

The Sealed Portion of the Book of Mormon: The Key to Redemption

KNOWLEDGE OF SEALED RECORDS IS IMPERATIVE

The Book of Mormon gives us a glimpse into the pattern where the Lord grants a prophet a “tour” of the history of the world, “the vision of all”, which includes the organization of the earth and all its inhabitants throughout time. Although the prophet is then commanded to record certain portions of the vision, he is also prohibited from recording certain portions of the account in order to test the faithfulness of those who hear or read the account to find out if they can exercise sufficient faith in the permitted material before further light and truth can be made available to them. This veiled information is said to be “sealed.” If what was revealed by the prophets in the public sphere was sufficient to redeem, allusions to further information would not be needed nor recorded in sealed portions of scripture. In other words, the additional information not disclosed by prophets would simply be something obtainable *after* death, where we can learn to become like God in some general, abstract way as is believed in Mormonism. However, if we allow ourselves to consider the possibility that what is veiled in scripture is actually essential to redemption and necessary for us to obtain before we depart this mortal sphere, passages of scripture pertaining to our obtaining such knowledge become more meaningful and clear. Let’s look at some examples:

*“And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying: Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel—and this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father—wherefore, **after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day,**[that would be Joseph Smith’s day] insomuch that **I will bring forth unto them, in mine own power, MUCH of my gospel**, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.” 1 Nephi 13:34*

The Lord tells Nephi that in the latter-days, after a period of time when the Gentiles have stumbled with the Bible and all that was redacted and will have scattered the aboriginals of America, He will bring forth **“MUCH”** of his gospel. This is not all and certainly not a fullness. It is apparent that what was to come through Joseph Smith was not going to be all that was necessary for us to know, but only a portion. As further evidence of a greater record that is available for us to obtain, Mormon begins to share such information, but is ultimately prevented by the Lord:

*“And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people; But behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people. And these things have I written, **which are a lesser part** of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken. And when they shall have received this, **which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith**, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall **the greater things be made manifest unto them**. And **if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation**. Behold, **I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people.**” 3 Nephi 26:6-11*

Simply and directly put, if the readers of the record show faith in what was given or what would come first, then greater things necessary for redemption and ascension would be given. If no faith is found in

what has been given, then further information would be withheld and **a condemnation would be the result**. The same pattern happens when Moroni tries to include the vision of the brother of Jared in his record, only this time **a curse** is applied to anyone who will contend or deny that faith like unto the brother of Jared and the obtaining of veiled material is a necessary step:

Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared. Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he **commanded me that I should seal them up**; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord. For the Lord said unto me: **They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.** And in that day that they shall **exercise faith in me**, saith the Lord, **even as the brother of Jared did**, that they may become sanctified in me, **then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations**, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are. And **he that will contend against the word of the Lord, let him be accursed; and he that shall deny these things, let him be accursed; for unto them will I show no greater things**, saith Jesus Christ; for I am he who speaketh. Ether 4:4-8

If the word of the Lord as spoken by the mouth of Moroni is to be believed, the sealed record of Jared's brother will not come forth until the Gentiles who will have had the record for some period of time (primarily the Mormons) repent, become clean, and exercise similar faith. Repent of what? What iniquity are we guilty of? As will be described, we are in terrible jeopardy for treating the unsealed portion of the record lightly. Not so much lightly in that we do not read it and talk about it, but in that we have neglected the import of the record we have available to us.

REDEMPTIVE FAITH IS TIED INEXORABLY TO SACRIFICE

How can we obtain the faith necessary for us to be able to exercise the required faith necessary to have the things which the brother of Jared saw made manifest to us? The answer to this question is clearly set out in Lecture 6 of the Lectures on Faith:

*"Let us here observe, that **a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things, never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation**; for from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things: it was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life; and it is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things, that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. **When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has, for the truth's sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice, because he seeks to do his will, he does know most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that he has not nor will not seek his face in vain.** Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life. **Those, then, who make the sacrifice will have the testimony that their course is pleasing in the sight of God, and those who have this testimony will have faith to lay hold on eternal life**, and will be enabled, through faith, to endure unto the end, and receive the crown that is laid up for them that love the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Sacrifice of every earthly thing, including your own life, is the only way to obtain the kind of faith that is necessary to part the veil and behold what the brother of Jared beheld and by so doing lay hold on redemption:

*“And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: **Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall**; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you.” Ether 3:13*

OPPORTUNITIES LOST AND FOUND

This level of faith is required for sealed things related to redemption and eternal life to be revealed. To have it revealed is to lay hold upon it. It seems the Lord has it as his design to keep a certain volume of information sealed to the public so that individuals can approach Him directly to obtain what is necessary for redemption. There have times in the history of mankind where God is willing to reveal this knowledge to a group of chosen believers with a covenant offered through an authorized servant or representative on earth who has been designated to facilitate such an event. Enoch was an example of one who was successful:

***And the Lord called his people ZION**, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them. And Enoch continued his preaching in righteousness unto the people of God. And it came to pass in his days, **that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION**. And it came to pass that Enoch talked with the Lord; and he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion shall dwell in safety forever. But the Lord said unto Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed. And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch all the inhabitants of the earth; and he beheld, **and lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Behold mine abode forever**. Moses 7:18-21*

Moses was an example of one who was unsuccessful:

*Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and **sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God**; **But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence**; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fullness of his glory. **Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also**; DC 84:23-25*

It was offered again in Joseph Smith's day but just like Moses, he was unsuccessful:

*And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people; For **I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times**. And I will show unto my servant Joseph all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood thereof, and the place whereon it shall be built. DC 84: 40-42*

And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place**. But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, **they shall not be blest, because they pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy

ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them. And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfil the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord. **For instead of blessings, ye, by your own works, bring cursings, wrath, indignation, and judgments upon your own heads, by your follies, and by all your abominations, which you practice before me, saith the Lord.** DC 124: 45-48

Understanding and talking about this concept is not enough to actually achieve it. It is experiential. You cannot make a covenant with God **TO** sacrifice, you have to enter into a covenant with God **BY** sacrifice. Action initiated by the individual is the driving factor.

THE PURPOSE OF SEALED RECORDS

Particular attention is the Book of Mormon is drawn to the sealed record of John the Revelator:

*And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see. **But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them.** And also **others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them; and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.** And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that **the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John,** according to the word of the angel. And behold, **I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard;** wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw. 1 Nephi 14:24-28*

Nephi was referencing what was given to John and then subsequently sealed as well:

*And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, **Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.** Revelations 10:4*

The Lord expounds on the record of John to Joseph Smith as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants:

*And **John saw and bore record of the fulness of my glory, and the fulness of John's record is hereafter to be revealed....**And I, John, saw that **he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace....**And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, **until he received a fullness....**And it shall come to pass, **that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John....**I give unto you these sayings **that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship,** that you may come unto the Father in my name, and **in due time receive of his fullness....**For if you keep my commandments you shall receive **of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace....**And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments....He that keepeth his commandments **receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things....**And **every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation....**The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth. DC 27*

Although the veiled account of the record of John the Revelator is excluded from DC 27, what is included is a beautiful description of what the purpose of sealed information is and the pattern in which it is

finally revealed. John sees that the Lord did not have the fullness at first, but He obtained it by obedience through the veil, little by little, grace for grace, here a little and there a little. It was not public information that was handed to Him. John then says that you too may follow the same track and obtain the fullness in the same way Christ did. This process of obtaining light and truth is what you are supposed to comprehend so that you know how and what to worship. And again we see that a **condemnation** is affixed to anyone who will not receive the light that is obtained in this manner.

APATHY AND SLUMBER

Still later in Nephi's account, he expresses his exasperation that he cannot make it any more clear or plain to his readers (modern-day gentiles, including Mormons) that the doctrine of Christ is only the gate through which we all must enter, but there will be nothing further given **until He shows Himself to you in the flesh** and gives you further doctrine. He wants to say more, but again he is commanded to veil or seal the information to try our faith:

*Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, **if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock**; wherefore, **ye are not brought into the light**, but must perish in the dark. For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do. Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and **there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh**. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you shall ye observe to do. And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; **the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be.** 2 Nephi 32:4-7*

Finally, near the end of his life Nephi makes reference to the veiled information he was commanded to seal by quoting the words of Isaiah. Notice that timing of the coming forth of the first portion or "much" of the gospel is clearly in the day of Joseph Smith while coming forth of the sealed portion is some time later:

*For behold, **the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep**. For behold, **ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets**; [the Lord imposes the state of slumber] and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity. And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered. And **behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof**. Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, **the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people**. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them. But the book shall be delivered unto a man, and he shall deliver the words of the book, which are the words of those who have slumbered in the dust, and he shall deliver these words unto another; **But the words which are sealed he shall not deliver**, neither shall he deliver the book. For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, **and the revelation which was sealed shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth; for behold, they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof**. And the day cometh that **the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops**; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth.... **Touch not the things which are sealed, for I***

will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work. 2 Nephi 27: 5-11, 21

THE BOOK OF MORMON IS A TEST

It should be clear that the complete record was never prophesied to come forth through Joseph Smith in the 1800's. It was a work destined for a different time, a different place, and a different people based on the diligence and heed that would be given to the partial disbursement of the record. It is and always has been a test in every generation. So a natural question that can logically be asked is: How did we do with that test when it was administered in Joseph Smith's day? Did we pass? Did we receive the sealed portion of the record? Did we establish Zion as it was foretold? History is clear that we did not pass the test or else we would have in our possession the sealed records mentioned by Nephi, Mormon, Moroni, and John the Revelator and we would be living comfortably in Zion located in Independence, MO. Instead, we have the word of the Lord regarding our failing grade along with the promised condemnation and curse in the following two revelations:

*And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And **they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written**—That they may **bring forth fruit** meet for their Father's kingdom; **otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.** DC 84:54-58*

*But I command you, all ye my saints, to build a house unto me; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me; and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me...**But behold, at the end of this appointment your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead,** saith the Lord your God....For verily I say unto you, that after you have had sufficient time to build a house to me, wherein the ordinance of baptizing for the dead belongeth, and for which the same was instituted from before the foundation of the world, your baptisms for your dead cannot be acceptable unto me...**For I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world,** things that pertain to the dispensation of the fullness of times....And I will show unto my servant Joseph all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood thereof, and the place whereon it shall be built....If ye labor with all your might, I will consecrate that spot that it shall be made holy....**And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place....But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest,** because they pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them....**And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfil the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord....For instead of blessings, ye, by your own works, bring cursings, wrath, indignation, and judgments upon your own heads, by your follies, and by all your abominations, which you practice before me,** saith the Lord. DC 124*

We must have enough courage to face the fact that what we have traditionally attributed to the early saints as blessings born of sacrifice may actually be cursings born of disobedience. But what about our

day? How are we doing with the test in our generation? In 1984 Pres. Ezra T. Benson had this to say about it:

*My beloved brethren and sisters, for some years now I have been deeply concerned that we are not using the Book of Mormon as God intends. As I participated in the Mexico City Temple dedication, **I received the distinct impression that God is not pleased with our neglect of the Book of Mormon.** In the eighty-fourth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord decreed that the whole Church was under condemnation, even all of the children of Zion, because of the way they treated the Book of Mormon. "And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent," said the Lord, "and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon" (D&C 84:57). Zion cannot fully arise and put on her beautiful garments if she is under this condemnation (D&C 82:14). – Pres. Benson, CR, Oct. 1984, pp. 4-5*

We have done nothing since 1984 to treat the Book of Mormon with more weight let alone what was done in the 1800's when the condemnation was first placed upon the church. A cursory review of church history will show that the early saints were driven from their homes multiple times, had their property illegally taken from them and they were raped, mobbed, and murdered. Do we currently sacrifice more than they? Are we more or less popular in the eyes of the world now vs. then? Are we less at ease than they were? Has anyone taken your home or property recently? Anyone you know been murdered for their faith? I think a rational mind can say that two hours of Sunday worship, occasional temple visits, and fulfilling of our church callings with zeal and vigor is a far more comfortable form of religious worship than what was enjoyed in Joseph's day. So if they could not muster enough faith to have sealed things made available, how likely are we to achieve it in our day? More importantly, is there anything about the current trajectory of the church that would lead you to assume we will EVER sacrifice more than the early saints?

One might say in response: "Well, it's not the end of days yet either. Surely we will sacrifice more than the early saints then when the Lord's wrath is poured out upon the world and the social structure changes with disease, starvation, and natural disasters abounding everywhere." This, however, would be compelled humility, which will be experienced by all living on the earth in that day, LDS and non-LDS alike. There is nothing in the record of those who have sacrificed all willingly and passed through the veil to suggest that such an act was compelled. It must be offered up of your own free will and choice.

THE SIGNS OF FAITH

Are we not supposed to be the stone cut out of the mountain without hands that comes out of obscurity and darkness to fill the whole earth? If that is the case, should we not experience the attendant signs and wonders also present? According to Mormon and Moroni at least, we should have angels appearing with office and ministry to declare the word of God to the chosen vessels (i.e., prophets) who in turn tell the rest of us what the angels said to them so that we too can have strong faith. And if we do not have somebody somewhere saying "...I have spoken to an angel and he says..." then we have a 'Woe' pronounced upon us and our religion is all for nothing:

*And if there were miracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles. **And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust.** Mormon 9: 19-20*

*And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, **have miracles ceased?** Behold I say unto you, Nay; **neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men.** For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, **showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness.** And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, **by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.** And by **so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ,** that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men. And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me. And he hath said: Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved. And now, my beloved brethren, if this be the case that these things are true which I have spoken unto you, and God will show unto you, with power and great glory at the last day, that they are true, and if they are true **has the day of miracles ceased? Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved? Behold I say unto you, Nay; for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.** Moroni 7: 29-37*

UNHOLY MOCKERY

The words of these Book of Mormon prophets matter and should be examined in detail. It seems logical to me that from the foregoing scriptures that not only did we not pass the test in Joseph's day, but we are receiving an even worse grade today, as evidenced by the lack of engagement of heavenly beings in our mortal experiences. In fact, in our devotion to religious tradition, we have done little more than give lip service to sacred things and therefore made a mockery of the plan of redemption. Jacob said it quite well in his sermon following his retelling of Zenos' parable of the olive trees:

*For behold, **after ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit,** that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire? Behold, **will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets;** and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and **make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you?** Know ye not **that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God?** Jacob 6: 7-9*

Ask yourself what constitutes a mockery. A mockery is when something real and authentic is imitated or modelled by something fake. This can be handy at times to convey something large and/or complex by making use of something small and simple to express the idea in general terms. The obvious example is a table top model of a building used to illustrate what the real structure will one day look like to potential investors of the project. In religious terms, the temple is a mock-up of the ascent back into God's presence (redemption from the fall). In the days of Moses, a mountain (Sinai) served as the model. In the wilderness the Israelites had a portable tabernacle that served the same function until an official temple could be built when they had a land of their own. Today, the same mock-up is found in LDS temples as the endowment portrays our ascent back into the presence of the Lord through new

names, signs, tokens and sacred prayer. So if Jacob is telling us here that we are going to stand in shame and guilt before the judgment bar of God for making a mockery of the plan of redemption, what does he mean by that? Only someone who is trying to make the model can be guilty of doing it wrong in the first place. Since the Mormons are the only ones who claim to be doing that, it stands to reason that Jacob is warning us against using the model as the ends instead of the means to achieve redemption. We focus solely on the symbol or “mock-up” of the actual ascent which leads through the veil and into the presence of the Lord without any intention of making the experience a real event in this life and thereby mock the entire process. For which, at least Jacob tells us we will stand in shame and guilt at the judgment bar of God.

SUMMARY

The restoration was brought about for one reason and one reason only: to bring back into the world the lost concept of individual redemption through a personal encounter with the Lord at the veil. There is a certain volume of information that is required knowledge for anyone to receive redemption and admittance into the family of God through advancement line upon line, grace to grace and from one exaltation to another. The full extent this information can only be obtained through sacrifice and thus can only be laid hold on in mortality as this is the only place where sacrifice is possible. While in mortality, part of that volume is kept sealed as a test to try the faith of those who desire it. If the test is passed, more of the volume is given slowly over time until the entire thing is unfolded to the individual and redemption becomes a matter of right by the declaring of it to the individual by God’s own voice. If the test is failed, less is given and a condemnation replaces the bestowal of further knowledge. This is what is meant by being damned: progress is halted in this cycle of creation. The Book of Mormon was and is the test in our day. That test was failed in the 1800s and is being failed today as evidenced by the lack of the sealed portion of the record not being made public, although a few faithful individuals have indeed obtained it. There is little in the current direction of the LDS church to suggest that the church as a whole is any closer to receiving the sealed records than it was in the early years and is likely headed in the opposite direction in terms of sacrifice, understanding, and faith. Thus, the sealed portion will continue to be revealed on an individual basis until such a time as a new opportunity can be offered by God to some contingent of believers as demonstrated by God with the early Saints in Nauvoo.