

"Hear Thou in Heaven Their Prayer"

Show Notes & Transcripts

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:

How does a man "after God's own heart" end up on the wrong roof? Dr. Shon Hopkin examines the devastating fall of David and the architectural glory of Solomon's temple, tracing the razor's edge between power and corruption and the merciful God who meets us in our worst moments.

Part 2:

Dr. Shon Hopkin continues his exploration of 2 Samuel and 1 Kings guiding through Solomon's breathtaking temple, the universal trap of wanting something for nothing, and the Lord who waits at the window for every one of His children to return.

Timecodes:

Part 1 -

- 0:00 - Part 1 - Dr. Shon Hopkin
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- 3:29 Setting the stage: David, Solomon, and the danger of great starts
- 7:07 Reading character weaknesses magnified by power
- 11:35 Shields up-David as cautionary tale
- 12:49 David's exaltation (is this the point?)
- 16:52 Judge not
- 18:49 Teaching the balance of warning without shame
- 20:07 Stealing school supplies: Another cautionary tale
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- 29:38 Nathan's parable
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- 39:22 Wrong place, wrong time
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- 1:05:06 Watching ordinary people grow in wisdom
- 1:07:54 End of Part 1 - Dr. Shon Hopkin

Part 2 -

- 0:00 - Part 2 - Dr. Shon Hopkin
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- 43:49 Study the OT, it is the water everything else swims in
- 49:45 Celebrities, athletes, and sports teams in place of God
- 51:00 *Hesed, hesed, hesed*
- 53:03 God never tells you, "I told you so"
- 56:53 End of Part 2 - Dr. Shon Hopkin

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Biographical Information:



Born in Denton, Texas, as the son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin, Shon Hopkin attended Southwest High School in Fort Worth, Texas and graduated from Orem High School. He received a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Brigham Young University in Near Eastern Studies with a focus on Hebrew Bible. He received a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew studies with a focus on medieval Hebrew, Arabic, and Spanish literature. Before coming to Brigham Young University, he taught in Seminaries and Institutes for four years at Timpview High School (1997–2001), four years at Provo High School (2001–5), and six years at the Austin Institute of Religion (2006–11). At BYU he has served as Chair of the Book of Mormon Academy, Chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council, and Chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture (2020-25). He currently serves as Associate Director of Academics for the BYU Jerusalem Center (2025-27). He is one of the principal organizers of the Jewish & Latter-day Saint Academic Interfaith Dialogue project. He has authored, co-authored, and edited numerous books and articles on Isaiah, the Hebrew Bible, Latter-day Saint beliefs, and medieval literature, including *Opening Isaiah: A Harmony* (with Ann Madsen); *Abinadi: He Came Among them in Disguise* (edited, Book of Mormon Academy); *Mormonism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (with Robert Millet, as part of Bloomberg Press' Guide for the Perplexed series); and *Understanding Your Neighbor: Judaism* (with Rabbi Mark Diamond, as part of the Widtsoe Foundation's Know Your Neighbor series). He and his wife have four children and three grandchildren.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:00:03	Move forward. Your sins don't define you in a universe that has a Savior. Trust and walk forward and keep doing all the good you can and God will turn the sins that you turn over to him into these threads woven through your tapestry that give you strength and wisdom and nobility. You would rather never have them and yet if you turn them over to Christ, he will use them to teach you lessons that will give you incredible wisdom.
Hank Smith:	00:00:37	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with John Bytheway. There is no co-host like thee in heaven above or on earth beneath. John, I'm telling you, I've looked in heaven and on earth, there is no better co-host.
John Bytheway:	00:00:55	I was fired from both locations, so that's right. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:00:59	They have not looked under the earth yet.
John Bytheway:	00:01:01	They were downsizing. Yeah, we're going in a different direction.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:01:06	I get excited to see how Hank is going to make John squirm every week. Like, how is this going to go? Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:01:12	It's actually pretty fun to go on the hunt for some of those. Although in the Book of Judges, it was hard to find a positive adjective.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:01:18	Wow. If he had longer hair, we would've been okay, but
Hank Smith:	00:01:21	Yeah. John, we've heard that voice before. Dr. Shon Hopkin is back with us today. Shon, welcome back to followHIM. We've missed you.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:01:31	It's so good to be with both of you.

Hank Smith:	00:01:33	We have had wonderful episodes with Shon in the past and I'm sure today will be no different. John, we're talking about Solomon's temple and we also are talking about David's ... John, what did you call it once? The Goliath David could not kill. The difficulty in David's life and then the temple. What are you thinking about?
John Bytheway:	00:01:53	Like 20 years ago, guys, I used to give a talk called Rough Start, Great Finish, and I was thinking, this is like great start, rough finish. A lot of the Old Testament has been that way. What we've been studying so far. Is there ever a great start, great finish? I guess that's just Jesus.
Hank Smith:	00:02:11	Yeah. Shon, what are you looking forward to?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:02:12	Let me just say that enduring to the end concept that's right there. That one matters a lot. There are some wonderful things that we will talk about, some poignant things, of course. My middle name is David, Shon David. David, I felt both an affinity to. Honestly, I've sort of paid extra attention to him and he's lovable and likable and admirable in so many ways and there's so many things I can learn from him and there are some warnings that I want to make sure I pay attention to as well. Hitting that sweet spot, making sure we don't dilute the warnings. We need those, we need the cautions and we need to highlight those at the same time to make sure that we don't lose our hope that we can be redeemed, that we are all imperfect and that in Christ, if we will turn our hearts to him, all will be well. We'll try to hit that space as we talk about David and then we're going to talk about temple. That'll be a lot of fun. Then Solomon ends up being a somewhat similar storyline to David just in slightly different ways. There's a lot of fascinating things to do today, I think.
Hank Smith:	00:03:29	We're excited to walk through this. I remember once walking out of a gospel doctrine class, we had just talked about David and Bathsheba, and I was thinking, oh, that's too bad. Oh, that guy, he just fell apart. Shane Argyle, good friend of mine, he turned to me as we're walking out and he said, that lesson scares me. That was surprising to me. I said, why does that scare you? He said, that's David who fell, if he can fall. Shouldn't we all be a little bit nervous? It never occurred to me. I thought, oh, it was a good insight. Instead of judging David, I saw some of the warnings that you're talking about, Shon. Now, John, there may be someone who doesn't know who Dr. Hopkin is. They're definitely not from Texas because everyone in Texas knows who Dr. Hopkin is and in Provo. John, what do we know about him?

Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:04:15	Let me defend the Texans for a second. You never ask someone where they're from. If they're from Texas, they will tell you without you asking. If they're not from Texas, they're actually embarrassed about it. So it's not going to go well either way.
John Bytheway:	00:04:28	Shon was born in Denton, Texas, son of Lorraine Hopkin and Arden Hopkin. Attended Southwest High School in Fort Worth, but graduated from Orem High School, received a bachelor's and master's degree from BYU in near Eastern studies with a focus on the Hebrew Bible, a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin in Hebrew studies with a focus on medieval Hebrew, Arabic and Spanish literature. Yeah, I was thinking of doing that. Before coming to BYU, he taught in seminaries and institutes, taught at Tempe, Provo High, Austin Institute of Religion. And at BYU, he served as the chair of the Book of Mormon Academy, chair of the BYU Religious Outreach Council, chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture, and that was only recently, I think you were released from that and currently serves as Associate Director of Academics for the BYU Jerusalem Center, and we spent a lot of time talking about that before we started recording today. He has four children and two grandchildren.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:05:29	And I will announce to the world, and one on the way. I think that's public knowledge, but hopefully by the time this is posted, this'll be public knowledge. We're very excited about that and to be here with two close friends and colleagues there from, that we teach together in the Department of Ancient Scripture is a joy to me. Yeah, and I'm really grateful for each of my colleagues and for two of you.
Hank Smith:	00:05:53	We love having you here. Let's start with the Come, Follow Me manual and we'll be underway. The lesson this week is Hear Thou in Heaven Their Prayer. Saul, David and Solomon, the first three kings of Israel all started out with so much promise. Humble, courageous, and wise, they each found favor with the Lord, at least at first. Sadly, each king also gave into human weakness and temptation. They put their own desires before the Lord's and as we've seen over and over in the scriptures and in our own lives, that led to tragedy. But something important happened during the reign of Solomon that provided some hope for the stability in the lives of the covenant people. Solomon built a temple. It was to be a more permanent house of the Lord than the tabernacle had been and it would represent a more permanent presence of the Lord among his people. Solomon knew that the people would continue to face weakness and trials of various kinds. In dedicating the new holy house, Solomon pleaded with the Lord. If they return unto thee with all their heart, then hear thou their prayer. That's part of

what temple covenants do for us. They create a connection to God. They secure for us the promise that through our repentance and his mercy, he can dwell among us and never forsake us. Wonderful. I'm excited to walk through these chapters. Shon, how do you want to get started?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:07:07 I love what they did in that manual. God is eminently and eternally steady and we tend not to be. But to have that temple there that is such a symbol and sign and that points us constantly back to God for Latter-day Saints, of course, that becomes very important. I love what they did there. I will take a slightly different tact in one area than what they did, although these are beautiful and powerful and moving stories and we often read them. I think I often read them as, well, wow. Saul started off great and then he fell. David started off great and then he fell. Solomon started off great and then he fell. What happened to these guys? Another way of reading the story is that there were these weaknesses in their personalities and when those weaknesses were magnified by unlimited power, they became unmanageable, multiplied the potency of the damaging nature of those weaknesses.

00:08:11 And this is why I would say speaking to all of us as young people, as it were, as people who are still able to change, repenting to the best of our ability, we're all going to continue to be flawed, but paying attention to it and not just thinking, I'm a pretty good person. I'll just keep walking the way I'm walking. And in one sense, God loves you as you are. Move forward and keep turning your heart to him. Sometimes I worry that we're a little too casual and we're a little too quick to say, oh, wow, David, what a train wreck that is. Well, how would any of us do with unlimited power? If I take some of my own personal foibles and then I multiply them on that kind of a stage, sometimes we look at those in our society who fame gives them a huge amount of attention and power and money and acclaim and then we watch what seems we're easy and quick to say from a distance to be the train wreck, but they've got the same kind of flaws that I have.

00:09:11 So I can learn from that with deep sympathy and love for others and hoping that by the grace of God, I can be spared some of those challenges. And in small and simple ways, we all sort of walk this walk in our own lives. That's maybe one thing that I would just mention. I think we see some of these things maybe. It depends on how you read the story, because David is so lovable early on. And I mentioned my middle name is David. There's so much to love about his courage, his exuberance, these moments when he has this opportunity to lift his hand

against Saul and he refuses. What a noble moment that is. But then there's another way of reading the early life of David that shows some of these things. Let me just quote from a biblical scholar here named David Wolpe. He's going way back to the David and Goliath story and he says, the first time David speaks, it is a biblical commonplace that a character's first words are defining, and here are the first words.

00:10:08 What will be done of the man who strikes down yonder Philistine and takes away insult from Israel? Now, I don't want to read too much into that. I love David. He was so exuberantly faithful and courageous. I love what he did with Goliath. Sort of interesting that his very first words are, what do I get if I do this? You see maybe, maybe a hint of willfulness, a hint of egoism, egotism there early on that continues to play out and we'll finish the story of David. The manual doesn't take us there, but we'll give it a little bit of time that at the end of his life, you see him once again doing the census that he knew he wasn't supposed to do, but he's counting in a way that seems egotistical and prideful. Certainly the Lord says, I don't want you to count how mighty you are. I want you to trust in the Lord. And it causes problems yet again. With that negative potential assessment there, I will look at my own self and just say, I need to seek after holiness. And I can be me, I can be my normal human being self, which I very much am for better or worse. And the gospel trying to get us to seek after the Lord early in our lives, early being today for any one of us is so important to avoid some of the heartache that will come to all of us when we don't, we all feel this when we don't seek after holiness.

John Bytheway: 00:11:35 Thank you. Just what Hank said at the beginning about leaving the lesson and having your friends say, ooh, that's scary. When we go to the, how do I apply this? It's a humbling story I think for all of us. If David can go, shields up.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:11:50 The trick for all of us is to do this to feel this in a way that moves us forward because I think for some, there's so many different people who are having different kinds of days who are going to hear this followHIM episode and might think, oh no, well, then I'm a goner. I'm done for. If those warnings ever come in a way that we lose hope, in fact, let me go to this warning. The starkest warning that we have is actually in restoration scripture. There's a lot actually, there are a number of restoration tidbits about David and Solomon and here is the most terrifying, you might say, or the strongest. And it is in Doctrine and Covenants 132:39 and I'll, it's short and sweet or not sweet and it says, "David hath fallen from his exaltation and received his portion." That's a pretty stark warning.

00:12:49 And that says with this incredibly charismatic, incredibly good-hearted in so many ways, human being, you can lose your exaltation. Now, I want to unpack that a litle bit. First, I like seeing the scriptures as intertwined and connected and not overdoing it with one verse because we have other verses that help us. I'm so grateful for the Book of Mormon's 2 Nephi 26, which by the way, as an Isaiah guy, I have to say, this is commentary that flows out of Isaiah. Just a quick nod there. He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world for he loveth the world even that he layeth down his own life. If David has lost his exaltation, that's not because God is trying to make David miserable or punish David. He loves David and David needs to be where David will have the greatest amount of peace or whatever he needs or has longed for or sought to be.

00:13:44 The other thing I want to give a little caution on and I'll share something from the JST that might just at least put some tension on that, that there is later a comment about Solomon in the JST KJV 1 Kings 11:33, this is fascinating, states that these different kings have not walked in my ways to do that which is right in my eyes and to keep my statutes and my judgments as did David, his father. David is often or constantly even complimented both in the biblical text and in the JST for being loyal to Jehovah. As Latter-day Saints, we understand Jehovah is Jesus Christ, that loyalty to Christ, that has power even with those challenges. But then look at this as well. His, and it's talking to Solomon, Solomon's heart is become as David his Father and he repenteth not as David his Father that I may forgive him.

00:14:45 And I don't know what that means. Was David forgiven, but then he lost that forgiveness? Is there more to this storyline than what we're getting in Doctrine and Covenants 132? If we're going to unpack just a little bit further, Doctrine and Covenants 132 that says, David hath fallen from his exaltation. I think often we say, oh, end of story. But it's not really my business who's exalted and who's not. That's between God and David. What this is for as God figures out how to work with David is a warning to me that it's possible to lose one's exaltation. And I can leave David over there, so to speak, for God to work with according to his own justice and mercy, but I need to learn the lesson. By the way, this statement comes thousands of years after David lives. There's been time in the spirit world. There have been decades since that statement.

00:15:39 I don't know that David's story is over or not. I can leave that there, but I do need to take the warning that I shouldn't procrastinate the day of my repentance. And sometimes we

worry that we're not sufficient and so then we say, no, I'm awesome just the way I am and I'm just going to be the way I am and I'm going to just be casual about that. I'm a nice enough person. This is all just going to work out for me in the end. David can be a warning. No, repent. Turn to the Lord. Doesn't mean you got to lose your personality quirks or the fun little things that make you you, but turn to the Lord, you will save yourself a lot of sorrow if you do so. And the Lord is ready for you today. So if anyone hears that in Doctrine and Covenants 132 and thinks my exaltation may be lost, there are probably those listening who are like, I really identify with David. Is my exaltation lost? I want to say very strongly, even though that's between God and you. No, that's not the message. The message is turn to the Lord today and if you are worried, then that's because you care. Turn to the Lord and the Lord will draw you to him. That's not what that warning is for. That's not what it's trying to accomplish I don't believe in any of our lives. It's trying to say, turn to the Lord today.

Hank Smith: 00:16:52 I love that, Shon.

John Bytheway: 00:16:54 It was so fascinating to me that President Oaks, who before his call was a Utah State Supreme Court judge, gave a talk called Love and Law, another one he called Judge Not and Judging. Boy, there's an opening paragraph in Judge Not and Judging where he says, "Some scriptures tell us not to judge and others tell us how to judge." He put them into final judgments we are forbidden to make, intermediate judgments we are commanded to make but upon righteous principles. And I love what you just said because those are final judgments. You don't make that about yourself. I don't make that about others. That's not my call. That's beyond my pay grade.

00:17:36 So just come to the Lord now. President Oaks gave that talk called The Challenge to Become, and I just loved it because I think there was a focus for a long time on knowing what we should know and teach me all that I must know. And President Oaks was, "It's great to know it's even better to do. If we know what to do and we do what we know, we begin to become what we're supposed to become", which is, oh, what a great thought. So I think they should change it to teach me all that I must be, because then that fits with President Oaks' talk. The idea of, like you said, Shon, oh, I'll just be the way I am. Well, there's a process of becoming. Face the Savior and keep on becoming. Let him worry about the final judgment. Just keep coming to Christ and keep becoming.

Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:18:20	I think that was beautiful. This was Jacob's concern. How do I give the warnings and the cautions without wounding hearts? And I suspect with the reach that you have, that's a concern that you bump into. How do we lift and give hope and joy? And you do it with a lot of humor, that's helpful. Also, how do you make sure those warnings are hit and they're not diluted but that they hit in the right space? I suspect that's something you think about fairly frequently.
Hank Smith:	00:18:49	As a teacher, I think it's difficult for me to strike the balance. I try to step back, teach the stories, teach the doctrine and at least in my experience, the Holy Ghost has that perfect little sweet spot of, you really need to work on this, but listen, you're going to be great. I have a hard time trying to gauge that myself. I think I overdo it. I overdo one or the other. And I think the Holy Ghost is like, look, you just teach the stories. Let me do the guilt, because guilt is not a bad thing. Guilt is actually quite wonderful. It says, hey, you didn't live your values. Let's make a correction. Let's get you back on.
John Bytheway:	00:19:24	It's a check engine, check engine light saying that you need to check this, but Hank, that's what I was thinking is fortunately if the Holy Ghost is present, it will take things to people's ears in different ways. Because you might have a kid in your class who stole a Snickers when he was six and feels guilty about it and I can't serve a mission and somebody else that's having serious problems in some other area and doesn't think anything of it, how do you talk to both of them in the same class? And you have to rely on the Holy Ghost and the Savior to get that to their ears just the right way, I guess. When you guys figure it out, let me know, but I think it's the Holy Ghost.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:20:07	We learned a lot about John that that was the sin he could think of was stealing.
Hank Smith:	00:20:11	Right.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:20:11	When he was six. I don't know.
John Bytheway:	00:20:12	Well, it was a Milky Way, but yeah.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:20:14	Ahh. Yeah. Yeah. My guilty theft story is when I was nine, I was obsessed with school supplies and we went to buy school supplies for the new school year. My mom turned her back and I'm like, school supplies. And I just like, those big pink erasers and those shiny rulers, I'm like, got them up under my shirt. We got home, I hopped out of the van, they fell out of my shirt. My

mom's like, you stole school supplies? And I had to go take them back to the store and there's like this teenager behind the counter and I've like got this white sort of blonde toe-headed chili bowl haircut. I put them on the counter. I'm like, I took these. I still remember that teenager looks over and he's like, dude, you stole school supplies? So that's my like, my sins are, I've got others too that I'm not going to talk about, but they're embarrassing.

John Bytheway: 00:21:01 No, that's a PhD in the making right there. Rulers and pencils and erasers.

Hank Smith: 00:21:07 That's so great. Yeah. I get concerned when people fall into shame. I am bad. I am a sinful, terrible person. I don't deserve things versus, oh, my, that action didn't match my value. I really need to make sure that I'm living according to my values. I try to err on the side of mercy as a teacher. Hopefully the Holy Ghost can touch someone's heart and say, actually, there's some repairing that needs to be done and you're the one to do it. That can be very healthy.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:21:38 You know, at the risk of belaboring this too long and I'll tell one other quick anecdote and then we'll move back into the storyline here. I remember this is not even a sin, it's just a silliness where I was teaching seminary and I was in charge of seminary graduation. I was in charge of the stake that had the stake president who was sort of in charge of all the stake presidents with church education stuff and I felt like, oh, I got to do well at the assignment. I pulled a suit out of my closet that night. I'm like, I have not worn this in like two years. Why not? And I put it on, I'm like, this is a nice suit. And I wore it. I was in rare form that night. I was up and down. I was hugging people saying hi to people and really enjoying being there and it was a little breezy.

00:22:17 I didn't think much of it though. I got home late that night and the back of my suit pants had this just giant hole. Like it was just like a flap hanging down. And my brain went back through how ridiculous I looked the entire night. That's why that thing was hanging in my closet. And I'm like, I'm that guy. I am that guy. I look, everybody was just laughing at me all night long. That's silly. Like who cares? Like these are silly little things, but I had one of those moments where I'm like, I am the wrong kind of human being. I can't go back. Sometimes we get really dark about ourselves and then I don't think that's the Lord. That's one of the ways that for me anyway, I distinguish. It can feel sort of dark, but there's got to be a ray of hope or let the Lord

bring that in to say, and you can change. And then it's sweet. It draws you to goodness.

Hank Smith: 00:23:10 Kind of like a warning on an electric fence. Take that seriously. There's one every six feet. They make it pretty clear. Do not come here. I like that with this lesson. Shon, it's not necessarily, oh, what did David do? It's, am I noticing these signs every six feet? Don't do this.

John Bytheway: 00:23:29 I like that phrase from The Chosen. You have one job today. Follow him. Maybe you don't have to worry about where am I going to end up about my exaltation. Just one job today, follow him. The answer's always Jesus. Start there, if nothing else.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:23:48 Yeah, I love that. Well, okay, a little bit more with restoration scripture and then we'll go straight to 2 Samuel 11. We've spent some time exploring this, but I think it matters to frame what we're talking about. We know this from Jacob 2 in the Book of Mormon, behold, David, and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me saith the Lord, wherefore I, the Lord will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old." And then he goes on to say, plural marriage is only going to function if I command it to raise up righteous seed unto me, right? This is Jacob chapter two. But then look at how that interacts with Doctrine and Covenants 132:38. David also received many wives and concubines and also Solomon and Moses my servant, as also many others of my servants from the beginning of creation until this time.

00:24:36 In nothing did they sin, and here's the lesson, save in those things which they received not of me. You're going to notice there's this moment when we're reading 1 Samuel 11. If we read that verse, I think we will, where it says, he sent unto the woman and they did take her. He brought her to him. This makes the story more horrifying that David is in a position of power and authority. And these are sensitive topics here. Notice when Nathan comes to David in 1 Samuel 12, never once, never once is Bathsheba critiqued or criticized. He zeroes right in on the most powerful person in the land and that is on David. And since we've sort of started talking about that, let me go ahead and read from Elder Patrick Kearon because this is a sensitive topic as we pause and think about Bathsheba.

00:25:37 Let me just read what Elder Kearon says. We often think, oh, David's the storyline here, but there is another storyline that we don't know super well, and that is Bathsheba's storyline. I think she was trying to bathe privately and David's up on this roof. By the way, the city of David in Jerusalem, you can see it. It slopes

downwards. So if he's up on his roof, he's got a view down into people's private yards and private space. Here's Elder Kearon. "If you have experienced any kind of abuse, violence or oppression, you may be left with the idea that these events were somehow your fault and that you deserve to carry the shame and guilt you feel. The abuse was not, is not, and never will be your fault. No matter what the abuser or anyone else may have said to the contrary, when you have been a victim of cruelty, incest, or any other perversion, you are not the one who needs to repent. You are not responsible."

00:26:35 This sounds very similar to the way Nathan is talking. And we love David and we care about what happens with David. God cares about David and we need to be careful when people have committed grave sins, God still loves that person and he will work with them according to his justice and mercy. And human experience is complex and it's nuanced and it's not always men who are the bad guys and women who are the good guys. We're complicated folk. All of us need a Savior. All of us need a Savior desperately.

John Bytheway: 00:27:10 A couple of things I'm trying to think of moms out there trying to teach this to their kids and David had wives and porcupines.

Hank Smith: 00:27:19 Prickly.

John Bytheway: 00:27:21 Yeah. How do you explain wives and concubines to kids? I liked what you said and both of you have been to the Holy Land, I bet a lot more than I have. By the entrance to Hezekiah's tunnel, yeah, you go east of there and you see the old city of David. Like you said, it's just this you didn't have to go out looking. Everybody's rooftop is visible from there. But the other thing I'm thinking about, wait, I thought Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the city of David, but there's an old city of David and that is closer to what you're talking about.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:27:56 First, city of David, you've got the birthplace city of David, the place where he was born. Then you've got political city of David, the place that he sets up. And we're talking the political city of David. And there's actually a building that's been uncovered there that may have been, we're not sure, but may have been his palace that's been uncovered there. It's a monumental structure. You can actually stand where his palace may have been and look down. The city of David sort of shaped like a thumb and you're on the sort of looking down towards the thumbnail part of the thumb, so to speak. And you can see it heading downhill like that in a way that makes the story really obvious what's going on. The other thing I would say is

concubines in the practice of plural marriage as instituted by God through Joseph Smith in the latter days, that concubines, this wasn't ever part of the practice. This is part of an ancient system of marriage that included concubines are if you marry someone who is not of the same social status, maybe a servant or a slave, then they would be considered a concubine rather than a wife. That doesn't apply, didn't apply, hasn't applied at all in the latter days and was part of the unique circumstance of antiquity. That's why you've got that in these accounts. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:29:16 That's interesting. Shon, thanks for doing that. That storyline of Bathsheba can be very helpful to someone who thinks, well, maybe I did something wrong in this. It doesn't seem to be the case that she was doing anything wrong.

John Bytheway: 00:29:30 I love that you brought it back to Nathan. What did Nathan actually say because he's the one, like you said, he's the prophet.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:29:38 And I think he gives modern priesthood leaders a real lesson and it takes inspiration and insight, which he clearly has. He knows what's going on in ways that David is shocked. Another powerful thing in 1 Samuel 12 is it is shocking in the ancient Near East that you have a religious figure absolutely abrading. It's not totally unheard of, but this is a tradition that carries forward and continues to influence us in Western society today that these all powerful leaders can be critiqued and should be critiqued and David accepts the critique. It's one of the really beautiful things about David. When he tells him this story and notice Bathsheba in this story is this tender lamb that is taken. That's how this story plays out. Nathan does the parable, hey, someone here in your kingdom wanted, he had a ton of lambs and he wanted his neighbor's lamb and he went and took his neighbor's lamb and David is ticked. He's like, not on my watch. That is not going to happen. And then the zinger, as we know, Nathan looks straight at him, thou art the man.

John Bytheway: 00:30:45 Who enjoys calling people to repentance? Nathan was so brilliant in the way he did that. I think they call it an entrapment parable. Basically, he passes the judgment and David doesn't say, hey, you're not supposed to judge. He says, what do you think? And David says, that man should be punished. He passed the judgment on himself. Nobody likes being in that position and I'm glad you said that because how often do we see a religious leader and a king working together? Isaiah was not a king, but he was an advisor to the kings of Judah. That's an interesting point. I hadn't thought of that, but so was Nathan around David a lot? Did he advise him on things a lot?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:31:30 We don't know quite as much about Nathan as we do about Isaiah who was clearly very welcome into the court, but it's obvious that he is welcome as an advisor to David. David's response here is fascinating. If it's just him and Nathan, which is the way it reads, this is a moment when a chapter earlier, David is willing to kill people to preserve his secret and David doesn't do it. He won't do it. His devotion to this religious authority. So you see that clear understanding of there is a God in heaven and I owe that God in heaven loyalty. And I have sinned greatly. This is what he says. It's 2 Samuel chapter 12 verse 13, "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also has to put away thy sin. Thou shalt not die. How be it because of this deed."

00:32:22 And then he goes on to talk about some consequences. David humbles down. He's all powerful and he chooses not to continue to carry his secret further and further. Another restoration scripture here that I think is very instructive for watching what's happening is found these powerful verses that Joseph Smith gives us from Liberty Jail. This is section 121, verses 36 to 40. "The powers of heaven cannot be controlled or handled only upon the principles of righteousness, that they may be conferred upon us. It is true." And you hear Nathan talking about, I gave you this, this, and this, and I promised you this, this, and this, and here's what you did. "That they may be conferred upon us. It is true. But when we undertake to cover our sins", and that's exactly what he does. He gets frantic.

00:33:13 And then Uriah, the Hittite he invites him home. Uriah won't go home and be with his wife. She's expecting a child now because of this interaction with David, this sexual liaison with David. She's expecting and David wants Uriah to go home and be with his wife. He won't do it. And the Hittite, by the way, is the one who says, no, the Ark of the Covenant and your people are out battling in the fields. I don't get to go home and relax. And that must have annoyed David a bit. He tries to get him drunk. He still won't go home. He's flailing about to cover his sins and then he writes to Joab and says, you've got to find a way to eliminate Uriah.

00:33:54 And as he does so, to cover his sins without intentionally meaning it, other people of course die as collateral. How many people are murdered so he can preserve himself and his image in this moment? And all this is a story of warning to us when we start to dig in and dig a little deeper and a little deeper. And what's the moment where we say, I got to pull back out of this. I have got to pull back out of this. I've got a brother who says he thinks that dishonesty is the worst sin because if you're honest

about your foibles and your faults and your flaws, then you can open it up so there's light. But if you are willing to cover your sins, then they can just go deeper and deeper and the wound gets harder and harder to remove.

Hank Smith: 00:34:41 Yeah. Secrecy can become a source of lifeblood to a sin. John, you mentioned how to teach this. There could be two things that I might do as a teacher. I might bring in Joseph of Egypt just to have that contrast. How could I do this great wickedness and sin against God? Another one I might do is look at Jesus and his three temptations and compare them to these three kings and their temptations where these three kings could not stand up against temptation. Jesus stood up against similar temptations. It's kind of a fun little parallel to do there.

John Bytheway: 00:35:16 Oh, I like that. There's a word that Elder Maxwell used once, which I think I've never used dalliance to dally in something. I remember this quotation as we were preparing this morning, got on churchofjesuschrist.org, and guess how often dalliance appeared? I think it was just one time so I found it right away. This is what Elder Maxwell said in April of '89. Let's see. Another vital way of coping was exemplified by Jesus, though he suffered all manner of temptations, yet he gave no heed unto them. Unlike some of us, he did not fantasize, reconsider, or replay temptations. How is it that you and I do not see that while initially we are stronger and the temptations weaker, dalliance turns things upside down. I thought that was cool. At first, the temp- no, we're stronger than that, but then we dally in it. We replay, reconsider. I don't know why I remembered that. Like you said, Hank, how quickly did Joseph and Jesus respond to those temptations in the examples that you brought up? I mean, Joseph just took off. He got him out.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:36:27 And this is the urgency to repent today. I think how silly am I or how silly are we when I say, well, I'm going to wait and repent next week. I'm not strong enough today, but I'm going to be strong enough a week from now. There's going to be this magical moment where I'm going to sin again and again and again, and then I'm going to be strong enough. And the Lord continues to work with us. So there is hope that we'll be able to repent in the future, but today's the only time I have any agency today. I never have any agency with the future until it arrives and it's present. Now is the time to pause and say, oh, don't continue down this path, David, and he does. But then Nathan, fortunately for everyone, but it's in some ways too late for so many in this storyline as he sought to cover his sins. If only he had paused before that moment or before that moment, let's go to 2 Samuel 11. Most are pretty familiar with these verses

and the way they read. There's this sinister tone David has been the man of action. John, would you do verse one for us and then tell us what you see there? And then Hank, would you do verse two, three, and four and tell us what you see there?

John Bytheway: 00:37:43 2 Samuel chapter 11, verse one. And it came to pass after the year was expired at the time when kings go forth to battle that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel and they destroyed the children of Ammon and besieged Rabbah, but David tarried still at Jerusalem.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:38:02 Let me just pause and say we've got a citadel, the citadel of Amman Jordan. This is actually the location where they were. The structures that you go see there are later than what they would have been sieging, but we've got that spot when we can, we take BYU Jerusalem center students to see that citadel and Amman, Jordan, that's that space. So we've got City of David, we've got Amman as two spaces we can actually look at today. Okay, sorry, back to you, John. What do you see there? We asked, how do you teach this? And I think seminary teachers bump into this one and it becomes an important lesson at times. What lessons do you see? What are the undercurrents that flow in that verse?

John Bytheway: 00:38:39 Right off, it says at a time when kings go forth to battle. David's a king, so where is he? But it says David tarried still at Jerusalem not being where he's supposed to be.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:38:52 Be a person of action. How often was David kept from sin and other times because he was moving forward and then he thinks, I've been working really hard. I'm going to send them out. I'm all powerful. I'm going to rest. You might say gratifies his pride, his vain ambition. He's up late at night doom scrolling or whatever he's doing.

John Bytheway: 00:39:13 Doom scrolling.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:39:13 Searching the channels, not looking for anything bad but sort of looking for something bad, and then he's in the wrong place at the wrong time. There's a lot there in verse one.

Hank Smith: 00:39:22 You got to be too busy to sin.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:39:24 Yes. Hank, would you do verses two through four for us? And then once we've analyzed those verses, we'll move on and start talking about Solomon.

Hank Smith:	00:39:33	And it came to pass in eventide that David arose from off his bed and walked upon the roof of the king's house. And from the roof, he saw a woman washing herself and the woman was very beautiful to look upon and David sent and inquired after the woman and one said, is that not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers and took her and she came in unto him and he lay with her for she was purified from her uncleanness and she returned unto her house.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:40:03	By the way, Bath-Sheba, the fact that Bathsheba was taking a bath, I used to think that as a teenager, I'm like, whoa, that makes sense. Daughter of the Covenant is what her name means, and she is actually doing a law of Moses ritual there after her cycle, you know, a purification ritual. That's the moment. I mean, here from all appearances is a faithful woman trying to live her life faithfully in this moment. What do we see there?
Hank Smith:	00:40:32	Oh, there's so many places where you would hope something would come to his mind, a scripture story. Does David know the story of Joseph of Egypt, because that would have been a great moment for him to quote his Joseph of Egypt memorized scripture mastery verse, wouldn't he? He very likely knows what he's going to see in the evening up on top of the roof. He sees her. He could have walked away right then and thought, oh, I'm invading her privacy. I need to go back inside, but he keeps watching. Then send someone to inquire after her would've loved to have someone like a, you know, Naman's friend who says, hold on a second, let's think through this. So wouldn't it have been great to have a friend who would say, wait, wait, what are you doing? I think there's all sorts of times in this where you would hope he would stop and turn his brain back on and think for a moment and look down that road. For one thing, it's hard to get teenagers to look further down the road, but David is an adult, he is a fully developed brain. What's he thinking?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:41:42	There are consequences to sin, even if we are never caught, those play out in our own lives and our own psyches and our own peace and our own confidence. So for any of us who are going downhill in a way that it takes effort to stop the downward momentum and it's going to be painful, no, I can't stop. It'll hurt too much. If any of us are not strong enough today, then rather than saying, I'm going to pretend that everything's fine and I don't need to change, may we get on our knees and say, Heavenly Father, I'm not strong enough today. Give me the strength, change my heart, give me more courage

so that I can learn the lesson that is to be learned here in these verses. Because watching David, who we have loved and who we're going to, like, continue to love, no, David, don't do it.

00:42:35 It's like we're watching it from a distance and you can see it. And there's that phrase, "He took her." So it's his volition, and then you see Nathan accusing him of that. It is painful. And then the chapter continues in ways that we've already detailed when he tries to cover his sin. We've talked about vain ambition and then that restoration scripture that I started to quote, but then we moved elsewhere or you exercise unrighteous dominion and you persecute others and he certainly ends up persecuting others to cover his sins, to gratify his pride and to exercise unrighteous dominion. Those restoration verses are really powerful in helping frame what's going on here.

Hank Smith: 00:43:18 John, correct me if I'm wrong, but earlier this year, Ross Baron taught us that Eliam here, Bathsheba's father, is one of these 30 men, honorable men that David keeps as kind of a guard. According to 2 Samuel 23, there's his name in verse 34. There's another point where he should have stopped and thought, wait, what am I doing here? Eliam, he's my friend. I have a bunch of teenage boys in my house, so I'm going to read together or listen to Elder Holland's Place No More for the Enemy of my Soul. If it's a perfect place to maybe go through this on your own or with your family, Elder Holland says in this talk, he says, "Why is lust such a deadly sin? Well, in addition to the completely spirit destroying impact it has on our souls, I think it is a sin because it defiles the highest and holiest relationship God gives us in mortality, love that a man and woman have for each other and that desire that couple has to bring children into a family intended to be forever.

00:44:20 Someone once said that true love must include the idea of permanence. True love endures, but lust changes as quickly as it can turn a pornographic page or glance at yet another potential object for gratification walking by male or female. True love, we are absolutely giddy about, as I am about Sister Holland. We shout it from the housetops, but lust is characterized by shame and stealth, you see that here and is almost pathologically clandestine. The later and darker the hour the better, with a double bolted door just in case. Love makes us instinctively reach out to God and other people. Lust, on the other hand, is anything but godly and celebrates self-indulgence. Love comes with open hands and an open heart. Lust comes only with an open appetite." I would go through this entire talk maybe with a Sunday school class or a seminary class. It fits really well with this story, I think.

Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:45:22	One of the things we didn't mention that we could have mentioned when we're reading those verses is this moment when David decides that Bathsheba is an object that he can look upon her as an object rather than seeing an eternal soul there. And by the way, that's going to lead us towards the end we'll talk about Solomon. Unfortunately, his downfall is connected to what the Bible describes as 800 wives and 200 concubines. Lots of wives and lots of concubines. It comes to a thousand. I think that's an oddly even number. There's some maybe hyperbole or just some rounding off of those numbers going on there. But Solomon's sin may have been connected, there may have been lust connected to that. There may have been control connected to that, but more so he is still seeing women and these marriages. This is what Kings did. You make alliances with foreign powers through marriage.
	00:46:20	It turns marriage into a, I'm going to get this. This is, I'm going to gain this from this relationship. I don't know how he treated his wives or his concubines. There's just no way to know those things, but certainly he puts him into a space that is very different than what Elder Holland is describing about the giddiness that comes in a covenant relationship. I feel this when I feel the spirit in my covenant relationship with the Lord gives me incredible joy, my covenant relationship with my wife, with my children and we're imperfect people and I'm sort of annoying sometimes, but ah, I feel this way about, because it's not transactional. I'm married to an eternal being and I am so deeply blessed to be blessed by her and by my children day by day. That's different than what Solomon is going to end up experiencing with these, this multitude of wives that he's doing for foreign alliance reasons.
Hank Smith:	00:47:21	This is also tragic, isn't it? Just so sad.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:47:25	Let's turn this a little bit brighter if we could. I wrote actually a chapter in Aaron Shade and Dan Belnap's Old Testament. It's their volume two that was just published just a few months ago. This is a bad form to read something that I wrote, but then I'll say it better than I would if I just said it. So I'm going to read the final paragraph of this chapter that I wrote. David's story is one that warns of sin but also that speaks of God's willingness to use imperfect humans to do his work even more so when that imperfect vessel was devoted to God amid an ancient society that battled and regularly lost the battle against the temptation of polytheism. David's life against much that was damaging, self-serving and prideful. And I've already referred to, we won't go back to it again this towards the end of his life here he's doing this census thing where he's seeking to gratify his pride.

	00:48:16	Oops, then there's a plague and he's continuing to circle back to the same challenges. And so as sincere as his repentance is, he has a hard time actually changing this willfulness in his character. But David's life also portrayed much that was faithful at times charmingly, exuberantly faithful in the face of great and grave challenges. David rose above his human nature so often in life, lifted there by his faith in the power of Jehovah. It is fitting that God should use this human as a type of the coming Messiah, a being whose complete devotion to God would also involve bearing the burden of human imperfection as he took upon himself the sins of all, including the sins of David, his mortal progenitor. Although the stark warning of David's fall is crucial for its readers to understand the witness of God's understanding of his flawed children and his mercy with them can still appropriately serve as the overarching theme of David's life.
	00:49:14	David apparently continued to walk forward in very flawed ways at times, but what if he had just said, oh, my story's over. I'm done. No, he continued to give it his shot to be a man of action and to move forward and God used him. God doesn't wait for us to have perfect motives. We are all people of mixed motives and he can use us. Now, the more pure our motives are, the better it's going to be for us and everyone around us. But he can use us in the meantime. Keep loving the Lord and walking forward. I'm talking to myself here. Keep loving the Lord and walking forward and try to seek after him and be more and more holy, but keep serving, keep moving forward and God will walk with you and use you for great good notwithstanding your imperfections. That's the hope I think that all of us have.
Hank Smith:	00:50:04	I think that's well said. Your worst moment does not have to define you.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:50:08	It doesn't. We highlight these fatal flaws, but do these really define who we are? Not when there's a Savior, not when there is a being who has descended below it all to lift us and to heal us and to comfort us and to chastise us too and to help us if we will turn to him. To me, that's the theme I want to end with as far as David goes. Yeah, I think you can tell I love him. The things he did are really painful. May we avoid each one of us those spaces in our lives to the best of our ability by seeking after the Lord.
Hank Smith:	00:50:48	Oh, I love it. We live in a world of temptation. These stories can serve as wonderful warnings without us coming down on David in a way that can create shame for anybody hearing the lesson. Good job, Shon. That's a difficult thing to do.

Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:51:04	Well, I appreciate navigating this with the two of you. It's heavy at times.
John Bytheway:	00:51:09	President Hinckley was speaking about the honor code at BYU once. This is in 1992. He said, "I think I can hear a student, perhaps a number of them saying to a bishop, why do we have to sign these codes? Don't they trust us? I'm reminded of what I heard from a man, a great, strong, and wise man who served in the presidency of this church years ago. His daughter was going out on a date and her father said to her, be careful, be careful how you act and what you say. She replied, daddy, don't you trust me?" Now, here is the best response I have ever heard to that question that President Hinckley is relating about this man, I think it was President J. Reuben Clark. "He responded, I don't entirely trust myself. One never gets too old nor too high in the church that the adversary gives up on him."
	00:52:04	For those that struggle, Satan does not play fair. He first tempts you to do it and then he beats you up if you do and makes you feel so low and terrible. He doesn't play fair at all. When Hank read those verses, I think of all the times, who is that? Could have stopped right there. Could have stopped when he saw her. Go in the house, sing a hymn. Brad Wilcox says, "No, not there is beauty all around, something else." But then there's another step. We'll go inquire after her. You can kind of see this slowly leaving your stronghold type of a thing. But that idea from President Hinckley, not from a bishop, not from a stake president, from somebody in the First Presidency who said, "I don't entirely trust myself, one never gets too old or too high in the church that the adversary gives up on him." I love the humility and the honesty in that statement right there.
	00:53:05	If you're listening and you're struggling with this, keep fighting every day, follow him. Keep coming back to him. What's the old story about the grandfather told a son, I've got two wolves fighting inside of me and the good and evil and the grandson says which one wins? And he says, the one that I feed. Make progress. Keep trying. I think all of us ache for each other when we know how we are all fighting our own battles. Maybe not on this topic, but we've got, we've got an ally. And I love what you said, Shon, that after this, David kept trying and did some good things and so can you. Keep, just keep going and let the Lord keep using you and maybe that other wolf will get stronger.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:53:51	You do not wait until you're perfect before you become a man or a woman of action. And yes, sorrow for our sins and walk it forward. Joab does David a real service. When he has conquered the ammonite stronghold, he calls David and says,

		you've got to come and be the one to take it. It pulls David back into the storyline and reinitiates his place, I am moving forward with my life. It's his friend that helps him do that, and sometimes we need friends to help us get back up, move forward. Your sins don't define you in a universe that has a savior. Trust and walk forward and keep doing all the good you can and God will turn the sins that you turn over to him into these threads woven through your tapestry that give you strength and wisdom and nobility. You would rather never have them and yet if you turn them over to Christ, he will use them to teach you lessons that will give you incredible wisdom. And he will take your flaws and your weaknesses and make them into these beautiful things that can actually help change the world. Don't wait until you've got it all figured out. Keep walking forward.
Hank Smith:	00:55:09	Yeah. There's a point where it says, "The Lord sent Nathan unto David." This story could be even different right there if it could say David went to Nathan. And we all have priesthood leaders that we can go to and mentors that we can go to and say, I need help. I need a friend like that. You both think like Joseph Smith. He said, "God does not look on sin with allowance. But when men have sinned, there must be allowance made for them. The nearer we get to our Heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls, to take them on our shoulders and cast their sins behind our back. If you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another."
John Bytheway:	00:55:54	Beautiful. And if you're a young person, man, boy, you've got help. Go, go to the bishop, get a blessing. Both of you face this together. Both of you fight it together and have an accountability partner, they call it sometimes. That's what we're supposed to do. We're going to help each other and we've got an ally in the Lord.
Hank Smith:	00:56:16	Shon, thanks for letting us take time on that. I think it's relevant and helpful and we hope that everyone will leave with hope. Warning, yes, but also hope for the future. Shon, what are we going to do next?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:56:27	1 Kings chapter three. We now have a young King Solomon who is coming into his kingly role and is terrified that he is going to do it poorly. And I really appreciate how the prayer that he gives where he talks about what he needs and what he's desiring from the Lord. Let's pause and read a couple of verses from 1 Kings chapter three. And John and Hank, if you'd be willing to

read again. John, why don't you do verses seven and eight and then Hank, why don't you do verse nine?

John Bytheway: 00:57:12 And now, oh Lord, my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David, my father. And I am but a little child. I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

Hank Smith: 00:57:33 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people that I may discern between good and bad, for who is able to judge this so great a people.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 00:57:44 And then God is going to be pleased with that and he's going to say, because you asked for this and not for riches or power, you might say, I'm going to grant you an understanding heart, then you'll be blessed with the other things. And along the lines of Jacob 2, our Book of Mormon scripture that says, seek ye not, seek ye first for the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. Well, a couple of quick Hebrew insights here. I know not how to go out or come in. This is tzeit v'lavo. That's a Hebrew idiom for leadership, specifically military and civic administration. I don't know how to go out or come in before the people. The ability to lead people in a way that they trust the leader and desire to follow the leader and then to bring them safely back home from battle.

00:58:36 Go out with courage and with trust and then come home safely. And then this, give me an understanding heart. This is actually a Lev Shomeah, a hearing heart, a heart that hears. If we think of President Nelson's encouragement to hear him and the power of being heard by our leaders, a leader who listens, but then also a leader who can listen to what the Lord is saying. You see then Solomon doing this throughout the rest of the chapter and there's this famous story where he's judging between two women who have brought, there's a child and the other child is dead and he listens to them. He discerns, with a discerning heart and then it seems clear to me anyway, that the Lord gives him insight. He's trying to hear, how do I move forward? I've been in situations at times that feel very thorny in a leadership kind of way, where there's conflict, where it's hard to know how best to resolve issues.

00:59:45 It's so tiring to be in a situation where you don't know how to move forward and it just sort of roils and continues. There have been times when I think, oh, that's the right thing to say. That's the right thing to do. That's the right way to move. And I almost sense how to walk forward. And all of a sudden I have energy

again. The Lord gives me a way forward. It takes listening and listening is hard. Listening takes energy. And if you're listening to competing voices but really trying to honor the goodness in those and understanding heart, a listening heart, a hearing heart to hear others, then okay, Lord, I've heard, I've listened, I haven't just tried to dominate or put my will forward. Now, how do I walk forward? And you see, I believe, Solomon getting that it's almost like it's clever but it's wise, it's brilliant.

01:00:41 It helps him know how to walk forward in a way to untie the thorny knot. And I think we see this at times where there are these thorny challenges. The correct solution is there, but you've got to find it. And then when someone finds it, you're in awe. And then so quickly it just becomes, oh, well, that's an obvious solution, but it wasn't obvious. An understanding heart, a listening heart. Oh, may God give us an understanding heart. And it doesn't need to be formal leadership. It is in all of our interactions as we're listening to someone to actually listen and then what can I say? What can I do here? Or maybe I don't say anything that is exactly what this situation needs and calls for. How can I give the balm of Gilead? How can I give some wisdom here that isn't aggressive or doesn't take away agency but that honors agency?

01:01:34 We can do so much good if we plead for and allow the Lord and then listen to him to give us wisdom, how we move forward in our relationships with each other. So I love seeing Solomon's tender good heart. Please help me know I'm such an idiot. I don't know how. Back to my story of wearing the suit with the big flap open in the back, you know? I did not know how to go in or come out before the people clearly. The Lord blessed Solomon beyond his ability. He has power to bless us beyond our abilities. I testify of that.

Hank Smith: 01:02:11 Isn't it interesting in our church, both of you, that we take these wonderful, ordinary men and women and we throw them into leadership and you can see almost everybody who gets a calling, a Relief Society President or Bishop it's I have no idea how to do this. It reminds me a little bit of Mosiah 26. Do you remember this moment where Alma the Elder, has to make some difficult decisions? It says, this is Alma 26:13. The spirit of Alma was troubled. He went and he inquired of the Lord what he should do concerning this matter, for he feared that he should do wrong in the sight of God. I just, I love the way the church is organized that, you know, I don't like it when it happens to me, but I love watching it in other people where we take our neighbor here and we're going to put him in charge or her in

charge for the next couple of years and you watch people grow in wisdom. It's really a beautiful thing, I think.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:03:09 Hank, you know, you and I have been in situations in our department that are challenging and thorny and trying to figure out how to move forward and all of us together seeking wisdom. It is beautiful to see those moments when the Lord just says, here's what we're going to do. Here's how we walk forward. We have a new stake president in my home stake well, new about a year ago. I loved the previous stake president. This new stake president, he was 37 when he was called and to watch the Lord pour out his spirit upon him and him lead with energy and enthusiasm with the talents that God has given him, it's so fun to watch this. I mean, I'm 52 now, so this young man, 15 years younger than I am, lead with wisdom and power. It's really beautiful to see God works things. For those of us who are, are willing to say, please give me an understanding heart. Give me wisdom. Help me to know how to go out and come in before the people.

John Bytheway: 01:04:11 We all remember that Moses said, I'm slow of speech. We all remember that Enoch said, I'm but a lad and all the people hate me. And here's Solomon, verse seven, "I am but a little child." As you taught us what it means to go out or come in. And then this question, who is able to judge this thy so great a people? I love the difference between willing and able, and the Lord requires the heart and a willing mind, but Jesus is able and God is able and he'll help you. Who is able? God is. He'll inspire you. Part of getting that inspiration is that kind of humility that you know you need it. But I've never done this calling before. How am I supposed to do this? Good, that's perfect. Can you ever imagine anybody receiving a calling and getting up, yeah, I'm totally qualified for this. I think I'm the right person. Glad they called me. I hope they'd get that inspiration. I was just waiting, you know, you'd never see that.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 01:05:06 Did, you did in a previous podcast talked about this moment with Moses where he's like, I can't do this. My mouth, I'm of stammering lips. And I sort of like the way they do it in Prince of Egypt where God just gets a little bit feisty with him. Who made your mouth? Didn't I make your mouth? Now go. Like, what are you talking about? Your lips don't work. I made your lips. Like I can make this work out. Trust in me, but you got to move. You got to move forward. And there is, by the way, a space in Jerusalem. Just to the north of Jerusalem is a hill called Nabi Samuel, which is the traditional burial place of the prophet Samuel. But just below there is Gibeon, is biblical Gibeon. We

		think that's the correct place where Solomon is doing these sacrifices where the Lord appears to this humble young man.
	01:05:59	It might actually be on that what is a taller hill of Nabi Samuel. Some speculate that, no, that's the higher place and he would've gone up there, but he leaves Jerusalem. That's where the ark is at that point, so that's the Holy Space. So he goes up there, the temple hasn't been built yet to worship and to offer sacrifice and the Lord apears to him. And I just want to bear my witness that God speaks to his children today and that he is willing to make himself known to us when we come to him in holiness of heart, humility of heart, most importantly. And he does it in his own way and in his own time, whatever's appropriate for the time and the need. God lives and God speaks and that is the Latter-day Saint message that I hope will reverberate throughout the world. There is a God who lives and there is a God who speaks still today as he spoke to Solomon.
Hank Smith:	01:06:55	Coming up in part two.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	01:06:57	Let's go even further than that. We use other human beings in the place of God like a king. Oh, when I get married then I will know that I have value. We persecute like roommates or, you know, my parents are supposed to fill this hole in my soul. And if they don't do it perfectly, then they're to blame. And the reality is there's only one king who will fill our soul.



John Bytheway:	00:00	Welcome to part two with Dr. Shon Hopkin, 2 Samuel and 1 Kings.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	00:07	Let's move then to what I think will be the last thing that we discuss. We've already given a nod to Solomon's challenges. He's going to struggle with these same things that David struggles with, that being what the restoration scripture warns against, which is to gratify your pride and exercise unrighteous dominion. He's going to have conscripted service. And let me just give this quick nod before we move then to talk about the temple. There is another leadership principle that Solomon ends up betraying and that is he gets the benefits that he wants in a way that works short term but is going to lay the foundation for long-term challenges and disunity in his kingdom. When he overtaxes or overconscripts or is too demanding in a way that is unhealthy, then he's preparing his kingdom for future dissolution. And I do think we at times will use shortcuts to get the effects that we want.
	01:11	We can do this as parents. We can do this as leaders. We can do this with each other. I think the other leadership principles in Doctrine and Covenants 121 that we've been quoting from so often, gentleness and meekness and persuasion, love unfeigned, reproving betimes with sharpness when moved upon by the Holy Spirit and then showing forth an increase of love. These are the long-term strategies that are going to give the best fruits over the long haul. Solomon, unfortunately, with all the grandeur and all the early wisdom, he does some things that are going to set his son up for failure and the future kingdom up for failure. Let's be careful to build for the millennium, so to speak, to build for the long term, the long haul.
Hank Smith:	01:56	That's so well said. In fact, I have some wisdom here from the year of 2022. We were interviewing a guest about Genesis three and four. John, I don't know if you remember this, but here's what this guest said. Pick a sin, any sin. Not one that you do because that'll be awkward, but think about any sin and how it's actually motivated somewhere lower in the motivation. As we

build towards that sin, I want to get something for nothing. And you could think of gossip that I want to use instead of building a relationship through love and sacrifice. I'm going to tell a secret that puts me in a position of trust with you. You could think of lying and how I want to shortcut the system or cheating to get something for nothing. You could think of breaking the law of chastity or pornography. At the click of a button, it looks the same as physical, sexual intimacy in marriage.

02:46 Typically, though, you court someone, you get married, you do the dishes, you go on dates, you raise children together, or I just get something for nothing. He said, all of us do this, by the way, being seduced by this getting something for nothing where we're looking for shortcuts. But this idea that we want the easy path of getting something for nothing, it weakens us as humans. We are light and truth at our very core. And when we go to sin to get what we want, it warps who we are. And then we need the redemption that comes through the atonement of Christ and reaccepting truth. That first great truth of mortality, I am going to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow. John, I don't know if you remembered that, but our guest was Dr. Shon Hopkin. It really impacted me, he said, look at the first commandment God gives to Adam. You're going to work by the sweat of your brow and then look at what Satan says to Cain. You don't have to do that. You can take what you want. The first commandment and the first temptation. Shon, does that kind of fit there?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 03:48 You have got to have improved that quote. That sounds way better than anything that would come out of my mouth. Hey, so thanks for whatever you did to polish that up. That was fun. I did not know you were going there. And then I was like, wait, this is familiar. That was very sneaky of you. And I do think it fits there. We want to build to endure and we're tempted not to. We're tempted to take those shortcuts.

John Bytheway: 04:12 I think there were people who said, we want to see a sign. I think that was a something for nothing. I want the testimony, I don't want any effort. I want the proof. I don't want to do any research, any work. And when Jesus says it's a wicked and an adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign, what's adultery? I want the pleasure of another person. I don't want the commitment of another person. They sound like the same thing.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 04:38 Doctrine Covenants 121 to me is a leadership manual, par excellence. There's nothing like it to me. In the literature of the world, I find nothing more powerful. Here's how you interact

		with other human beings to try to do good. It's Doctrine and Covenants 121. I think it's from about verse 28 or 30 and then up to 34 to the end. I very imperfectly take it as my guide anytime I'm trying to interact with others in positive ways. It's pure, it's powerful. How did Joseph Smith give us that? The Lord gave us that and I love it.
Hank Smith:	05:19	The essence of power came from a jail. The essence of freedom comes from a jail.
John Bytheway:	05:26	We have brought that up a few times, haven't we? I think that same thing, it's the interpersonal relation, it's, you read it and think, this is brilliant.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	05:34	And those three sins that I've been talking about, the three things that get us covering our sins, gratifying our pride, our vain ambition, and exercising unrighteous dominion, these show up like Saul, you could track his downfall with those three sins. It's just fascinating how often that shows up and then once you start to see it, it shows up in our own lives. That level of just deep human insight to me came to Joseph Smith from God. Let's look at the temple chapters here. Beautiful to see this young Solomon asking for wisdom, hard to see him struggle with some of the same kinds of challenges that David is struggling with. Seeing so many times these people that we love struggle, I hope, once again, serves as a warning to us. We tend to think, well, I, the way I do things is the best way. Let's just be cautious that maybe I might see some of those same tendencies in my own life. Okay.
	06:30	Let's talk about the temple. There's a fascinating thing here that I have used at times but maybe incorrectly. So let me just mention it. The tail end of 1 King 6 tells us how long it took Solomon, how long he spent building the temple, which was seven years. That's a nice symbolic number of completion of creation and the temple commemorates this idea of creation and completion and is designed to create and bring us to completion. Then 13 years building his own palace. Seven years on the temple, 13 years building his own house, you already start to see things going a little bit awry for Solomon. That's one reading of that and that may be an accurate reading. It may be just as accurate or more accurate. It's a different approach. He's hurrying, so to speak, with the temple. He is doing the temple first and devoting the most attention to that and taking longer to complete his own house.
	07:30	I don't know which of those is more accurate. It's just sort of an interesting thing to think about and consider maybe. Then

there's another small point I want to make before we move to the dedicatory prayer. Let's go to 1 Kings chapter 7:23. This is where you get a new thing. Usually when we see depictions of the temple, the ancient temple, what we're actually looking at is the tabernacle and the way that it was designed. And Solomon's temple is very similar, but there's a lot, there are a lot of differences as well. You don't have the 12 oxen in the tabernacle. You get them in Solomon's temple, and I want to make a point about that, but first let's read a few verses here. I'll read verse 23, "He made a molten sea, 10 cubits from one brim to the other. It was round all about. His height was five cubits, a line of 30 cubits to encompass it roundabout.

08:21 Under the brim of it, roundabout were knops compassing it 10 in a cubit, encompassing the sea roundabout. The knops were cast in two rows when it was cast. And here's then the oxen. It stood upon 12 oxen. Three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. And the sea was set above them and all their hinder parts were inward. Well, for Latter-day Saints, of course, these oxen are beloved oxen because the baptismal fonts in our temples are, of course, set on the backs of 12 oxen that look like this and that symbolize one of the things they are going to symbolize is the tribes of Israel, God's covenant, amongst his people. You've got ... If you're doing symbolic numbers, three is sort of this heavenly perfection and four is the four corners or quarters of the earth and so three times four is 12.

09:16 So you sort of have earth and heaven combined. God and his people are going to be in this covenant relationship, all of that. And then we could say more about the oxen. Here's one point though that I think might be of interest and that is why don't we have the oxen in the tabernacle? I will suggest an answer to that, not the answer, but an answer to that is the tabernacle is portable. It actually rides on the back probably of oxen as it moves throughout the wilderness, this giant structure. It's portable. God moves with you. Now, what have we done? Like the other nations of the world, we've actually got a structure that actually doesn't move, the temple's in one place. And maybe one thing God is trying to communicate here is don't misunderstand that you can only find me here in Jerusalem. I will be with you.

10:13 I move with you. And should you come up to the temple? Yes, you should. But when they are cast out of Jerusalem and the temple is destroyed in ancient societies, when your temple is destroyed, you're done. Like some other God defeated your

		God, you're over. Why do the Israelites make it through? Well, there's this incredible vision that Ezekiel has where God is on this chariot with wheels. It's like the ark has wheels. And you're like, what is that? Well, he's saying, I will still be in your midst. I'm not stuck in one place. You haven't lost me or my influence because you've been cast out of your land to a far away land. I will be with you. I'm portable is the wrong way to talk about God, right? But don't misunderstand that I'm stuck in only one place. I will be with you in the wilderness.
	11:11	I will be with you in your time of need. I love that we've got this continued symbol of movement, of action, of not being cemented to one particular space that persists in Solomon's temple here with these oxen that can still move that sea around, so to speak. And I would just say, I love going up to the temple. May we go up to the temple? Solomon's about to talk about in his dedicatory prayer in the next chapter. May we seek after the Lord wherever we are. Wherever I am, may I know that he has power to find me there when my heart seeks after him.
Hank Smith:	11:52	That sounds enormous. Any idea of how big that is?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	11:56	Well, you could do the measurements, of course. Cubits are approximately, to the best of our understanding, 18 inches per cubit. And so if you've got 10 cubits, you've got 15 feet across. One of the biblical scholarly ideas here, and you'll hear Dan Belnap talk about this, that's one of our colleagues, is that all of these proportions, the altar was the same with Solomon's temple and the idea is this is God's territory and you should feel a little bit small here.
Hank Smith:	12:26	Okay.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	12:26	Everything is grand and everything is larger because you are entering into the realm of the all powerful God. You should feel some awe. It shouldn't be casual. It shouldn't be, hey, cool. I get to make a covenant with God or God makes a covenant with me. That we should be deeply awed that the omnipotent God of the universe enters into a relationship with us who are his children. He's a benevolent Father. He is also the all powerful ruler of all things. Yeah, that might be one of the symbols.
Hank Smith:	13:02	Is that like the laver?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	13:03	Yes. This isn't true in the tabernacle. You don't have giant molten sea in the tabernacle. This is something that shows up in

		Solomon's temple. They do have, if you continue reading the chapter, they've got a bunch of lavers as well that would have been in the courtyard as well. So you need a lot of water if you're going to be doing animal sacrifices. There's a lot of ritual washing and cleansing and then you also need water to make sure that the priests stay clean and ritually prepared. There's a use there symbolically, ritually, and just functionally for that water.
Hank Smith:	13:40	Solomon would see one of ours and go, hmm, it's okay. Kind of small, but it's okay. Yeah.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	13:45	Yeah. Our baptismal fonts are built, you might say, are designed on the foundation that's received through Solomon got that inspiration first and now our modern prophets have got inspiration. Here's how we should build our baptismal fonts today in our temple baptismal fonts. Good. Wow. Just poked myself in the eye with my glasses. We can leave that in.
Hank Smith:	14:08	Yeah, this thing sounds huge, man.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	14:10	Yeah. Well, the altar is the same way. These are enormous shapes.
John Bytheway:	14:16	Let's talk about that. The molten sea was not a baptismal font then. It was water needed for the sacrifices.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	14:23	And for washing ordinances and so it has similarities and the symbolism is in some ways going to be similar to both the washings that we would identify with in our Latter-day Saint temple practice and it is about cleansing. It is about holiness before the Lord in ways that baptism also is, but we don't have any understanding that baptisms were ever performed in that. They had mikvahs, mikva'ot, where they would ritually immerse and those are to prepare to come up onto the temple mount. So if there's anything like that, we don't see it clearly from anything that we can see in the biblical account. Hank you, we're talking about these giant sizes. We often picture the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. If you look at the cherubim, 1 Kings 6, verse 23, within the oracle, he made two cherubim and we better do it accurately. I think Avram Shannon from a previous podcast was talking about this. This is Cherubim in Hebrew is the plural already. We don't need an S on the end. What did you say, John? It's not geeses. It's geese-
John Bytheway:	15:42	Geeses. Yeah.

Dr. Shon Hopkin:	15:43	It's not moose. It's meese.
John Bytheway:	15:46	Meeses. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	15:47	Mooses. Meesin.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	15:51	These are 10 cubits high. Look at this. So we tend to picture these cherubim that are on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant, but in Solomon's Temple, these are 10 cubits. We're talking 15 feet tall and their wings are going to stretch. Look at verse 24. Five cubits was the one wing that's seven and a half feet wide, five cubits the other wing of the cherub from the uttermost part of the one wing under the uttermost part of the other were 10 cubits, so 15 feet wide. And then again, the height of the one cherub was 10 cubits and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubim, plural, but yeah, without the S, within the inner house, and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubim, so the wing of the one touched the one wall, the wing of the other touched the other wall, their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.
	16:35	So when you see those different depictions that we're used to seeing the tabernacle depictions, usually these are Temple of Solomon had some differences that were really powerful and really grand. Lots of gold, by the way. They're in a position now that to bring their best looks different than what it looked like. Actually, you think of Kirtland Temple compared to Nauvoo compared to Salt Lake Temple. Bringing their best now, there's going to be a lot more overlay of gold in Solomon's temple than what you had in the tabernacle. Let's talk about the dedicatory prayer. It is really powerful. You really do get Solomon's wisdom. God did bless him to know how to go in and out before the people, how to lead this people. These prayers of faith. I love the prayer of the brother of Jared in the Book of Mormon where he is saying, we know thou canst do this and please bless us this really humble but faithful prayer. And you see Solomon doing this.
	17:42	I love Hezekiah in Isaiah 37. He gives a really powerful prayer of faith in the temple. And let's just pause for a second. The point that was made with the Come, Follow Me Manual is with the impermanence and the inconsistency of David and Solomon, David wanted to and then Solomon was allowed to. He gave them a temple that then allowed them to recenter again and again and again on their relationship with the Lord. And it's still there when Assyria is the threat. Solomon's long gone. Solomon did some things to mess things up, but the temple is still there. I love that with this Assyrian threat now jumping forward in the

storyline to Hezekiah, here they come and what does Hezekiah do? This is such a Latter-day Saint sounding story. He goes to the temple and he prays to God in the temple and he sends to the prophet and as he's praying in the temple or connected to his prayer in the temple, the answer to his prayer comes from the prophet to him.

18:45 And so you have temple, prophet, and the person who is trying to overcome a challenge in his life. And he can pray directly to the Lord and he does. And he goes to the temple in order to do that and then he gets this. I think of Latter-day Saints going to the temple maybe before a general conference session. I can pray to the Lord and then I will listen and be better prepared to hear what the Lord will say directly to me through his prophets. Such a Latter-day Saint way to view the world and it's fun to see that there in the ancient texts, the Old Testament. All right so this beautiful prayer that he gives and the thing that strikes me as I reread this prayer is how focused it is not on your people are going to be perfect, but the temple, yes, is a place of prayer and a place of repentance and forgiveness over and over and over again.

19:39 Let's look at verse 33. When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, when we've got challenges, because they have sinned against thee and shall turn again to thee, where turn again as symbolized by return to the temple and confess thy name and pray and make supplication unto thee in this house, then hear thou in heaven and forgive the sin of thy people and bring them again. Shuv is the Hebrew there, right? This return or repent. 36, here's another one. Then hear thou in heaven and forgive the sin of thy servants and of thy people Israel that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk. The Hebrew word for, and then the later Jewish teachings of the commandments we should walk in are the halacha, literally the walk the way we walk in. It's a path and we walk in it. It's the path that leads to joy.

20:35 It's not like do this, this and this, you walk in the path and that path leads you to joy. Then look at verse 38, What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart? How often do we go to the temple and only we know the plague of our own heart? It's so beautifully expressed by Solomon, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart and spread forth his hands towards this house. Now you're not even in the house, but you're, it's a symbol of your relationship with the Lord. Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place and forgive and do and give to every man according to his ways

whose heart thou knowest, for thou, even thou knowest the hearts of the children of men. We have to make sure that we get verse 41.

21:26 Moreover, concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country. Verse 43, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place. And I love this attention that we're also going to see in Isaiah to the needs of those who have been outsiders, but bring them in, bless them, may we pay attention to those who have not been part of us but will be inspired by this practice and come and pray to the Lord because of this. Let me do one last one, verse 47, talking if they get scattered, if they're scattered throughout the world, yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land, whether they were carried captives and repent and make supplication unto thee, verse 49, then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven and maintain their cause and forgive thy people. And there's this really cool thing that happens after he's done praying to God, then he turns to bless his people.

22:27 I think Latter-day Saints, those particularly who have been endowed know just how powerful the temple is as a place of prayer. What we often don't see is then those who are officiating in the ordinances turn and offer this kind of blessing upon us that Solomon does. I think one of the reasons why is because God is bringing all of us in in ways that weren't possible for the ancient Israelites, all of us into his presence to then allow us to turn and bless others as we leave the temple. We become the priestly or the priestessly voice. Here's King Solomon and God promises to make us kings and queens, priests and priestesses. The temple is the place where that begins to happen. When you go back and you're officiating in an ordinance on behalf of another person, someone who's passed away, you are, I'm not saying you are in the office of a priest or a priestess, but you are functioning in a priestly, priestessly function to perform an ordinance on behalf of another being.

23:43 We actually become as Solomon is in this storyline when we, as Latter-day Saints, come up to the Lord and worship and renew our covenants in His Holy House. So I think there's lots going on here that's really beautiful and powerful. His prayer is so poignant. It's so vulnerable as he's gone in or out before the people and he's leading them to bring them safely home. Yeah, I don't know if there's some things that resonate with the two of you about our own Latter-day Saint temple observance and how you understand it and see it that sort of can be helpful for you with this chapter.

John Bytheway:	24:23	I just love how he's praying for every aspect of life and interaction with each other and with foreigners. I was looking up these seven points of the dedicatory prayer, judging each other verses 31 and 32, defeat in battle 33, 34, drought, 35 and 36, 37 through 40 natural disasters. The stranger and the foreigner, like you said, 41 through 43, victory in war 44, 45, and then about exile and captivity, 46 through 53. And to answer your question, I just underlined verse 43, that all people of the earth may know thy name. That's the missionary effort right there.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	25:11	It is really powerful to see God willing to forgive his people and then use them. Notice the two times that tends to be when we can be endowed when we're old enough, as soon as we're prepared, but often right before he sends us out to the world to share the power of his name in the world and we're going to gather a people or right before we get married and we're going to create a people and try to gather that people. He wants us to do that. He wants us to know how to go in and out before the people, how to have an understanding heart. And then one other thing I'll just highlight again, each man knows the plague of his own heart. God, you know the hearts. Each of us would agree nobody really knows what each of our fears and concerns, the weight of things that lie upon our hearts and even in a marriage relationship, there are vulnerable moments where you really, really come to know each other and see our hearts more deeply.
	26:20	But so often, even when we're in our covenant relationships, we walk those pretty privately. It's hard to be fully open about those. There's God, who knows. And this all started with Solomon saying, give me a heart to understand those things and then to judge correctly. I don't know what Hank is dealing with. I don't know what John's dealing with. They don't know what I'm dealing with. Any of you who are listening, but God knows. Solomon prayed for that. You each know the plague of your own heart and you know the hearts of men and women bless them. Heal them, heal them in their need.
John Bytheway:	26:59	I love that verse 46. "If they sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not." So we're not putting on airs. We're all messing up and we know it. Please help us. Thankfully, we have a God who loves his children. He has to remind us of that a lot. I think we need to remind each other of it a lot because he has made it so clear how interested he is in his children. Sometimes we think, ah, not me though.

Hank Smith:	27:26	I wonder if Nephi has not maybe these exact words but something like this because he tells us, I built a temple like unto the temple of Solomon. I couldn't do it because I didn't have all the precious things, but I, you know, I tried.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	27:42	Cherubim were a little smaller.
Hank Smith:	27:44	Nephi may have read something similar to these because you can almost hear Nephi in some of these, that if they're carried away captive or far away that they will return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul, which led them away captive to these enemies, pray unto thee toward their land, which though gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, the house which I built for thy name, hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven, thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause. That's interesting. Here we have the house of Israel who is chosen to bless the whole earth and at one point, maybe a little bit of a prophecy here, they're going to be scattered. Please maintain their cause. There's a feeling of Nephi and Jacob in that, that one day God will remember Israel and Isaiah.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	28:35	Yeah, absolutely. I had a fun experience during grad school. I presented at a conference the Modern Association of Professors of Hebrew Literature was the name of this group and I presented on how Latter-day Saints build on the foundation of Hebrew Bible imagery and practices and I showed a map of Utah and a map of Israel and sort of rotated the map so that the Salt Seas and the-
John Bytheway:	29:03	Great Salt Lake and the Jordan River.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	29:06	They were pretty into it. But then one guy got agitated when I was talking about the building of temples and I talked about multiple temples in the proliferation of temples. He got agitated. He actually interrupted and said, you can't do that. There is only one temple and this is a very land bound concept that's the ancient view of God's influence and redemption. You got to be redeemed to the land. You can't do that only one temple. If you start multiplying temples, then you dilute the holiness, you dilute the power. And I was getting ready to respond and he got shouted down by other members of this conference. You don't know what you're talking about. Read your Bible again. They had multiple holy spaces. It's only later they pull it into one. I was like, oh, well, okay, let's move on then. And we just moved on and they did my work for me.

	29:53	Pretty fascinating to watch that happen. We have our own concept, of course, and we're, we're quite, unique in this idea of a Christian people with temples, God dwells in heaven and he's got physical children on this physical earth and there's a locus, a space where we can go renew our covenants and seek after him. And the temple doesn't get in the way of our relationship with the Lord. It brings us and unites us with God in heaven and allows us to understand him and remake and recreate those covenant relationships again and again and again.
Hank Smith:	30:37	Shon, speaking of that, I know you love the restoration. How is it for you to study the early prophetic ministry of Joseph Smith that, okay, we've got the Bible and Jesus and the Book of Mormon and then we're going to start talking priesthoods and sacraments. So now we're going away from Protestant America kind of, we're becoming Catholic and then we're going to start talking temple. I just want you to speak to that because you're right, as Latter-day Saints, we're a very Old Testament religion and I don't know if all Latter-day Saints even realize that.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	31:13	Yeah. In this presentation I was, I talked about patriarchs and high priests and that's not a typical sort of New Testament kind of a concept. It is really fascinating to me as sort of an Old Testament studies kind of a guy to see God bring together in one all of these things from antiquity to modernity. There's a really powerful scripture in Isaiah where he says, In the last days, I'm going to bring the stranger, the foreigner, even the eunuch I will bring into my house, and there I will give them Yad Vashem, which is typically translated a memorial and a name or a place and a name, Shem is name. Yad literally is hand. I'm going to bring them into my holy house and there I will give them a hand and a name, my covenant hand and a name. In the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, there is a hall of names where the names of those who could have been forgotten who died in the Holocaust are honored.
	32:23	These are lives that were lived and we don't want to forget who they are. I just love this Latter-day Saint temple effort that when Latter-day Saints go to the temple and we of course do work for our own ancestors, we are remembering the forgotten ones and saying, your life had meaning and it won't be forgotten. I'm going to bring you into his holy house and you will receive there a hand and a name, a place and a name. You will have a home again, not as a forgotten one, but as one who God knows as well as he knows me today and I will remember you and I will honor you that remembering the forgotten ones, the outsiders, the marginalized, so to speak, and bringing them into God's holy house is such a beautiful holy work that has meaning in my life.

		It changes me today. These practices are deeply inspiring to me. They are life changing to me.
John Bytheway:	33:20	I love that. A hand and a name. Names that maybe haven't been repeated for hundreds of years are spoken in reverence and in love in a temple. It's pretty cool.
Hank Smith:	33:31	Yeah. Shon, just a question for my curiosity. It says, Solomon spread forth his hands toward heaven. Is that a common thing to pray that way in the ancient world? He's not bowing his head and folding his arms.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	33:46	You actually see a lot of hand symbolism and you get this talked about fairly regularly the idea of uplifted hands uplifted to heaven in a sacrificial context. Then at times they would actually have a wave or a heave offering where they'd actually, I've sacrificed and now I lift that sacrifice before thee. Our Jewish friends will often talk about prayer in this way. Prayer is the modern day sacrifice that we are lifting to heaven, our faith, our time, our efforts that we lift before God to heaven. But there's all kinds of really powerful, I talked about the Yad Vashem. There's places in Psalms where, you know, the Psalmist is saying, pluck your hand out of your bosom and offer it to me. Let me reenter into this relationship with you where God is. And, you know, in Isaiah, he says, "I'm going to hold you by your right hand." And then he says, "You hold me by my right hand and I'm going to walk through the fire with you." And I just love this image of a loving heavenly Father walking hand in hand with his child. I'm going to walk with you and I'm the all-powerful ruler of all things, but I'm going to hold your hand.
Hank Smith:	35:05	It was always fun as a young father to have that little child walk up to you and put both their hands up, right? Like, pick me up. Right? Like, I'm here. So if I'm walking around the temple in Solomon's day, would I see them praying with their hands up, not down, not bowing their head?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	35:23	Often, not necessarily always, but yes, often that would be a powerful ritual of prayer.
Hank Smith:	35:29	That's interesting. That's beautiful.
John Bytheway:	35:31	Hank, where are you seeing that verse, the hands raised to heaven?
Hank Smith:	35:34	That's 1 Kings 8:22. Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel and spread forth

his hands toward heaven. Be hard to keep your hands up there that long. It's a long prayer.

John Bytheway: 35:48 Yeah. And that's the illustration in the Come, Follow Me Manual shows that.

Hank Smith: 35:53 Shon, keep going here. If I'm walking through the temple, what else might I see?

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 35:57 As far as their different sacrifices, you'll get different things that they do. You'll get a heave sacrifice that sort of they're offering it in this gesture to heaven. You get a wave sacrifice where it's sort of going across like this. You get hands up raised in prayer. One of the fascinating hand symbols that I studied and learned about from non-Latter-day Saint biblical scholars, I wrote a paper where I talk about this. When Aaron or other priests are being consecrated or set apart, basically they're being ordained or set apart to priesthood office. They're being given priestly power and authority. The Hebrew there is literally Malay Etayad. So they're going to fill the hand. It doesn't say consecrate. It says, and then the hand was filled of Aaron is what the Hebrew literally says there, which in the King James version, like, what? That doesn't mean anything. So you just say they consecrated Aaron.

36:56 The idea there is the caph, which is the palm of the hand. The letter for caph is a cupped hand or if you're reading it in the alphabet, it's shaped like a "c". If you think of an upwardly turned hand, that's the idea. As Aaron is being ordained, he has an upwardly turned hand and God is placing symbols of power or of authority in the palm of the hand. They're being placed in their oil for the sacrifice or even the blood of the sacrifice, pieces of the sacrifice that are going to then be used to officiate and that upwardly turned hand is filled with symbols of authority but also things that are needed to then function in the priesthood office. And then you turn that hand upside down and pour that out and use it to bless others. If we're going to apply this in our lives when we're set apart, it's like God is pouring out blessings on us and we need to catch those.

37:57 We need to receive those in the symbols of power and of authority and the blessings. Let's say I'm a primary teacher. I bless you with wisdom to teach. And then we go into the classroom and we turn our hands upside down and pour those blessings that we've been given out upon those that were blessing. And there's other ways the symbol plays out. You can think of Christ receiving and then drinking the cup, the bitter cup. You can think of a sacrament cup that's held in our

		upwardly turned hand. You can think of the way that he blesses us with power and authority in the various places that we serve in our callings, in our temple, covenant making, et cetera, et cetera.
Hank Smith:	38:41	Would that have anything to do with also they would catch the blood, right? They would catch the blood and then go sprinkle that out.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	38:47	You actually, and one of our colleagues has also written about this, Kerry Muhlestein has written about this. They found cups that were used in the ritual purposes from Egypt that actually the cup has a hand on it. So it's like the cup is the hand. Then you're catching blood in that cup so that it can be used as part of the sacrifice. And I think of the emblems of Christ's body and blood placed in or that I take into and receive into my hand. There's some real power there to that hand symbolism that's hidden. It's buried in the Hebrew Bible because of the way that it doesn't come through in the King James Version translation.
Hank Smith:	39:32	Thank you. That was fantastic.
John Bytheway:	39:34	If someone wanted to read that paper ...
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	39:36	It can be found in a Sperry volume, the Gospel of Christ in the Old Testament and it's found on the Religious Studies Center and it's called Christ and the Caph C-A-P-H is the name of the paper. It's from 2009, so.
John Bytheway:	39:56	Oh, thank you.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	39:57	Yeah, if anybody wants some light reading or if you're having a hard time getting to sleep at night. That could be helpful. I actually like the paper personally, but I'm a little biased. Anyway, I don't mean to insult my own paper. I find those symbols really powerful that for us as Latter-day Saints point us to Christ and to our own temple covenants.
Hank Smith:	40:21	If you want to have some good reading, you should just go to amazon.com, type in Shon, S-H-O-N, Hopkin, H-O-P-K-I-N. You'll see some wonderful texts, including a fairly new one called Understanding Our Jewish Neighbors, which I thought was maybe the best explanation of Judaism for a Latter-day Saint I'd ever read.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	40:38	Thank you, Hank. The rabbi who was the co-author and who did the understanding of Judaism and then I did the, here's some

		connections with Latter-day Saints that I think can be helpful. What he did is maybe the best short intro to Judaism I've ever read. I think it's really well done. Rabbi Mark Diamond is who that is and he did a really great job. The temple as a place of prayer to me is sort of the primary thing you see over and over and over again in this chapter and that's the way Latter-day Saints feel about it. We see in Israel today in Jerusalem, the Western Wall isn't even the wall of the ancient temple, it's the wall of the platform that the temple sat on top of that. It is a place of fervent prayer. It is still the place where people return, where Jews return to seek after the Lord in that covenant relationship, put little prayers or names or scraps of prayers and put them then, you know, in the cracks of the wall there. For us to see that ancient theme, may the temple be a place of prayer for me as well. What do I do when I go to the temple? My heart seeks after the Lord with all of my energy that I can muster.
Hank Smith:	41:59	That's beautiful. This reminds me a little bit of Doctrine and Covenants Section 109 and then I look in the footnotes and it's all over down there because we have these long dedicatory prayers in the church today and if someone's thinking, why do we do that? Does it seem to come from here, 1 Kings eight?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	42:16	Absolutely, you can see the corollary, right? That Joseph Smith, through Revelation and probably also learning from what Solomon models, you get this model of this powerful dedicatory prayer. And by the way, God is going to come, the glory of God it says with Solomon's experience and there's a cloud an anan in Hebrew that fills the temple and the glory of God was there and that cloud seems to act like a veil to protect people from fully seeing the presence of God and his all powerful holiness, but they can feel the glory. They can feel God's glory. And so if you think of veils and the way that we have to be prepared to see God's glory, but he's there. He's there in the temple waiting for us.
Hank Smith:	43:03	The Lord appeared to Solomon. That's so beautiful. And he says something very similar to Section 110, "I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built."
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	43:12	Yeah, this is what God does. Sometimes there's this, well, seeing God face to face, that's how, and I think often that's motivated by wanting to be the coolest one or the most spiritual one in the room. God appears in a lot of ways in our lives and that's one of the ways that he can appear. His love, his mercy, his encouragement has appeared to me again and again in sacred moments for me in the temple and I love that he is found there. My heart draws to him and then I'm able to find him.

Hank Smith:	43:49	I've come more and more of a testimony of studying the Old Testament because I want to understand the Restoration and the Book of Mormon. If I want to understand those, the Old Testament opens up a new world to me.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	44:03	That is so true. It is the water that those other texts are swimming in. The Book of Mormon, you read it and you think, oh yeah, this is pretty plain and simple. I'm getting it. And then you study the Old Testament, you're like, oh, well, there was a lot there I was just missing and taking for granted. And it illuminates that Book of Mormon text. I like to think of Nephi being a litle bit tricky when he says, you know, he glories in simplicity. I'm like, yeah, but you like Isaiah a lot too. What Nephi is doing is he's giving us second simplicity. He has absorbed the teachings of Isaiah and then he is then sharing, he's simplifying or making clear and plain what we need to know. It all connects back in ways that become more profound as we study the Old Testament.
Hank Smith:	44:55	Yeah. It's been an eye-opening experience. Both years of Come, Follow Me to go, oh, wow, that makes me see the Kirtland Temple differently, or this helps me see Nephi differently, or King Benjamin. I have another question just to switch back to Kings. Way back in 1 Samuel, the Lord said, this is a bad idea. They came to Samuel and said, give us a king, like all the other nations. And the Lord said, this is not a good idea, and we see it play out. This was not a great idea. The Lord says to Samuel, they don't want me to reign over them. They have rejected me. They would rather have Saul or David or Solomon than me reigning over them. Shon, just in your experience with these texts, they have a king. Why do this? I almost feel sometimes like Saul, David, and Solomon are victims of this.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	45:47	They are proving the point and they do actually. I mean, the things that David does, David's sins are actually specific things and Solomon's as well, specific things that Samuel had, that the Lord had warned them about through his prophet, Samuel. And I would say this is so us, is it not? And the Come, Follow Me Manual talks about seeking for kings this solution that the world has to solve my problems and make it all okay. I want to be like other people and I want these sort of temporary solutions. I have mentioned here before a phrase that I learned from someone at some point, there is a hole in our soul and that hole is Christ shaped. We all feel a divine sense of lack or uncertainty or fear that we don't matter, that we're insufficient, that we don't have value. That's like a hole in our souls everyone desires.

	46:54	Happiness, everyone in this world desires to know that their own life has meaning. We take and we fill that with, well, if I have a king, then I'll know that we have value, then we'll be like the other people. Or if I have enough money, if I have enough likes on whatever social media page, then I'll know. Or we try to mask that we fill this fear with substances or with too much sleep or with binge-watching and none of those things, I mean, some of them are inherently bad. Many of them aren't inherently bad, but if we try, let's go even further than that we use other human beings in the place of God, like a king. Oh, when I get married, then I will know that I have value. We persecute like roommates or, you know, my parents are supposed to fill this hole in my soul.
	47:46	And if they don't do it perfectly, then they're to blame. And the reality is there's only one king who will fill our soul fully and the other stuff is good and it actually helps, you know, it sort of fills in those gaps, but God has to be first. And when we try to put our spouse in the place of God, you need to solve my problems. You need to be the source of my happiness. You need to anticipate all my needs and know what's in my mind and my heart and figure it all out for me. We persecute ourselves, we disappoint ourselves, we set ourselves up for disappointment and we persecute others as well, those that we've put in that position. God needs to be the king of my soul. Jesus Christ and his Father need to be sovereign in my soul and then all of my relationships will be stronger because of that. And then all that is good can flow. May we put first the kingdom of God and then all other things can flow in ways that will not self-sabotage. Your question is spot on, Hank, and a really insightful one. Thank you for asking it.
Hank Smith:	48:56	So sad, but like you said, so us.
John Bytheway:	49:00	And when have you felt that? I mean, no place like the temple for feeling that void filled. That's a really good place to have that void filled. So I love that idea and all the other things we try to make fit in that void and they, nope, that's not it. Nope, that's not it. Don't, that's not it.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	49:23	Yeah. Ice cream- It's going to undermine you in the end, you know? Yeah. Doritos, that'll fill this hole... No, that's not going to. Chocolate, maybe, maybe better. For a minute.
John Bytheway:	49:35	Certain brands.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	49:36	We are setting up our own future sorrow if we sort of over-rely on those as the solution to our challenges.

Hank Smith:	49:45	Yeah, we do it with celebrities, athletes.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	49:47	Oh, so painful when that happens, isn't it? When we've put a sports team in that spot and their success, that doesn't last very long, does it? Yeah.
John Bytheway:	49:57	What do you say, Hank? Your girlfriends and the cougars will break your heart. What is that that you say?
Hank Smith:	50:01	Yeah. It's the birds and the bees and the Jazz will break your heart. Those are the two lessons you get when you turn 12 in our house.
John Bytheway:	50:10	A revelation to Martin Harris. You've got a hole, Martin. Learn of me. Listen to my words, walk in the meekness of my spirit, and you will have peace in. Think of all the things you could think that might bring you peace. No, you'll have peace in me. That's the thing that's going to fit in that hole in your heart.
Hank Smith:	50:31	That leads me to my second question, which is, Shon, you've tried to articulate something to us and I think you've done a really good job. Even though they choose some kings over the Lord, he doesn't leave them.
John Bytheway:	50:41	Which is nice of him.
Hank Smith:	50:42	The Bible could be over in 1 Samuel 8.
John Bytheway:	50:45	He's like, I've had it with you people.
Hank Smith:	50:46	Fine. You're on your own.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	50:48	Rejected me. You picked that guy. Go have him then.
Hank Smith:	50:51	Go do your thing and I will, I'll wait for you to come back. But here he is walking with them in their poor choices. Is that not us as well?
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	51:00	I think that is spot on again and it reminds me that in Solomon's prayer, he's going to talk towards the end about God's covenant and mercy. So in 1 Kings 8:13, Solomon says, Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above or on earth beneath who keepest covenant and mercy, covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart. Well, so covenant is brit. That's the word that is consistently translated as covenant. Mercy is that other word that President Nelson and others have worked to teach us that is hesed. You're going

to have hesed with your covenant people. And what that means is that God puts himself in the position of the steady one. He's the one who's waiting at the window for us. He's the one who doesn't move. We move all over the place and he says, I'm staying put.

52:06 You're going to have to repent and return to me, but I'm here. I'm here for you. So you picked someone else over me. That's going to lead you to sorrow. That's unfortunate. I will be here to heal you. And there's this beautiful verse in Isaiah where he says, and he'll wipe away all tears from their eyes, tears from off their faces and all faces. And I just picture God's gentle, powerful hands cupping my face or a little child's face and gently wiping those tears away. I'm the one that gives you joy. He's jealous. He's a jealous God, not because he cares that someone else is getting our attention. It's because he cares about us. He has power to heal us. We all know we've had pain in our lives. We tried to seek after the wrong thing to fill the hole in our souls. He's the God that has covenant and hesed and mercy.

Hank Smith: 53:03 I don't hear him often saying, I told you so.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 53:07 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 53:09 I like the statement in the Book of Mormon and they said that what did Mahonri say? Surely this leadeth to captivity, right?

Hank Smith: 53:18 Shon, look at all these imperfect people. Some of them really these are serious flaws connecting with God. They're reaching towards him and he is reaching back in hesed, like you said, he's so kind.

Dr. Shon Hopkin: 53:34 The much differently than is the common conception of the God of the Hebrew Bible or the God of the Old Testament. And you see it in Isaiah. You never get a moment where God expresses, hey, I'm going to forgive those who don't repent. You don't get those moments. But what you do get is there's never a moment where he says, if you repent, I'm not going to forgive you. I will be there for you. And you see it play out. These people, sort of like all of us today, they're a bit of a hot mess. God stays the course. That's the God of the Old Testament. That's the God of the Hebrew Bible and he manifests himself a Jehovah is Christ, but the Father manifests who he is and how he feels about us in New Testament times when Jesus descends. He is the same being who is still there walking the path with us and for us.

Hank Smith:	54:37	Thanks, Shon. This has been a fantastic day. It always is with Shon Hopkin.
John Bytheway:	54:42	Yeah. We should have him on again.
Dr. Shon Hopkin:	54:45	Well, I enjoy every time you explore the Old Testament and the other scriptures with someone. I'm like, ooh, that was spectacular. There was, there were some really beautiful, powerful, applicable insights there. I'm really grateful to be a small part of that.
Hank Smith:	55:00	Thank you. Thank Jennifer for us for letting us steal you away for a little while. With that, we want to thank Dr. Shon Hopkin for joining us today. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen. Thank you, Shannon. We want to thank our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen in every episode. We remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We're going to keep going through the Old Testament 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. Thank you for being part of our follow him 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.



Hank Smith:	00:03	Welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I share a single story to go with each week's Come, Follow Me lesson. John, the Fall of David. David and Bathsheba. This is the David who was able to overcome Goliath, but he falls here. Tell me what story you have.
John Bytheway:	00:18	It hurts because he has points where he could go, oh, maybe I should have gone to war. Maybe I shouldn't be up here on my leisure porch. Maybe I just shouldn't be here. Maybe we can learn lots of lessons from that. I have a book at home called The Next Few Years Will Change Your Life by Travis Hansen. I think he's an athletic director down at BYU now. Great guy. I'll let him tell the story. I was a sophomore in high school. A time when many teens want to make friends, get a driver's license, be seen in the latest fashions. I was no different. Some of the older guys had cool clothes, just the kind of gear other teens would love to have. A few of my friends learned these older guys stole this, and other clothing from the University Mall and sold what they didn't keep.
	00:58	My friends thought it was a cool thing to do and somewhere along the line I bought into the idea that it would be a thrill and went along for the ride. And then he said, you can see where this is going already. Walking into the mall, we came up with a plan. Somebody would be lookout, somebody else would distract the clerk. Another guy would steal the stuff. I had a bad feeling about this.
Hank Smith:	01:19	Nooo.
John Bytheway:	01:19	As soon as we got to the store we decided to target. It also happened to be the most popular shop in the mall, place where the cool kids shopped. But I had this feeling it was not right. I didn't belong there. I absolutely shouldn't be part of it. Everything I had been taught all my life, everything I thought I was screamed at me to run away.

Hank Smith:	01:38	Oh, wow.
John Bytheway:	01:38	I tried to think of excuses. My mom needed me, at a doctor's appointment, anything to get me out of there. Sadly, I pushed these thoughts away, decided to go along with it. Two guys went to the dressing room, stuffed clothes under their clothes. The rest of us played lookout. They made a trip to the car, took the clothes out, returned, did it again. They came back for their third load. Things started getting rushed and chaotic. In another dressing room, two guys started stuffing my clothes with clothes.
	02:07	When I came out of that dressing room, the clerk took one look at us and said, I'm calling the cops. I froze for a split second. The voice inside me said, run, but I froze. I was scared to death. My friend started walking fast, the clerk grabbed him and grabbed me. The police came and took us both to a room in the back of the store and began to ask questions. They asked me my name. I told them I was Frank something. It's like, let me be Frank. Okay, Frank.
Hank Smith:	02:33	I'll take it.
John Bytheway:	02:33	They said I'd better use my real name or I'd be in more trouble. They knew it wasn't my name because I wasn't the first kid who tried that on them. The police took me outside, separated my friends, as I was walking to the police car in handcuffs, I passed by a member of my ward I knew very well. I tried to hide my handcuffs, but there was Brother Lyman.
	02:58	He saw me, I was embarrassed, humiliated, taken to the police station, my dad came to pick me up. I felt awful. Why had I done this? I ended up with a parole officer. I had to do community service. I was grounded for a year. In fact, he says in high school, one of his nicknames was always grounded. And it doesn't mean grounded in good, it means grounded at home. He came back to the manager. I'm sorry for what I did to you in your store. The manager appreciated I came in but had a warning for me. It was brave for you to come in. I hope you learned your lesson. It's wrong to steal things. I can't let you come back to the store again, not at least for six months. I'd been taught all my life to be honest with myself, others and the Lord.
	03:40	I'd been taught not to rationalize and that lying and stealing were wrong. None of this ever would have happened had I made a pledge to myself to be honest long before this experience. When the temptation came and pressure from my

		friends mounted, I should have said no and walked away. Best advice I can give you is to make up your mind about how you will act before anything tempts you and then act on that promise to yourself.
Hank Smith:	04:05	Great story though.
John Bytheway:	04:06	We can learn from it. We can learn from David. We can learn from Travis to say, if you ever have that feeling I shouldn't be here, when do you exit? Right now.
Hank Smith:	04:16	Turn around, follow that prompting. And Travis is absolutely incredible, incredible basketball player and he's friends with me on social media, which I, you know.
John Bytheway:	04:25	Which he's got to be a great person then.
Hank Smith:	04:27	He's got to be a great guy.
John Bytheway:	04:29	Thank you, Travis, for being willing to share this and willing to bless others with that story.
Hank Smith:	04:35	Yep. Someone listening is going, I have that feeling right now and I do not want to be hauled out in cuffs in front of Brother Lyman.
John Bytheway:	04:43	Right. Brother Lyman is always watching.
Hank Smith:	04:50	Thanks, Travis, if you're out there listening. Hey, we hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcast. We are with Dr. Shon Hopkin this week who shows us some things in the Old Testament I had never seen before. We hope you'll join us there and then come back next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.