quote or just to get rid of that emotion and say, no, I'm okay. And here's why I'm okay. I like that you said that. It's okay just to be sad. In fact, it's pretty healthy to just sit in an uncomfortable emotion for a little while, but I can't imagine this.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:12:30 I also think sometimes culturally we present that if you are faithful, you won't be sad. When you connect to Isaiah 53, the Savior is described himself as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. That doesn't come by finding your way out of

sadness as soon as it comes. It's being familiar with. The easiest way for me to frame all life experience is I have to put it in the context of becoming like God. Otherwise, I think mortality is the worst. For me. Seriously, I'm like, I can't be here unless these things are changing my nature and helping me become like him because if I do that then when, to experience sorrow and to experience grief and to allow myself to do so, knowing that it actually is helping me, or it can be if I'm choosing Christ and I'm not choosing anger for long term.

00:13:27 If I'm choosing him, then it can be for the development of my God-like attributes rather than just a hiccup of mortality that we get rid of because happiness means no sorrow. I mean, our father in heaven right now, can you imagine the sorrow of the way his kids treat each other? He lives right now in sorrow and in joy. You can feel them in the same space recognizing to your point, I don't know anybody who's like, I just love sadness. If I could have more of that in my life. Most of us are trying to figure a way out of it, but learning to sit in it and be with it can be really powerful by way of saying, okay, this is actually can be refining.

Hank Smith: 00:14:10 We live in a world of painkillers. I get kidney stones occasionally and I want this pain gone immediately. I'm begging my wife, take me to the hospital. When we get to the hospital, I'm begging the nurses, get this pain away. But emotional pain, there's not a painkiller.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:14:28 There's no ibuprofen.

Hank Smith: 00:14:29 Yeah. It just, you're going to sit with this for a while.

John Bytheway: 00:14:32 If you go through your life and your experiences are always shallow, then dare I say you could remain kind of a shallow person, but if your experiences are deep, you experience that kind of hurt and sadness, you also have great joy, your ability to empathize and to your heart to be touched for others when they're going through something, I think what you were saying, Lori, was you feel those things to help you become like God because he's feeling it too. You go through those depths of sorrow experiences, you become more of a deep person and you feel compassion for other people when they're going through it too. I mean, this whole book starts with, "There was a famine in the land." Now I'm coming from 21st century, I don't even know what that's like. I've never experienced what they call food insecurity. Imagine that and then all of this death coming as well. We go past that sentence in the scriptures a lot and there was a famine and no refrigeration, no preservatives,

but boy, I hadn't even thought about what that might be like. Like, I don't know what I'm going to eat tonight. And then you have a family. Wow, I just can't imagine.

Hank Smith: 00:15:49 Yeah. And she's in poverty. When you asked what would it be like to lose children, it's scary to even venture your mind there, let alone live in this situation. I just, oh, my heart just breaks reading this. And the more I read scripture, the more into it I get, the more I visualize, the more I see it and, you know, this is a heartbreaking thing to think of. And she even tells her daughters-in-law, right, Lori? Like, you can leave me.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:16:16 I'm confident there's women who are listening and men who are listening to this. My own mother included, lost a baby. I'm at four months driving to the mall and SIDS sudden infant death syndrome in the car seat, in the backseat. If there's an attribute of my mom that I admire probably the most, is her faith in God. So I think that there's people listening to this podcast that are, I would say, modern day Ruth's and Naomi's and Boaz's, but this particular in Naomi, they understand both the bitterness of soul and then the sweetness because to your point, there's not an ibuprofen for emotional pain and there is a God and an atonement that can take the edge off of. That's what makes me wonder to a degree because why does Naomi keep going? To your point, she's lost. I mean, they go through this right again historically if she loses her line and then also she's in Moab, which is not her land of her inheritance.

00:17:18 That's going to be back in Bethlehem. She's going to go back, the famine comes to an end. In verse six, she realizes that the Lord had visited people in giving them bread or another way of saying the famine in Bethlehem is done, so she's going to head back. And then even praises in verse eight, to your point in her own suffering, Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, "Go each to her mother's house, the Lord deal kindly with you." In this, the actual translation of the word kindly or to deal kindly is hesed as you have dealt with the dead and with me. I love the story here so much of Ruth because here's another cool thing about this book. So Ruth and Esther are our only female books in the Old Testament. This is a chapter that elevates women. I mean, even to say, "Go back to your mother's house" other than your father's house, is this focus here on this women.

00:18:15 So I think sometimes recognizing for just a minute, like the power of really faithful, real women who are struggling with a variety of things coming here though to [President Nelson](#) when he talks about hesed and he said, "hesed has no adequate equivalent. Translators of the King James version of the Bible

must have struggled with how to render hesed in English. They often chose lovingkindness. This captures much but not all the meaning of hesed. Other translations were also rendered such as mercy and goodness. It hesed is a unique term describing a covenant relationship in which both parties are bound to be loyal and faithful to each other." She acknowledges what they have done for her. John, when you talked about even like the feelings allowing us to be able to empathize with people, what came to my mind was Mosiah 18. The covenant that we make at baptism is this ability that we are willing to bear one another's burdens, which is what we see Ruth do in this beautiful way, even though we don't know that she's covenanted yet.

00:19:25 We know she's married and been married for 10 years, but we don't know that she's covenanted yet, but then comes in nine, this is for all of us too. We are willing to mourn with those that mourn and comfort those that stand in need of comfort. If I can point something out, the language of this, to mourn with those that mourn not to comfort those that mourn. And lots of times we try to give comfort to those that mourn because we're uncomfortable with their pain and the Lord says, I can comfort. The Holy Ghost, that's his role perfectly. He knows how, he knows what. Sometimes there are not mortal words that you could say to somebody in their pain that is going to make a single thing better. Just mourn with those that mourn. As we experience the sadness and grief, you got to believe that Ruth is going to be sitting in some pretty serious sorrow with Naomi.

00:20:19 When Naomi comes back and describes herself as bitter, those two are together full-time. It's probably not jokes and laughter all the way back to Bethlehem. They're both mourning the loss of Ruth's husband. There's some space in there to say, hey, this bearing one another's burdens that they may be light and hesed we see so beautifully in the daughters towards Naomi at this moment, which is, I would call a messenger of God.

Hank Smith: 00:20:46 Lori, I think also, what is Naomi like that these two daughters-in-law are saying, we want to stay with you. What kind of mother-in-law? No mother-in-law jokes, I promise. But, what kind of mother-in-law is she that her two daughters-in-law are widows and maybe they have a chance at a different life back in Moab. They don't want to leave her, neither of them. I think it tells you something about her and she's saying, you have to leave me. This broke my heart. It grieveth me much for your sakes.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:21:22 I actually, Hank, asked the very same question this time in reading it. I found myself thinking, man, what is it about Naomi?

This is where I say she's such an amazing model of hesed. She leaves everything, because there's a chance, or I think part of the reason Naomi encouraged them to go back that they could still remarry and still have kids and family in the Moabites. And when Ruth agrees to go, she doesn't know there's a Boaz. We have the end of the story, but they don't. Ruth just leaves saying, no, I will literally give up everything to take care of you, to show you love, to support, because she knows Naomi's probably going to be too old to glean the fields. Yes, there comes a point where they allow the, those who are poor to come and glean them, but age is going to wear on her.

00:22:10 She's not going to remarry because she's going to be too old of her own ... She's not going to have any more sons. She even says that. Essentially, right in verse 12, Turn again, my daughters go your way for I'm too old to have an husband. If I should say I have hope if I should have a husband also tonight and should bear also sons, would you tarry with them till they were grown? Would you stay for them from having husbands nay my daughters it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me. I love her thoughtfulness of them in a true mother heart. Like, no, please go. As hard as it is, I've lost everything, but will you please go because this in her mind would be best for them. You don't follow or pronounce for going, but you do see just this really beautiful love of Naomi and their behalf.

00:22:57 Like I love this tug of war of generosity between these two women. You go back because it'll bless you. No, I'm staying with you because it'll bless you. No, you go back because it'll bless you. No, I'm staying with you. And I actually don't want to hear another word about it. We love these verses so much in 16 through 18 as we see her come, which I think is just so beautiful hesed. I like to say this is how I feel about my Father in heaven. This would be my declaration to him. Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest, I will go. And where thou lodgest I will lodge and thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more also if ought but death part thee and me.

00:23:55 In order for Ruth to go and be buried away from her family is almost unheard of in the ancient world. Even so much so that when she gets to Bethlehem, she's known as the Moabite who came with Naomi. People are astonished at her faithfulness that she would leave her family, that she would leave her gods. As a Moabite, she probably would have been with Chemosh and she would leave, for her to say, your God will be my God, is also not

... At the time of the Judges, everybody's going after their own heart. That's actually how it ends in 25 that they did that which was right in his own eyes. A lot of them believed in just adding to gods and mixing it up. So for her to replace her gods with Yahweh is an amazing declaration to say, I'm giving up literally everything to take care of you, Naomi, and to stay with you. She just becomes this unreal model to me of hesed.

Hank Smith: 00:24:56

Lori, don't you think Naomi must have been telling these two about Jehovah because Ruth says, thy God will be my God. So one, she knows about Jehovah, and two, what has Naomi said about Jehovah? That this is her lot in life. These are her circumstances, and Ruth is still saying, I want that, that God. Naomi must be saying, yes, my life is incredibly difficult. Let me tell you about how great my God is. And Ruth is saying, okay. Because I might look at that and go, I don't think I want to follow your God. Your life has not turned out.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:25:37

Hmm. One of the things we don't know is, like, I mean, she was married to her son for 10 years, so we don't know what she actually knows about the Israelites other than whatever you would learn about their culture and beliefs. We don't have any record of any type of, like, conversion by what we would say, but this declaration seems to say, hey, I'm willing to go and become with that. But if it's true Israel, I mean, they can't help but it's who they are to speak of God and to talk about the God who has delivered and delivered her people and a covenant people. It's a beautiful question that I wonder also, like, what did she say and what did it sound like? And did they pray together? What was that like? There's a timeframe when I lived at home later in my single years and my mom was still single.

00:26:22

My parents had divorced when I was young so my mom didn't remarry till I was, like, 31 I think something like that. So I lived with her for a little while. I remember praying we would have family prayer was just the two of us and I love to hear my mom pray. I love to listen to her talk to God and especially pray for me. It meant the world to me. I wonder in these moments too if Ruth has had the gift of praying with Naomi and hearing her faith. It's a question mark. I love to wonder in scripture. Like I have lots of, way more questions than answers, but I think it's a fun wonder.

John Bytheway: 00:26:56

I just think sometimes in the scriptures, they stack these poetic things together For her to say, call me Mara, because wasn't it Mara where the water was bitter and Moses threw the tree in and it became sweetened and some have said that trees are people often in the scriptures and maybe this tree is Christ and

it made bitter things sweet. This whole story is how Jehovah can make bitter things sweet, I guess.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:27:24

Definitely it ends on that very note, John, like this, the end of the story in chapter four, when verse 16, and Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom and became a nurse unto it. And the women, her neighbors gave it a name saying, there is a son born to Naomi who is Obed. We'll get there I know in a second, but I think that that's a beautiful evidence of how the Savior does make this a sweetness.

Hank Smith: 00:27:52

Perhaps she knows the story. She's saying, call me bitter. Maybe it's a moment of faith too. He will make this sweet. We may have some listeners out there who have sons-in-law or daughters-in-law who you would say Ruth is not a member of the faith. I love that. For years, she loved her, as we might say it, her non-member daughter-in-law. You don't have very many examples of that in scripture, do you, of part member families? The way they've interacted and treated each other? I think it's beautiful. That phrase, you guys, I will go. I'm seeing that's coming up more and more in the Old Testament. Nephi had some examples to follow. Wasn't it Rebekah earlier who said, I will go?

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:28:35

This overall theme about life not turning out like you planned, I think you have a choice when it doesn't. You can either hunker down and express the anger and frustration to God, or you can go where he's taking you. When I graduated from BYU years ago, I don't even know who this person was, to be really honest. I can't remember the name. I just remember the talk. The talk was at my commencement was really simple of, you know, my wife and I, all I really ever wanted, we just wanted to serve a mission. So the second we got married, we started putting away money and saving for our mission. So their entire married life, they did it and they were thrilled and they were so excited that the day their last child graduated at 18, they started their papers. This is him telling us the story.

00:29:26

Starts the papers, go in for medical, zero signs, and she's diagnosed with cancer. He said, you know, we had that moment where like, are you kidding? Like this is all we wanted our whole lives and it's a righteous desire and we're trying to do and we've lived faithful. You know, he said that and he said, so we realized that in that moment we had a choice. We could either be bitter or we could create a new dream. And he said, so if I have one piece of advice for you guys as you graduate, go forward, it's to write your dreams in pencil. I would love to someday tell this man, he has no idea how that is exactly what my entire adult

life has been. Even if I go back to like middle school and high school, it has just been a constant deconstruction by the Lord of my desires and plans and hopes to a space of a constant, okay, where are we going?

00:30:19 I'll go where you want me to go. I don't always go happily at first, but I go, then on my way, I work on my attitude. And eventually I can look back and see Ruth has that eventually too. After when she does know Boaz and she's blessed with a child that she didn't get to have with her husband, I think it's a look back and say, man, I'm so glad I went. Lots of times I say, yeah, I will go because I want to be able to say I'm so glad that I went. It's a journey that I take with the Savior. Pick up in two, she goes and they get to Bethlehem, then comes her saying, all right, well, Naomi, I'm going to go and start to get us food. And culturally, what they would do is in the fields, they would leave the edges so that people who were poor, it was a covenant responsibility by Israel to take care of the poor and to take care of widows and to take care of refugees.

00:31:16 At this, we see Ruth is a refugee. Essentially, what they do is they leave that so that they can come and glean or harvest and pick up both on the edges. And then if we see this fun interaction, this is where I start to love the character of Boaz because Ruth is gleaning. She's starting to pull and gather that. Well, Boaz comes to the field in verse five, "Whose damsel is this?" He sees her and who is this? The servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab." She's not named. This is the woman we've all been talking about who left everything to be with Naomi. It is incredible. And she said, I pray, now her guts to go to him and say, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.

00:32:09 So she came and hath continued even from the morning until now that she tarried a little. Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearst thou not my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. The beauty of Boaz to say, you don't need to go and go to a bunch of here and I'm going to treat you not like a refugee on the outside. You come and you glean as if you're one of us. And he protects her. In nine, have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? Suggesting that perhaps it wasn't safe for women? Sometimes to go and do this, extra effort. You can glean anywhere in the field, not just on the edges. I'm going to protect you from anybody that harms you. And then verse 10 and her response, she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground.

- 00:32:58 Why? Have I found grace in thine eyes that thou shouldst take knowledge of me seeing that I am a stranger? I'm a refugee. I'm a foreigner. Why are you being so kind? And I love 11 because actually Boaz blesses like his response to her. It has been fully showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband. It's her own character, but I love that Boaz sees it. Then in 12 gives her a blessing which will become beautiful and later on too. The Lord recompense thy work or compensate and a full reward be given thee of the Lord of God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust. Wings are a symbol in scripture for power or protection, even shade. You have no shade anywhere and wings provide shade, so it's the safety and this protection for them.
- 00:33:55 But the Greek, I don't even know how to pronounce it official, but the Hebrew would be kanap, K-A-N-A-P. It's the same ones that are going to be when she asked for him to spread his skirt over her. It's this, essentially her asking for the fulfillment of this blessing that he's offering or praying for her. I think sometimes when we see the poor, we give the minimal fast offering or we do the small thing. We give the excess in our pantries to the food drive and Boaz is like next level.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:25 I just now colored in that phrase, the Lord recompense thy work. It reminded me of a poem of President Benson who does God's work will get God's pay, or one that he used to quote. You can't put the Lord in your debt. We never can. He honors those who honor him and...in time. Boaz saw, was so impressed with her loyalty. That verse 11 is awesome. I saw what you've done to your mother-in-law at the death of thine husband. I was going to mention something that only those who are in their 60s or 70s might remember. Speaking of changing names for different groups within the church, when I was a kid, I used to see posters for the M Men and Gleaners. They must have got the Gleaners, that was what to call the females were the Gleaners after Ruth. Does that ring a bell to you, Lori?
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:35:25 Oh yeah. We went through all the names historically, right when we, when the, in the counseling, the very first decision to even have any of them to not go by names, just be known by young women. So we went through all of them. So fun. John, when you brought up compensation too, my mind went to Mosiah 2 and King Benjamin, the concept of the minute, the second that you serve him.
- John Bytheway: 00:35:52 Immediately. Yeah.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:35:53 He immediately blesses you.

John Bytheway:	00:35:55	He doth bless you.
Sis. Lori Newbold:	00:35:56	And then he lends you breath that you may live and move and do according to your own and supporting you from one moment to where I say, if you should serve him with all your whole souls yet would you be unprofitable servants. So I think it's this compensation that he gives to Ruth through Boaz is again an evidence of a father in heaven more than is anything else. This moment is, yes, Boaz is amazing and we recognize where every good thing comes from and who every good thing comes through and clearly her Father in heaven couldn't be more grateful for her choice to go with Naomi and take care of her in whose wings thou art come to trust. That also tells us, I think, something about Ruth coming to know God, the God of Israel.
John Bytheway:	00:36:45	That was new to her, according to way that the story started. She was not an Israelite.
Hank Smith:	00:36:52	I don't know if either of you know this story. I bet you do. We have our own latter day Ruth. This article was written by Kristy Wheelwright Taylor, talks about <a href="#">Phoebe Woodruff</a> . Listen to how similar these two stories are. Phoebe was living with her family in Maine. She was baptized as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Maine in 1834 and she chose to follow her new faith. This is what she wrote. She said, "My friends marveled at my course." I think that's her decision, "as did I. But something within impelled me on. My mother's grief at my leaving home was almost more than I could bear and had it not been for the spirit within, I should have faltered. My mother told me she would rather see me buried than going thus alone out into the heartless world.
	00:37:43	When the time came for my departure, I dared not trust myself to say farewell so I wrote my goodbyes to each, leaving them on my table, ran downstairs and jumped into the carriage. Thus, I left the beloved home of my childhood to link my life with the saints of God." The next year, she ends up meeting Wilford Woodruff and they marry in Kirtland and you both know Wilford is like the world's greatest missionary. She serves some of those missions with him to England and the Fox Islands, other places. They serve a mission together from 1845 to 1846 in England and some of their children are left back in the States with family and friends. Then they lose two of their youngest sons in Winter Quarters and a nine-month-old daughter in 1848. They finally settle with the saints in Salt Lake City in 1850. Wilford Woodruff, the President of The Church, this is how he described Phoebe.

- 00:38:47 This is after returning from a mission. He says, "I soon found that the same spirit which had inspired her to embrace the fullness of the gospel, forsake her friends and go a journey of a thousand miles to enjoy the society of the saints and had united her heart and hand with my own and caused her to accompany me to the islands of the sea was with her still. Yes, Phoebe possesses too much firmness and faith in God and confidence in God to put her hand to the plow and look back or wholly give way to such trials and any other however great. She is determined like Ruth to forsake her kindred and country for Christ's sake and my own and the cause in which she is engaged. As I behold this principle beaming in her daily walk, heart and countenance, it binds my whole soul to her in love stronger than death.
- 00:39:42 Yes, that love that none partakes of except those in like circumstances and that man that will not love his wife with all of his heart after she has made such a sacrifice for his sake is not worthy of a companion or a standing in human society." How many people do we know of who gave up so much to join the saints? I love that Boaz says, oh, I've heard of you.
- John Bytheway: 00:40:08 Just a week ago from the time of our recording, I went to the open house of my wife's next door neighbor when she was growing up. It was his 90th birthday. His name is Wilford Bruce Woodruff. He was the stake president that signed our marriage recommend, so I told him I was once again grateful for that, but he, I think great-great-grandson of Wilford Woodruff. I wanted to give him a shout out because I, he, I think he listens.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:40:33 As you shared that, I've been sitting here thinking in some ways isn't this the call to every one of us to leave, whether it be a life that we knew or desires, again, going back to dreams perhaps that we had along those ways, like at some point I think in our relationship with the Savior, we all have to have that moment where we choose him above anything and anyone else. So each of us are coming out from, I mean, you could sub Moab for any land of dreams or expectations that you might have had. In an effort of hesed, when Ruth leaves, essentially she's choosing unhappiness because she's choosing to leave all of her posterity that she could have had if she had remarried in her mind. Again, she doesn't know there's a Boaz. My relationship with God ongoing, he's asking me to do things and leave behind what I thought my life would be, where I thought my life would go and even sometimes what I'm really enjoying currently to go somewhere new and do something different or hard.

- 00:41:47 Nephi's not begging to leave Jerusalem. In fact, chapter two tells us he cried unto the Lord and he softened his heart. Well, that tells you something about how Nephi felt about his experience. I think it's Elder Andersen that says, "Faith is not by chance but by choice." And each of us is backed up to a wall where we have to make that choice that even doesn't make any sense whatsoever other than the God that we know to go forward with whatever path is ahead of us. I have long loved the hymn, I'll go where you want me to go. If by a still small voice you call to pass that I do not know, I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine, I'll go where you want me to go. We prove fidelity to him, which seems so small compared to the fidelity he's proven to us and yet there is a demand that we do prove that because in the ancient world, faith is relational.
- 00:42:54 It's not about outcomes. Lots of times we talk about faith like, if I have enough faith, then I'll get this thing. I'll receive that blessing. I'll find my husband. I'll receive healing, like faith is always to an outcome of some circumstance in our conversation. I prayed for this and I had enough faith to have that. In covenant fidelity, our relationship with God, faith is all about relational. My faith is in Jesus Christ, not in an outcome, which is what allows Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego say, listen, we know our God is able to deliver us, but if not, we're still not going to worship your God anyway. And then the Savior's in the fire with them. For so many of us, like, I know that God can take away my cancer, but if not... I trust in a God who knows what is absolute best for me and my family and all the people involved in my circumstance.
- 00:43:48 I know God can find me a husband, but if not... I know that God can help my husband find a job, but if not... I know that God can lead me to somebody for my child to help, but if not... I mean, all of these spaces in my mind a different level of faith when we're talking about it's in a being. The one true being who understands perfectly everything about us because he took it on and he suffered it in Gethsemane so that he would know how to take care of us in our moment so he knew perfectly how to understand, how to carry, how to lift, how to bless, how to guide. He knew everything that I would think and feel when he asked me to leave Jerusalem. He knew how hard it would be for me. I think he literally looks upon us with like a deep gratitude that we go when we don't want to go because he's experienced all the emotion that we're going through in that moment and I think he loves us even more and it builds our relationship when I do those things that he asks and then I learn more about him and always, I mean, it literally always turns out for my benefit

long run, he never gives a timeframe for his blessings, which is so annoying

00:45:08 Lots of times, right? I'm like, yeah, like I'm reading some of these again, like, yeah, these are the promises. And I'm like, when do those promises come to pass? His timing is one thing for me, although I do recognize President Oaks reminds us that is part of having faith in him and we're going to see that with Hannah too and we get to her in a few minutes, like he has promised her and he never said when. As we look at the timing of it, if you're not receiving your blessings yet and if you're going where the Lord wants you to go, hang on, because he always, always fulfills his promises. He cannot not fulfill his promises or he will cease to be God. So you can trust that and you can go with that. This call, this example of Ruth is something that each of us is really going to have to say, I will go and then once I get there, like I said at the beginning of two, she goes and she gleans, but then this is what's wild to me.

00:46:06 If you keep going, then maybe it's me not understanding each world very well, but I'm trying to think of a more awkward request than when Naomi says, okay, now that Boaz, who by the way is their near kin or a family member, we find out, now go lay at his feet and essentially ask him to marry you. She says, okay. What? Like this moment of she is ongoing, like it isn't that she just came with Naomi. Okay, now go glean, she goes and gleans. Now she comes back and tells who Boaz is and the way that he treated her beautifully back to 2:20. "Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, blessed be he of the Lord who have not left off his kindness." Again, the word translates here to hesed, "To the living and to the dead and Naomi said unto her, the man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen," which leads us into the concept of a goel is what that translates or, or a redeemer and the goel at the time essentially too is Israel's covenant to care for widows.

00:47:15 The essential line is that if a brother passes, then the other brother has a responsibility to take care of, right? Or they have, they go down the line and this next of kin has this responsibility to provide for and take care of. And that's why they're often known as a redeemer, to redeem whether it be the land or the family, that's what the word translates into of goel, which is kind of a fun obviously moment we see Boaz who has no relationship other than knowing that Naomi is his family, come to redeem Naomi in this experience. The rule is the nearest of kin has the first opportunity of responsibility. There's questions about how Ruth knew which field to go to, because when she started gleaning, she didn't know that Boaz, she knows his field,

she didn't know that he was a family member, but by divine providence, she ends up there.

00:48:07 So does she have a feeling? We don't know, but we just know she ends up there and then Naomi's like, guess what? That's our family member. He is the next kinsman. Then if you jump to chapter three, then that's essentially what she tells her. She says, hey, verse three, wash thyself, anoint thee, put on raiment and get thee down to the floor but make not thyself known unto the man until he shall have done eating and drinking. She gets ready and she goes down to the threshing floor, which is typically where only men are working with the harvest, and he goes to bed or he lays down essentially to go to sleep. And then I love verse five because this is the statement of Ruth to Naomi's request. "She said unto her, all that thou sayest unto me I will do." What an amazing meekness and humility that Ruth possesses.

00:49:01 And then verse six, so she went down unto the floor and did it according to all that her mother-in-law bade her. Again, all that her mother-in-law bade her, she just followed her command. And I love here again, Naomi wants her daughter-in-law to be happy and to be married. You can also feel like this mom kicking in again, like this mama bear saying, hey, this is also an opportunity for you to receive blessings. And yes, it will also be a blessing for Naomi, but you know that she cares about Ruth's best interest as well. This has been a man who gave us far beyond what we should have with gleaning. This is a man who is our relative. God clearly has provided this. Let's go to capitalize on it. Then verse seven, she goes down and it says she came softly and uncovered his feet and laid her down and it came to pass that at midnight. The man was afraid and turned himself and the suggestion was maybe he was startled, maybe he recognized somebody who was at his feet. I mean, there's ... We don't know exactly what the reference is there.

00:50:05 "But who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid, spread forth thy skirt over thine handmaid for thou art a near kinsmen." So again, skirt here is the same word back in the other verse as wings in Ruth 2:20 and his response, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, for thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning." What a beautiful declaration of her character. "Inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich, and now my daughter fear not, I will do thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman." Then he does.

- 00:50:45 He said, I'll go, but there is one who is closer of kin. So I'll go meet with him essentially, and that's what you see in the beginning of chapter 4, he goes and he meets with him and the individual wants the land, but then once he tells him that he also has a responsibility for Ruth and Naomi, then he says, no, you can, you can have them. But he goes and fulfills everything that he promised her that he would do, which is pretty amazing to me.
- Hank Smith: 00:51:12 Yeah. It's interesting to me that Boaz, we don't know his whole story, right? We get Ruth's story and he's in the background, but he meets Ruth because he's keeping the law. He is leaving some of the grain for the poor. And Lori, you said that that was part of the law of Moses. I thought of President Uchtdorf's statement in seeking to answer other people's prayers we often find the answer to our own. He could have said, no, we're not going to leave anything for the poor. This is my grain. But in leaving that, doing what the Lord asked him to do, he finds the answer to his prayer. Little side lesson I love.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:51:51 I think that's beautiful as well.
- John Bytheway: 00:51:53 These wonderful things often happen when you're in the path of your duty. You're doing the right thing. And I love what Lori said about faith and outcomes because I think the first principle of the gospel is not faith, it's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes we might be trying to exercise faith in the outcome we want instead of putting it in the Lord's hands and saying, like you said, I'll go where you want me to go. I'll be what you want me to be. And that's an easy song to sing, harder to do. But that's where real faith is. My personal example was when my brother needed a kidney, we all thought dad has the priesthood, we'll pray our hearts out and we have faith that dad can heal David. And then it turned out that we had a member of The Seventy come and give David a blessing and we thought he was going to heal him and he didn't.
- 00:52:45 He said, your body will not reject the new element and he meant me. But it turned out to be such an amazing thing. In fact, this week was our 36th anniversary of that transplant, but it was should we exercise faith in the way we want it to turn out or should we just say faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and let him work out the details, which is, that's what real faith is, as you said, Lori.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:53:13 What made you want to give your brother your kidney 36 years ago?

John Bytheway: 00:53:19 I knew I had a spare. I mean, there's a lot of things. They tested the whole family and I was the closest match. I was a six antigen match. They tested six areas back then. I also, he was my oldest, firstborn son in our family and I wanted to help my brother. Of course, that was part of it too. And my friendship with my brother has never been the same since that day.

Hank Smith: 00:53:47 Yeah. He never gave it back, did he?

John Bytheway: 00:53:50 No. He wants the other one and I said I'm fresh out, but...

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:53:56 You remind me of Ruth and I know you wouldn't say it, but that's exactly what we're talking about. And it's amazing too because sometimes my devotion to God is easier for me than my devotion to another human to love a brother. Those are the kinds of moments we're talking about by character and development of becoming like God. With this faith, I thought a lot about President Christofferson's talk too on our relationship with God in April of 2022 and when he said we ought not to think of God's plan as a cosmic vending machine where we select a desired blessing, insert the required sum of good works. And three, then the order is promptly delivered. We do our best but must leave to him the management of blessings, both temporal and spiritual. What our heavenly father offers us is himself and his son. A close and enduring relationship with them through the grace and mediation of Jesus Christ, our redeemer.

00:54:53 In the midst of this refiner's fire, rather than get angry with God, get close to God, call upon the father in the name of the son, walk with them in the spirit day by day, allow them over time to manifest their fidelity to you. Come truly to know them and truly to know yourself. Let God prevail because we're at the point in the story now where Naomi sees after her choice to continue with a God who it seems like maybe at times could have abandoned or caused all this pain and grief for her. Now we see more clearly, at least maybe she recognized his fidelity to her the agreement for the marriage, the way that it works out and then the gift of a child and that will redeem Naomi's literally redeem her family line. She now has posterity and the way that it works is it's considered her posterity or her son's posterity because through Ruth.

00:55:51 So even Boaz being willing, yes, he'll be remembered also. Obviously here we are talking about him. But essentially this is the amazing gift too in verse 13. "So Boaz took Ruth and she was his wife and he went in unto her and the Lord gave her conception and she bare a son. And the women said unto

Naomi, blessed be the Lord." So even for Ruth, they say to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel, and he shall be unto the restorer of thy life and a nourisher of thine old age for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons hath born him." To me, that is a statement of a God who manifested his fidelity to her over the years.

- John Bytheway: 00:56:45 A restorer and a nourisher. Better than seven sons. A fullness of sons.
- Hank Smith: 00:56:54 Naomi finds out and maybe she recognized it all along, but [Jehovah](#) had never left her. Ruth was the manifestation of hesed for Naomi. This is a beautiful story.
- John Bytheway: 00:57:08 Then you just see this nod to the future. A son born to Naomi, they called his name Obed. He's the father of Jesse, the father of David. You're like, whoa, whoa. Here comes the royal, the kingly line.
- Hank Smith: 00:57:24 I don't know if this was intended by the authors, but as we read Judges last week, that it was really just a dumpster fire awful, just a terrible time for Israel. You might think, oh, the Lord has given up on them. But I love that this story started with in the time of the Judges. So Jehovah's still at work, even though the society is unraveling, he's at work here with this family.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:57:49 With even the whole concept of him being a goel or a redeemer, but I spent so many years wanting and desiring marriage. I've thought a lot about my covenants with the Savior. 15 years ago probably somewhere in there, I had this prompting to start doing sealings every month. At first, I was kind of ticked about it. I literally was like, Heavenly father, are you kidding? Do you know how mean that is? You want me to go typically with couples, go and join a group and listen to all the promises. I'll go where you want me to go because I know you and I know that you only ask that which is best for me. I do to my core know that God who would never, ever, ever ask anything of me that wasn't the best for me. Now it's not comfortable and it's not pain free, but it's the best.
- 00:58:46 So I started. So I've studied and I've thought so much about, for lack of a better way of saying it, I would call the redemption of marriage. Number one, it doesn't even ever happen, you don't have an altar without a savior. You don't have an opportunity to enter into eternal covenants without a savior. Every time anyone kneels at that altar, whether it be for a child to parent

or a husband to wife, I see him at the center of the ordinance and at the center of a covenant and of a reality of that promise. But I've thought about too how my role, my eternal role as wife and mother. You know, I was smiling and introductions are so weird. Sometimes you sit and I'm like, you know what? Just tell people I love the Savior. We don't need no stinking bio. Because those roles and those opportunities I had, they're not eternal.

00:59:43 What matters to me and what God has told me is that eternally wife and mother. I know for a lot of women and I fault no one who has pain around this because I also have a lot of pain around this of waiting upon the Lord in faith for this and yet I have had more than one witness that it is an eternal role and every blessing will be mine. Participating in sealings at least once a month for the last 15, 16, I'm probably closer to 20 years now if I'm honest about it, has been one of the greatest gifts God has ever given me. It has been a space where he has manifested and revealed himself and his nature and his character continually. And I have friends who can't or won't or don't want to for now and I don't blame them. Somebody says, if I say you want to go do sealings, no, I'm like, great, I'm going to go, let me know when you're ready.

01:00:40 Because of a variety of reasons, those words can sometimes hurt. They've done both for me. In the same breath, I don't know how to explain it. They've been so painful and so hopeful. In the same day. As tears of joy are going down the right side and tears of pain are rolling down the left side. I literally have experienced the mixture of emotion kneeling at the altar and I see a redemptive God and deep gratitude for that ask of him. Now, I don't do it because I'm supposed to keep a quota. I do it because I just am thrilled to get to that altar as often as I can. If I can't get married, I might as well do it for somebody else. That's sometimes my philosophy too. I'm like, I'm going to go marry other people today.

Hank Smith: 01:01:28 I like that. Tears of pain on one side, tears of joy in the other. It's a lot like Naomi saying, bitter and sweet.

John Bytheway: 01:01:34 Beautiful. Thank you for sharing that. The idea of a marriage being a redemption in here is really fascinating, isn't it? That's what you were getting to, right, Hank? Ruth marrying Boaz and Jehovah marrying the church. There's so much of that, Jehovah being the bridegroom that how could there not be eternal marriage when that is the metaphor that's throughout the scriptures all over the place?

- Hank Smith: 01:02:00 I see Boaz as the Savior saying, don't go to any other field. I will protect you. She falls on her face. Why have I found grace in thine eyes? She falls at his feet saying, I am willing to be yours. This would be a good little thought exercise maybe for a seminary class to maybe look at some of the aspects of this story and see Jehovah and Israel.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:02:26 In the Book of Mormon it says, you can have faith, hope, and charity, but essentially at the end of the day, beyond that, you've got to be meek and lowly of heart. [Elder Bednar](#) gave a talk on being meek and lowly of heart. He says, "The meekness is a defining attribute of the Redeemer and is distinguished by righteous responsiveness." We see that in Ruth. "Willing submissiveness," we see that in Ruth "and strong self-restraint." We see that in Ruth. Sometimes in scripture we talk often about humility, which I do love very much humility, but they're not the same quality. They're sister attributes. One thing of recognizing to his language, meekness is strong, not weak. It's active, not passive. I mean, again, just thinking of all the things we've seen in Ruth. Courageous, not timid, restrained, not excessive, modest, not self-aggrandizing. I always love that word. Gracious, not brash.
- 01:03:28 A meek person is not easily provoked, we're also going to see that in Hannah, pretentious or overbearing and readily acknowledges the accomplishments of others. This particular phrase changed me a couple years ago when he gave this talk. He said, whereas humility generally denotes dependence upon God and the constant need for his guidance and support. A distinguishing characteristic of meekness is a particular spiritual receptivity to learning both from the Holy Ghost. Okay. Yeah, good. We're good there. And from people who may seem less capable, experienced or educated, who may not hold important positions or who otherwise may not appear to have much to contribute. Sometimes in our culture, both church as well as just in our world, we decide that people who are famous or well educated are the ones who have something to teach us. I love the concept of learning from people who ... And if you ever deem somebody in your own mind as less than you in any way, shape, or form, then I hope your next thought is, so what can they teach me?
- 01:04:42 So if you make that judgment in the first place, I hope it is followed up with the meekness position of saying, wow, you're going to have experiences of things that I'm never going to have. What can you teach me? I remember particularly I was working downtown at the time that this talk was given and I thought about all the people that I passed in a day, some

begging for money, others in jobs that caused them to live paycheck to paycheck when I wasn't and then just a variety of life circumstance. I made it a goal. I was going to stop and talk to them and learn something every time. So I started that as my focus. So whether it be if you work at a gas station, if you pass on the street, I've done my best we're safe. I'll say that sometimes I recognize it's not always a safe practice, but in everywhere I can, it doesn't matter if I'm in line by Walmart, I'll usually strike up a conversation.

01:05:36 My family sometimes jokes about me being kind of that annoying person on an airplane, because I'll talk and tell you want to put your AirPods in. I'll give you that option. "Hey, just so you know, I'm a chatter. So if you don't want to, just tell me, you can put your AirPods in. But if you don't, then let's have a conversation because I want to learn from people and I'm striving to develop meekness. I love, again, that we see this demonstrated in Ruth's character. It doesn't seem like she's trying to develop meekness. She is just meek and the Savior is meek and I am not by nature. I am praying for it and I am seeking to develop it so that I do really, truly in my mind, believe that I need every one of God's children to make me better and to make me more like him and therefore I think Zion is built up of a people who don't rank themselves as the ones helping the poor.

01:06:33 They see themselves as helping the poor and as the poor who are being helped. If we're all honest, the humility and the meekness that is required to believe that I am no better because I have education, because I have a bed to sleep in, that I really am not. I'm grateful for those things, but it doesn't make me better than anyone that I have those things. We learn that so beautifully from technically a refugee. In the scriptures, she is a model to me of a Christlike attribute that I have been trying to develop for years.

John Bytheway: 01:07:13 Where would widows who have to glean to get their food, where would they rank in society? and what are we learning from them, as you said, Lori.

Hank Smith: 01:07:24 It's poetic. Don't overlook anyone.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:07:27 Kids, elderly, have the meekness to pause and say, you have experiences that I will never have. I think sometimes we long for the experience that more famous or more wealthy people have. We see what they have and we end up in this world of lack and I have found the quickest way to be grateful for the blessings that

I have is to learn and speak with everybody and I love his children and I need them.

- Hank Smith: 01:07:57 Lori, as we started today, there's a number of people we're going to talk about, obviously, but you said we're going to talk about Ruth and we've done that. And then you said you really wanted to talk about Hannah. John and I are excited to know why.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:08:12 Well, thank you. Thank you. Thank you for asking. And hopefully you'll be glad you did. A few years back, I was asked to do a lesson on [Hannah](#) with a group of teachers. At the time, I'm like, I really don't know anything about her, to be honest, other than like I knew she was Samuel's mother and all that kind of stuff. One of the gifts that maybe a lot of you can relate with is you love when you're asked to teach because it forces you to study. You don't always love when you're asked to teach. I do, but I know many of you, like, this is not your jam, but you do love the outcome of speaking or teaching and that you paid a price. That was my experience with Hannah. One of the things that helps me a lot in scripture is to pause and to say, okay, if Hannah were here, because Hannah and Ruth and Naomi, somebody else is telling us their story.
- 01:09:03 I got to be honest, when somebody else speaks for me, sometimes like, oh, you didn't get it right. Or like, hold on. I want to jump in and insert some really important details in my mind. Then I had this thought that maybe I would shift the way that I read the story to say, if Hannah were here telling me her story, what would she want me to know? The first time that I went into these chapters with that lens changed what I saw and what I understood about her and her character and her nature. For example, starting in verse one, there's a man named Elkanah and then it's verse two, he had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah. The name of the other was Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. What would she want me to know? From my own experience, I want children because I want children.
- 01:09:57 It isn't about a status thing. I don't know that I would assume for Hannah that it's only about that, that Peninnah has them and she doesn't, or that it makes the difference on how she's seen in society. From her character and her love for God, I think she wants to be a mom. So when I read this in verse two, I'm like, I resonate with that. I want children. And then verse three, "This man," meaning Elkanah, "went up out of the city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh." Shiloh is where the tabernacle is. Essentially, it's their way of attending

the temple, if you will. I think Hannah would say to me, hey, Lori, I married a really good man who loves me very much. If you go to verse five, he offers sacrifices and then he gives portions to all of his children and his wives.

01:11:00 So in verse four, it tells us that he gave Peninnah his wife and her sons and daughters portions of the sacrifice and then verse five. But unto Hannah, he gave a worthy portion for he loved Hannah, but the Lord had shut up her womb. I love that this evidence from him that he loves her and he wants her to know that he loves her and that he doesn't love her conditioned on her ability to give him children, her ability to give posterity, which again, matters so much even to men at that day as well. It's all across the board, but that's not why he adores Hannah. Because you read the story about Hannah, you can find a million reasons why he adores Hannah. It makes sense. I adore her also.

Hank Smith: 01:11:44 Coming up in part two of this episode.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:11:47 Sometimes I'd give the parent, I'd say, listen, you have an assignment to have a full conversation with a child without bringing that one thing up, not even one time. And they couldn't do it. They couldn't do it. A lot of them of their own admittance. And then I would work with them to come back and say, okay, let's figure out how to do this so the relationship could start to heal.



- John Bytheway: 00:00:01 Welcome back to part two with Dr. Lori Newbold, the Book of Ruth and 1 Samuel one through seven.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:00:07 On verse three, we're introduced to Eli, who's the priest and then his two sons who we're going to see in contrast in this story in chapters one through three, essentially one through seven, that these are men who are operating in a priesthood office and who are wicked in their choices. Just the awareness of the introduction of them here I think matters. In verse six, her adversary or the translation is her rival wife, if you will, provoked her sore. This comment going back to what we talked about with meekness that she's not easily provoked because we don't read anywhere where Hannah responds to Peninnah. She only takes her pain to the Lord.
- 00:00:51 She doesn't reply to Eli other than to declare she doesn't get offensive with Eli might be a better way to say it. Elkanah who says essentially, hey, am I not enough for you? I mean, all of these people who are coming, she takes her pain to God rather than lashing it out on them, which is not my skillset by the way. One of the reasons that I love and admire her is while her ability inherent is something I'm still striving for. Her rival wife provoked her sore for to make her fret and again because the Lord had shut up her womb. Maybe some listeners can really relate to this concept of saying, I have such righteous desires and God has promised me. I feel like perhaps he's even maybe given me the trial, or if not, he's allowing the trial that would prevent me from the fulfillment of this blessing. This makes no sense to me.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:51 I have a tendency to get frustrated with heaven when things don't go the way I wanted them to go or thought they should go, especially when it's, this is such a good thing so the word meek is perfect. The self-control to not respond to others who are antagonistic to her and the meekness to go to the Lord in prayer. This is an inspiring story.

John Bytheway: 00:02:14 Yeah, that's a great insight, Lori, that you had that she always took her problems to the Lord never complained against the other people.

Hank Smith: 00:02:24 Have you ever not felt understood by anyone in your life? Right. This Peninnah doesn't understand her. Elkanah doesn't seem to understand and even her priesthood leader-ish. Eli doesn't seem to understand. Feeling misunderstood by almost everyone in your life would be so frustrating. Again, her focus is, Lord remember me.

John Bytheway: 00:02:51 I am so deeply grateful for my life and the Lord's blessings. I had a little trouble finding someone who was willing to marry me that I wanted to marry. I remember more than once people telling me what I was doing wrong and I knew how hard I had prayed and how hard I was trying, and sometimes I thought you have no idea how stupid you look in front of me and God right now. Like you were saying, Lori, the only place I had to go was to the Lord because I knew he knew my heart every molecule of it.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:03:26 Culturally, we're way more understanding of a woman getting married later in life than we are a man and my heart has tons of compassion and I've had lots of conversations with friends in my stage of life who are also single, whether they're in a singles ward or men that I've been on dates with, that my heart aches because I feel they desire it also. There's lots of factors like, you know, another person that has to be involved in this one, particularly.

John Bytheway: 00:03:54 Like agency, fought a war over it. Yeah.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:03:57 I've also learned that some people want to talk to you about your personal life. They don't always know how to bring it up so they either try to joke or make comments that feel really insincere or unkind. And I have chosen in my mind to say, I'm going to choose to hear what I think you meant. Not what you said. What you said was not a good thing to say to somebody in my circumstance or my sister particularly, they struggled to have children for a number of years. Please don't ever ask a young couple when they're going to start their family. You have no idea what is happening for them. It's not the topic of conversation unless you're in their really close circles because I love this moment with Hannah where she's taught me this. They go up every year. In seven, they went up every year to the house of the Lord to offer and make an offering and she wept partially because Peninnah was provoking her.

00:04:57 She wept and she fasted and this was really hard for her, but I love that when she's in bitterness of soul in verse 10 and prayed unto the Lord, then Eli comes over to her. We'll go down to verse 13. "Now Hannah spake in her heart, only her lips moved." This isn't out loud, but this is her pleading, and we come back to her prayer in a minute. But her voice was not heard, therefore Eli thought that she'd been drunk. So her priesthood leader at the temple.

John Bytheway: 00:05:27 Thought she was drunk.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:05:28 By the way she's pleading and weeping thinks or accuses her, essentially, because in verse 14, how long wilt thou be drunken? So it's not even just a thought by him, it comes out of his mouth. Then says, "Put away thy wine from thee."

John Bytheway: 00:05:45 Hannah's like, let me rephrase that what I think you should have said.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:05:50 Because that's what she does. Yes. In order for her to respond, well, maybe not. She probably didn't have to reframe it. I've just had to learn to reframe it because she, no my Lord, my Lord, she still respects, like, I love this about her so much she respects his office. The dignity of his office, regardless of the comment that just came out of his mouth. "I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink. She just gives facts. I am not drunk. I poured out my soul before the Lord. It does not seem to me at all that she's resentful to him because of their interaction that continues on and asks will you please not consider me a daughter of Belial, which is worthless, good for nothing, right, wicked is her plea. Like, will you please not see me that way?

00:06:41 For out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto, which is this really beautiful declaration by her. You know, your initial question, Hank, of like, have you ever felt misunderstood? I'm going to lobby from the mental health side for just a second that every human is misunderstood by somebody at some point, even your spouse or your kids or your parents. There is just no way for us to understand each other to the depth of what's really happening in our hearts. If you ever want to push a button of mine, say something to me like, oh, I know exactly how you feel, because you don't. No two cases of infertility are the same. No two cases of singleness are the same, no two cases of divorce, no two cases of anxiety or depression or financial trouble. Humans are so much more complicated than that, that the only one and he only one knows

exactly how I feel and he reaches my reaching in my Gethsemane, my Savior and my friend.

00:07:51 I love that she knows that she can speak to a God who does know exactly how she feels and that when somebody else misunderstands her, she chooses with the meekness that we have been talking about to receive him well instead of becoming resentful and angry, which is what my friends do, speaking for her friend, just that concept of seeing him properly. I love this moment, what she teaches me about how to handle it when I am misunderstood.

Hank Smith: 00:08:23 I love that we have an example of human beings saying the wrong thing at the wrong time in all of the people in her life almost. You have one person being mean on purpose, a spouse not understanding, and a priesthood leader putting his foot in his mouth.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:08:39 She really is the model of still saying all of these factors and we know she's in the depth of pain. This isn't even like later on in life that's happening when she's had Samuel. She doesn't know she's going to have Samuel yet. She's in her pain and this is how she's choosing to respond. It reminds me of the Savior. He is being beaten and scourged and spit upon. He's still in pain and is choosing still to respond so masterfully and so kindly to those who are unkind to him. In this state, she still continues with the Lord. Maybe we can go back to her [prayer](#) in verse 11. This is one of those moments where I feel like the whole room goes away and you zone in on this moment with her and God. All the background noise is faded out. You see this singular focus.

00:09:38 I can't imagine the chaos going up temple time to offer sacrifices and all that's happening around her. And it is as if she and God are the only ones that exist in this prayer in verse 11, like you can feel it, she vowed a vow. O Lord of hosts. The title she chooses in this moment isn't by chance. I know a God of army and power who is over all. This is her declaration. I know you are over all. If thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me and never forget thy handmaid, but will give unto thine handmaid a child. Then I will give unto him the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head. And she continued praying before the Lord. I've always wondered what else she keeps saying. I want the rest of the prayer.

00:10:41 At the same time, I feel like I've written my own. I've had times where I admire her ability to keep praying in this. I've had times in my life where I'm like, Heavenly Father, I can't keep asking.

This is too painful and it makes me border resentful. I'm not resentful but I don't want to be. And if I keep asking you for it and you keep not granting it, then I don't want to resent you. I don't want to be mad at you. I got to stop praying about this. I remember for a period of years I stopped praying for marriage and children. And I said, listen, you know how bad I want and what I want, but I can't talk about it. I'm just going to trust that you know my heart and when the time is right. And I'm not in that space anymore, but I have had those times and I really believe that again, because prayer doesn't even always have to take the form of words.

00:11:34 If prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed, you can think a prayer, you can feel a prayer. It is connection with your Father in heaven. It is a yearning that doesn't always have to have language because I think sometimes there are not words when it comes to the deep things of the soul, to emotion and expression. I think we see that in here with her amazed that she could give words as she does promise God, I'll give him to you if you'll just give him to me for a little bit. I love that for her it is this space with him and how she's taught me and reminded me how you can pray. I love the line in I know that my redeemer lives, that he lives to hear my soul's complaint. We so often want to talk about you can't express those things to God. And I'm like, that's the very place you go with all emotion. Anger, fear, hurt, frustration, disappointment. Don't talk behind his back. Talk to him.

John Bytheway: 00:12:33 And he knows it anyway. You're not hiding it from him if you don't talk about it. You probably don't know this, Lord, but yeah. It reminds me of Romans 8:26. I've always loved this. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities. We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:12:57 To me, it makes 19, oof. I am so emotional on her, I probably should have warned you that that would be the case too. 17, Eli answers her, go in peace and the Lord God of Israel grant thee thy petition. Like, I just wonder what that moment was like for her. Again, she chooses to trust the promise given to her through her leader because it could have been like, I'm not sure if you know this, Eli, but we've been trying. Thank you for your cute thoughts, pat pat on the head. She just leaves and says, okay. In 18, she did eat. She went her way and she ate and her countenance was no more sad. And I want to say this in the most correct and tasteful way possible. When you are struggling with infertility, it makes marital intimacy very hard because there is so much emotion around once you have to start

tracking ovulation and you start tracking all of the things that go in with that, for those who've experienced it, they could attest to this that marital intimacy can become a very stressful and even contentious point in a marriage.

00:14:10 For me, one of the greatest statements and declarations of faith by Hannah is in verse 19 when it says, They returned to their house to Ramah and Elkanah knew his wife. That to me for what she has been through and how many times she has tried is an incredible statement of trust in God. Sometimes the very thing that is most difficult for us to do is what God asks when we're in pain. And the Lord remembered her as she pled in verse 11, please remember me. Forget not thine handmaid. This moment I marvel at in one of those lines that is almost a passing one when I was reading through on my own studying the feeling that if she was going to tell me her story, she'd want me to know, Lori, I had faith in God. I have faith in his power and I will do hard things because he has asked and he has promised and she has been such an amazing example to me in my moments of like, I don't think I can do this. And I remember, not only does the Lord remember Hannah, I remember Hannah. She is an inspiration to me to help me come unto him. I just cannot wait to thank her someday in person.

Hank Smith: 00:15:44 Thank you, Lori, for this. This is beautiful scripture study when you go slow enough and you notice the details, the phrases, what's said, what's not said. I think of, and you both have had young women in class who want to go on a mission, but for some reason can't any young person really that wants to go on a mission but can't for maybe mental health reasons or some sort of medical issue, whatever it is. They feel misunderstood by everyone around them and they're, don't you know how bad I want this? I would love to be able to contribute. It sounds like she wants to contribute. I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life. Reminds me of [President Nelson's](#) talk. Landmark, of course, you both know the Peacemakers Needed. He says, "If a couple in your ward gets divorced or a young missionary returns home early or a teenager doubts his testimony, they do not need your judgment. They need to experience the pure love of Jesus Christ reflected in your words and actions." Interesting that you can find so much relevancy in antiquity. This is an old story. Lori, you bring it to life.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:17:01 I thought I had this quote on my phone. I'll paraphrase it because it hangs up on my mirror actually and has for the last 15 or so years because I do know that there's a lot of women listening to this and men who long to have children. I love, love, love [President Oaks](#) and how strongly he testifies of the [family](#). I

know that for some, it's painful with how strongly he testifies of the family. I've had to really work to say like, where do I sit with all of these things and how can I come to a place where when I hear that strong of a testimony and the role of a woman that it doesn't cause me to be mad that he's testifying of it. President Oaks, Latter-day Saint women understand that being a mother is their highest priority, their ultimate joy. Okay, so 44, no kids in my home, and yes, I recognize that I get to bless students and I get young women and I have nieces and nephews and I've had the sacred privilege of being told that I'm like a second mom, like I love those have meant so, so much to me.

00:18:13 Then to hear this without again it not being overwhelming, awful things, I realized one day [Elder Maxwell](#) talks about that God lives in an eternal now, that past, present, and future are before him all the time. Since that is true, if future is before him and he has promised me that I will be a mother, then in his eyes I am a mother now. So I am a mother now, which means what for how I live as a single woman in my 40s. I have carried this verse in Jarom with me in the Book of Mormon. There's just really a phrase from it. They're talking about essentially when the Savior will come. In Jarom chapter one, verse 11, I found the way to be happy now and then continue to fulfill that role for me now. He jumps down to the middle, he said, "The prophets and priests they did labor diligently exhorting with all longsuffering the people due diligence, teaching the law of Moses and the intent for which it was given, persuading them to look forward unto the Messiah and believe in him to come as though he already was."

00:19:29 I realized in that moment that I could live as though I am a mother now. That means the things that I have on my walls in my home, then the entertainment, the music, the types of behaviors and how I don't want a huge life shift when little kids come into my house. I don't want to be like, well, great, because I chose to be a mom, I have to give up this and I have to give up that. Like I don't want them to be a pain to my single life. They deserve a mom who loves the Savior. They deserve to come into a home that is most like the one they are leaving when they come here. There has been more than once when my ability to keep my covenants has been because of my thought of them and almost as cheering on in my mind, I remember particularly I was struggling in my teenage years as my parents with divorce and normal teenage stuff.

00:20:29 I was talking to a leader at an activity and the comment was made to me, hey, Lori, just remember something. Your children are praying for you. They are hoping, I'm like 13, by the way,

and at first it felt a little weird but then it didn't at all at the same time, right? I'm like, wait a minute, what do you mean my children? You have kids, right? They're going to come into your home someday. Next to you, it matters more to this group than any other that you stay faithful to the Savior in your trials. That stayed with me from age 13 on to think about my children, like when I was in high school, choices that I made, is this fair to my kids? Is this the story that I want to tell them someday? Is this what I want to bring them into?

00:21:19 Every year that passes has been painful. I feel like I know it sounds a little dramatic at times, but maybe some women can resonate with this or men, but I feel like every birthday that I had was a death of another child for me. Until the Lord shifted this as though a phrase for me, which wasn't till my mid- 30s, by the way, the living for them, yes, that governed me up till then, but then to realize that I am a mother now came in my 30s. Now I don't hate Mother's Day. I am a mother now. I can live that way and I can act that way. I know that God remembers me. So the other quote that I have hanging by Elder Maxwell that I don't have in front of me is the one that just said that sometimes perhaps there's a special form of patience when you really want to become a saint and it is connected to having something to lay on the altar and then not being required to lay it on the altar.

00:22:15 And he said, presumably that when we say I'm willing to go where you want me to go, I'm also saying I'll stay where you want me to stay. I wrestled with the Lord. I'm like, am I not good enough? Do you not trust me? All of those prayers that I'm like, what's wrong? Like, am I a bad influence? What do I need to change? When I can say him saying, no, Lori, you will be an amazing mother. It's just not time. To have it to lay on the altar and then not be asked has been this space in my relationship with him that has actually been amazing because I know him and he sits with me in the heartache. The Savior is the only one who understands because of his atoning sacrifice what it's like as a woman to want to have children, what he suffered and experienced and then to not be blessed with it, but to know that he gets that pain and therefore he sits with me in it and carries me and strengthens me and I love every ounce of him for it.

John Bytheway: 00:23:20 I've never seen some of the things that you've shown me here. This is great. And I liked what you said earlier. We paint singles with a broad brush: singles. And there are so many different kinds in there. Never been married, have been married, have been married with kids, we're, you know, never got... All that

stuff and I hate that we do that because we're defining people by something they lack. We need a better word. So fun to put a new hero in your hero Hall of Fame, isn't it? I always knew about Hannah, but now I'm seeing things that Lori's showing us there is like, wow, this is really impressive.

Hank Smith: 00:23:57 Yeah. It seems that Hannah's faith, like Lori said earlier, is not in the outcome. She wants the outcome. That's valid, right? To tell the Lord what you want, but then my faith is in him. Nevertheless, like you said earlier with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, nevertheless.

John Bytheway: 00:24:17 But if not.

Hank Smith: 00:24:18 Yeah. But if not, I believe.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:24:20 You see that too because it's clearly not just in the outcome because as we progress in the story and then she's blessed to get pregnant and then she names him Samuel in verse 20 because I have asked him of the Lord. Samuel also means heard of the Lord or heard of God. Then she gets these really special sacred years of being with him where Elkanah continues to go up to the temple and she says, when I've weaned him, then I'll take him. Scholars suggested the weaning's probably like two to four years sometime in there. Old enough, obviously, that she can just leave him without a mom. I wonder what those are like for her. We continue to see her character because you look in 24, that when she had weaned him, she took him up with her and not just with that, but with an offering to God because now she has her outcome.

00:25:16 She has her baby and she's about to give him back. Her faith isn't conditioned to what God giving her the thing she's praying for. It's in the God that she loves that she keeps her promises. It's so interesting to me when I'm begging for the Lord for the fulfillment of his promises and literally every week I break mine every week, sometimes every day, which is why I'm so thankful for the sacrament table and I'm so grateful that he's not like, well, you didn't keep yours so I don't have to keep mine. This unreal God who is so, so generous in helping us in 27 and 28, which I've heard many women over the years recount, especially when they've sent off missionaries and I'm sure that the men have too. I just have sat probably in more relief societies than elders quorums. And by probably I mean a lot.

00:26:09 So, for this child, I prayed. And the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore, also have I lent him to the Lord as long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the Lord and he

worshiped the Lord there. At the time, most Levites, when they would go serve, it's about 25 to 50 years, though they're the 25 to 50 year olds, but she's bringing him at age three. So you see this space, then she immediately goes to this praise of who God is as well in chapter two.

- Hank Smith: 00:26:44 This feels like an Abraham-like sacrifice. You pray for this child, you get it. I know the Lord wants him back. I was really mad at John Bytheway, when I sent my son on a mission. I texted him and I said, you did not tell me how hard this was. You've done this five times. It ripped my heart out and it's two years and I still get to talk to him on Mondays. It was a privilege. I know what a blessing it is to have children, but I'll tell you, I didn't want him to go. When he was 15, I would have sent him easily, right? I would have said, send him. Like-
- John Bytheway: 00:27:31 Speaking of stacking themes, here is somebody giving up a son. God so loved the world he gave a son. Abraham giving a son, like you said, Hank, and here's Hannah giving a son. Wow.
- Hank Smith: 00:27:43 Lori, I might be wrong here, you'll have to correct me, but I don't think anybody else knows about this promise. So she could just keep this to herself and say...
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:27:56 Right.
- John Bytheway: 00:27:58 Nevermind.
- Hank Smith: 00:27:59 This is pure integrity. I made this promise.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:28:04 That's a great point.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:05 And I'm going to keep it. And then this is the ultimate to me of this is not my child and this is your child.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:28:14 So now Eli takes him and is going to help him. He's going to serve as brought up all the way back at the very beginning we point out that you have Phinehas and Hophni who are Eli's sons. Clearly the people are aware that they are not stellar examples and by that they are eating the best of the offerings. They're taking it from people and then they are also sleeping with the women when they come for sacrifices. What you have now is, I wonder, this is a question mark, I don't know what Hannah feels about leaving her three-year-old boy with Eli. This is one of the trickiest spots where we see a comparison in parenting in scripture because it isn't so much that Eli's sons are making the choices that they are making that God rebukes Eli. It's for not

correcting his sons. So he's quick to correct Hannah for being drunk, but he's not quick to correct his own sons who are in a priest role and are taking advantage of the faithful members who come up.

00:29:22 But I did want to make one more comment going back to Hannah, because I love she offers Samuel. Then in chapter two of verse 21 is just one of the sweetest things. Again, she doesn't know this. She's been barren, but then God, it says, "The Lord visited Hannah so that she conceived and bare three sons and two daughters and the child Samuel grew before the Lord." Even going back when we talked about Ruth and the compensation of the blessing, you see that again with Hannah. She keeps her promise, the one that nobody knows about but her and God and he blesses her with more. Like abundant, a womb that was closed is clearly open and five more kids. Amazing evidence to me of Heavenly Father remembering her, caring for her and rewarding her for her offering to him, which to me is just this incredible one. We can jump back. He's going to be raised at the temple so that when we get to chapter three, you're going to see that it's when Samuel has the calling of a prophet, it's going to be Eli that he is, goes to and thinks is speaking to him when it's actually the Lord.

Hank Smith: 00:30:36 Now, Lori, as we move into chapter two, just like Ruth, Hannah is going to show up in the beginnings of the New Testament. I love how poetic this is that these two women who aren't born to any sort of privilege are the opening of the story of the Savior's life.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:30:57 I think that's a telltale actually about what's truly remembered. It seems like in the history books we remember tragedy and evil or you remember faithfulness, not always wealth or fame but saying that lots of times fame is accompanied by wickedness or falls. But as far as righteousness, like we see that she's remembered by us again, like God remembers her, but we remember her because of her faithfulness. I love in chapter two. This is the other element. So she's just left her son. The first thing that she feels to do is to praise the Lord. Just to start with even the title of the Come, Follow Me for the week, because I think this is such an amazing way to frame these two things. If we go back to again, everything in my mind being framed to the plan and while I'm here on earth to become like my father in heaven, then an opportunity to praise.

00:31:56 Hannah prayed and said, "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord. Mine horn," and horn is a symbol, right, in Hebrew for power, capacity, "is exalted in the Lord." And I love that immediately

she gives credit. I know where my blessings come from. I know where my strength comes from. And then "my mouth is enlarged over my enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee neither is there any rock like our God." I think this is a really fun set of verses. So maybe two things that I would invite listeners to do. One is to just identify what she says about who God is. Wherever you're at in your faith, what can you learn from Hannah about why you can trust God because of who she praises and how she praises. The second fun exercise, which I think to do is to write your own.

00:32:55 With the Passover and the increased focus on Easter, one of the things that they do is called the Dayenu, which is this recounting of all the things that God has done for them. Essentially the line is that if you'd done these things for us, it would have been enough. Just this recognition of the blessings that God gives and of his sufficiency. This year, I wrote my own Dayenu and it was like one of the most spiritual hours or hour and a half. I mean, I'm no writer, but I am a journal keeper in hopes that someday my kids will be able to know parts of my life that they weren't born for. I've kept a record so that they'll know who I am just because I'm going to be an old, old mom. But in regards to that, I kept these notes and this letter, so I decided to write this and just say, Lord, if you had done this for me, then it would've been enough.

00:33:47 And as I went through this, it was just this amazing recounting of my life. This is one of those moments where I said, when you're saying I'll go where you want me to go, I want to be able to say, I'm glad I went where you wanted me to go. And I can look back and say, wow, I'm so glad that I went where you wanted me to go. And an exercise like this really helped me to see what he has done for me. And you feel that for and from her. That's one of the things that I love about these set of verses were in her praise, but I don't know, what about you two? What do you guys like about these verses?

John Bytheway: 00:34:20 I know some of our other guests like Michael Ballam would really love that it's a song, that it's a hymn. All of a sudden it's reminding me, Hank, when you referred to the early part of the New Testament, I'm thinking also of Mary's magnificat, my soul doth magnify the Lord and she sounds just like Hannah. It's not about, I'm so lucky. I'm so great. I'm so awesome. It's all about. God's so great. God's so awesome. God's so powerful. And look what he has done for me.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:34:49 I don't know if we know this, but do you think Mary was inspired by Hannah's writings?

Hank Smith: 00:34:55 Oh, 100%. At least she knows the song and the song is based on Hannah's prayer. How beautiful that the mother of the son of God, hundreds of years later is singing a song based on what Hannah says here. That to me is a pen to the heart, just, oh, that's beautiful.

John Bytheway: 00:35:15 It's there in the footnote, footnote 2B at Luke 1:46, Magnificat. It also shows that Mary, who some scholars think was a mid-teenager, was well versed in her Old Testament or her scriptures.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:35:31 Yeah, it's beautiful.

Hank Smith: 00:35:33 I think of her mother, Saint Anne, singing this song to Mary when she was a little girl.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:35:40 Well, in both of them, it's a double prayer. I mean, it's the spirit of my relationship with God that I'm praising and also for the opportunity to be a mother. I had this conversation with students last year and it was a bit of an epiphany for me. I was teaching an eternal families class. I had some young women express that essentially the feeling that their potential is greater than just motherhood as far as education and making a difference in the world and that's a pretty common narrative. I want to be really careful to not ever criticize the feeling of like your potential. I don't think you have to put down the role of motherhood. Sometimes we'll say, well, like, I'm bigger and better than a mother. When again, I go back to what my eternal roles are and I've shared that with them, right? Of all the titles that I have, the degrees or whatever else you want to put behind your name, the scriptural one that God talks about is motherhood and the epiphany that I had is I was like, you know, it's funny when we talk about how cunning the adversary is because when we talk about women, what we're saying is your potential is greater than motherhood.

00:36:49 When we talk about men, we're flipping. It's the opposite narrative. We're so mad at men for being deadbeat dads is the conversation in our society today. And I'm thinking to myself, nobody is telling a man that if he works, he is living beneath his potential. It's like the opposite. Our social narrative has become so, so cunning and causing women to misunderstand identity and priorities to some degree. Now, I also love going back, Hank, when you brought up the quote by Elder Andersen about as far as when and not to have kids is between you and your

spouse. I think the same thing is true as far as work. My parents divorced and I came from a home where I had a working mom. My mom worked three jobs for most of my teenage years to provide for us. She was educated and so it didn't ever occur to me that there would be a lesson or anything comparison in there.

00:37:44 I will tell you that I know of all the things that my mom has done in her life, she would tell you because she consistently emphasizes that her greatest joy, truly her greatest joy is us. And every one of her children would tell you that when we are around her, we know she values nothing more than us. I even think she went to work because she had to provide for us and she was well revered in her career and has had awards for the contributions that she has made in her career, but I've never heard one time. I kid you not, not one time in my entire life when somebody's asked her what means something to her, never a comment about her success as a career woman. It is 100% about her joy and her children and her grandchildren and now her great-grandchildren. I love that this prayer like of praise by Hannah and by Mary is this joyful opportunity to be a mom.

00:38:44 I do want to make a comment because there are a lot of women today now who have loved and wanted to be stay-at-home moms and we've almost flipped the narrative as if they are bad for wanting that or if they're less than because they don't desire a career or because they find joy in being a full-time mother and that that is the greatest development of their potential. I think it's important to speak to that just as I would say I don't fault the woman for working. I don't fault the woman for not like, it's a really beautiful space to find joy in motherhood and recognize that not all of us get to live our ideal in any way, shape or form, but I love that in this circumstance we still see that the catalyst, I guess, is the word for this song of faith and this praising of the Lord is connected to the gift of being a mother.

Hank Smith: 00:39:40 The principle of remembering what God has done for you, writing it down like you are, Lori, and drawing back on it in future times. John, we've talked about this many times, but I don't know if you can talk about it enough. Writing down your experiences, writing a song, someone wrote a song about this about Hannah's experiences.

John Bytheway: 00:40:03 Someone sent us an email and they talked about their ward had a project. It was their acronym was H-O-T-L, Hand of the Lord, where you're going to document the hand of the Lord in your life. Then do what King Benjamin might say, put it before your

eyes so that you don't forget how often you've seen his hand in your life.

- Hank Smith: 00:40:24 Even these incredible experiences can fade. They can have a short shelf life if you don't write them down.
- John Bytheway: 00:40:32 And then write a song about them, yeah.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:40:36 I found that my prayers were shifting so much to either lamenting about my frustrations with my circumstance or asking and asking and asking God for things. I did thank him, but as the primary order of things, like I began by saying, Dear Heavenly Father, I thank him for blessings and humbly I ask him and then move on. But I realized that I wasn't as sincere in this recognition so I got a whiteboard and I made a list of things that I want to praise him for and make sure that I thank him for. It's not every time I pray because that's not possible, but I do take time to go have different prayers and those prayers are ones of just to praise. The hymn As Now We Take the Sacrament, there's this line: contemplate thy lasting grace, thy boundless charity. I realized that for a long time I was going to the sacrament feeling so heavy about all the things that I'd done wrong and begging for forgiveness for that, but that hymn was like, that's not what we're thinking about actually.
- 00:41:39 What we're thinking about is his grace and his boundless charity. And when I started shifting to that, clearly my sins came to my mind because those were amazing spaces for him to exercise charity in my behalf and then also to give me grace and pull me out of it. Anyway, the short is in the last however many years, my prayers have shifted, not every single one of them, but I do take times to make sure that I do this in my prayer so that I'm having a more holistic approach to who God is to me. Yes, he is a God who can help and bless and direct and guide and he is also the God who has done so much. Remembering what he has done gives me hope and courage of what he still can and will yet do for me.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:25 Right. Yeah, it's exactly the same God that did those things for you in the past. Well, he's not done with you.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:33 It's almost as if Hannah says, remember me, and then the Lord turns around and says the exact same thing to Hannah. Remember me.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:42:43 I do think the Lord seems to want to emphasize the importance of righteous parenting in a society currently where I tell you, I'm

watching my siblings raise teenagers. It's tough. The moral code and the decisions that they have to make and the things that these kids are facing in elementary school and middle school, I mean, it's like, you know, half the time of like, what do I, what hills do I die on? What do I teach? What do I not teach? How do you teach acceptance of love and also take a stand on morals? It's a tricky space there, right? And we see in here, we see Hannah who's longing to be a parent so blessed and gives her child to the Lord. Then the Lord has this experience where Eli, his sons, as we've already mentioned, have this responsibility, a very sacred responsibility at the tabernacle with the repentance offerings essentially of what their role is as priests to represent the Savior and Eli does not stop them essentially from this sin that he knows that they're involved in.

00:43:59 I think there's a big difference. Clearly they've been taught and I would say lots of parents have taught their kids today. Now the Lord is not rebuking Eli for their choices, but he is rebuking Eli for not stopping them in the role that they're in and their choices. You can stop them as functioning as priests and then they can still go do whatever they've been doing because they have agency. I think it's important to distinguish the two here because it seems to be that Eli's more concerned with what his sons think than what the Lord is thinking.

Hank Smith: 00:44:35 Yeah And that's the Lord's statement. You honor your sons above me.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:44:43 Yeah, what verse are you in there, Hank?

Hank Smith: 00:44:45 That's 29.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:44:47 Even conversations with people, they're almost afraid now to teach any type of moral or value because of the fear of their kids being judgmental or not accepting or not being accepted socially along those lines that we can if we're not careful pull back from teaching truth. That's a caution as we go forward in our day and more and more seems to be okay and we're tired. I don't think you have to repeat and repeat. On my mental health side, I worked frequently with teenagers. Then I would typically do a session or two with the teenager and the parent. I can tell you that parents love their children. They want to make sure that they're taught well, like a lot of, a lot of LDS parents, a lot of Christian parents, oh, a lot of parents in general, they really want to teach them well sometimes to the point where they belabor it so heavy on the kid that they actually start to damage the relationship.

00:45:44 I would ask the child, let's say for example, whether it be depression or whether it be gender identity, a number of things, I would say, do you wonder what your parent thinks about this? And they're like, no. Do you want me to give, which speech do you want me to give? Like verbatim, they could tell me the things that have been said to them. And then I would meet with the parent and the parent obviously out of love and I do mean love and sometimes fear for where this direction and this trajectory, and I don't, again, I don't blame them, they would tell me what they wanted to say and then I would ask them, I'm like, if you never spoke of this thing again, whatever the topic, if you never said another word, would your child know how you felt about it?

00:46:25 And they were like, yes. Okay, so my next question is, does your child know that they still have a seat at your table, that they're still welcome in your home, that they're still part of your family if they don't choose your faith, if they don't choose the sexual identity that you would like, if they don't choose, I mean, fill in the blank of whatever it may be, do they know that? And the parent would say, well, I would hope so. And I'm like, you should ask them. Or we'd pull them in together and we would do that type of session, that conversation together and saying, if I could help the child, lots of times they were super scared to bring it up to their parents because it had usually turned into a huge fight. But if I could help the child and advocate with them just to say, hey, I know what you think and I disagree or I just want to set different perspective for now. And then for me to be able to say, okay, you understand each other.

00:47:19 Actually, you do understand each other. You think you don't, but you do. Now can we go forward with just agreeing to disagree on what this looks like or how this goes and where can we find peace and strength in the relationship? And sometimes I'd give the parent, I'd say, listen, you have an assignment to have a full conversation with the child without bringing that one thing up, not even one time. And they couldn't do it. Like they couldn't do it a lot of them of their own admittance. And then I would work with them to come back and say, okay, let's figure out how to do this so the relationship could start to heal. It's not necessarily that we're saying at all costs, you have to keep telling your child over and over again that God is not okay with this decision that we as covenant members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints don't believe in, fill in the blank, like they know.

00:48:09 That conversation doesn't actually need to keep being had. You get to have standards in your home, for sure you do. And my

experience is most kids respect that when their parents do that. But if you go to a restaurant and they want to order alcohol, quote unquote, that might be a different conversation. And I'm not trying to make it a clean, easy cut. I don't have a judgment because I just don't know what it's like in the relationship, but I think our father in heaven is to me the most amazing example of the perfect parent whose kids have chosen otherwise at times and it does not mean he failed as a parent because if the child doesn't choose the thing you want him to choose does that mean you're a bad parent or you didn't do it right or you didn't teach him well enough because if by that definition then heavenly father, a third of his kids didn't even come, then does that mean he's a bad parent or does that mean agency's a thing and he still is loving and patient and reaching out?

00:49:09 I mean, can you imagine if every time you prayed the first start of heavenly father's response he was like, well, you know I told you not to do that right? You know I told you that won't lead to happiness. You know where this is headed, you know, you know, you know, like that sort of moment, he doesn't do that with us, which I think he's the most amazing model of how to handle when your kids are choosing differently than you would like. In my mind, that's just one important side to recognize this that he's not rebuking Eli for their choices, but he is rebuking Eli because they have a position of responsibility for being more fearful of his sons than he is of trusting God in that.

Hank Smith: 00:49:50 Lori, you've told me before that there's a statement you wish a parent would never say to a child. Can you tell our listeners that?

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:49:59 It's just the phrase of, I still love you. I've heard that frequently used by people that I have both friends and then also people that I worked with in a way of like the LGBTQ community, that that's been told as if love was conditioned on my sexuality while some parents are trying to make sure that I love you to me is very different than I still love you. Even with all you've done, I still love you. God doesn't say to me, Lori, with all the ways that you've offended me, I still love you. He just says, Lori, I love you. I want you.

Hank Smith: 00:50:36 I always have. I always will.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:50:39 Mm-hmm. Again, hesed.

Hank Smith: 00:50:41 Yeah.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:50:42 I am in [relentless pursuit](#) of you and I am doing everything that I can in every way to show you my love and to have you desire to be with me and to be like me. I think that that's an important one. You can say I love and they may, I don't know if they wonder or not if you still will, but I think some do wonder that if they don't choose the lifestyle that you would like, if they don't choose the faith that you would like or that matters so much to you, then can you love them as much as their siblings who did or whatever. So just that assurance of, I love you. I think that's a beautiful space.

Hank Smith: 00:51:21 I wonder if Eli had fallen into a false dichotomy that parents, including me, often fall in, which is either I have to be high love or high demand, and he was like, well, I'll be high love. And then other people like me fall into, well, I'll just be high demand. There is a way and God shows us there is a way to be both high accountability and high love. You can do both. You don't have to fall into the trap of, well, I've got to be the good guy or the bad guy. There's a way to be both high care and high accountability. Sometimes you have to be a little more creative, but there's a way to do that and Eli seems maybe to be high care but not high on demand, on accountability.

John Bytheway: 00:52:11 As a young adult, I'm grateful for people who did not say, oh, you're great, but would say, I love you so I want to tell you about a blind spot that you have that you haven't even noticed, which was a harder conversation for them, but for me it was, wow, that person really does. I mean, it's like whom God loveth he chasteneth. As a young adult, I was thankful for people who would say, you've got a blind spot.

Hank Smith: 00:52:39 Well, parenting is such an intimate thing. When we start talking parenting, you're like getting into the most sensitive parts of our lives. So we hope everyone listening is saying, what was it that you told us Lori? I want to hear what you're trying to say...

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:52:54 Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:52:55 ...on this because you're right. The Lord does seem to be very concerned with Eli's parenting.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:53:02 Don't be afraid to apologize as the parent when you're in the wrong, because guess what? You're going to be wrong. There is not a parent who has always made the right decision, always said the right thing. You can't be mortal and do that no matter how well intentioned you are. Having worked 20 plus years with teenagers in a variety of settings, when I talk and they come, whatever conversation we've had about parents, they're just

like, my parents never apologize. My parents are never wrong. That sort of thing. I even had a student say to me one time, he's like, I just wish one time. One time they would say to me, oh man, I messed that up. And he goes, instead of everything being my fault all the time. And I thought, you know what, that's actually really a beautiful statement because you do and kids respect that. They're forgiving and you're actually teaching them life skills by acknowledging that.

00:54:01 I know this is pulling outside of the story. [Elder Rasband](#), three phrases that we all need to adopt, "I'm sorry. Thank you and I love you. Parents, do you thank your children for anything good that they do? How often do you say those words to them? I love you. Thank you for taking out the garbage. Thank you for helping with dinner, even when it's an expectation and even when it's like their chore or things they should be doing or they're trying to do is to be able to go hang out with their friends, you can still genuinely express gratitude for them and not be afraid to just say, I am sorry. Here the Lord seems more concerned with the concept of the end of chapter two. The Lord does essentially curse him and tell him as a result of this, Eli, they're going to be cut off, they're going to die in the same day, and then you're also going to be cut off because you haven't hearkened to me, your inner responsibility and you haven't valued me above whatever fear comes there.

00:55:14 And he says in 35, which is where we pick back up into the heavy story of Samuel, "And I will raise me up a faithful priest." This tells you essentially what's happened and some of what's going on in Eli's heart "that shall do according to that which is in my heart," meaning the Lord's "and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house and he will walk before mine anointed forever." I think that that's a good reminder for any of us who are in any type of calling or responsibility, whether it be parenting or church or work trusted position is, am I doing what's in the Lord's heart and am I seeking to know what's in his heart so that I can then turn and do what's in his heart? Because then in four through seven, when the Philistines come to war with Israel, you're going to see the fulfillment of God's prophecy in that Eli and his sons all die.

00:56:10 I love that we love it when we say we prayed for something and God kept a promise and blessed us. He also keeps his promises on these types of situations as well, which I know this sounds kind of odd, but I love that God is so consistent. I actually find a lot of hope that he's a promise keeper in both directions because here's a father who isn't more worried about what his children think of him. That just terrifies me to think of a God

who is, he wants to be popular or cool or well liked and so he changes based on what his kids are pleading for. I am so thankful for a just God who is consistent and dependable that way and does not give into my tantrums. I'm thrilled later on that I want him to give to me anyway. I just love that he isn't and we see that also in four through seven. But coming back to Samuel, we're going to watch this raising up of him in chapter three.

- Hank Smith: 00:57:12 I would throw out a little note to anybody out there who's feeling very frustrated as a parent because I've been there before. The best parenting guide I've ever read is section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants verses 34 through 46, 34 to the end. You want a parenting guide, go through that line by line the way Lori has taken us through these verses in Ruth and Samuel. That's the Lord's parenting guide in my mind. John, I know you feel the same way.
- John Bytheway: 00:57:40 Yeah, or any interpersonal relationships. It's so good. It's so brilliant and it's a letter out of Liberty Jail. It's amazing.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 00:57:51 I love Alma the younger. When you go into chapters 36 through 42, because he's talking to three different children who've made three different sets of choices, he talks directly to all of them and with so much love. It's fun to say, man, why did he teach this child this thing given this circumstance? It's another amazing guide to say, here's even another person in scripture who isn't a perfect parent, but understands this balance of love and directness and acceptance and teaching with that too. Those are really beautiful spots in scripture to help you and know that parenting is a covenant relationship with the Savior. You're not being asked to parent alone. I know that he will guide you. He will give you direction. He will give you strength. He will give you patience. He will bind your tongue for you if you ask him to at the right times to not speak and then he will loose it.
- 00:58:52 There are times when you're like, you need to stop talking and you can't do it by yourself. I know this as not as a parent. Like as a verbal processor and the person who says way too much sometimes, I have started praying like, Heavenly Father, can you just stop me in the moment instead of causing me to repent later like me living with those stink and regret? And he does. That's a promise I know he'll do for you as well.
- John Bytheway: 00:59:14 [President Dallin H. Oaks](#) said once, "Where do parents draw the line? This is a matter for parental wisdom guided by the inspiration of the Lord. There is no area of parental action that

is more needful of heavenly guidance," and then I love this, "or more likely to receive it than the decisions of parents in raising their children and governing their families, this is the work of eternity."

- Hank Smith: 00:59:39 It's rough. It's hard.
- John Bytheway: 00:59:41 But like you said, that's a most likely area where you will get help because he's parenting with you and I've heard you, Hank, say before, I think you said it this way, rather than saying, Heavenly Father, help me raise my children, you can say, Heavenly Father, help me help you raise your children.
- Hank Smith: 00:59:58 What do you want me to do to help you? Versus you help me.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:00:02 This is a [inaudible] it's a [President Oaks](#) quote that I love that he has given in more than one conference talk. When he talks about parenting, it's about spending time with your kids and he even encourages to put technology away and just find connection. He says, "Parents, what your children really want for dinner is you."
- Hank Smith: 01:00:22 He has said that multiple times. Lori, let's finish this out. What do we have left in 1 Samuel that you want to make sure we see?
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:00:31 In verse two of chapter three, Eli, his eyes began to wax dim as we're talking about as he's aging that he could not see. The lamp goes out and it's dark and then we get in verse four. And I love this parallel with this language, maybe it sounds familiar to somebody, but the Lord called Samuel and he answered, "Here am I." And he ran unto Eli and said, "Here am I. For thou callest me, he said, I called not. Lie down again, and he went to lay down." Which clearly says Samuel doesn't recognize God's voice yet because he thinks it's Eli. So he goes and Eli's down. Verse six, the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel rose and went to Eli and said, Here am I. Is this sounding like anybody we know when God called? Here am I. Send me. So for thou didst call me.
- 01:01:34 And he answered, I called not, my son, and lie down again. Now, Samuel did not yet know the Lord and neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him. By this, we know that he's been raised with Hannah. He was very young, so it's not a matter of saying he doesn't know him in the spirit of like he's completely foreign to him, but he is of these growing age now where like most teenagers that I know, probably the number one question I've received in my career has been, how do I tell if it's the spirit

and how do I know if it's just me? Verse eight, the Lord called Samuel again the third time. He arose and went to Eli and said, "Here am I, for though didst call me." And Eli perceived at this time, oh, I know what's happening. That the Lord had called the child.

01:02:24 It also was fun for me because it reminds us of 3 Nephi 11, that they're gathered together to rebuild the temple and they hear a voice and they don't recognize it and they hear a voice and they don't recognize it. And then the third time, that's when they hear it and they know who's speaking. Then Eli, therefore Eli said unto Samuel, "Go lie down and if it shall be if he call thee, thou shalt say speak Lord." This is the other thing that I think is really beautiful with the Lord and Eli. Even though we just talked about what he's not done with his sons, God still honors him as a priest and is still using him to train up Samuel, just such a merciful God. And then, speak Lord for thy servant hearest. So Samuel went, I love this obedient little boy and lay in his place, and then the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel.

01:03:18 Then Samuel answered, "Speak for thy servant heareth." [Sister Beck](#) said that learning to recognize and act upon the Holy Ghost is the single most important skill that we can acquire in mortality. I have loved that the Lord is so patient with all the times that I don't recognize him or that I recognize him and I don't follow it. One of the sweet things about this too in verse 10, "Called as at other times." The Lord hasn't changed, but Samuel has. I have found that as my life progresses on and the closer I draw to him, the more time I spend in his word, the more time I spend in his house, the more familiar I become with how he talks and what he says, the more able I am to recognize it when it comes because I'm seeking and then I'm trusting that he's patient as I'm figuring it out and not frustrated with me all the time because he very well could be.

01:04:21 Like he has very good reason to be like, again, Lori? For real? But he doesn't. He just says, okay, again, Lori. [President Nelson](#), does God really want to speak to you? Yes. If you believe that God really does want to speak to you, then you will learn how to hear him. This is your number one starting point. If you don't think he wants to speak to you, then it is going to be very hard for you to hear him, but you have to believe he wants to. And once he does, [Elder Bednar](#) gives this amazing devotional with Ensign College that it's titled Living in Revelation. And he says that most of us are living in revelation and we have no idea that it's happening around us. So it's not even this concept of whether or not God is speaking to us, it's just learning to hear it,

especially when you're being a good boy and a good girl is his comment.

01:05:13 You are doing your best to keep your covenants. Your promise is that you will always have his Spirit to be with you. I want to make maybe a side note here for mental illness because of the difficulty that can arise from certain mental health challenges of recognizing and hearing and feeling the Spirit. And I love this insight that I had one day that the Lord said that you may always have my Spirit to be with you, not that you may always feel my Spirit to be with you. If you're one who battles depression or anxiety and you have a hard time feeling the Spirit, I don't think you can then conclude that you don't have it, even if you don't feel it. One of the ways that you exercise faith in the Lord is to go forward trusting that you have it even if you don't feel it. That's a really key component given some of the challenges that some of our bodies and our brains face today is it's not always easy to detect, especially when it's connected to emotion and feelings.

Hank Smith: 01:06:19 And Samuel's going to be pretty central to our next how many lessons? Come, Follow Me. He's going to see Israel through the monarchy.

John Bytheway: 01:06:29 Yeah. Well, just like you said at the beginning, Hank, this is the end of the Judges and now we're starting with the monarchy and Samuel's this big piece of that.

Hank Smith: 01:06:39 He is. What does the Lord say to him in chapter three? We're going to do something big, right? "I will do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of everyone that heareth shall tingle.

John Bytheway: 01:06:50 Tingle.

Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:06:52 Well, in the tutoring in verse 19, Samuel grew and the Lord was with him. Reminds you of Joseph and the Lord was with him. And my friends, he's with us. We're growing. We may not have the role of prophet, but we have a really important role in gathering Israel and preparing the earth for the Savior's Second Coming. We have heard that over and over and over again. Wherever you are in the world and whatever space you live in and your current circumstance, you have been asked to gather. Therefore, God will help you gather because he needs all of his children prepared for the Savior. There's no vineyard too small or insignificant to him. There's no space that doesn't matter. No, they all matter because where you're at are children of God that need the Savior. He will be with you in a way that you can reach them and help prepare them for him. This tutoring

process is not unique to Samuel. It's for all of us if we'll seek him.

- Hank Smith: 01:08:00 Thank you so much. Lori, this has been a fantastic day. I really want to take time to say, okay, how can I be more like Ruth? How can I be more like Hannah? Sometimes we don't do that very well as men. We say, oh, look, let's all learn from the men in the scriptures. Oh, and the women. You can learn from the women in the scriptures. But I want to be more like Ruth. I want to be more like Hannah.
- Sis. Lori Newbold: 01:08:27 To me, it doesn't matter if it's male or if it's female. It's the Savior that we're learning from. It's the Savior we're striving to be like and I have found his attributes in everyone. Studying that quest is an amazing opportunity which we get to learn from all of God's children. I'm so grateful. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share, to prepare and to express my love of these amazing women and these amazing men and of my Savior and my Father in heaven who I know are so intimately personally working in my life, are the very reason that I get out of bed every single day. Thank you for letting me share that today.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:11 Well, thank you. We hope everyone who wants to leave a message for Lori, come on to YouTube or come onto our website, followhim.co, followhim.co, and we'll make sure those messages get to her. This was a great day. I have no room left to write in my, in these chapters. I'm going to have to get a new set of scriptures.
- John Bytheway: 01:09:33 I love how these huge powerful lessons are with plain ordinary people in a famine, widows. They weren't kings, they weren't high priests. Thank you for devoting space in the scriptures for these stories, Heavenly Father.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:54 Lori, I think all of our listeners do know that thou art a virtuous woman. May the name of Lori Newbold be known all over our listeners' hearts and minds this week. With that, we want to thank Sister Lori Newbold for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. In every episode we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. Let's find out what happens to Samuel and the House of Israel on followHIM. As a thank you to our wonderful listeners, we'd love to gift you the digital version of our book, Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. It offers short, meaningful insights drawn from our past Old Testament episodes. Visit

followhim.co, that's followhim.co to download your free copy today and you'll also find the link to purchase the print edition.

01:10:46

Thank you for being part of our followHIM family. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, Heather Barlow, Amelia Kabwika, Sydney Smith, and Annabelle Sorensen.

## followHIM Favorites



- Hank Smith: 00:03 Welcome to followHIM Favorites. John and I are sharing a single story to go with each week's Come, Follow Me lesson. John, we're in Ruth and the beginning of 1 Samuel, you have a story for us.
- John Bytheway: 00:12 Yes, in fact, there's two verses in Samuel that I really love. One of them, Samuel, speak thy servant heareth, and another one, for them that honor me, I will honor. So President Monson was a mission president up in Ontario, Canada, and he had this one area and all the Elders called it stony Kingston because they'd only had one convert in six years. Nobody baptized there. That was the rumor that went around. Nobody to teach. It's horrible. He says, I was praying about this dilemma and my wife, Sister Monson, gave him this book to read, A Child's Story of the Prophet Brigham Young. It tells the story about Brigham Young in Kingston, Ontario. He labored there for 30 days and baptized 45 people. Without explaining it to the mission, he closed the area. Then he started spreading this rumor that a new city was going to be opened where Brigham Young had proselyted before.
- 01:10 And everybody speculated about it. He said, letters pleaded for the assignment to this Shangri-La, President Monson said. So he selected a few missionaries, two of them new, two of them experienced. They were chosen for this high adventure. The members of the small branch pledged their support. And the missionaries, yes, speak thy servant heareth, so they go. In three months, it became the most productive city of the Canadian missions. The gray limestone buildings stood still. The city had not altered its appearance, but the change was one of attitude and a label of faith. This talk that he gave this in was about labels. The branch president, this is another part of the story that's so good. His name was Gustav Wacker from the old country. He spoke English with a thick accent, never owned or drove a car. He was a barber. He loved to cut the missionary's hair.

02:04 He wouldn't accept pay. In fact, he would take all of his tips from that day and give it to the missionaries. And if it was rainy, he called a taxi to send them home. President Monson started noticing it must have been a district that Gustav Wacker's tithing was way in excess of what he could have been earning and he tried to tell him, no, no, no. It's no more than 10%. And he said, I love to pay all I can for the Lord. And President Monson said it amounted to half his income.

Hank Smith: 02:35 Oh my word.

John Bytheway: 02:36 They established a home that was a heaven. He said they were not blessed with children, but they mothered and fathered their many church visitors. A sophisticated and a learned leader from Ottawa told me, I like to visit President Wacker. I always come away refreshed in spirit, determined to live ever close to the Lord. So President Monson said, did Heavenly Father honor such abiding faith? Well, the branch prospered. Membership outgrew the rented Slovakian hall, moved into a lovely chapel of their own. President and Sister Wacker had their prayers answered. They served a proselyting mission in their native Germany and later a temple mission to the beautiful temple in Washington, D.C. Three months ago from when he gave this talk. His mission and mortality concluded Gustav Wacker passed away peacefully in the arms of his loving wife. Only one label appears for such an obedient and faithful servant. For them that honor me, I will honor. Two verses from Samuel, but what a great story about Kingston and the rumor about, hey, a place where Brigham Young served and all of a sudden the missionaries attitudes changed.

Hank Smith: 03:47 That's beautiful. The lesson title fits perfectly, My Heart Rejoices in the Lord. That's awesome. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get any of your podcasts. We're with Sister Lori Newbold this week and she is a joy. She really is. So excited about the scriptures. Then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.