



EPISODE 29

GUEST: DR. MIKE DAY



“He Trusted in the Lord God of Israel”

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:

Why did Jerusalem’s kings keep gambling with the Assyrian Empire, and how did that set the stage for the Book of Mormon? Dr. Michael Day explores Hezekiah’s faith crisis in the late monarchy world of Lehi.

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Part 2:

Dr. Mike Day continues to examine 2 Kings 16-25—Josiah’s reforms and how the Book of Mormon may correct and illuminate what the reforms left behind, and closes with his own testimony of Jesus Christ and how scripture carried him through crisis.

Timecodes:

Part 1 -

- 0:00 - Part 1 - Dr. Mike Day
- 2:29 Mike's Top 3
- 4:55 Bio
- 8:51 Late monarchy overview
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- 45:03 Rabsakeh's taunting Israel
- 49:49 Turn to Isaiah 37
- 53:10 Hezekiah's prayer
- 57:28 Angel strikes Assyrian army
- 59:26 Prism
- 1:02:48 Promise to Hezekiah
- 1:04:48 Connection to Nephi
- 1:08:22 End of Part 1 - Dr. Mike Day

Part 2 -

- 0:00 - Part 2 - Dr. Mike Day
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- 4:49 Hezekiah's tunnel
- 7:01 The water-drawing ceremony
- 9:03 Manasseh and the Isaiah martyrdom legend
- 11:33 Josiah takes the throne
- 12:07 Finding the Book of the Law
- 13:00 Huldah's prophecy
- 14:42 Josiah's seven reforms
- 15:52 One place of worship
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- 19:27 Hosts of heaven and the secret things
- 20:20 Moses and "You only heard a voice."
- 21:40 Defining the Deuteronomists
- 24:49 1 Nephi 1 counters the reforms

- 27:13 Origins of biblical monotheism
- 29:13 The Book of Mormon correcting the reformers
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- 34:04 Josiah's fatal move against Egypt
- 36:46 Josiah's death and the editorial
- 40:33 The fall of Jerusalem and Zedekiah
- 43:00 End of Kings
- 44:16 Mulek and the Book of Mormon connection
- 45:25 Dr Day's testimony
- 49:05 End of Part 2 - Dr. Mike Day

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Biographical Information:



Mike Day grew up in Modesto, California. After his mission in Chicago, he met his wife Sonia at Weber State University. Their family has grown to include four sons, their wonderful wives, and treasured grandchildren.

Mike co-hosts the podcast *Talking Scripture* with his colleague Bryce Dunford. He is also a regular contributor on *The Stick of Joseph* channel.

Mike firmly believes that the Book of Mormon is exactly what it claims to be. He is deeply passionate about uncovering and highlighting the connections between esoteric temple teachings and their roots in the Book of Mormon. Equally enthusiastic about the Bible, Mike embraces its complexities, exploring its original languages and rich cultural and historical contexts.

Mike has been a professional religious educator for Seminaries & Institutes of Religion since 1993. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Utah in World Languages & Cultures, Comparative Literary & Cultural Studies, with an emphasis in Classical Greek and Biblical Hebrew.

Mike loves cycling, warm beaches, Tolkien, and all things Star Wars.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:00:03	I've had that experience. In 2013, this lady was texting on her phone and she just ran right over me. I remember when she hit me, I'm in the air spinning and I'm looking at the horizon go upside down and I'm doing like 22 miles an hour. Everything slows down. Time slows down and I remember thinking, so this is how I'm going to die.
Hank Smith:	00:00:26	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my tenderhearted co-host, John Bytheway, John 2 Kings 22:19. You have humbled yourself before the Lord.
John Bytheway:	00:00:42	I have several prescription medications like atorvastatin that also soften my heart.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:00:47	Wow.
John Bytheway:	00:00:48	And the arteries and veins going into it and out of it. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:00:54	John, we are privileged today to have with us Dr. Michael Day, Dr. Mike. Grateful to have you here, Mike. Thanks for being on followHIM.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:01:02	Glad to be here. You guys are hilarious. We just started the recording here but we've been talking for a while and you guys crack me up. I'm excited to hang out and talk with you guys about the late monarchy period. It's everybody it's exciting stuff. It's the middle of summer and we're doing Kings.
Hank Smith:	00:01:19	I mean, is there anything better? I can't think of anybody out there that's going, I cannot put this down. Well, if there's anybody who can make it great, it's going to be Mike Day. John, speaking of the late King's period, the late monarchy, as you've been looking ahead, anything coming to mind? I'll give you one thing that I'm thinking of and then I'll jump over to you. That is,

this is where the Book of Mormon starts to connect with the Bible. You start to think, wow, this is the world Lehi is going to grow up in.

- John Bytheway: 00:01:50 That's exactly where I think people will go, oh, okay, I do want to know about this because the more you study the Book of Mormon and the Old Testament, the more you see how they connect. There were some late monarchs. I don't know why they were never punctual. Also, it's helpful here to get what's Northern Kingdom, what's Southern Kingdom, who's Ahaz, who's Hezekiah, and hopefully we can sort out some of that so that when you make that jump to the Book of Mormon, you're like, okay, I get what's going on here.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:20 If you can connect these, the Book of Mormon will come to life. Mike, what are you looking forward to today? As you've been preparing, what are you hoping we walk away with?
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:02:29 Well, the number one thing is pay your taxes. Here's why. These kings don't pay their tribute to the big dog on the block, the big gorilla on the block, whether it's Assyria or Babylon. And if you don't pay your taxes, bad things happen. Number one, pay your taxes. The [story of Hezekiah](#) where he goes to Isaiah and he says, listen, these guys say they're going to kill me if we don't let them in the city. And then Isaiah says, we're going to pray about this, and then they go to the Lord. That story's told in Kings and is told in Isaiah. It's a big part of the middle of Isaiah. That's a really big story to help us understand the world of Isaiah, but also it's a great narrative of what do you do when you're up against it? I like that prayer and that whole experience because it's also part of the hero's journey.
- 00:03:12 Every hero has to go through a time where everything is just not working out. What do you do in your life when you lose your job or you have chronic illness or you lose a loved one or something horrible is happening or going to happen? How do you handle it? That gives me a lot of faith. It really strengthens my belief. For me right now, I'm going through a period of time that's difficult in my family and I think a lot of our listeners have had times or are having times where they need to have their faith strengthened. So that's a faith strengthening one, maybe a little less humorous. But then towards the end, and I nerd out about this so much and I don't want this to be like a hobby horse, but I love it. I love the bit in the end in 640 when Josiah is a kid and he's put on the throne.
- 00:03:55 Then they make all these religious changes because like John said, that's really where 1 Nephi picks up. 1 Nephi 1:1 is

addressing the Josiah reforms. If you really want to have people walk away from you at a dinner party really fast, this is what you say, you know, when they come up to you and say, what are you reading about? And you could just say, I'm reading about how Josiah's reforms are connected to the Deuteronomistic historians, you know, reconstructing Israel's religion and how that ties into the visionary men of 1 Nephi 1. You say that to them and they will be like, okay. And then they will walk that way. But I really like talking about that because it's so awesome. Hopefully it will make sense. I hope that when they put this out there that people will go, okay, I think I know what Mike's talking about. That's my hope. Anyway, those are kind of like the big three.

Hank Smith:	00:04:44	Okay. Mike, I love it.
John Bytheway:	00:04:47	Awesome.
Hank Smith:	00:04:48	I love it. We're going to laugh, we're going to learn, we're going to feel.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:04:51	That's right.
Hank Smith:	00:04:51	This is going to be great.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:04:52	We'll scratch our head and go, what is he talking about?
Hank Smith:	00:04:55	Now, John, I got to tell you, I first met Mike back in 2005. We passed each other, you know, ships passing in the night. I just joined the faculty at Copper Hills Seminary. He was just leaving. We saw each other for a day or two and then he went on to do great things. I've loved him ever since and he doesn't know this. I'm a big fan of his Come Follow Me podcast Talking Scripture . And I know our founder and executive producer, the Sorensens, they are big fans as well. I've been listening to Mike for a long time. But what do you know about him, John? Do we have any background? How is he qualified to talk about these things?
John Bytheway:	00:05:35	We do. I know he's qualified because I first met him. he was on the back of a bus in somewhere around Nauvoo and I was in the front of the bus talking and I saw him taking notes. I don't know what he was writing. Maybe this guy has no clue what he's talking about. Maybe that's what he was writing. He grew up in Modesto, California, served a mission in Chicago, met his wife Sonia at Weber State. Their family has grown to include four sons and their wives and treasured grandchildren. How many do you have, Mike?

Dr. Mike Day:	00:06:05	Oh my goodness. We have a fourth coming this week.
John Bytheway:	00:06:08	Wow.
Hank Smith:	00:06:08	Oh, fun.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:06:09	They keep coming.
John Bytheway:	00:06:10	Yeah. That's great. And as Hank mentioned, you're the co-host of the podcast called Talking Scripture with Bryce Dunford. Mike is also a regular contributor on the Stick of Joseph channel. Mike firmly believes the Book of Mormon is exactly what it claims to be, so do we. He's deeply passionate about uncovering and highlighting connections between esoteric temple teachings and the roots in the Book of Mormon and is equally enthusiastic about the Bible. He embraces its complexities exploring its original languages and rich cultural and historical contexts including the late kings. So he's been a professional religious educator for seminaries and institutes since 93, has a PhD from the University of Utah in world languages and cultures, comparative literature and cultural studies with an emphasis in classical Greek and biblical Hebrew. This is going to be a lot of fun. Welcome to the program. Thanks for taking notes on the back of the bus on the church history tour.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:07:12	Glad to be here. Awesome.
Hank Smith:	00:07:15	Mike, I think I've seen you more in person in Israel than I have in Utah. We'll both have groups in Israel and I'll run into Mike and then in Utah we just don't run into each other. He's up in Salt Lake County. Well, Mike, John and I are excited to learn. I'm going to read from the Come, Follow Me manual and we'll give the reins over to you. The lesson this week, he trusted in the Lord God of Israel. Despite the prophet Elisha's powerful ministry, the people of the northern kingdom of Israel did not repent. Eventually, the Assyrian empire conquered and scattered the 10 tribes of Israel. Meanwhile, the Southern Kingdom of Judah wasn't doing much better. Idolatry was also widespread there. Amid this spiritual decay, the scriptures mentioned two kings of Judah, who for a time, turned their people back to the Lord. One was Hezekiah.
	00:08:05	During his reign, the Assyrians conquered much of Judah, but Hezekiah and his people showed faith in the Lord who saved Jerusalem in a miraculous way. Later, after another period of apostasy, Josiah became king. Inspired in part by a rediscovery of the book of the law of Moses, Josiah brought reforms that

revived the religious life of his people. Mike just talked about that. Like Israel and Judah, we all make both good and bad choices. When we sense that our lives need some reforms, we can take encouragement from these two bright spots in the dark years of Judah's history. Perhaps the examples of Hezekiah and Josiah can inspire us to trust in the Lord our God. Beautiful. All right, Mike, with that, let's go where you want to go.

Dr. Mike Day:

00:08:51

That's a good intro. Big picture, we're covering the late monarchy period from about Isaiah's time. Oh, Isaiah is around 740 BC, 750 BC in that period, to the Book of Mormon to 600 BC, but really 586 BC. So that's the time period almost a couple hundred years. It's called the late monarchy period is people sometimes will say, how do we know that there really was a King Ahaz and stuff like this.? What's really cool when you do history is you can kind-of triangulate things. We can read the biblical narrative and we can say, okay, this is what the Bible says. But then what were other people saying at that time? What are the Assyrians saying at this time about Judah? What are the Egyptians saying? We know that there was a kingdom there. We know that Jerusalem was attacked during the reign of Hezekiah.

00:09:42

There's a thing called the Taylor Prism or the Sennacherib Prism, midst of the annals of the king of Assyria where they write down, this is what we did and this is who we attacked. I put some of these in the slide. We can put these up for those of you that are watching them, but if you go to the [British Museum](#), they're massive reliefs. You can see the prism and one of the cool things about the prism, it's this like six-sided pillar. The person who writes it says that Sennacherib caged in Hezekiah like a caged bird. We know there was a Hezekiah, we know they attacked because of there's other outside sources. This part's really easy to triangulate and say, hey, this stuff happened. That's kind of the time period we're at. As far as the chapters, I always like to do, like John says, a 30,000 foot view.

00:10:26

I've heard you say that before on church history tour. Here's the overview of the flyover. 16 and 17 cover Ahaz and Hoshea. Ahaz is the king of Jerusalem. Then we get an 18 through 20 and that's Hezekiah and his experience with the Assyrians are coming, what are we going to do? And that's also in Isaiah, which we talked about before. There's some really good stuff in there, faith building stuff. Then we get to the long decline. The next bit is [Manasseh](#) in his 55-year reign. And according to some traditions, Manasseh actually kills Isaiah. That's not in the Bible, but it's in the extra biblical literature. That's a fascinating story to me because I love Isaiah so much. If it's true, it's so sad. In

some traditions, I think it's Manasseh marries the daughter of Isaiah.

Hank Smith: 00:11:15 Yeah. I've heard that. And he has him saw it in half.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:11:19 Yes. And so there's images if you go to like Italy, some of the old churches of [Isaiah](#) holding a saw, I have an image of this in the church of the Gesù where Bernini's Padawan learner learned how to paint and sculpt and he painted Isaiah with a saw on his hand. It's a fascinating story. Every time I go to a magic show and I see the lady get sawed in half, I turn to my wife and I'm like, this reminds me of Isaiah. She's like, you are so weird.

Hank Smith: 00:11:47 Oh man, I'm glad someone else's wife says that to them.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:11:50 So that's Manasseh and he's not a good guy. And then you get to Josiah who's put on the throne when he's eight and that's chapters 22 and 23 of 2 Kings and all these reforms happen. The writer of Kings is like, Josiah's awesome. He's the best thing since sliced bread. He's as cool as John Bytheway, he's so awesome. Then he dies. Oh, the Egyptians kill him. And you're like, why are the Egyptians killing him? It didn't say anything about the Egyptians. What's going on with that? Why are the Egyptians killing him? We'll talk about that.

00:12:19 And then chapter 24 and 25, everything goes to heck in a hand basket, the temple's destroyed, that's the end of the kings, but the beginning of the Book of Mormon. So that's the big picture, the 30,000 foot view. Most of the kings in the north and the south are portrayed as really bad, but Josiah is a bright spot. [Hezekiah](#), I think he gets a lot of props. The whole thing with the Assyrians come, whenever I teach this in class, I call it Hezekiah's last stand, but he's not alone. Wouldn't you be scared? If Canada [invaded](#) Salt Lake and they were surrounding us, we're going to force you guys to use maple syrup and you're going to play hockey and we're going to take over. Holy cow, that'd be really scary.

Hank Smith: 00:12:58 Yeah. John's told me this before. They're on Capitol Hill looking over the Temple Square saying, we're coming in tomorrow.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:13:08 Yeah. We're going to eat all your stuff and you're going to have to pay us tribute and it's going to be horrible. That's kind of the big picture.

Hank Smith: 00:13:15 I wanted to bring two things. One, can you notice as a teacher, enthusiasm is contagious. Mike has it. As a teacher, I can't think

of anything you'll need more, of course, the Holy Ghost. Enthusiasm is contagious. Then two, if someone's listening going, why do I need to know this? If you love the Book of Mormon and you really want it to shine, this lesson in particular along with the Isaiah lessons are the key. Through this show, I've come to learn if you really want to understand the Book of Mormon, you read the Old Testament.

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| John Bytheway: | 00:13:50 | Yeah. How did you say his name? I try to say it the way I heard somebody in Israel say it Sennacherib. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 00:13:58 | I butcher my pronunciations, but I call Sennacherib, you know, potato potato. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:14:03 | When he says he had Hezekiah pent up like a bird in a cage, it's, he didn't say I conquered him because Jerusalem was miraculously protected. Oh, so this is why Lehi had a tough sell. Jerusalem's going to be destroyed. Nah, because back when the Assyrians attacked, it was all protected. I like what you said, Hank, this is a great jumping off point to help us understand the beginnings of the Book of Mormon for exactly that reason. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:14:29 | We do need to say that all Mike is a meticulous records. He knows how to footnote. All of this we're going to make available on our website, followhim.co. The great Lisa Spice will link all of these show notes in. I would love to see the story of Hezekiah talked about more like we talk about Alma and Helaman because here's a guy who everyone is telling him, do not listen to the prophet. He does not know what he's talking about. How many youth adults do we have today who the message is do not listen? |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 00:15:04 | The reverse with Zedekiah where Jeremiah comes to him and he says, listen, the Babylonians are going to wreck you. You need to pay tribute. And then these other false prophets are like, no, you're going to be all good. And he listens to those guys. Let's just jump into chapter 16. In the chapter heading, it even brings it out and it says, listen, Ahaz reigns in wickedness. He becomes the king of Judah, and verse three says he made his sons pass through the fire, and it doesn't get a lot of specifics there, but there was this idea that child sacrifice did happen. I'm not going to settle that here for this podcast, but the Old Testament authors are very much anti-child sacrifice as we should be. After that, it talks about Judah being attacked by Syria, by Aram and by Israel, the northern kingdom. Ahaz appeals to Assyria for help. |

- 00:15:53 To give you an idea of, like, what's going on during this time period, Assyria is the big gorilla on the block. Syria and northern Israel are joining together and this is where we read in Isaiah where Remaliah's son is going to come down and invade. Then Isaiah says something like, don't worry about these two smoking firebrands. You're going to be okay, Ahaz. Isaiah does talk about this stuff. Ahaz is in this state of like, what do I do when they're coming to get me? In verse nine, it says that Assyria defeats Damascus in the north. From basically verse 10 to the end of the chapter, Ahaz adopts some of the Assyrian ways of doing the temple. In scholarship, they call this syncretism where another religious tradition will have this thing that you don't have necessarily a way of doing it and we blend it together.
- 00:16:47 We see outside influences coming into the temple. The best way I describe it, sometimes in seminary, I'll show that little 30-second commercial. I'm sure you guys remember it where there's a guy walking down the sidewalk and he's got chocolate in his hand and then there's another lady and she's eating peanut butter and they bump into each other and they give each other that look like, you're really cute. He says, your chocolate's in my peanut butter. And she's like, your peanut butter is in my chocolate. And what are they trying to sell you?
- John Bytheway: 00:17:11 Reese's peanut butter cup.
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:17:13 See, you know it, right? None of our kids know it today. You show that to the seminary kids say like, what, what? That's syncretism. We're blending stuff together. Big picture, it says in verse 11 that the priest, Urijah, built the altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. That's 16. Now Ahaz is portrayed as bad. Verse 17, I think the author of Kings is trying to portray him bad where it says, Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, removed the labor and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen. Verse 18 in the middle of the verse says, turned he the house of the Lord for the king of Assyria. Here I have this written down, syncretism is a harsh critique of Ahaz's reign. The author of Kings is trying to portray that. He's not saying it, but I think he's saying it by saying, hey, don't do that.
- 00:18:00 Now, how could we apply that today? And that's the conversation you could have of dress, language, the stuff we watch. Are we influencing the world or is the world influencing us? And I think that's something that, you know, you could have a conversation, a gospel doctrine about that. And how can you watch for that? Because it doesn't just happen at once, it happens in little stages.

Hank Smith:	00:18:19	The people in Jesus' day are going to have the same problem with Hellenization. How much do we embrace? And then we have the same problem today. How much do we embrace of the culture around us?
Dr. Mike Day:	00:18:30	Like you and I would never watch a Rated R movie in the '80s and '90s, but how many reels do we consume that's R rated. Like, what am I doing?
Hank Smith:	00:18:38	I do like the application there of, oh, be careful that you're changing things that the Lord gave to fit with the Assyrian culture around you. Thanks, Mike.
John Bytheway:	00:18:50	Our listeners will be familiar with some of those terms like The Sea from off the Brazen Oxen. Hank, do you have a more contemporary English Bible translation you could read 17 and 18 from?
Hank Smith:	00:19:01	I really like the contemporary English version. I use a website called Bible Hub. You can bring up a verse and it will show you 30 different translations. The contemporary English version, the reason I like it, this might sound a little juvenile, but it's a third grade reading level, which kind of fits for me. Contemporary English version of 2 Kings 16:17. Ahaz also had the side panels and the small bowls taken off the movable stands in the Lord's temple. He had the large bronze bowl called the Sea removed from the bronze bowls on which it rested and had it placed on a stand made of stone. He changed the temple. My boys are in junior high, we definitely read simpler versions of the Bible. Doesn't do them any good to not understand what they read.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:19:53	The Book of Mormon, I'm just going to say this too. I think the Book of Mormon is the best lens to study the Bible. When you read the Bible and something's just not jiving, it's good to read other translations, it's great to read commentaries, but don't forget the Book of Mormon. That's my interpretive lens.
John Bytheway:	00:20:09	Nice.
Hank Smith:	00:20:09	Well said.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:20:11	When you get to chapter 17, in verse four, it says that the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea. Now, Hoshea is the king up north. The rest of the verse continues, it says, "For he had sent messengers So to the king of Egypt and brought no present to the king of Assyria. So he had done year by year, therefore the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison."

What's going on? It's about tribute. You're supposed to pay tribute to the Assyrians. They're the overlords. They're the big gorillas on the block and they're like, you got to pay us this. And so what we think's going on is Hoshea is talking to Egypt and he's saying, hey, will you guys have my back? The geopolitics is like this underlying baseline buzzing noise that's happening through the King's narrative.

00:21:01 The author of Kings is approaching their story through the lens of faith. For the author of Kings, whoever this person is, it's not so much do you pay your taxes as it is, are you following the right way of doing religion? The author of 2 Kings is going to say, Israel's doing it wrong. It starts with Jeroboam and it just goes down the list and you guys are all messing it up. But not paying your taxes is a problem. This is the beginning of the end for Israel. Now, I always say this, I don't know, I wasn't there. I'm going to bookend everything with I don't know. I think Assyria's going to come down and take or kill a lot of people, but I don't think they're going to take everybody. They're going to leave people behind. They're going to take the elites, the people that are literate, Lehi's kind of people. It's in this time period 721 where they take them and what's so fascinating if you read like [Israel Finkelstein](#) stuff or some of these other [archeologists](#) that have done work, they found that there's a massive influx of population coming from the north into the south into Jerusalem during this time. Why? Well, what would you do if you knew that they were going to come wreck you? I'm out of here. I'm going. A lot of people came south and the population increased and they know because they're like studying the garbage and like there's a lot more garbage from this layer.

00:22:20 There's way more people. They go in and they take them and they, I call it the wrecking of the house of Israel or the scattering, right? They take them and they take them north and they get scattered. Now, if you read some of the early stuff, now we're going to just pivot from the Old Testament talk about church history and you start reading stuff Brigham Young said and Wilford Woodruff and Joseph Smith. They're like, listen, you British folks are from those guys. The blood of Ephraim goes. It goes to Russia. It goes maybe as far as the far east, but I'm from German, French, and a little bit of British and I'm from Ephraim. I know you guys are prob... I don't know. I'm not, not trying to assume, but I'm figuring you guys are Ephraim. They scatter Israel. But what's super fascinating to me, and I'm a big believer in this, I think the northern folks had records too.

00:23:11 Now, obviously Lehi's not here yet, but he has ancestral land up north in Manasseh, okay? But I think perhaps his grandfather or

his ancestors came south and there was somewhere in that family line the preserved record of the north. There's this idea that the Old Testament has layers, editorial layers. In the 17th chapter, it talks about that they have evil ways in verse 13. They hardened their necks in verse 14. They rejected his statutes in verse 15. Then it says in verse 16, "They left all the commandments of the Lord their God and made molten images, even two calves and made a grove." Now it says grove in the English, but that's an ashera and worshipped all the host of heaven and served Baal. The north is being castigated for all those things. The images, the two calves, it kind of helps you understand the perspective of the person writing this stuff down.

Hank Smith: 00:24:10 Yeah. Sometimes we read this Mike as if it's like unbiased historical nonfiction and we get confused going, oh, that really happened? You have to realize the authors and the editors even all had little jabs that they're making.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:24:25 Yeah, they had a perspective. That's why I love the Book of Mormon where Mormon and Nephi and these guys are like, listen, I have a perspective. My whole perspective is to draw you to the Holy One of Israel. I want to take you to Christ. In him, we're saved and there's no other way. And every story I tell is to that end, every story. These guys are like, listen, our way of doing religion is the right way and those guys are doing it wrong. If you go to verse 19, 20 through like 23, it says, "The Lord rejected all the seed of Israel and afflicted them and delivered them into the hands of spoilers." Verse 21, "He rent Israel from the house of David. They made Jeroboam, the Son of Nebat king, and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the Lord." The authors hearkening back to earlier times, because remember Jeroboam, that's like Solomon's day, that's hundreds of years ago.

00:25:14 That's the equivalent of saying like, let's say Canada's wrecking us, and we're blaming it on Thomas Jefferson. We're like, well, it's because of what he did. Or Alexander Hamilton, why did he set up that banking system? That's why we have these problems. But these guys are doing that because from their perspective, Israel's doing religion wrong. They're doing it the wrong way. Verse 21 and 22 is ripping on Jeroboam. I mean, I wrote in my scriptures, this is 931 to 910 BC. This is 200 years ago, but it says in verse 22, The children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, which he did and departed not from them, and then until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he said by all his servants the prophets, so was Israel carried away out of their land to Assyria unto this day.

- 00:26:03 The [Deuteronomistic history](#) is this. It's Deuterteronomy, Joshua, parts of Judges, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Samuel. It's this corpus of texts that people say that the Deuteronomist, whoever that is, had a certain theological perspective. They wrote down their history and it tells one story. The story is those Northern guys are bad, the Southern guys are good. There's one way to do religion. We're going to tell you what it is and the core of it is going to be in what those reforms are going to be that we're going to talk about at the end. At the end of this podcast, we'll talk about Josiah's reforms. Those reforms are the theological perspective of the [Deuteronomist](#). It's going to get a little bit nerdy here really quick, but a lot of historians or a lot of biblical scholars call this the double redaction of the Deuteronomistic history.
- 00:26:53 I kind of think it's a triple redaction, but to be sure in speaking, here it is. There's one where they put the story together right around Josiah's time and their idea is that Josiah is the best thing since sliced bread. All these other kings are just not good, but Josiah's awesome and we're going to have a golden age. We're going to be protected. We'll see that with Hezekiah. And after Josiah dies, he gets hit by an arrow. They're like, those promises aren't being fulfilled so they redact it again where they edit some material and you can kind of sense the language shift. And some say, and I would be one of them, that there's like a third redaction of this story and it's during the exile. There's this book by [David Carr](#). He's a Bible scholar, not LDS, but it's a really good book and the book's called Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins.
- 00:27:43 I think this is so important for us to understand the theological and political perspective of the person writing the Deuteronomistic history. And the question on the table is this, at least from the third redaction, the third layer. The issue, and I do believe that this Deuteronomistic history has some editing that's happening during the exile. Imagine you guys, we're in Babylon. We've had all these promises. If you remember the promise in Samuel where the prophet tells David, you will always sit on a throne. Your seed are going to reign forever in the house of Israel. Then your great-grandparents talked about the grandeur of the temple. We live in Babylon. How sad would we be? Not only are we paying tribute, we don't even get to live on our own land. You read some of the Psalms and they lament and they're like, we long for the day when we could live back home. It's so sad how they did this to us.
- 00:28:36 Because of this trauma, this great sad thing, we have the Bible. The Bible is coming out of horrific trauma. Now think about

Mormon. 20 years of his life, he's killing people. You think he's thinking about the matters of life and death? There's nothing that brings you to Jesus and like the meaning of life than taking another man's life and realizing that your best friend just got killed and you could be next. You know that affected Mormon. The Book of Mormon comes out of trauma. David Carr starts this book off and it, I guess the reason why it really hit me is because he talked about he was riding his bike. He used to do a lot of road biking and this car just hit him and nearly killed him and it just caused great trauma. I've had that experience. In 2013, this lady was texting on her phone and she just ran right over me. I remember when she hit me, I'm spinning in the air. You remember when you were a kid and you were like at Lagoon or whatever and you're on the rollercoaster and you'd watch the horizon flip upside down? Did you ever do that look sideways?

Hank Smith: 00:29:36 Yeah.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:29:37 I'm in the air spinning and I'm looking at the horizon go upside down and I'm doing like 22 miles an hour and I'm in the air. Everything slows down, time slows down and I remember thinking, so this is how I'm going to die. That thought just occurred to me. I'm like, this is my last breath. And I hit the pavement and I skidded for several feet. I look like Anakin where he's like, I hate you. Like, I'm all road rashed. The first thing I did was wiggle my toes, like, am I paralyzed? And then I realized, okay, I'm not paralyzed. But that trauma affected how I ride bikes now. Now I ride bikes on mountain trails and I don't ride by cars because with people not looking at you when they're looking at their phone, like, what are you going to do? David Carr talks about this and he says this trauma shaped the biblical narrative. One of the things that, that the authors of Kings are trying to say is, why did we get wrecked? Why did we lose the temple? It's because we didn't do religion right.

00:30:33 Now, I could see this going one of two ways. If you have a child who's not living the gospel, can you see how this could be a damaging thing? Like blaming you as a parent. Is it really your fault? Like, let's take a breath. When I teach this, I like to teach, but that's their perspective. I'm not trying to teach this with lacking faith, but another message is, dude, pay your taxes. Like, I don't think they would've got wrecked if they would've paid tribute. That's the perspective of the guys that wrecked them. Do you think Babylon cares if they're doing religion right? They didn't care. They just wanted their money. What do you do with this perspective of looking back, thinking about, okay, why did

we lose the temple? But you can sense that trauma here, can't you?

- John Bytheway: 00:31:15 I appreciate the clarification in verse four of they brought no present to the king. Now, that wasn't just a gift to be nice. I was just thinking of you and wanted to let you know how much we love you.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:24 It was my birthday and you guys did nothing.
- John Bytheway: 00:31:29 It was a tribute they were obligated to bring. They were forced to bring. The other thing I wanted to note was the consistent message of Jehovah, who's still there, verse 13. "Yet the Lord testified against Israel, (Kingdom Israel), and against Judah by all the prophets and by all the seers saying, Turn ye from your evil ways. Keep my commandments and my statutes according to the law which I commanded your fathers." I just loved, that was the verse I had marked as there's the consistent message of Jehovah while all of this mess is going on everywhere else.
- Hank Smith: 00:32:04 My students at BYU, they get so tired of one of my favorite quotes. I've used it on here before. "It is good to be faithful," said [Elder Richard L. Evans](#). "It is good to be faithful. It is better to be faithful and competent." This to me, what we're doing today, Mike, is competency. Let's understand this text where it came from. What perspective are we getting? How has it been changed through time? I think you can worship God with your mind and learning these type of things is a form of worship, I would say.
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:32:38 Hank, I love this verse in section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants. It's really a great way to approach scripture. Will you read Section 88, Verse 118?
- Hank Smith: 00:32:47 You got it. It's a long section. "And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith."
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:33:03 It's super interesting to me that in this section, they do the things that John talked about, like they rejected his statutes, they didn't listen to the prophets, but then they also didn't pay the tribute. And you're right, you can miss it. He didn't send a present. You're like, what is this talking about? It was like big bricks of gold. Many, many talents of gold. They're just like, we're just not going to pay it. It's not going to bode well for you. This scattering is talked about throughout the Book of Mormon.

And I put this in the slide deck so we'll have it for your people that are watching it. But I'm just going to read this bit here. The House of Israel was scattered on several occasions. The first was in 721 when the Assyrian Empire conquered the northern tribes. The second was in 586 when Babylon conquered Jerusalem and relocated many of the Jews.

00:33:50 Finally, there's another [scattering](#) in 70 AD after Jesus when the Romans burned down the temple in Jerusalem and sold much of the population into slavery as Nephi prophesied would happen. He prophesied this in 2 Nephi 25. However, Nephi also knew from Isaiah that someday God would set up an ensign for the nations. He will assemble the outcast of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. That's the message of the Book of Mormon. It's that there's two gatherings. There's a physical gathering and there's a spiritual gathering. There's both. Both have to happen. Because of that, that spiritual gathering and this is 1 Nephi 10:13 and 14. They got to come to the true knowledge of the Messiah, their redeemer. That's the goal of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The goal is let's spread that message to as many as will hear.

Hank Smith: 00:34:45 For all the parents out there who have future missionaries, I do not understand how you can send a missionary out to gather Israel if they don't understand at least a little bit of the scattering of Israel. And that means parents need to know this.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:35:01 So in that sense, 2 Kings 17 is relevant. It does help us to see these are real people. We know that they existed. We are from them. Every one of us is from these individuals. It's a great story, but this is like David Carr says, a very traumatic story. How much of the moments in our life where we're closest to God come out of trauma or while we're in trauma? I think about that a lot. I think about Section 121. I think about the Bible. I think about imagine what the apostles felt after watching Jesus die. Then he comes back and then he leaves. To me, that would be traumatic because he's alive and he's back and then he's like, I'm out of here. And then, oh, by the way, you're going to go get killed. Traumatic.

Hank Smith: 00:35:45 Whiplash. Yeah.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:35:46 The Bible's coming out of trauma.

John Bytheway: 00:35:49 If you want a big picture of all this, like Hank, what you just said, you're sending out kids to gather Israel. Well, how did they get scattered? Well, who is Israel and all that? If you want to see a

really good 30,000 foot overview of this, go to ensign.edu. Find [Hank's](#) talk, which had a big picture of what in the world's going on here. Going back to Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant, how are we going to bless the families of the world? How did the restoration go all the way back to doing this Abrahamic covenant to bless all the families of the world to gather Israel? Go watch the talk because not only is it really good, but it's your buddy, Hank. So you can watch him explain this beautifully. Some really beautiful writing in that. How awesome to have [President Nelson](#), he had these great little soundbites like hear him, like let God prevail, this gather Israel thing.

00:36:43 I love that he added on both sides of the veil. How are we going to bless the families of the earth? We get them to the temple and how we can gather on the other side too by going to the temple. Putting all of that together. Hopefully this context will help us see that. I wanted to ask you both because I like to call it a fortunate scattering because it scattered Israel all over the place. Was it a scattering for wickedness? Yeah, most of the time, except for Lehi. But it was a fortunate scattering because now people go out, we go gather them, they get their patriarchal blessing, they go, oh, I'm Israel. I'm from one of these tribes too. Is that okay if I call it a fortunate scattering?

Hank Smith: 00:37:25 I think so. I mean, without it, we don't have the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:37:29 Before we leave chapter 17, the end of the chapter, verses 27 through 41, big picture, here's what's going on. After the King of Assyria takes the elites, that's what I think. I think he's taking the elites. I don't think he's taking everybody, but whatever, however you want to read it, after he scatters Israel and takes them, verses 27 through 41, the author of Kings is telling you that the king planted people there and he's putting religious authorities in there. They're dwelling there and they're doing religion wrong. This is the author of Kings denigrating this group, the northern inhabitants of the land. I mean, if you look, it says in verse 37, "The statutes and the ordinances and the laws and the commandments which he wrote for ye shall you observe to do forevermore. Ye shall not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made, ye shall not forget."

00:38:20 But verse 40, "howbeit they did not hearken." Verse 41, "So these nations feared the Lord and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children, as did their fathers unto this day." To be sure in speaking, it's syncretism. They're following the Lord, but they're also doing religion wrong. That's what the perspective of this author is trying to

say. It could be so confusing. You can read this and go, but it says they feared the Lord. But then it says they didn't hearken. Like which is it? What scholars do is they look at this and they say, okay, what's happening? Like I said, I don't know. I wasn't there. But the best guess is they're doing Yahweh or they're following Jehovah, Jesus as it were. They're following Jehovah, but they're doing it in a way that's not the way the author of Kings would say is correct.

00:39:06 The shout out to that is verse 29 and then specifically verse 32. It's super interesting because if you read Mosiah, Abinadi is like, well, do you follow the law of Moses and do you follow the 10 Commandments? And King Noah's like, well, yeah. We totally do. And Abinadi's like, yeah, no, you don't. Mosiah cracks that window open a little bit to let us say, it's interesting is some of that stuff's happening here. I'm not judging the north here. I'm not here to say what they are or not doing right. I'm just like looking at the text saying this is the complexity of the text, how they're portraying it. If I had a 25-minute lesson, I wouldn't get into any of that. But that's what's cool about what you guys are doing is you put all this out there, then people can, if they have three hours, they can put me on 1.5 speed and just speed it up.

Hank Smith: 00:39:56 Oh, not you. There's other people. There's other people you can put at 1.5 speed. Mike Day is not one of them. I love the energy that we're getting here. Now, I'm going to share with you one thing about teaching. I think this came from a man named Rich Robbins, who's a fantastic teacher. He said, if you go to a dam like the Hoover Dam, if you see the force of the water coming out at the bottom of the dam, you see the incredible force that's coming out of there. It's because you know on the other side of that dam is a lot of water. Well, he said a teacher's a lot the same way. When you see the energy and power that's coming out of their teaching, it's because they have so much stored up behind that. You can get that from Mike. You're going, this is amazing! If we only had the time where we could go in and look at the other side and look at all he has stored up. I've always loved that analogy ever since I heard it. I can see it in a teacher like Mike. Let's keep going. We're on 18 next.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:41:07 2 Kings 18 through 20 is the reign of Hezekiah. The time period here is 715 to about 686 BC, in that little space there. I talked about him being 25 when he's put on the throne. That's in verse two. In verse four, it says he removed the high places and he broke the images and he cut down the Asherah. That's the grove. Then the author writes this in verse five, there was nobody like him "among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him, for he clave to the Lord and departed not

from following his commandments." And then of course, if you're going to be a good king, verse eight, you got to kill some guys. You got to smite the Philistines. It's the Old Testament. We're clearing out chaos. Just in my scriptures next to verse five, I wrote 2 Kings 23:25. That's where the Deuteronomus says, well, actually, the greatest thing since sliced bread wasn't Hezekiah, it was Josiah. These are the twin darlings of the Deuteronomistic historian or the writer of 2 Kings.

00:42:10 They love Hezekiah and they love Josiah. Once you get verse nine to about verse 14, there's a lot of trouble happening. The trouble is that Assyria is on the loose. They're conquering every place everywhere. And so on one of my slides, I put several reliefs. I went to the British Museum, which is fascinating. I would that everyone in your audience could at some time spend a day in the British Museum to see those massive reliefs. And we see that the nation of Judah is just devastated by Assyria as they come in. This is what David Carr writes. He says, "[Lachish](#) was Judah's largest town outside of Jerusalem." And then the relief shown here, and I depict it here, is a vivid Assyrian depiction of the destruction of Lachish. Other parts of the relief depict Assyrian archers and stone throwers on the attack, Judean soldiers being impaled around the city and later scenes of people being led from the defeated city into exile.

00:43:11 According to archeological surveys, the Assyrians decimated virtually all of the countryside outside of Jerusalem. We see that in verse 14. It talks about in verse 13, Sennacherib comes against all the fence cities and he took them. And then verse 14 says, Hezekiah, the King of Judah sent to the King of Assyria to Lachish saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou putttest on me will I bear. In other words, I'll pay tribute once again, that's what it means. The King of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah, 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. That's the amount that they have to pay. I literally put this relief from the British Museum. I'm there taking pictures. I, like, put it in my scriptures. What does Hezekiah do? And this is, in my opinion, sad. In verse 15 and 16, he cuts a bunch of gold and silver off the temple and gives it. Is this good? Do you see where I have some tension? It's a fascinating history, but on one hand, the author says he's a good king and he does everything right. Can you imagine if the prophet of God was like just chiseling off bits of the temple?

Hank Smith: 00:44:17 Yeah, it's complicated. Reminds me a little bit of Captain Moroni where Mormon says everybody should be like Captain Moroni. And then there's some things Captain Moroni does that you're like, oh wow.

John Bytheway:	00:44:27	Wrote a pretty harsh letter to Pahoran. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:44:30	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:44:31	We know not, but what you are traitors to your country.
Hank Smith:	00:44:34	Yeah. You're like, wow.
John Bytheway:	00:44:37	Pahoran's the guy who's just like, oh man, I rejoice in the greatness of your heart. He's the one I go, wow. I mean, he could've gone, how dare you. You have no idea what you're talking about.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:44:49	I love that that's in the Book of Mormon. It gives me hope because there's a lot of times when I'm on the wrong and then I have to eat crow and go... It's usually to my wife. I'm like, I was wrong. And she's like, yeah, you were. And I'm like, I'm sorry.
Hank Smith:	00:45:03	Mike, is this where the Rab-shakeh steps in?
Dr. Mike Day:	00:45:07	Yes. Geek out moment really quick. I call him the PIO, the public information officer of the Assyrians is going to stand on the wall. Now, I spent some years in city government where I was elected city council. I remember being fascinated by cities hiring a PIO. Every city has one, especially now with social media. You have to have a public information officer. I remember going, I want that job. That sounds so fun. Like, you get to stand in front of the camera and explain this horrible thing in your city. Here's how we're going to fix it. And then I thought, sometimes as a seminary teacher, you're a PIO. You have to stand up in front of the kids and go, okay, guys, we're going to read some really sketchy stuff in Genesis. Genesis 18, but bear with me. We're going to talk about Jesus. In this case, Rab-shakeh is not a good guy.
	00:45:57	He's going to stand up and basically taunt the residents. When I first saw, I know it's been 20 years. I'm sitting in this movie called The Return of the King . Now, I'd read the book, but I had forgotten much of it because I was a kid and I didn't understand it. But I'm sitting in here as an adult and there's that scene where the mouth of Soren is holding the mithril shirt of the hobbits and he casts it at Aragorn's feet. Now, Aragorn is the Christ figure. And the mouth of Soren, in my opinion, I think Tolkien is channeling this bit because the mouth of Soren, that guy with the teeth, remember that scary dude? He says the hobbits are dead. Mordor has one. You guys have to basically

bow down to us because we're going to wreck you guys.
Everyone's looking at Aragorn like, what do we do?

00:46:41 And Aragorn's like, we fight. It's one of the greatest moments in cinema because I think, isn't that what Satan does? He basically says, you're outnumbered. We have the goods and just surrender and just give up. This is such a dramatic part of scripture. If you set it up the right way, I think the students will go, oh, I can relate with that. Have you ever been in a time when you just felt like I'm hopeless and I don't know what I'm going to do? That's what he does. He stands up and he says, verse 19, "speak to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt." The idea is, well, Egypt is going to save us.

00:47:35 Judah might be thinking. Rab-shakeh says that's not going to happen. Then he says, verse 22, But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord: is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has wrecked. That's my translation. He's wrecked them. He's taken them from Judah to Jerusalem. So he's basically giving a shout out like, you guys think Jehovah's going to save you? We've wrecked every one of those places. Now, the previous chapter, the author of Kings is saying, well, they worshipped Jehovah, but maybe they weren't doing it right. Maybe that's why those are in there. But the whole point is he's basically taunting them saying... and it gets pretty vulgar. I'm not going to read the verses, but if you keep reading it, even in the King James, they preserve the language. He gets really vulgar and says, things are going to go bad for you. Then the key verse that I have highlighted that I want to talk about for your audience is verse 30. John, do you want to read verse 30? Actually, read 30 and 31.

John Bytheway: 00:48:32 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

Dr. Mike Day: 00:48:58 Don't trust him.

Hank Smith: 00:49:00 Mike, this guy seems to know exactly what to say.

Dr. Mike Day:	00:49:04	Oh, yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:49:05	Yeah, he's good.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:49:07	And so does the adversary. Doesn't the adversary know that every one of my weaknesses, and I don't know if you guys ever have this happen to you, but there have been times when I'll be thinking I'll have this negative tape playing in my head. And the negative tape is, yeah, don't talk about that. Don't testify of Jesus. Or I'll be out to go give a presentation and I'll hear a tape that says you're going to do horrible. It's going to be boring. Sometimes I wonder, is that my voice or is that another voice? The more I've come to grow and learn, I've learned those negative voices. That's not me. But they're real. I got to say this. I know we're in Kings, but I can't help myself. We got to go to Isaiah. Let's go to Isaiah 37. Because it's the same time period, right? This is the same stuff.
John Bytheway:	00:49:49	I'm reading the upper pool by the conduit and to the fuller's field going, that's Isaiah language right there. And that's Hezekiah too.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:49:57	This is it. I mean, let's get a big picture. Let's read the chapter heading and then let's read verse six and seven. I'm going to pitch that to you guys. You guys want to... One of you do the chapter heading and one of you do six and seven. I really think Isaiah's going to give us a perspective that's going to help the Kings narrative really pop.
Hank Smith:	00:50:15	Isaiah 37. Hezekiah seeks counsel from Isaiah to save Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesies defeat of Assyrians and death of Sennacherib. Hezekiah prays for deliverance. Sennacherib sends a blasphemous letter. Isaiah prophesies destruction of Assyrians and then a remnant of Judah will flourish. And then here comes the spoiler. An angel slays 185,000 Assyrians. Sennacherib is slain by his sons.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:50:46	Okay. So that's a big picture. Now, these guys don't know history. So imagine you're in the city. You're surrounded by walls. If there really were 185,000, I don't know. That word eleph is squishy. Eleph can mean clan, it can mean group, it can mean thousand. I'm not here to settle the numbers question of the Old Testament. I don't think anybody can. But the idea is it's a lot of people. Once again, I'm channeling my inner lover of Tolkien. We're at helms deep and we're surrounded by this hoard. They go to Aragorn, what do we do? And he says, we're not surrendering these guys. This is not going to happen. With that picture in our head of all these people, let's read verse six

and seven. This is Isaiah saying Isaiah's a prophet, and he's saying, hey, let me tell you what the Lord has said about this.

- John Bytheway: 00:51:34 Okay, this is Isaiah 37 starting in verse six. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:52:08 Libnah is a city southwest of Jerusalem. I have a map that we'll put in your video and for those of you that are listening, can't see the map, all the map is basically doing is showing all the places that the Assyrian army is just wrecking. And it's basically everywhere. Now go from Isaiah's account to 2 Kings 19. The words of Isaiah are in verse six and seven. At the end of verse seven, Isaiah says I'll cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. In verse eight it says, [Rab-shakeh](#) returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And when he heard say of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, behold, he is come out to fight against thee. He sent messengers again to Hezekiah saying, Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah, King of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trusteth deceive thee saying Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.
- 00:53:10 What verse nine is saying is there's like a pause in the fighting. There's a Cushite ruler of the Egyptian forces and now Sennacherib has a two-front war. He's fighting the people in Judah, but now he's facing and fighting Egypt. There's a pause in the fighting. While he's not coming to Jerusalem at this time, he sends a letter and he says, listen, I put a pin in that. I paused coming to get you. I still remember who you guys are. I'm still coming to get you. Don't forget. That's what's going on in verse 9 and 10. During that pause is where Hezekiah gives his prayer. And in the first slide that we, I'm giving you guys that I pulled this off the internet, I didn't paint this picture, but it's this beautiful image of Hezekiah on his knees. He's just praying. And that's Hezekiah's prayer, which is in Isaiah, but it's also in 2 Kings.
- 00:53:58 It's just a beautiful prayer. I'm going to read Hezekiah's prayer. I'm going to read from Isaiah. And you guys follow along in 2 Kings. Isaiah 37:15 says, Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord saying, O, Lord of hosts, God of Israel that dwelleth between the

cherabims. Once again, that's in the Holy of Holies. You're dwelling there. Thou art the God, even thou alone. Of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thy ear, oh Lord, and hear. Open thine eyes, oh Lord, and see. Hear all the words of Sennacherib which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their countries. They have cast their gods into the fire for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore, they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord, our God, save us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.

00:54:54 Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Whereas thou hast prayed unto me against Sennacherib king of Assyria. This is the word of the Lord, which has spoken concerning him. The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn. The daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Cities were considered women in the ancient world. This is God speaking, but he's speaking as if he's coming and being personified as the city. The city of Jerusalem is despising this king of Assyria. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? Verse 23, against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the holy one of Israel. Here, God is identifying as the city itself. It's like this beautiful personification. This is one of the reasons why later when Jeremiah comes in 100 years later and says, hey, we're going to get destroyed. The collective memory of the people in Jerusalem is, no, it isn't because it was preserved here. What I just read, is it really similar to 2 Kings?

Hank Smith: 00:56:02 Almost exactly.

Dr. Mike Day: 00:56:03 I just love Isaiah. If you go to Isaiah 37 verse 32, I'm just going to read this. Out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant and they that escape out of Mount Zion. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. Verse 31 says, the remnant that is escaped to the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. This is a beautiful sign that Isaiah's giving to Hezekiah and here's the sign. And I kind of skipped verse 30, but it's in there too. I'm just going to summarize it. In three years, Assyria's going to be gone. We're going to be able to plant again and this land that's been devastated will again bear fruit. It's going to be okay. We're in a rough time. Trust the Lord. And then he says, verse 35 of Isaiah 37 says, I will defend this city to save it for my own sake and for my servant David's sake. That's

hearkening back to that promise that Nathan gave to David where he says the throne of David will be forever.

- 00:57:05 It's never going to end. This is Isaiah saying, we're going to be defended. And then again, in verse six of chapter 38 of Isaiah, he says, I will defend this city. That's kind of the big picture of Hezekiah's prayer and Isaiah's response. And I know some of it's in Kings. I don't know why I just always go to Isaiah. Maybe because Jesus said we're supposed to.
- Hank Smith: 00:57:28 I got to read you guys something. The Bible Dictionary author, I think it's Robert Matthews, he has a flare for-
- John Bytheway: 00:57:37 Oh, I've heard you do this, Hank. It sounds like a movie preview. Yeah, read it.
- Hank Smith: 00:57:41 It does. This is under Assyria in the Bible Dictionary. I like to read it with this voice. All Palestine now lay at the feet of the Assyrian. One man alone, the prophet Isaiah remained undaunted and encouraged Hezekiah not to surrender his stronghold. The prophet's confidence was justified. A great disaster fell on Sennacherib's host. It's just a one man alone.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:11 Man alone.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:12 This is one of the greatest stories told in scripture. He is begging God. You can feel this prayer.
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:58:19 At the end of 19, it says that the angel of the Lord went out and smote them and killed all those guys. I love the end of verse 35. The Syrian army is now dead and it says, and early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. That's sometimes my seminary students. When I'm boring them to tears, I'll be like, hey guys, 2 Kings 19:35. Come on.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:39 They arose in the morning. They were all dead corpses. That's such bad grammar.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:45 Wait, did the corpses arise? That's what I like. When they arose, they went, hey.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:51 I think I'm a dead corpse.
- John Bytheway: 00:58:52 We're all dead corpses.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:53 I'm not dead yet.

John Bytheway:	00:58:56	Mike, you brought up the Sennacherib prism. The Lord smote everybody but the king who had to walk home. All he could write was, yeah, I had Hezekiah pent up like a bird in a cage.
Hank Smith:	00:59:11	That was the end of that story.
Dr. Mike Day:	00:59:13	Yeah, that's the argument that biblical scholars say. They say there must be some historicity to this because if he would've taken it, he would've said, you know, I wrecked your stuff. I ate all your steak out of your freezer and now I took your stuff. It doesn't say that just says I hemmed him in. The other thing is the author of the text kind of puts it as he goes home, the king of the Assyrians, and his sons kill him. And yes, it does happen, but that's like 20 years later. The events here are around 701 BC, and then the killing of the King of Assyria is in 681. But the author is condensing it to say, can you see? The Lord is in charge.
John Bytheway:	00:59:50	Hank, you mentioned that it was actually Gerald Lund, back when they used to do CES Symposium. He showed a map of the United States and he said, okay, imagine it like this. Assyria is the superpower. North and South Dakota are gone. Wyoming's gone. Montana's gone. Colorado's gone. And they're coming into Northern Utah. And hey, when they hit Ogden, don't worry. I have a scourge reserve for them. When they hit Woods Cross, don't worry. When they hit Bountiful. And it was Gerald Lund who said, you know, I'll stop him at Nob. He said, let's compare that to Capitol Hill. We see an army of 185,000 shaking their fists and yelling at us and we're on Temple Square. They're saying, we're coming to get you tomorrow. That night, here comes this angel of the Lord smote a hundred and fourscore and five thousand. And when they arose, they were all dead corpses.
Dr. Mike Day:	01:00:43	I love that line.
John Bytheway:	01:00:44	Yeah. It's my favorite. I think it's funny without trying to be.
Hank Smith:	01:00:47	If I were teaching this, you could teach prayer, sincere prayer in those few verses. You can feel it. He's saying, save thou us. Please hear me.
Dr. Mike Day:	01:01:02	Do you remember the story President Packer told about the guy who can't feed his family anymore because his business is failing and he's up at two and three in the morning and he can't sleep? He's like, well, I can't sleep. I might as well do something. He goes to the office and he gets on his knees and he's like, Lord,

what am I supposed to do? Everything rides on his business and it's not working. And he prays and he begs God and then he hears a voice or he gets a thought and he gets a sticky note and he just starts writing down, okay, do this, do this. And he just starts doing it every day and he's up at three every day. Weeks go by and he's doing his to-do list that's coming to his mind after he prays. Then one day he realizes that his business is feeding his family. The next thing he knows, it's succeeding. And then he hires a manager and he doesn't have to go to work anymore. And they call him as a mission president. I remember President Packer telling that story and I was a young father and I was like, this is Nephi's bow. When it's on you and your families are going to starve or eat depending on can you bring it? And can you imagine being in charge of a city? On one hand, you have a prophet saying you're going to be okay. And on the other hand, you see the mouth of Soren standing there on the wall saying, we're basically 99 and 0. We're undefeated. We're a number one seed. We're going to wreck you guys.

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| Hank Smith: | 01:02:18 | I love Hezekiah going to the temple. I love Isaiah. We'll be fine. Are you seeing what I'm seeing? Because yeah, we'll be okay. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:02:28 | And the Assyrians were the worst, but what they did to people, it wasn't just like we'll take your land, now you guys stand over here. They did horrible things to people and then displayed their carcasses. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 01:02:43 | Brutal. How would you feel about a nation that killed your grandma? |
| Hank Smith: | 01:02:47 | What a great insight. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 01:02:48 | The beginning of 20 really sets up the Josiah stuff, the idea that we're never going to be defeated. If you look in verse six of chapter 20, it says, "Turn again and tell Hezekiah, I will heal thee and on the third day thou shalt go up to the house of the Lord. And I will add to thy days 15 years, I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the King of Assyria. I will defend the city for mine own sake and for my servant David's sake." There was this idea that was in the ancient world that cities, they were tied to gods and so whatever God was in control, the city would be preserved. If the city was preserved, the God was powerful. By the city being preserved, it was the way for the people that lived there to say, see, our God is God. But then the reverse was also true. |
| | 01:03:37 | If our God is God, then the city will be preserved. That viewpoint is going to spill over into the time period of Jeremiah |

and Lehi when Jeremiah and Lehi both... We have Jeremiah's words where he says, hey, you're going to get wrecked if you don't pay the tribute. There's other prophets that are false prophets that tell the king of Judah, you don't have to do that. Why? Well, because God's going to protect you. When I think about this, I don't know who said it first, but I'm sure we've all heard this. Just because we're raised in the church or just because my dad's the bishop, well, it doesn't mean that you are going to have faith and everything's going to be okay. Faith is not an inheritance. It is a choice. Every day when we get up, every day is a new day and we have to decide where we stand. I really like these verses. They're difficult because you can see once again, the danger of misinterpreting scripture. We have to be careful and we have to be careful in our assumption. Remember Jesus where he says, "I can raise up stones to make children of Abraham." That's not the deal.

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| Hank Smith: | 01:04:38 | Mike, I want to highlight something you just said that I think is so crucial to understanding 1 Nephi. This city was saved by Jehovah. How long before Lehi is this saving of Jerusalem? |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 01:04:54 | A hundred years. About 701 BC. It's going to get wrecked in 586. I don't know exactly when Nephi is. I think Nephi tells you the time period, but we're in that window of about 100 years. |
| Hank Smith: | 01:05:04 | No wonder they didn't think it would happen. He saved them before, he'll do it again. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 01:05:09 | If you remember, this is all tied in. Everything's connected. So Laman and Lemuel, in my estimation, my reading of 1 Nephi, they're actually being pretty religious. They don't believe Jerusalem's going to be destroyed. It says, according to the prophets. Well, one of the prophets is this prophet named Nathan. So in 2 Samuel, he makes this promise to David, the inviolability of the house of David, is what I like to call this. He comes to him and he says in verse nine, "I've made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth." One of the ideas in the biblical narrative actually starts in the book of Abraham. God says, if you make my name great, I will make your name great. Because by the house of David building a house to God out of the cedars of Lebanon on Mount Zion, on Mount Zion, by building a house to the name, God will make his name great. |
| | 01:06:00 | The promise is in verse 12, when thy days be fulfilled, thou shall sleep with thy fathers. I will set up thy seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy bowels and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the |

throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father and he will be my son. Now that's hearkening to Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. Psalm 2 is the most quoted text out of the Old Testament in the New Testament. The New Testament authors geek out and love Psalm 2. The idea is that the king becomes a son of God. Well, that's Jesus. He's God's son. But that's also any righteous priesthood holder, male or female that holds the power of God. They become a son of God. The Bene Elohim, they become God's son. We see this in the temple.

01:06:49 So this is very much temple theology, like, just mixed in with this history. And then verse 16 says, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee thy throne shall be established forever." That's a promise given to the saints today. One of the promises in the temple is I'm going to watch your kids. I'm going to protect them. This is Psalm 91, the promise of inviolability, the promise that the king is going to be protected. This is also Isaiah 52, which is in 3 Nephi right around chapter 20 where it says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." This is a promise from outside the veil. I don't take it literally that I'm not going to get hit by a car riding my bike, but what I take it as, yeah, I'm going to die, but my kingdom will go on because of Christ, because of the resurrection.

01:07:36 The Christian interpretation of all this stuff is that the throne is carried on through Christ. Christ is king. And Jerusalem can get wrecked. That's okay. Or Augustine when he writes the city of God, he says, Rome can fall. The kingdom of God is what matters. That's what's important. But the people that lived in Laman and Lemuel's day, they read these passages and they're like, Jerusalem's not going to get wrecked. Look, it's right there in the scriptures.

Hank Smith: 01:07:59 1 Nephi 2:12, And thus, Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their father. They did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who created them, neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be destroyed." Not even would be, could be destroyed "according to the words of the prophets." They're misreading scripture.

Dr. Mike Day: 01:08:22 They are misreading it, but it's so easy for us because we live here. What would we think if we were them? Sometimes my students will say, well, how do I know if I would follow the prophet? And my only answer is, well, do you follow him now?



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. Mike Day, 2 Kings 16 to 25.
- Hank Smith: 00:07 Mike, wouldn't you say another message here if I was going to teach a 25-minute lesson would be how Hezekiah trusts the prophet? Do you believe the prophet when everything says not to?
- Dr. Mike Day: 00:18 You're a man who's just met the missionaries. You work two jobs. They say pay tithing. But you felt the Spirit. You read the Book of Mormon. You know their message is true, but you also understand economics and you're like, how am I going to pay tithing? I'm already working two jobs. Oh, and take Sunday off? I work Sunday. What am I going to do? I'll never forget I was teaching this lady. She was on fire with the Spirit. I was dreading asking her this because we're going to get to the word of wisdom lesson. We read the Book of Mormon and she loved reading the Book of Mormon. We'd read with her. She felt the Spirit, but she smoked. And I remember the look in her eyes when we taught her and I held out my hand and I said, do you trust me? And her hand was trembling as she gave me her cigarettes and I thought, that is the same concept. The Lord is saying, I'm going to ask tough stuff of you. I was 19 and I was so nervous.
- Hank Smith: 01:08 I wonder if you ought talk to Isaiah afterwards. Like were you nervous? He's like, oh yeah. I was nervous. He didn't act it. I wish I could dramatize the way you do, Mike. The Lord's response to Hezekiah, I have heard. Three words. Then he says, you have reviled who? Who have you blasphemed? The Holy One of Israel. It's almost like someone saying, oh, you should not have done that. Assyria, you are in more trouble than you realize. This would be a beautiful movie. No wonder you're quoting Tolkien here.
- Dr. Mike Day: 01:40 I'll never forget Return of the King, and I just think Tolkien is channeling so much of the scriptures. Now, I would not show clips of Tolkien in seminary, but I would reference the story to

say, close your eyes for a minute and just imagine this army outside your walls and how scary that would be. Even though we don't have that today, I don't have armies outside my wall, I have my own trials. We all do really hard things. It's a real challenge. I'm going to pivot now. I'm not going to talk too much about this, but Hezekiah is ill and he prays and there's this thing with the shadow. The shadow moves and he's given some extra time in his life. Then it pivots to this really weird narrative in 2 Kings, the end of 2 Kings, starting at about verse 12 to the end. This is where the King of Babylon hears that Hezekiah is sick.

02:36 There's some communication. And this has just been such a weird thing for me to ponder. But it says that Hezekiah shows the treasures. This is verse 13. He showed them all the precious things and the silver and gold and spices and everything, the treasures of the house. What's going on here? In verse 14, it says Isaiah came to Hezekiah and it says, what said these men? What are they doing? What are you doing with this? And then he said, verse 15, what have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, all the things that are in my house have they seen. Then he gives him this really dark prophecy that the sons of his descendants will be taken away in the captivity, that they'll be eunuchs. And I've always puzzled over verse 19. So imagine John, the prophet of God comes to you and says, your kids are going to be captive. They're going to be made eunuchs. Would you ever say verse 19? Read verse 19.

John Bytheway: 03:27 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah. Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken. And he said, is it not good if peace and truth be in my days?

Dr. Mike Day: 03:38 Some people look at this and say that it's Hezekiah's way of saying, okay, my kids are going to be in captive, but at least I'm living it up. I'm having a good life. That's one interpretation. Another interpretation is channeling that 1 Samuel 3:18 narrative where Eli says the same thing where he finds out about his kids and he says, good are the words of the Lord, meaning he's in charge. Good are the words of the Lord. It reminds me also of Nephi. If you remember, Nephi has this vision where he sees his descendants get completely killed. That's a hard thing. But however you interpret verse 19, I don't know how to interpret it. I would love to hear the people there be on this podcast and explain it. But that's a hard thing. Then there's another layer. A later redactor is inserting this after it happened saying, hey, this is really what happened to the seed of Hezekiah because the kingdom ends. The king is going to be held captive. But then the author throws this in here in verse 20

that says, the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and all his might and all the cool stuff that he did, are they not written in Chronicles? One of the things they shout out are the pool and the conduit. And I'm sure you guys, because I know you guys have been in Israel, have you walked the tunnel? [Hezekiah's tunnel](#)?

Hank Smith:	04:49	Oh, yeah. Absolutely.
Dr. Mike Day:	04:50	How would you describe that to your audience and what would you say its purpose is?
John Bytheway:	04:54	There is hewn out of solid rock. Is it like a third of a mile, I think? This tunnel that goes from outside where Jerusalem's walls would've been. It was from a spring, so you're able to cover it and brings water into the walls of Jerusalem coming out approximately at the pool of Siloam. Militarily, it's brilliant because an enemy can't cut off your water supply. But you can go walk through this and it's like ankle deep maybe comes up to your knees right at first. It's pretty dark and if you're claustrophobic, don't do it.
Dr. Mike Day:	05:31	John, were you freaked out the first time you went in? Were you a bit, little bit like, what am I doing?
John Bytheway:	05:35	Hey, I had my Energizers on my little headlamp. I was okay, but it's really cool. It's so old. The water has been flowing for, I guess, centuries. If you go to your study helps and look at the Bible map, they have a red dotted line for Hezekiah's tunnel there. It's important enough they stuck it on the map.
Dr. Mike Day:	05:56	They found an inscription because guys started it on one side and then guys start on the other side and they kind of do this and then they come together in the middle and they left an inscription, hey, we were here. We made this tunnel. They did that without power tools. And all of it was to preserve their lives. In the ancient world, if you have high ground, food and water and walls, if you have those four things, you could do pretty good. A lot of people say, hey, that's also why Jerusalem stayed safe, is they had access to water. It's interesting that it's right here in the text that is talked about.
Hank Smith:	06:31	Just reminds me of my son, Elijah, who got one of our group members to pay him \$50 to go through. He's like, I don't want to. And then my buddy, Brandon Hatch, he said, I'll pay you, my son, okay. I was like, you were going to go anyway. He's like, yeah, but now I'm going through and I made 50 bucks.

John Bytheway:	06:48	Yeah, I'll go, and refused to go. Chronologically then, when was the tunnel built? Was it before this Assyrian siege or was it in anticipation of this Assyrian siege?
Dr. Mike Day:	07:01	In anticipation of the siege. What I do find really interesting about this tunnel is it leads to this pool. This pool was the beginning of what was called the Ascent . In the Psalms, which are the scripts for rituals, there's what's called the Psalms of Ascent. And Psalm 120 to 134 are these 15 Psalms, Psalms of Degrees or Psalms of Ascent that they would sing as they were going up the steps to the temple. But the journey, the pilgrimage, started down at the bottom at the pool of Siloam and you could go up and there were certain Psalms that they would sing as they approached the throne of God up at the temple. During this time period, they also had what was called the water drawing ceremony where they would draw water and they would pour it over the altar. And the idea was that this water from this heavenly spring under the earth would touch the altar and that God would bring rains and that we would follow God, that we would drink of the water, but also, follow his way.
	08:01	Live according to Mishpat, according to the judgements and the righteousness of God. When Jesus says, "I am the living water," that ties into this temple idea. What's fascinating is brand new, last I checked, because I was there in Jerusalem when they were getting the final touches, they've opened up the old steps of ascent from the Pool of Siloam, the ones that probably existed during Jesus' day. And that's now accessible. To me, I find this super fascinating that... So we have Hezekiah, but then we have this pool, but it's tied into the temple, but it's also tied into Jesus. These were the things that Jesus would've known about and had part of their collective memory and part of their religion.
Hank Smith:	08:47	Mike, this is a spiritual and scriptural feast. Now, the next chapter, 21, is about Manasseh. We don't want to confuse this Manasseh with the tribe that some people have in their patriarchal blessing or they're going to be sore disappointed.
Dr. Mike Day:	09:03	Yeah, not the same. Same name, but different guy. The legend is that he's not a good guy.
Hank Smith:	09:08	Tell us all about him.
Dr. Mike Day:	09:10	According to some of the legends, Isaiah is like the grandfather of Manasseh, that King Hezekiah married Isaiah's daughter. And then from that union, Manasseh was born. Now, there's legends

that Manasseh actually ends up killing Isaiah, which is super sad. I nerd out about some of this on [Talking Scripture](#) where I'll put a pin in whatever it is we're talking about and then I'll go to this extra biblical literature. I always go to extra biblical literature to corroborate the Old Testament text or the text of the New Testament to kind of give another lens. Sometimes in the Bible, there'll be a story that's like half told and we don't have the whole story, but then the extra biblical literature will add light to it.

09:51 There's this text, this extra biblical piece of literature called the Ascension of Isaiah. In a couple of the chapters, chapter one and chapter five, Isaiah related that he and Manasseh get into it basically and that Manasseh kills him. And the legend is that he's sawed in half. Sometimes in the early Christian depictions and then later they would depict a great martyr with the symbol of his death. There's a beautiful church, St. John the Lateran, where the papal throne is in Rome, and these beautiful marble statues that are just ginormous that every one of the apostles is depicted a lot of times with the implement of their death. Well, there's [paintings](#) of Isaiah that you can see if you go to some of these old churches where Isaiah's holding a saw in his hand. We put one of these in the slide decks.

10:40 So if you ever see that image and you're like, why is Isaiah holding a saw? That's the story. Now it's not in the Bible. I want to be careful. It's not part of our canonized text. Isaiah doesn't talk about this stuff. That's the legend that is told. Really the author of Kings does cast some major shade on Manasseh, verse 16, that he shed innocent blood very much. That's not good. Verse 11, he did wickedly above all that the Amorites did. In the words of Obi Wan Kenobi, it's a dark time for the rebellion. It's not that this is the rebellion, but it just reminds me of that Star Wars line. In other words, this is one of the dark times of Jewish history. In fact, later after Josiah does his thing, the author of Kings hearkens back to Manasseh and says Manasseh was a really bad guy and that's partly why we're having these horrible things done to us.

11:33 In a gospel doctrine lesson, I wouldn't spend a lot of time on it. As a reward for his activity, Manasseh verse 23 of chapter 21 is killed. After this, chapter 22 is the beginning of kind of the end, but there's this high point in the text of Josiah. Josiah's portrayed as the greatest thing ever. Now, granted, he takes the throne or it says he's eight when he began to reign, but let's be honest, do you know any eight-year-olds that are really in charge?

John Bytheway:	12:04	No. Somebody else is in the cabinet there.
Dr. Mike Day:	12:07	Yeah, somebody else is in charge. In verse three, it says, it came to pass in the 18th year of King Josiah. So 18 plus 8, 25, 26 years old, he's 26. That's 622BC. About that time, 622, we read about this guy named Hilkiah the priest. They're cleaning up the temple. He sends them in there to work through it and do some renovations. This is not unfounded that when they do renovations in a temple, this is not just in Israel or Judah, this is other places in the ancient world. Remember, these temples sometimes last for a millennia. They, especially in Egypt, some of these really old buildings, they would do some renovations in these other cultures, they would actually find texts in the wall or in the cornerstone or in parts of the temple that they didn't know existed. This story is not out of thin air.
	13:00	But the idea is that the priest comes and says, hey, we found this text called the Book of the Law. And that's in verse eight. From there, he reads it in verse 10. He rends his clothes in verse 11. And the idea is we've been doing religion wrong. He does this and then the 23rd chapter is we're going to fix all the ways we're doing religion wrong. And these are called Josiah's reforms. In the midst of all this, there's a little bit about this female named Huldah who gives a prophecy. And that's in verses 14 through 20. Huldah's prophecy to Josiah is essentially, I will bring evil upon Jerusalem. God will gather Josiah to his fathers and his grave will be in peace and Josiah won't live to see the destruction of Jerusalem. That's kind of the bit of her prophecy there. I don't know a lot about Huldah.
	13:51	There's just not a lot we have, but that's the idea. Verse 20 says a lot of this. Behold, therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers. Thou shall be gathered into thy grave in peace. Thine eyes shall not see the evil which I shall bring upon this place. Verse 11, he ends solar worship. The Assyrians had this idea that their God would be taken across the sky on this chariot. The Egyptians had the same thing, but it was on a boat. There are horses that would do this. And so the idea is that there were horses in the temple or around the temple complex and that stuff's being taken down. Then in verses 15 through 20, he goes on a rampage and reforms the northern area. All the land of the north. It says in verse 15, the altar that was with Bethel and the high place which Jeroboam set up.
	14:42	He breaks this stuff down. He burns at the end of verse 15, the asherah or the grove. And then he took bones in verse 16, the bones of the dead, and he put them all over these holy places. The idea was, because I put bones there, now it's unclean. You

can't worship there. And then he breaks down all the houses in the high places of verse 19 that were in the cities of Samaria. He takes all this away. And then in verse 20, this is the word for slew, Zabach. He slew the priests of the high places. So he kills a bunch of guys that were the priests up there in the north. Massive reforms. Really violent stuff. That's the sixth reform. In the seventh we just read, he killed the priest of Samaria. Those are the seven really big reforms. One of the big ideas in Deuteronomy, this is in chapter 12. This is difficult. Like I'm not here to settle it for your audience or even for myself. My opinion could change tomorrow as I learn more information. But the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy is this strict prohibition you cannot sacrifice anywhere except for the place where Yahweh shall choose to put his name. That place in Josiah's day was where?

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|---------------|-------|---|
| Hank Smith: | 15:51 | The temple. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 15:52 | Yeah, the temple in Jerusalem. But it doesn't say that in the text. It doesn't say that anywhere in the text. It just says, the place where Yahweh shall choose to put his name. Now, interesting, in some of the other strains of the Pentateuch, God is portrayed as dwelling in the temple. That's where he dwells. Deuteronomy does not take that position. Deuteronomy's position is God's name, Hashem. His name dwells in the temple. Why? My reading of Deuteronomy is the reason why Hashem, his name dwells in the temple is because God is non-corporeal in the Book of Deuteronomy. He's unseeable. You can't know Him. He doesn't have a body. |
| Hank Smith: | 16:31 | Mike, can I say that the Deuteronomy that we have that we've been reading is a product of these reforms. We don't have an earlier version. A pre-reformed Deuteronomy. |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 16:43 | I think there is a proto-Deuteronomy. Deuteronomos just means the second telling of the law. I think the Jews call it the Deverene, the words. These are the words according to the text that Moses spake right before he crossed over. Now, spoiler alert, go to verse one of chapter one of Deuteronomy. This is a dead giveaway that Deuteronomy has been redacted. Just look at verse one. |
| Hank Smith: | 17:05 | Redacted, you mean edited? |
| Dr. Mike Day: | 17:07 | Yes, edited hardcore. These be the words. That's the title of the book. These be the words which Moses spake unto Israel on this side, Jordan, in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red Sea between those places. Well, that's not what it says in the |

text. In the Hebrew text, it doesn't say that. Remember, the story is Moses, never crosses Jordan. He doesn't come in Israel. The Hebrew text, this is what it says in English. It says, these are the words that Moses spake when he was on the other side of Jordan, meaning that the author writing Deuteronomy 1:1 is on the west side of Jordan. The first time I tell that to people, I have to say it again. Do you understand, the author's telling you from verse one, Moses didn't write this. This is written later from the west side where Moses never went.

17:56 Now, that's really hard to hear. The King James translators, I don't know what they were thinking, but they took that Hebrew bit and they're like, well, that can't be. These were the words that he spoke on this side Jordan. The east side. That's not what it says. We could do a whole podcast on what the heck's going on with Deuteronomy because we're barely scratching the surface. [Jeffrey Tigar](#) wrote the JPS commentary on it, which is stellar. He would concur with what I'm saying because it's in the text. Just read it. Like I said, I'm not here to denigrate it because I think Deuteronomy's good. Here's the deal. Guys, there's a ton of Deuteronomy in the Book of Mormon. Every time in the Book of Mormon where it says, if you keep the commandments and you follow the Lord and you're humble, you're going to be blessed, that's Deuteronomy speaking. That's the Book of Mormon.

18:41 Once again, I'm going to use the Book of Mormon as a lens by which to read these reforms. The first one is centralization. So centralization in Deuteronomy 12:2, and it's not just in verse two, but Deuteronomy 12:2 really is reflected here in 2 Kings 23. Any place where there's an altar outside of Jerusalem, we're just going to burn it and we're going to put dead people's bones on there so it's not holy anymore. The second reform in Deuteronomy, these are the big ones that coincide with Josiah's reforms. The second one is exclusive worship. 2 Kings 23:20. He slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars and burned men's bones upon them in a return to Jerusalem. This is Deuteronomy 13 and 17. The third reform is hosts of heaven. The hosts of heaven are denied in Deuteronomy 4:19.

19:27 Chapter 23:11 is 2 Kings. This is what it says. "He took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun." So that's that solar worship. "At the entering in of the house of the Lord by the chamber of the chamberlain, which was in the suburbs and burned the chariots of the sun with fire." There's this idea that the divine council had different individuals on it. In this council, they called it the hosts of heaven. They're denied.

That's reflected in the 11th verse. We mentioned the fourth one is going to be God's name dwells at the temple. That is in Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, and 21. Deuteronomy 29:29 talks about that the secret things cannot be known. I want to read this verse because it applies to our discussion we're going to have briefly about what Nephi says. So if you go to Deuteronomy 29, this is what it says.

20:20 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever that we may do all the words of the law." Translation. You don't worry about the mysteries. You just follow the law. The law is all that matters. The mysteries belong only to God. Now, there's another bit in here where the author of Deuteronomy says to Moses, do you think you can see God? If you go to verse 12 of chapter four, the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire. You heard his voice of the words, but you saw no similitude. Only heard a voice. It literally says in verse 12, Moses, do you remember when you said you saw me? You didn't see me. God can't be seen. You only heard a voice. That is contrary to so many other passages.

21:13 We learn them on our mission. Don't Bible bash with people. If a priest comes up to you and says, Joseph Smith could not see God, and they show you verses like these, you are wasting your time Bible bashing with them. If you show them a verse that says Moses saw God, you're just spinning your wheels and you're going round and round. And biblical scholarship, in my opinion, unlocks why this is. The Deuteronomists have a different theological view. Deuteronomists say you can't see God.

Hank Smith: 21:40 Mike, do me a favor and define those for our audience. When you say a Deuteronomist, is that someone from Josiah's time?

Dr. Mike Day: 21:49 Yes. So the religion [shifts](#). There's this shift. Remember, the early prophets know the mysteries. They're brought up into the council. I mean, you got Jacob's ladder. We're going to do Nephi in a second because Nephi is a rockstar. He's going to show you in technicolor what's going on. I read Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, especially Abraham and Jacob through the lens of Nephi. But the Deuteronomists are these people that live in the 600s BC, what's called seventh century Israelite religion. There's a shift. His name is the only thing that dwells in the temple. We're going to cut down the Asherah. This tree, which is so important as part of their religion that Josiah takes out is taken out in 2 Kings 23:6 and Deuteronomy 16:21 through 22. These are all some reforms that coincide with Josiah's reforms. I'm not alone

in this. And not all scholars agree. There's actually a couple LDS scholars that take two positions. One takes a position that Laman and Lemuel are Deuteronomists, that they're literally following this law. They look at Lehi as you're messed up. There's this bit in Deuteronomy that says, if there's somebody that's having visions, you got to take them out. Hank, do you want to read verse five of Deuteronomy 13?

Hank Smith: 23:02

Mike, let me make sure I understand. Perhaps Laman and Lamuel were in on these reforms. They're saying, no, you're turning against this religion, which these reforms brought us.

Dr. Mike Day: 23:15

If we read Laman and Lemuel through this lens, we see why they're having a freak out when Lehi builds an altar. We'll see a couple others. We're going to briefly look at 1 Nephi 1. I know we're in 2 Kings, but I think 1 Nephi 1 is pertinent to this discussion.

Hank Smith: 23:30

Here's Deuteronomy 13:5. "And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of bondage to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee." Mike, I was going to say the next verse. If thy brother do this, then you can get rid of him too.

Dr. Mike Day: 24:00

Yeah. Verse eight, thou shall not consent to him. Verse nine, but thou shall surely kill him. This is certainly complicated, but on one hand, it's asking to kill a dreamer of dreams. Something Lehi was. He was a dreamer of dreams. But it's also a directive against false God worship. I want to be careful. I don't want to overplay my hand on your podcast and say that I'm 100% right. I don't know. I'm just a guy looking at stuff. I don't know. But what we're looking at is I'm stacking the cards and saying there's strong evidence that Laman and Lemuel may have had this perspective. Now, what really blows me away, if you remember our conversation about Deuteronomy 29:29, we had about five or six minutes ago about the mysteries or the secret things that are only known to God, don't worry about them. Go to the very first verse of 1 Nephi 1.

24:49

Now, before I read this, I want to just say this. There's a lot of scholars, not just one or two. They're not hidden in a corner. There's a lot of biblical scholars that say these reforms of Josiah were pretty rough. They were happening during this time period. There's a major shift in religion. There's another scholar, he wrote an article in the Interpreter called [Vindicating Josiah](#).

He takes the other position and says, hey, Josiah's a good guy. I don't want to speak evil of the dead. I think Josiah would be great to be on your podcast. We need him, but we don't have him. All we have are these records. What blows me away is this. Joseph Smith's 23 years old. I don't think he knows a lick about the Josiah reforms. I don't think he's done the biblical scholarship on this and realizes the political things at stake.

25:32 I believe the Book of Mormon is what it purports to be. Look at verse 1. "I, Nephi, haven't been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of the proceedings of my days." In the very first verse, Nephi says, I am privy to the mysteries. Then he says that there are a lot of prophets that said, hey, we got to repent. Then he tells you the vision of his father. And his father, remember, there are no divine council. There's only one God, monotheism. There's this no hosts of heaven thing going on. And what does he see? Verse 8, a numberless concourses of angels.

26:20 God sitting on his throne, 12 other divine beings of some sort in verse 10. And they come down and they give him a book. He talks about I'm going to undo some of these reforms. He is privy to the mysteries. He sees God, which counters Deuteronomy 4, which says you can't see God. Remember Moses Deuteronomy 4:12? You can't see him. So we've countered that one and we've seen the council. Three of the seven really big reforms of the Deuteronomist reforms are tackled in that very first bit. But then later, he builds an altar, which undoes the whole bit of Deuteronomy 12 is thrown out the window. It's so interesting that in a 23, 24-year-old in the early 1800s gives us this text by which we can maybe interpret the Bible. Now, all that being said, this is a lot of stuff. What you can see is some tension in the text.

27:13 How do we do religion? Josiah's going to put him on a trajectory. And John Hall said this to me one time. This put them on the monotheistic track. So when Jesus comes and says, I'm God's son, they don't know what to do with that. Their interpretation is, you're saying you're the king, which he is, but Jesus isn't just saying, I'm the king, as in I'm adopted by God. No, he's like, I'm the king. I'm like God's son. Literally God's son. Which blows their mind because they're monotheists. There's a book called The Origins of Biblical Monotheism by [Mark Smith](#), not LDS. I'm going to sum it up. He says, "This is the beginning of

monotheism. The origins of biblical monotheism are coming out of the seventh century and his whole book makes that argument and is very strong. And he's dealing with things outside of the Bible, extra biblical texts, uberitic texts about when did monotheism come to be.

28:03 It coincides with the Book of Mormon. It coincides with at least my reading of the Josiah reforms. I know that the church has that video, that beautiful video of, like, what a good guy Josiah is. I'm not here to say he was a bad guy or a good guy. I don't even know if these reforms were made by him. I wouldn't do any of this in gospel doctrine. Like when I taught gospel doctrine, I didn't even show the video. I just talked about have faith, do these good things. On podcasts or side conversations, I would have members come and say, but what do we do with this? I'm like, yeah, read the Book of Mormon. If we read the Book of Mormon, what the Book of Mormon tells us is God can be seen. He wants you to have the mysteries. He wants you to come to Him.

28:40 More than His name dwells in the temple. His presence is there. One day you will embrace Him. And the very end of Ether 12 and Moroni 10 is an invitation by these guys that say, I've seen him. So can you. To me, that's relevant. That's powerful. And that's what we practice in the temple. Ritually, liturgically, we're practicing coming into the presence of God. I think that's beautiful. That was probably 10 minutes of undoing Josiah, poor guy. And I hope when I meet Josiah, that he'll be nice to me. I hope that we can be friends and break bread.

John Bytheway: 29:13 I'm so glad to hear your final summary there. With all of this that someday will get settled, what do we do? We focus on following as best we can.

Dr. Mike Day: 29:24 We focus on Christ. Coming to him and be perfected in him and you're going to meet him. Nephi, Moroni. They say, I've seen him and you will too. The last bit in Moroni where he says, you and I will be before his bar. He's a real person.

Hank Smith: 29:40 So the Book of Mormon may be correcting what the reformers got wrong. I can just see Joseph Smith. He's like, by the way, I'm going to go ahead and correct everything from 2 Kings 23 that had been inserted in Deuteronomy while I'm at this.

Dr. Mike Day: 29:57 This is my take. I think Nephi and the other visionaries of the Book of Mormon, they take everything that Deuteronomy has that's good and they run with it and they let go of the stuff that doesn't work. Stuff that says you can't see God, you can't have

altars anywhere else. God only has a name. He's non-corporeal or the mysteries cannot be known. They let go of that stuff and they keep the good stuff. Maybe, just maybe that the brass plates had a different version, the cool version.

- Hank Smith: 30:21 Wow. John, this is great stuff.
- John Bytheway: 30:26 I'm already going, I got to print these show notes out and read them again.
- Dr. Mike Day: 30:30 I'll send it to you. We're almost there.
- Hank Smith: 30:33 I've been asked before, how come Lehi is building altars wherever he goes? And it says pretty clearly in the Bible that you can only worship in one spot. This explains that. That wasn't probably in Lehi's Deuteronomy.
- Dr. Mike Day: 30:48 And Deuteronomy goes against everything the patriarchs do, everything. The patriarch, they have a tree. What's their preeminent vision of 1 Nephi? They go to a tree. In fact, Lehi's vision, which then becomes Nephi's, they go through three-part space. They go through the lone and dreary wilderness. They go past the great and spacious building. By the way, the word Haikal, which is the main house of the temple, means great and spacious palace. That's what it means. He passes that and then he comes to the tree and he falls down, partakes the fruit of the tree. I look at that as a Holy of Holies vision. There's three-part space in his vision and the tree is central to this visionary experience. The tree was central in part of the early Israelite religion. There's so much debate on this and I know there's [LDS scholars](#) on both sides of this.
- 31:36 I'm not dogmatic. I don't know, I wasn't there. I'm just a guy looking at stuff, but I find it fascinating because the Book of Mormon, like the providence of the Book of Mormon, a 23-year-old man who says, I've seen God, gives it to us. I always like to tell my students, If the Book of Mormon was found in a cave and it came out today, it would be the biggest find in archeological history every Christian would be shouting hallelujah saying, this is proof. Jesus is the Christ. You know, it's just the providence they don't like. The message, I don't think they have an issue with that.
- Hank Smith: 32:08 Wow. This has been fantastic, Mike. This is my kind of day where we go through and really become more competent in scripture. Like you said, there's not a place to do this in gospel doctrine.

Dr. Mike Day:	32:23	No. We got 25 minutes.
Hank Smith:	32:25	But it sure is fun to do on your own, I'll tell you, and to talk about with your good friends, Mike and John. Mike, wouldn't you love to see the Deuteronomy on the brass plates?
Dr. Mike Day:	32:35	Yes, I would. Because here's the thing. Jacob 4, where he says all the prophets testify to Christ. What if the early versions of this stuff read more like the Book of Mormon, that they testify of the Messiah, the one who will come down and die? I believe that Moses taught this. I believe Exodus 12 with the Passover probably came with a lecture. And Moses said, this lamb we're killing is the Son of Man. That's not in Exodus 12, but I bet it was.
John Bytheway:	33:02	Book of Mormon talks about Moses raising a brazen serpent and then testifying that this will be like the Son of God. And I'm like, well, that's not in Numbers. That's where it happened. But it's not in there, but it's in the Book of Mormon then. And then he testified the Son of God will be raised up like this.
Dr. Mike Day:	33:18	Bill Hamblin wrote an article called Vindicating Josiah in Interpreter Magazine. I think it really is a good balance to what I'm saying, because once again, I don't know if I'm right. I know that there's different opinions on this and I don't want to be dogmatic in this. I definitely lean a certain way. That's because of what I've read, but it doesn't mean I'm right. Hamblin's article is a really good counter to Rapple's argument about Laman and Lemuel being Deuteronomists. We'll put those out there so you can read those and get an overall view of both sides of this argument. What's going on at the end of 2 Kings 23? What in the heck is Josiah doing there fighting the Egyptians? Big picture is this. Assyria's on their way out and Babylon's on the rise. The third empire is going to be Egypt. Babylon has chased the Assyrian warriors all the way to Haran.
	34:04	They've wrecked Nineveh in 612. It's completely wrecked. In a strange, really weird twist of politics, Egypt, under Necho II, decides to march north to help their former enemies, the Assyrians. Why do they want to do this? Well, they want to buffer. They want to check Babylonian power and by having Assyria have some more power, they can check them so that they can have power as well. Now, anybody who studies geopolitics, we see this happening even today, whether it comes with embargoes or controlling trade. There's so much going on even today when it comes to power. Every leader wants to defend their people. Well, that's Egypt's take. What's Josiah doing? Why does he want to stop the Egyptians? He had

just spent a ton of time reclaiming lands in the north from Assyrian dominance and changed their religion as it were, and he didn't want Assyria to come back in and take it.

34:58 He didn't want Assyria to have influence over the north. In Josiah's mind, we think, we don't have Josiah's journal, but in his mind, stopping Egypt would help out. But this was a fatal move. Josiah viewed Babylon as the enemy of my enemy. And there's a phrase that goes, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. So Josiah seems to think, hey, if I do this, maybe something good will happen. Well, it kind of backfires. Babylon defeats Assyria and Necho at Haran in 609, but Necho doesn't give up. He stays at a place called Carchemish on the Euphrates, and he tries to hold a slice of the pie in Mesopotamia. He tries to hold on, but he gets wrecked in 605. His army gets pushed all the way back to Egypt and we read about that in 2 Kings 24:7. At that point, Judah is a vassal to Egypt.

35:49 Now that Babylon has power, Judah finds itself on the wrong side of power. Judah now it's sitting in this really weak position where Babylon has risen up. They're still paying tribute to Egypt, but in this story of this war, remember once again, Josiah goes up north to defend against Assyrian might. So he's attacking Egypt. Why? Well, because Egypt's running to their defense. That's the backdrop to 2 Kings 23. If we read 2 Kings 23, if we read verse 29, it says, in the days of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river of Euphrates. Josiah went against him; and slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, this is Josiah, dead. They bring him to Jerusalem and they bury him in a sepulchre. The people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, and anointed him king.

36:46 That's the end of his reign. In my opinion, the Deuteronomistic reformers were not expecting this. They thought that he was going to be the greatest thing ever. There's these bits in Kings where they rewrite history like little editorial insertions. I want to read one of them. Now after we just read how he's killed in those verses starting in 29, 30, 31, let's go back. Go back to verse 24. In 24, it says, "The workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols," these are all the things that Josiah put away. That's verse 24. In verse 25, this is the greatest thing since sliced bread verse. It says, "And like unto him," meaning Josiah, "there is no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might according to the law of Moses. Neither after him arose there any like him."

- 37:39 So in other words, from the perspective of the Deuteronomistic historian, verse 25 of 2 Kings 23 says, There's never been a king better before or after. Once again, I want to give a shout out to the Book of Mormon. If you read Alma 13:19, the author of Alma 13 says that the greatest king ever is Melchizedek. And Melchizedek, there's no record in Alma 13 of him going around killing a bunch of people. He preaches repentance and the city becomes righteous. The Book of Mormon, I think, could be read as a lens to help us understand this text. I'm okay with this history. History's messy. If the history you're reading isn't making you uncomfortable, you're probably not reading history. So this is really uncomfortable. The Book of Mormon's going to give us another lens. After it says he's the greatest thing ever, verse 26, in my opinion, is an editorial insertion where a later editor is going to say, okay, he's the greatest thing ever. But then look at verse 26.
- 38:36 "Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh did." Where it's like, well, we're still going to get wrecked because of Manasseh. The Lord said, in verse 27, "I will remove Judah out of my sight, as I removed Israel, and will cast off the city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said," here it is again, Hashem. "My name," the name "will be there". This is very much Deuteronomistic theology. The name of God will be there. Even after it says Josiah's the greatest thing ever, you're still going to get wrecked. In my opinion, and most scholars say, hey, this is an editorial insertion from a later redactor. I know that's a lot of stuff. Sorry if that's super boring, but it really helps you wrap your brain around this history, like what's going on. The son of Josiah takes the throne. We get a couple more leaders after Josiah, but this is the slide downhill.
- John Bytheway: 39:31 I actually had that note in my scriptures, I think, from [Josh Sears](#) a few years ago after verse 25. I had written this could be the initial ending. It sounds like you said they added some more after that.
- Hank Smith: 39:43 They're like, oh, it didn't quite go the way we thought.
- John Bytheway: 39:46 Yeah. This is showing us this is history. This is messy. It's written by humans. They're writing it with a certain lens. Am I bashing the Bible by saying that? No, you're showing us there's Deuteronomists, there's... What did you call there?
- Dr. Mike Day: 40:00 Yeah. So the Yahwist is from the South. They portray God Corporeo. The Elohist. They portray God in visions and dreams.

		He's accessible that way. They are representing a Northern perspective.
John Bytheway:	40:12	And all of them have influence on what we're reading.
Dr. Mike Day:	40:15	Yeah, everybody has a piece.
Hank Smith:	40:18	Mike, we've looked at the Assyrian destruction of the Northern Kingdom. We've looked at Hezekiah and Isaiah. We looked at Manasseh for a little bit. Then we looked at Josiah and the reforms. Wrap it up for us. What happens next?
Dr. Mike Day:	40:33	So this is where the Book of Mormon really picks up. We read in 24, Jerusalem is besieged and is taken by Nebuchadnezzar. Now, Zedekiah's put on the throne. I'm kind of skipping a king here, but Zedekiah's put on a throne. We read about this in verse 17 of chapter 24. His name's Mattaniah. They changed his name to Zedekiah, and the author says he did evil in the sight of the Lord. Jeremiah tells him and warns him in the 37th and 38th chapter that you're going to get wrecked if you don't listen to this. He says these words exactly, he says, "If you will surrender to the officers of the King of Babylon, then your life shall be spared. This city will not be burned with fire. You and your house shall live." That's Jeremiah 38:17. For that, Jeremiah's thrown in prison. Lehi comes out and says kind of the same thing, and they want to kill him.
	41:22	This is the end of the monarchy as it were. It's not good stuff. They burn the house of the Lord. They slay his sons in verse seven of chapter 25. It says they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes and then they put out the eyes of Zedekiah. So that's like the last thing that he sees is his sons being killed and the temple being destroyed. What's super fascinating to me is the end. If you skip to the end, and I think this is important, if you go to verse 27 at the very end, it says, "It came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; and he spake kindly to him."
	42:09	This king, who's a descendant of Zedekiah, who's a descendant of the Davidic line, he's freed from prison. Verse 28 says that he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison garment, and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of

his life. And I wrote this in here in my scriptures. I remember the first time I really was pondering this and I wrote, "The Book of Kings ends with a ray of hope. Jehoiachin is released and allowed to live. After 37 years in prison, a Davidic king lives. This sparks, at least to some, in the Jewish tradition, a hope for a return of the Davidic dynasty.

43:00 This is considered by most scholars to be a, the Deuteronomistic Redactor's addition to the story that there is hope. I'm a Star Wars nerd at heart, but there's this one line in Empire Strikes Back where Luke's taking off. The spirit of Obi-Wan turns to Yoda and says, that boy is our only hope. Yoda looks up and he says, no, there is another. That's this idea of a remnant shall return. The root shall grow a new branch. This is Isaiah 11. We're going to another tree. In my opinion, Matthew chapter one is continuing 2 Kings 25, that the Davidic line is in Jesus even though they killed him. The tree is the symbol for the king. The tree will live. That's kind of my conclusion to 2 Kings. I don't want to end on the ruin, the calamity. Yeah, the temple's destroyed, but that's the trauma that David Carr's talking about. That trauma preserved the Bible because these people were so traumatized they wanted to know what do we do now. Now that we've lost our land and our temple.

John Bytheway: 44:03 One of the questions that sometimes comes up is, you read it, 2 Kings 25:7, they slew the sons of Zedekiah. But didn't Zedekiah have a son named Mulek? Where do we figure he came from?

Dr. Mike Day: 44:16 In the Hebrew text, it doesn't say all the sons of Zedekiah. It just says Zedekiah. What's interesting is that word Mulek, it's voweled differently, but the word mulek means king. Mulek is a really cool kingly word. It has the same Hebrew stem. They just vowel it differently. Maybe Mulek was like his throne name or maybe that was a code name. But yeah, the Book of Mormon says, here's a line of David that comes to the Americas. That's pretty cool.

Hank Smith: 44:42 I think that's Omni 1, where we first hear about that group.

John Bytheway: 44:46 It seems like they seem to be the ones that are the kingmen because they're claiming, hey, we came from a king. We came from Zedekiah.

Dr. Mike Day: 44:54 I think you're onto something. Isn't that an interesting complex little wrinkle in the Book of Mormon? There's so many of those, aren't there?

John Bytheway:	45:01	They were claiming to be of high birth because they could claim Zedekiah.
Dr. Mike Day:	45:05	Well, you can see why it's important. This Davidic line is everything to these guys.
Hank Smith:	45:10	That end of 2 Kings 25 feels like a bit of a post-credit scene where it's ending and then there's just after the credits, oh, by the way, we're going to leave this open. We're going to leave this open for a sequel.
John Bytheway:	45:22	For a sequel.
Hank Smith:	45:25	Mike, before we let you go, this has been fantastic. Speak to our listeners who have stayed with us this whole time. They've gone through this. They're loving it. At times, our listeners assume that the guests we bring on have not seen the difficult times they have, but you have. Your family has. Yet here you are. You love this. You feel it exuding from you, this excitement for scripture. Could you speak to them for a second? What has scripture done for you in your difficulties? The Lord, through the scriptures.
Dr. Mike Day:	45:55	Honestly, it's literally saved my life. I didn't come from... I'm going to cry, but, I didn't come from an active family. I didn't have a dad. My mom married three different men and so I had different men in my life, but I didn't really have, like, a steady influence. I was not active in the church. And I remember being a 15-year-old kid reading the Book of Mormon. Well, you know when you know. That's when I had to make a decision, because I wasn't living according to this stuff that I was reading. So I had to make a decision. It saved my life. I would be literally dead. I would be an alcoholic. My whole family on my mom's side, my mom's side was what I knew. We were all alcoholics. Alcoholism runs deep in my family. And I know, saved my life. I could talk about it all day, but I have had spiritual experiences where I'm like, Joseph Smith did not write this book.
	46:46	It is from heaven. It's just been everything to me. The amazing thing for me is as I've chased biblical scholarship and really gone down some of these deep rabbit holes, the Book of Mormon is prophetic Midrash on the Bible. It is prophetic commentary. It is interpreting it. It is showing you ways to read Isaiah, how to read the Deuteronomist reforms, what Isaiah's doing. There is so much in the Book of Mormon, and I think we haven't even explored it all yet. I think there's more to come, which is so exciting. But I remember after, like, the 10th or 12th time I read the Book of Mormon, I remember thinking, okay, I got this. I

know what it's about. Every time I read it, I walk away and go, how did I miss that? I just did a presentation two days ago on the liturgical aspects of 3 Nephi.

47:35 I was reading one day, like, about a year ago, and I saw the liturgy of the temple in technicolor in 3 Nephi, not the stuff in the Sermon on the Mount that John Welch has done, but other stuff. I thought, I've read the Book of Mormon more times than I can tell you. And I was learning something. I just thought there's power there. And the Restoration's real. I know people have issues about different social issues or whatever, but if you get to the bare bones, come unto Christ and be perfected in him. That is gold.

Hank Smith: 48:04 Thank you, Mike. Thanks for spending the day with us. I love it when my hand is tired from writing. I'm trying to keep track of all the different scriptures. You know, I got fingers in different fingers in Deuteronomy and some in 1 Nephi, some in Jeremiah, and I feel so uplifted. That is the power of scripture. John, what a great day.

John Bytheway: 48:28 That last part, speaking of ending on a beautiful high note.

Dr. Mike Day: 48:33 I cannot deny what I felt. It was so powerful. It was almost like there was a angel in heaven going, look, Mike's awake. Let's get him.

John Bytheway: 48:41 Yeah. Here is a Bible amazing scholar reading this and going, I am missing stuff every time I read it that's coming out this time. What a testimony. Thank you for that.

Hank Smith: 48:57 Thank you, Mike.

Dr. Mike Day: 48:58 Thanks for having me.

Hank Smith: 48:59 With that, we want to thank Dr. Michael Day for being with us today. It has been a treat, a joy, a feast. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And every episode we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you join us next week. We're going to do more Old Testament study on followHIM.

followHIM Favorites



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| Hank Smith: | 00:05 | Hello, my friends. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with one of my best friends in the whole wide world. His name is John Bytheway. Hi, John. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:13 | Hi, Hank. Thanks. I like that introduction. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:16 | Yes. One of my best friends in the whole wide world. Now, John, we are doing followHIM Favorites. We take one question from this week's lesson, which is the end of 2 Kings, 17 through 25. And the question this week is how do you remain faithful when those around you aren't remaining faithful? And here's why I was looking at the last nine kings of the Southern kingdom of Judah. I'm sure you do this all the time, John. You're like, "Let me look at those kings." |
| John Bytheway: | 00:44 | I was just making that list yesterday. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:46 | Yeah. I was just like jotting them down. And you go from it's 150 years worth of kings, nine of them, Ahab all the way down to Zedekiah. And there's only two of the nine who are close to God. So you could say that the majority is not faithful to God, yet here are these two. Hezekiah and Josiah who stand out as, "Nope, I'm faithful to God." John, how do you be a Hezekiah or a Josiah in a world of Ahabs, Manassehs, Jehoiachins, Zedekiahs, Amnons who are not faithful to God? How do you stay faithful when those around you aren't? |
| John Bytheway: | 01:23 | I wish we could open this up to listeners because there are a bunch of listeners out there who are doing exactly that. You're amazing. The fact that you're even listening to this tells us that you are doing what he Hezekiah did. I'm looking like in 2 King's 18 where it talks about Hezekiah. "20 and five years old was he, when he began to reign." He was a young adult, right? Verse three, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." Verse five, "He trusted the Lord God of Israel." And I see that in there. Do you trust God? |

John Bytheway:	01:59	The promises he has made are so amazing. Do you trust him? Have you looked around you and seen? Sometimes it's kind of obvious sometimes when you look around, the consequences of not following God. Sometimes though it looks like they're having a blast. But eventually, that catches up to everybody. It has to.
John Bytheway:	02:19	Hank, you've heard me talk about this guy in my ward that is a missionary at the prison. And he stood up in the back of High Priest once. And he said, "Listen, you guys, I have to tell you when I was partying and drinking, I had a great time." He said, "I was at the great and spacious building, laughing at you guys. Then it turned on me and I lost my marriage and I lost the chance to raise my daughters. And I lost my job. And in 25 years, I spent \$500,000 on drugs and alcohol." And I'm like, "What? Who is this guy?" I've been to the prison with him since that to teach there, which is a wonderful experience. But anyway, he talked about, "First, it was fun and I lost everything." And I think of those who are listening that have this question.
John Bytheway:	03:01	I just want to say, hang in there and keep trusting God. It reminds me of Peter walking on the water. There are a lot of things he could have looked at. He could have looked at the waves. He could have looked at the wind. He could've looked at the clouds. When he focused on Christ, he was okay. And that's what Elder Holland said. As soon as his eyes wandered, then he started to sink. And so, man, we just want to tell you, Hank and I, your friends here, to hang in there and keep trusting God like Hezekiah did. Do that which is right in the sight of God and trust him and all of that. Those good consequences will follow.
Hank Smith:	03:37	John, everyone's going to have these Rabshakehs in their life who are attacking them. Remember that Rabshakeh. He knew exactly what to say to get you to doubt. He says, "Don't be deceived." That's chapter 19, verse 10, "Don't let this God whom you think is there deceive you." Very much like a Book of Mormon antagonist, trying to just push those right buttons. But look what in 2 Kings 19:15 Hezekiah prayed. He went to the Lord. He didn't go to Google. He didn't go to anybody else. He said, "Let me pray."
Hank Smith:	04:13	Look at verse 19. "I beseech thee," he says to God, "save us out of this hand." So one, I would say, if you're going to stay faithful, you have got to pray. That's part of trusting the Lord is praying heartfelt. And if you're like, "Well, Hank, I don't know how to pray. Hank, John, I don't know how to pray." Well, do what Joseph Smith said. He said, "I knelt down and began to offer up

the desires of my heart to God." That's to me a great definition of kneel down and to offer up the desires of your heart.

John Bytheway: 04:43 And if you don't know how to pray, say that.

Hank Smith: 04:46 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 04:47 Heavenly Father, I don't know how to pray. I just feel like we can get a checklist mentality. I said my prayers, but that's not the point. That when you get down on your knees and sincerely talk, you are just opening up the door to Heavenly Father, to help you inspire you send the Holy Ghost. And that's why you get down on your knees. Because you're putting yourself in a place where you can hear him, to use President Nelson's phrase that he has emphasized. So yeah, I love that.

Hank Smith: 05:15 Exactly. So in Hezekiah's life, he did two things. He listened to the Prophet first. If Isaiah said it, he was in. Two, he went to the Lord. He prayed, but what did Josiah do? He was the other one we talked about. What did Josiah do that was different than what he Hezekiah did? And that is, he went to the scriptures. Believe it or not, he apparently had not heard the scriptures before someone found a set.

John Bytheway: 05:42 "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord. What's that? 2 Kings 22:8. "Look what I found."

Hank Smith: 05:50 So he says, "Read it to me, read it to me." So those of you listening, tell your parents, "Read this to me, read these books to me." It says that he did everything he could to follow what those scriptures said.

Hank Smith: 06:03 Look at this in verse three, 2 Kings chapter 23, verse three. "And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul to perform the words of this covenant that were written in the book."

Hank Smith: 06:22 So, John, I think if I was going to sum this up, I'd say, if you want to be a Hezekiah or a Josiah in a world full of wicked kings, you've got to do these three things. Put the Prophet's words first. Two, you've got to pray. And three, you've got to get into those scriptures and commit yourself.

John Bytheway: 06:41 Yeah. And I don't think you look around with disdain on others. You just move forward with quiet confidence. And I don't know

what you think about the church, I love this. I love this. I get so much help. I get so much strength. I listen to conference and I am built up and I am strengthened and I am excited and motivated. And let that give you that kind of quiet confidence. You don't have to be condemning or judging who everybody else is. But for you, it's like I'm sticking with ... I am staying because I love this. It helps me, it blesses me. And I think the Lord wants to give you that kind of strength as we have just read.

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| Hank Smith: | 07:20 | Yeah. And don't be afraid to do a little makeover on your life. That's what Josiah does. When he reads scripture and he then looks at what's happening in his kingdom, he said, "All right, one of these two has got to change." Either the scriptures have to change or this situation has to change. So I know the scriptures aren't changing. So it says, he basically does an extreme Israel makeover. He builds the temple back up. He burns down the groves. He breaks down some of the evil things that were happening. So get rid of that music, get rid of those websites, get rid of those apps, whatever it is. Let's do an extreme life makeover and get back aligned. Let's get back aligned with God and the scriptures. |
| John Bytheway: | 08:04 | There was a talk, Hank, that affected me years ago, and I loved it because it was Elder Robert D. Hales, talking about that he was a fighter pilot in Vietnam. And his motto for their squadron was "Return with honor." And I believe it was in that talk where he gave the best definition of a friend that I've ever heard. A friend is one who makes it easier to live the gospel. And what you just said about eliminating this, that. Ask yourself, is this music a friend, is this TV show a friend? Is this movie a friend? Is this habit a friend? Is this way I spend my time a friend? Is it making it easier to live the gospel? Or is it making it harder? Why would I want to make it harder for me to live the gospel? Good way to think of things in your life as friends, not just people. |
| Hank Smith: | 08:47 | I love it. We'll finish here with 2 Kings 22:19. "Let your heart be tender. Soften your heart. Humble yourself before the Lord." You too. You're going to be Hezekiah and a Josiah in a world full of wickedness. You're going to be just like them. And I love what it says about Josiah in 2 Kings 23:25. "Like unto him, there was no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his might. Neither after him arose any like him." |
| Hank Smith: | 09:20 | We hope and pray that'll be said about you, that nobody looks to God like you do. |

John Bytheway:	09:25	You just be the best version of you. Get your patriarchal blessing out. What am I supposed to do and be.
Hank Smith:	09:31	Get yourself aligned with him and he'll make your dreams come true. Hey, come join us over on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. Use whatever app or whatever web browser you use, type in followHIM, Hank Smith, John Bytheway, it'll come right up. And join us next week because we're going to come at you with another followHIM Favorite.