

Seers and the Urim and Thummim

9/8/20

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The Urim and Thummim was given to Aaron, the brother of Moses. It was placed in the breastplate Aaron wore and called the "the breastplate of judgment".¹

Because of Aaron's rebellion on Mount Hor, the Lord stripped him of the priestly robes. The sacred robes, (including the breastplate) were given to Aaron's son, Eleazar.² Thereafter the breastplate and robes remained with descendants of Aaron and the presidency of the Aaronic priesthood.³ This succession continued for a time after Moses was removed from Israel with the Melchizedek covenant.⁴ At the time of Moses' departure the Lord commanded Moses to take Joshua, the son of Nun and "set him before Eleazar [Aaron's son and high priest].

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;

And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.

And thou shalt put *some of thine* [Moses'] *honour* upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

And he [Joshua] shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel *for him* [Joshua] after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, *both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.*⁵

The instrument Eleazar used to inquire of the Lord on Joshua's behalf was the Urim and Thummim received from his father, Aaron. "Some of thine honour"—a portion of the Melchizedek priesthood—included the ability to ask questions of the

¹ Exodus 28:30 or RE Exodus 15:4

² Numbers 20:25-28 or RE Numbers 10:5

³ Exodus 40:12-16 or RE Exodus 20:1

⁴ Deuteronomy 34:5 or RE Deuteronomy 9:34, Alma 45:19 or RE Alma 21:3 and D&C 84:23-25 or RE T&C 82:13-14

⁵ Numbers 27:18-21 or RE Numbers 12:3, emphasis added

Lord and receive answers albeit through the Aaronic (vicarious) medium of Eleazar the priest. This is consistent with the Glossary definition of "key."

Joseph Smith also used the term *keys* to mean understanding, the greatest key being the ability to ask God and receive an answer.⁶

The subject of Joshua becomes an interesting topic when examined closely. Biblical scholars look to Joshua as a type for the Savior. One reason is Joshua's name. Jesus' name derives from the Hebrew word "Yeshua" which translates to English as "Joshua". In this sense the two share the same name. The name "Joshua" means "Yeshua saves".

The "root of Jesse" believed to be the last days "Davidic king" is a descendant of Jesse as well as of Joseph. Joshua is a descendant of Ephraim, (son of Joseph) holder of the firstborn right of Israel.⁷ "Oshea" is another form of Joshua but Moses refers to him as Joshua, possibly in reference to a new name assigned by the Lord).⁸ Israel gathers to Ephraim to receive their [Israel's] blessings in the last days.⁹ In this sense Joshua, (a descendant of Joseph) is a type for the "root of Jesse" who raises an "ensign" and gathers Israel.¹⁰

Joshua leads Israel to battle at the Lord's direction and divides inheritances among the tribes of Israel in the promised land. Joshua serves as a type for a descendant of Ephraim who leads Israel to the latter-day Zion and divides their inheritance. This is the role of the "one mighty and strong" mentioned in D&C 85¹¹ and the "prince" in Ezekiel.¹²

Joshua, the Ephraimite is a type that has many prophetic parallels to the last days. There are other parallels that could be a subject for a separate paper.

Transition of the Urim and Thummim from the high priest to the king

⁶ Glossary, key(s)

⁷ Numbers 13:8 or RE Numbers 8:1

⁸ Numbers 14:6 or RE Numbers 8:7

⁹ D&C 133:30-32 or RE T&C 58:3

¹⁰ D&C 113:5-6 or RE T&C 129:3

¹¹ D&C 85:7 or RE T&C 83:4

¹² Ezekiel 37:25, chapters 40-48 or RE Ezekiel 19:6 and chapter 21

When Israel sought a king like unto the Gentiles¹³ and the Lord granted their request¹⁴, in effect it required altering the priesthood. Prior to that time Israel's Melchizedek King was the Lord and Samuel His high priest. When Saul and David assume the throne of Israel, the high priest or priests assume responsibility for the temple and work of the Levites. The king is over all temporal affairs and enters a covenant with the Lord whereby the king (vassal or minor king in the Aaronic priesthood) is subordinate and devoted to the King (suzerain or major King in the Melchizedek priesthood) by covenant. If the vassal is obedient and loyal to the suzerain, the Lord (supreme King, Melchizedek)¹⁵ protects the minor king or vassal and his people, as long as subjects of the vassal remain loyal to him and the vassal loyal to the suzerain or Melchizedek king.

In this transition the vassal is the judge over Israel (like David and Solomon) and their means of judgment was the Urim and Thummim. Support for this conclusion is found in the Book of Mormon. Mosiah (the grandfather who departed out of the land of Nephi and traveled to Zarahemla) was in possession of "interpreters" or a Urim and Thummim. This gave him the ability to translate "by the gift and power of God" tablets as did Joseph Smith.¹⁶

And it came to pass in the days of Mosiah, there was a large stone brought unto him with engravings on it; and *he did interpret the engravings by the gift and power of God* (emphasis added)¹⁷

Mosiah [the grandfather] interprets the engravings by "the gift and power of God." Mosiah, like Joshua, is a descendant of Joseph who is led by the Lord out of the land of Nephi¹⁸ to the land of Zarahemla. The people of Zarahemla are Mulekites, descendants of Jesse and heirs to Israel's throne. Mulek was the only surviving son

¹³ 1 Samuel 8:4-5 or RE 1 Samuel 4:2

¹⁴ 1 Samuel 8:6-9 or 1 Samuel 4:2

¹⁵ The Literary Message of Isaiah, Avraham Gileadi, p.14, 66-75

¹⁶ Joseph Smith History 1:59 or RE JSH 6:1, Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, 7 Sept. 1834, [Letter I], Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate 1 (Oct. 1834)

¹⁷ Omni 1:20 or RE Omni 1:8

¹⁸ see Omni 1:12 or RE Omni 1:6

of king Zedekiah.¹⁹ The union between these descendants of Jesse and Joseph is a type for the gathering of Israel in the last days.

King Benjamin

King Benjamin, the son of Mosiah and heir to the throne doesn't mention the interpreters or the "gift and power of God." Yet he places tremendous importance on the records in his possession.

And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi; and I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God has given me.

Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of king Benjamin, *he took them and put them with the other plates, which contained records which had been handed down by the kings, from generation to generation until the days of king Benjamin* (emphasis added)²⁰

Records given to king Benjamin [father] from Amaleki are joined with records given to Benjamin by his father, Mosiah. The presumption is that the "interpreter's" were transferred with the records. Evidence the interpreter's continued with the royal lineage is found in Ammon's explanation to Limhi about king Mosiah's [the grandson of Mosiah] gift to translate ancient records. Ammon explains to Limhi he knows a man who has the means to translate ancient records and that man is Mosiah [the son of Benjamin, grandson of Mosiah].

And I say unto thee again: Knowest thou of any one that can translate? For I [king Limhi] am desirous that these records should be translated into our language; for, perhaps, they will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people who have been destroyed, from whence these records came; or,

¹⁹ Helaman 6:10 or RE Helaman 2:29

²⁰ Words of Mormon 1:9-11 or RE Words of Mormon 1:3

perhaps, they will give us a knowledge of this very people who have been destroyed; and I am desirous to know the cause of their destruction.

Now Ammon said unto him: I can assuredly tell thee, O king, of a man that can translate *all records* that are of ancient date; *and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, and no man can look in them except he be commanded, lest he should look for that he ought not and he should perish. And whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called a seer.*

And behold, *the king* of the people who are in the land of Zarahemla is the man that is commanded to do these things, and who has this high gift from God.

And the king [Limhi] said that a seer is greater than a prophet.

And Ammon said that *a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have*, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; yet a man may have great power given him from God.

But a seer can know of things *which are past*, and also of things *which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them*, and also things shall be made known by them *which otherwise could not be known*.

Thus *God has provided a means* that man, *through faith*, might work mighty miracles; therefore he becometh a great benefit to his fellow beings.

And now, when Ammon had made an end of speaking these words the king rejoiced exceedingly, and gave thanks to God, saying: Doubtless a great mystery is contained within these plates, and *these interpreters* were doubtless prepared *for the purpose of unfolding all such mysteries to the children of men*.

O how marvelous are the works of the Lord, and how long doth he suffer with his people; yea, and how blind and impenetrable are the understandings of the children of men; for they will not seek *wisdom*, neither do they desire that *she should rule over them!*

Yea, they are as a wild flock which fleeth from the shepherd, and scattereth, and are driven, and are devoured by the beasts of the forest (emphasis added).²¹

Ammon offers Limhi a detailed description of king Mosiah and the gift God gives to mankind for the purpose of revealing things that “could otherwise not be known.”

The significance of Limhi’s conversation with Ammon should not be overlooked. In Ammon’s explanation we learn a clear description of a “seer” and what they are capable of. We learn of God’s pattern for revealing things the substance of which would otherwise remain unknown. Men are given means by God to interpret all ancient records but that is not all. The reason Limhi sought to understand the content of the records is to gain understanding of the cause of incredible destruction befalling prior occupants of the land. A major role of ancient records is to inform the current civilization about the errors of those who precede them. God’s intent is they learn from past mistakes of others and redirect their paths avoiding similar desolation.

When the reign of king Mosiah [the grandson] came to an end there were no heirs willing to assume the throne. Mosiah’s sons left Zarahemla to preach to the Lamanites. Rather than continue the pattern followed by Mosiah’s father and grandfather, king Mosiah altered the affairs of the land and formed a representative form of government. Alma the younger was appointed “Chief judge” as well as the presiding High Priest over the church.²² In all prior successions the records and interpreters were passed from father to son in the royal line. Since no king was anointed to succeed Mosiah, Mosiah gave the records and interpreters to Alma the younger.²³

It is important to note changes in the government affairs were not merely done out of convenience or practicality. Under the reigns of Mosiah [the grandfather], Benjamin [the son] and Mosiah [the grandson] the covenant status between God and the people changed. Prior to passing the throne to his son Mosiah

²¹ Mosiah 8:12-21 or RE Mosiah 5:12-14

²² Mosiah 29:42 or RE Mosiah 13:10

²³ Mosiah 29:42 or RE Mosiah 13:10

[the grandson], Benjamin was given direction from an angel he delivered to his people.²⁴ The message from the angel led the people of Zarahemla to repent, receive a change of heart from their baptism by fire, receive great knowledge personally and become adopted into the family of Christ.²⁵ Having become the son's and daughter's of Christ, these people no longer need vicarious representation through the Aaronic covenant. The new covenant allowed them to represent themselves before the Lord under the Melchizedek covenant.²⁶

Alma the Younger Receives the “Interpreters” from Mosiah

At the end of Mosiah's (the grandson) reign the people reversed what ancient Israel did in seeking a king. Heir's to Mosiah's throne served missions to the Lamanites and a system of common consent whereby the people selected judges by popular vote to oversee the government. This was in effect a transition away from an Aaronic, vicarious form of government to a Melchizedek, individually represented form of government where personal accountability and responsibility is emphasized.

The chief judge, Alma the younger, was appointed by the Lord and his father Alma to be high priest over the church.²⁷ In the days of Samuel and David, the office held by Samuel under the direction of the Lord divided responsibilities between the king (temporal affairs) and the priest or priests of the Aaronic priesthood, the king presiding. Prior to Mosiah's death the office of king and priest was consolidated into the office of chief judge. Under Benjamin's (the father) leadership the people of Zarahemla transitioned from the Law of Moses to the Higher, Melchizedek covenant, the first being representation by proxy and latter, personal representation before the Lord.²⁸

Until this time the “interpreters” and records were kept by kings. After Mosiah (the grandson) introduced the new form of government there is no mention of interpreter's other than Alma's personal record. Alma the younger delivers the

²⁴ Mosiah 3:2 or RE Mosiah 1:13

²⁵ Mosiah 4:2-3 or RE Mosiah 2:1-2 , 5:1-7 or RE Mosiah 3:1-2

²⁶ Alma 13 or RE Alma 9, D&C 84:19-22 or RE T&C 82:12

²⁷ Mosiah 29:42 or RE Mosiah 13:10

²⁸ Mosiah 29:25-32 or RE Mosiah 13:6-8

records and interpreters to his son Helaman. At this point, in the 37th chapter of Alma we find that Alma the younger was given the interpreters²⁹ and sacred records by Mosiah (the grandson) to be joined with other records in his possession. Alma the younger gives to his son, Helaman the records and interpreters with the following instructions for their use.

“And I also command you that ye keep a record of this people, according as I have done, upon the plates of Nephi, and keep all these things sacred which I have kept, even as I have kept them; *for it is for a wise purpose that they are kept.*

And these plates of brass, which contain these engravings, which have the records of the holy scriptures upon them, which have the genealogy of our forefathers, even from the beginning-

Behold, it has been prophesied by our fathers, that *they should be kept and handed down from one generation to another, and be kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord until they should go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, that they shall know of the mysteries contained thereon.*

And now behold, if they are kept they must retain their brightness; yea, and they will retain their brightness; yea, and also *shall all the plates which do contain that which is holy writ*” (emphasis added)³⁰

The purpose for writing and keeping the records is to bless contemporaries of the prophets in the generations in which they live, past and future. Ultimately the day comes when all records go forth *for a wise purpose* to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people so they are informed about the mysteries contained in the collective body of records and judged accordingly.

Regarding the prophetic destiny of the records, Alma explains to Helaman how the Lord accomplishes His purposes by “small and simple things” that confound the wise after the manner of men.

²⁹ Alma 37:1 or RE Alma 17:7

³⁰ Alma 37:2-5 or RE Alma 17:7

“Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and *small means in many instances doth confound the wise.*

And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and *by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.*” (emphasis added)³¹

The records play a role in the last days in confounding those who think themselves wise. This appears to be a primary objective in the Lord’s plan:

“The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, *that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh-*” (emphasis added)³²

The Lord’s intent is to eliminate every “arm of flesh” upon which all mankind relies. He intends to expose the ignorance of men and their arrogance in hope they humble themselves, repent and turn to Him for light and knowledge. God will accomplish this *by the simplest of means.*

Denver Snuffer alluded to how the Lord is able to stop governments and economies of nations with the simple means of a virus.

“In the few weeks, a great alarm has been raised about a viral pandemic. It illustrates something about institutions. Although they may seem durable, they are all vulnerable and easily destroyed *by very simple means.* Like locusts destroying the crops of Egypt in the story of Exodus, great societies are shaken through the smallest of means. We know there will come an overflowing scourge for a desolating sickness shall cover the land (RE T&C 31:7 or D&C 45:30-33), *for the Lord has told us beforehand so that when it comes, we’ll not be overtaken. This current unrest illustrates what will happen one day soon. Being forewarned gives us the opportunity*

³¹ Alma 37:6-7 or RE Alma 17:8

³² D&C 1:19 or RE T&C 54:4

to prepare” (The Heavens are Open (And Therefore We Have Work to Do), Denver Snuffer, Jr., p.2, emphasis added).

This year we have witnessed how simple means crippled our economy and governments and subjected mankind to substantial loss of individual freedom and liberty.

Alma’s Instructions to His Son, Helaman

Alma explains to Helaman it is wisdom in God the records are preserved and explains why these records are important:

“And now, it has hitherto been wisdom in God that these things should be preserved; for behold, *they have enlarged the memory of this people, yea, and convinced many of the error of their ways, and brought them to the knowledge of their God unto the salvation of their souls.*

Yea, I say unto you, were it not for these things that these records do contain, which are on these plates, *Ammon and his brethren could not have convinced so many thousands of Lamanites of the incorrect tradition of their fathers; yea, these records and their words brought them unto repentance; that is, they brought them to the knowledge of the Lord their God, and to rejoice in Jesus Christ their Redeemer.*

And who knoweth but what *they will be the means of bringing many thousands of them, yea, and also many thousands of our stiff-necked brethren, the Nephites, who are now hardening their hearts in sin and iniquities, to the knowledge of their Redeemer?” (emphasis added)³³*

Records preserved by the Nephites “enlarged the memory of the people” and “convinced many of the error of their ways.” That is God’s intended purpose for preserving and bringing forth records. It is a way of introducing wisdom into the creation.

³³ Alma 37:8-10 or RE Alma 17:8

Alma points to the role played by the records in convincing the Lamanites of the “incorrect tradition of their fathers.” False traditions passed down from forefathers is a primary strategy of Satan to withdraw light and truth from mankind.³⁴ In addition to exposing false traditions, the records point mankind toward gaining a knowledge of God and rejoicing in the salvation offered through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The importance of applying these verses as a type for future events should not be overlooked. We stand at a covenant crossroads when God’s covenant with the Gentiles is to be removed from them and offered to Israel.³⁵ The Lamanites were separated from their brethren the Nephites and bound by the false traditions of their fathers. Israel is scattered among the Gentiles and God covenanted with their fathers to gather them to the lands of their inheritance. Records preserved by the hand of God were used to convince the Lamanites of the “incorrectness” of the traditions of their fathers. The same is true in the latter-day gathering of Israel. Records we now possess are to be combined with records previously withheld to restore all tribes of Israel to the covenant God made with their fathers.³⁶

In addition to gathering Israel, the records are used to gather those who harden their hearts among the Nephites. The Nephites were the covenant people of their day but many turned from God. The Nephites are types for modern Gentiles. Today many Gentiles harden their hearts against God and religion as did the Nephites. When Israel is gathered to receive the lands of their inheritance and repent and return to God, a number of Gentiles awaken and seek the knowledge of God once known but since rejected.³⁷ In this manner, the account becomes a type for the close of the Gentile dispensation and the beginning of God’s covenant renewal with Israel.³⁸

Continuing Alma’s Instructions to Helaman

³⁴ D&C 93:39 or RE T&C 93:11

³⁵ D&C 45:28-31 or RE T&C 31:6-7, 3 Nephi 21:11-21 or RE 3 Nephi 9:12

³⁶ 1 Nephi 13:39-42, or RE 1 Nephi 3:24

³⁷ 3 Nephi 21:22 or RE 3 Nephi 10:1

³⁸ 3 Nephi 21:23-29 or RE 3 Nephi 10:1

Following Alma's confession the Lord has not revealed all the mysteries surrounding the use of the preserved records to him, Alma asserts to Helaman the records are preserved for a "wise purpose" known to God.³⁹ Before returning to the subject of preserved records, Alma admonishes Helaman to remember how strict are God's commands. If Helaman obeys God's commandments he will prosper. If he fails to keep God's commandments he will be "cut-off" from God's presence.⁴⁰ Losing the opportunity to be in God's presence and receive revelation from Him in a world of wickedness is the highest of prices to pay.

Returning to the Records

Alma instructs Helaman that the "wise purpose" for which God preserves these records is so God may "show forth his power" to future generations.

"And now remember, my son, that God has entrusted you with these things, which are sacred, which he has kept sacred, and also which he will keep and preserve for a wise purpose in him, *that he may show forth his power unto future generations*" (emphasis added)⁴¹

The wise purpose for which the Lord preserves the records is God showing His power to future generations. Neither Alma nor Helaman comprehend the critical role played by these records in a future day when their importance becomes greatly elevated. With the sacred responsibility Helaman accepts comes a sober warning for the risks of failure and disobedience.

"And now behold, I tell you by the spirit of prophecy, that if ye transgress the commandments of God, behold, *these things which are sacred shall be taken away from you by the power of God, and ye shall be delivered up unto Satan, that he may sift you as chaff before the wind.*"⁴²

³⁹ Alma 37:11-12 or RE Alma 17:8

⁴⁰ Alma 37:13 or RE Alma 17:9

⁴¹ Alma 37:14 or RE Alma 17:9

⁴² Alma 37:15 or RE Alma 17:10

As dire as the consequences for failure are, the promise to the faithful and obedient servant are extraordinary.

“But if ye keep the commandments of God, and do with these things which are sacred *according to that which the Lord doth command you*, (for you must appeal unto the Lord for all things whatsoever ye must do with them) behold, *no power of earth or hell can take them from you, for God is powerful to the fulfilling of all his words.*

For *he will fulfill all his promises which he shall make unto you*, for he has fulfilled his promises which he has made unto our fathers.

For *he promised* unto them that *he would preserve these things for a wise purpose in him, that he might show forth his power unto future generations.*

And now behold, one purpose hath he fulfilled, even to the restoration of many thousands of the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth; and *he hath shown forth his power in them, and he will also still show forth his power in them unto future generations; therefore they shall be preserved.*

Therefore I command you, my son Helaman, that ye be diligent in fulfilling all my words, and that ye be diligent in keeping the commandments of God *as they are written*” (emphasis added).⁴³

The directions from Alma to Helaman are critical in instructing Helaman about his responsibility as steward of the records. However, the purpose of this record exceeds in purpose a faithful father instructing his son. Alma’s instructions are critical for a latter-day servant whom God chooses to bring forth sealed records to future generations. A time when God will “show forth his power” to them.

Every admonition given to Helaman by Alma should be viewed as Alma staring in the eyes of God’s appointed latter-day servant and speaking the same admonitions to him.

In the mind of Alma, the records are associated with the mysteries of God.⁴⁴ God’s mysteries address subjects that are godly and inspirational, but may also be

⁴³ Alma 37:16-20 or RE Alma 17:10-11

⁴⁴ Alma 37:11 or RE Alma 17:8

subjects exposing darkness. It is a matter of darkness Alma addresses with Helaman.

“And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that *ye keep them*, that *the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people*; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, and that *ye preserve these interpreters*.

For behold, the Lord saw that his people began to work in darkness, yea, work secret murders and abominations [like modern Gentiles]; therefore the Lord said, *if they did not repent they should be destroyed from off the face of the earth*.

And the Lord said: *I will prepare unto my servant Gazelam, a stone, which shall shine forth in darkness unto light*, that I may discover unto **my people who serve me**, that **I may discover unto them the works of their brethren, yea, their secret works, their works of darkness, and their wickedness and abominations**.

And now, my son, these interpreters were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled which he spake, saying:

I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent **I will destroy them from off the face of the earth**; and *I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land*.

And now, my son, we see that they did not repent; therefore *they have been destroyed, and thus far the word of God has been fulfilled*; yea, *their secret abominations have been brought out of darkness and made known unto us*.

And now, my son, I command you that ye retain all their oaths, and their covenants, and their agreements in their secret abominations; yea, and all their signs and their wonders *ye shall keep from this people*, that they know them not, lest peradventure they should fall into darkness also and be destroyed.

For behold, *there is a curse upon all this land, that destruction shall come upon all those workers of darkness, according to the power of God, when they are fully ripe*; therefore I desire that this people might not be destroyed.

Therefore ye shall keep these secret plans of their oaths and their covenants *from this people*, and **only** *their wickedness and their murders and their abominations shall ye make known unto them*; and ye shall teach them to abhor such wickedness and abominations and murders; and ye shall also teach them that these people were destroyed on account of their wickedness and abominations and their murders.

For behold, *they murdered all the prophets of the Lord who came among them to declare unto them concerning their iniquities*; and the blood of those whom they murdered did cry unto the Lord their God for vengeance upon those who were their murderers; and thus the judgments of God did come upon these workers of darkness and secret combinations.

Yea, and *cursed be the land forever and ever unto those workers of darkness and secret combinations, even unto destruction, except they repent before they are fully ripe*.

And now, my son, remember the words which I have spoken unto you; *trust not those secret plans unto this people*, but teach them an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity” (emphasis added).⁴⁵

The inhabitants of the America’s are subject to divinely appointed laws tied with this land. When they are “fully ripe” in iniquity they are destroyed by the power of God. This is a continuing theme throughout the Book of Mormon that serves as a sober warning to all who possess this land.

Ripe in Iniquity

From Nephi to Emer in the Book of Mormon, the Lord warned all who inhabit *this land* iniquity in its residents would not be tolerated.

⁴⁵ Alma 37:21-32 or RE Alma 17:12-14

“Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, *this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fullness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their power over it*” (emphasis added).⁴⁶

And Emer:

“And thus the Lord did pour out his blessings upon this land, which was choice above all other lands; and he commanded that whoso should possess the land should possess it unto the Lord, *or they should be destroyed when they were ripened in iniquity*; for upon such, saith the Lord: I will pour out the fulness of my wrath” (emphasis added).⁴⁷

The Book of Mormon is a cautionary tale to all who inhabit this land. When the people occupying this land have “ripened in iniquity”, no matter what their lineage, they will be destroyed if they fail to repent. The Gentiles who now occupy this land have the stain of blood from over 55 million aborted infants upon them. One of the greatest if not the greatest genocides in modern history. Trying to justify to God why the Gentiles should not be destroyed will be an insurmountable task. Yet, with the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ, all things are possible. Because of His worthiness, certainly not ours.

The Lord has issued a similar warning to those who entered a covenant with Him by the mouth of His servant:

Those who have entered faithfully into the covenant this day are going to notice some things. The spirit of God is withdrawing from the world. Men are increasingly more angry without good cause. The hearts of men are waxing cold. There is increasing anger and resentment of gentiles. *In political terms, it's rejection of white privilege.*

⁴⁶ 1 Nephi 17:35 or RE 1 Nephi 5:19

⁴⁷ Ether 9:20 or RE Ether 4:4

Language of scriptures gives a description of the events now underway *and calls it the end of the times of the gentiles. This process with the spirit withdrawing, will end on this continent, as it did with two prior civilization in fratricidal and genocidal warfare.* For the rest of the world, it will be as in the days of Noah in which, as that light becomes eclipsed, the coldness of men's hearts is going to result in a constant scene of violence and bloodshed. *The wicked will destroy the wicked.*

The covenant, if it is kept, will prevent you from losing light and warmth of heart as the spirit now steadily recedes from the world. *The time will come when you will be astonished at the gulf between the light and truth you will comprehend and the darkness of mind of the world.*⁴⁸

Alma and Helaman Conclude

Alma advises Helaman what he should teach his people and how to conduct himself in verses 33-37. His counsel applies to us. After advising Helaman on how he should proceed, Alma refers to the Liahona or compass prepared by the Lord. Alma explains how the compass worked according to their faith.

“And now, my son, I have somewhat to say concerning the thing which our fathers call a ball, or director- or our fathers call it Liahona, which is, being interpreted, *a compass, and the Lord prepared it.*

And behold, there cannot any man work after the manner of so curious a workmanship. And behold, *it was prepared to show unto our fathers the course which they should travel in the wilderness.*

And it did work for them *according to their faith in God; therefore, if they had faith to believe that God could cause that those spindles should point the way they should go, behold, it was done; therefore they had this miracle, and also many other miracles wrought by the power of God, day by day.*

⁴⁸ Closing Remarks Covenant of Christ Conference, Denver Snuffer Jr., Boise, Id., September 3, 2017, emphasis added

Nevertheless, because *those miracles were worked by small means it did show unto them marvelous works*. They were slothful, and *forgot to exercise their faith and diligence* and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey;

Therefore, they tarried in the wilderness, or did not travel a direct course, and were afflicted with hunger and thirst, because of their transgressions.

And now, my son, I would that ye should understand that *these things are not without a shadow*; for as our fathers were slothful to give heed to this compass (now these things were temporal) they did not prosper; *even so it is with things which are spiritual*.

For behold, ***it is as easy to give heed to the word of Christ, which will point to you a straight course to eternal bliss, as it was for our fathers to give heed to this compass, which would point unto them a straight course to the promised land.***

And now I say, *is there not a type in this thing?* For just as surely as this director did bring our fathers, by following its course, to the promised land, *shall the words of Christ, if we follow their course, carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land.*

O my son, *do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; for so was it with our fathers; for so was it prepared for them, that if they would look they might live; even so it is with us. **The way is prepared, and if we will look** [to the words of Christ] **we may live forever***" (emphasis added).

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Instruments like “interpreters” or Urim and Thummim and the Liahona are not inherently beneficial to anyone. They are tools prepared by God and designed to work *according to their faith in Christ*. Absent faith in Christ these implements become nothing more than furniture or novelties.

God prepares them for the faithful to fulfill His will and deliver His people. They are temporal in nature, meaning the Lord provides them to assist His people

⁴⁹ Alma 37:38-46 or RE Alma 17:15-17

in managing temporal affairs. In so doing, the Lord provides a type or example for managing our spiritual affairs.

The spiritual counterpart to these tools are the words of Christ. If we have faith in the words of Christ and seek diligently to find and obey them our course is guided and we obtain Eternal Life.

In providing these tools to guide our temporal affairs, the Lord teaches us the simplicity of the spiritual way. Our temporal affairs may be managed with “tools” the Lord provides to guide our path, and provide access to greater, hidden light and knowledge. They expose conspiracies of wicked men acting as Satan’s minions to rob of us light, truth, and agency. In so doing God instructs us in our spiritual affairs by encouraging our diligence in seeking out and applying the light He offers to navigate the straight and narrow path. The temporal tools provided by God are a means to an end, not the end themselves.

Those Authorized by God to Use the Urim and Thummim

A bishop is known as the "judge in Israel", the position held by Aaron as the Aaronic high priest. It is noted in the Doctrine and Covenants that a bishop will be a Melchizedek high priest unless a literal descendant of Aaron is found:

"Wherefore they shall be high priests who are worthy, and they shall be appointed by the First Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood, *except they be literal descendants of Aaron.*

And if they be literal descendants of Aaron they have a legal right to the bishopric, if they are the firstborn among the sons of Aaron [like Eleazer].

For the firstborn holds the right of the presidency over this priesthood, and the keys or authority of the same.

No man has a legal right to this office, to hold the keys of this priesthood, *except he be a literal descendant and firstborn of Aaron.*

But, as a high priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in the office of bishop when no literal descendant of Aaron can be

found, provided he is called and set apart and ordained unto this power, under the hands of the First Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

And a literal descendant of Aaron, also, must be designated by this Presidency, and found worthy and anointed, and ordained under the hands of this Presidency, otherwise they are not legally authorized to officiate in their priesthood.

But, by virtue of the decree concerning their right of the priesthood descending from father to son, *they may claim their anointing if at any time they can prove their lineage*, or do ascertain it by revelation from the Lord under the hands of the above named Presidency" (emphasis added).⁵⁰

And then:

"Wherefore, the office of a bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a bishop is in administering all temporal things;

Nevertheless a bishop must be chosen from the High Priesthood, *unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron*;

For unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron he cannot hold the keys of that priesthood.

Nevertheless, a high priest, that is, after the order of Melchizedek, may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the Spirit of truth;

And also *to be a judge in Israel*, to do the business of the church, to sit in judgment upon transgressors upon testimony as it shall be laid before him according to the laws, by the assistance of his counselors, who he has chosen or will choose among the elders of the church.

This is the duty of a bishop *who is not a literal descendant of Aaron*, but has been ordained to the High Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek

... ,

But a literal descendant of Aaron has a legal right to the presidency of this priesthood, to the keys of this ministry, to act in the office of bishop independently, without counselors, except in a case where a President of the

⁵⁰ D&C 68:15-21 or RE T&C 55:3

High Priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek, is tried, to sit as a judge in Israel (emphasis added).⁵¹

One might ask "Why a descendant of Aaron doesn't need counselors?" I believe the answer is because he has the Urim and Thummim as did Aaron.

It appears there is a co-mingling of titles with Aaronic priesthood powers. Bishop, king, high priest, and Aaronic priesthood presidency may all be linked to these powers and offices. The office of bishop and king are linked to assigning inheritances in Zion in both the D&C and Ezekiel.⁵²

The Brother of Jared and the Urim and Thummim

The account of the brother of Jared is noted as one of the more detailed accounts of mortal man being instructed by the Lord and allowed to pass through the veil. In his transition he was endowed with knowledge from the other side of the veil and commanded to “treasure up” and “show it to no man.” This knowledge is strictly controlled by God and only revealed in appropriate circumstances to people previously cleansed and prepared.

“And now, as I Moroni, said *I could **not** make a full account of these things which are written*, therefore it sufficeth me to say that Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body *even as he showed himself unto the Nephites*.

And he ministered unto him [the brother of Jared] even as he ministered unto the Nephites; and all this, *that this man might **know** that he was God*, because of the many great works which the Lord had showed unto him.

And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he

⁵¹ D&C 107:68-73,76

⁵² D&C 58:17 or RE T&C 45:3, 85:7 or RE T&C 83:4, and Ezekiel 37:24-25 or RE Ezekiel 19:6 and Ezekiel 40-48 or RE Ezekiel 21.

saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting.

Wherefore, having *this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil*; therefore *he saw Jesus; and he did minister unto him*.

And it came to pass that the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: Behold, thou shalt not suffer these things which ye have seen and heard to go forth unto the world, until the time cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh; wherefore, *ye shall treasure up the things which ye have seen and heard, and show it to no man*.

And behold, *when ye shall come unto me, ye shall write them and shall seal them up, **that no one can interpret them**; for ye shall write them in a language that **they cannot be read***.

And behold, *these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write*.

For behold, *the language which ye shall write I have confounded*; wherefore *I will **in my own due time** that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men **these things which ye shall write***.

And when the Lord had said these words, he showed unto the brother of Jared all the inhabitants of the earth *which had been*, and also *all that would be*; and he with-held them not from his sight, *even unto the ends of the earth*.

For he had said unto him in times before, that *if he would believe in him that he could show unto him all things-it should be shown unto him*; therefore the Lord could not withhold anything from him, *for he knew that the Lord could show him all things*.

And the Lord said unto him: *Write these things and seal them up; and I will show them **in mine own due time** unto the children of men*.

And it came to pass that *the Lord commanded him that he should seal up the two stones which he had received, and show them not, **until the Lord should show them unto the children of men***" (emphasis added).⁵³

⁵³ Ether 3:17-28 or RE Ether 1:14-16

The Lord promised the brother of Jared He could show him “all things” and once they were shown to the brother of Jared he was to write them. The “catch” was the written words are in a language the Lord confounded and are only read or interpreted with the “two stones” or Urim and Thummim.

Moroni recorded this portion of the record of the brother of Jared in the Book of Mormon and provided the following commentary of the Lord’s revelations to him [the brother of Jared].

“Behold, I [Moroni] have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and *there never were greater things 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 the Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are” (emphasis added).⁵⁴

Moroni was commanded by the Lord to add the record of the brother of Jared to the Book of Mormon and “seal up” the records and interpreters. Addressing the subject of when and if the brother of Jared’s account comes to the Gentiles, Lord states it is contingent on the faith of the Gentiles and their sanctification. The Gentiles must become clean even as the brother of Jared was sanctified.

⁵⁴ Ether 4:4-7 or RE Ether 1:17

The Lord is dangling the proverbial carrot in front of the Gentiles and Israel in Ether 4 or RE Ether 1. He prepared the means to do what He promised by including the interpreters with the records. Now comes His offer to both Israel and the Gentiles:

“Come unto me, O ye **Gentiles**, and *I will show unto you **the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief*** [what the brother of Jared saw beyond the veil and more].

Come unto me, O ye **house of Israel**, and *it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and **it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief.***

Behold, *when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief* which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, **then** shall the *great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you-yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and contrite spirit, then* shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.

And **then** shall *my revelations* which I have caused to be written by **my servant John** [the Beloved, the Revelator] *be unfolded in the eyes of all people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that **the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.***

Therefore, when ye shall receive *this record* ye may know that *the work of the Father has commenced upon all the face of the land*” (emphasis added).⁵⁵

The knowledge hid up because of unbelief is offered to both the Gentiles and Israel. That is everything including records written by John the Beloved, the Revelator. Receiving the records alone is insufficient. The “means” for translating and interpreting the records are necessary because some records are written in a

⁵⁵ Ether 4:13-17 or RE Ether 1:19

language that cannot be read without the assistance of divine means. That “means” is the interpreters or Urim and Thummim.

The “means” were necessary for Joseph Smith to translate the Book of Mormon, written in “reformed Egyptian”.⁵⁶ The records in John’s possession include different languages that require a broad body of knowledge to perform the translation and interpretation. Those languages confounded by God are impossible to translate unless the Lord provides a seer with means to translate and interpret the languages and a command from God to do so.

The records in John’s possession are more than his personal account of his mortal ministry. As a translated being who remains on earth as a ministering angel⁵⁷, John the Beloved is the Lord’s keeper of records, not just for his time but for the history of this world.

“And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Behold, *he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been.*

And he shall also write concerning the end of the world.

Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men.

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 shall not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them.

⁵⁶ Mormon 9:32 or RE Mormon 4:11

⁵⁷ D&C 7:6 or RE JSH 13:19

And also *others who have been*, [past] *to them hath he* [John] *shown all things* [Does “*all*” include the account of the brother of Jared beyond the veil and the Savior’s ministry to the Nephites?], *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 (emphasis added).⁵⁸

John is known for his Book of Revelation as well as other books in the New Testament. What is not known and less understood is John’s role in showing others in the past and future the vision of future events. John instructs them to write what they have seen to come forward in a future day “in their purity.” The number of records in John’s custody exceeds the number he originally authored personally. They are sealed to come forward in “the own due time of the Lord.”

The Own Due Time of the Lord

The “own due time of the Lord” or the “due time of the Lord” are two ways of identifying the same period. The two phrases are more than figures of speech. They identify a time when the Lord makes all things known to mankind with the introduction of sealed records and the Urim and Thummim to translate and interpret them.

Nephi saw the “due time of the Lord” and foretold what happens when that day arrives:

“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 . . .* ,

⁵⁸ 1 Nephi 14:19-27 or RE 1 Nephi 3:30-31

Touch not the things which are sealed, *for I will bring them forth in my own due time*; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.

Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, *until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men*” (emphasis added).⁵⁹

When the Lord refers to the time He reveals all records, from the beginning of the world to the end, He refers to it as the “due time of the Lord” or “mine own due time.”

Mormon Writes about the Due Time of the Lord

The prophet Mormon spoke of a day when Israel would be restored to a knowledge of the covenant in the context of the Lord’s “own due time.”

“And as surely as the Lord liveth, will he gather in from the four quarters of the earth all the remnant of the seed of Jacob, who are scattered abroad upon all the face of the earth.

And as he hath covenanted with all the house of Jacob, even so shall the covenant wherewith he hath covenanted with the house of Jacob be fulfilled *in his own due time*, unto *the restoring all the house of Jacob unto the knowledge of the covenant that he hath covenanted with them*.

And *then shall they know* [like the brother of Jared?] *their Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God*; and *then* shall they be gathered in from the four quarters of the earth *unto their own lands*, from whence they have been dispersed; yea, as the Lord liveth so shall it be. Amen” (emphasis added).⁶⁰

⁵⁹ 2 Nephi 27:11, 21-22 or RE 2 Nephi 11:19-20

⁶⁰ 3 Nephi 5:24-26 or RE 3 Nephi 2:18

How will Israel be restored to the knowledge of God’s covenant and thereafter, know Jesus is their Christ? The records restore Israel to a knowledge of the covenant like the records restored the Lamanites to the knowledge of God and the incorrectness of their traditions.⁶¹ When Israel learns of the covenant they come to know their Savior and gather to Zion where He dwells in their midst.⁶²

There is a tendency to think of these events as independent of one another but in truth, they are related. In the Lord’s due time the sealed records will be the Lord’s “means” or instrument to bring forth the evidence that persuades Israel Jesus Christ is their Savior.⁶³

For the body of records to be of benefit to those willing to repent and receive them, it is necessary to provide means to translate the records from their native tongue or confounded condition to a language or languages understandable in modern times. According to the Book of Mormon, those means were the “interpreter’s” or Urim and Thummim.

When the Lord instructed the brother of Jared to seal up his record the Lord told the brother of Jared He [the Lord] would confound the language the brother of Jared had written so it is *impossible for mortal man to read*. The Lord then instructed the brother of Jared to seal up “these two stones” with the record for the express purpose of providing means to interpret confounded language.

“For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause *in my own due time* that *these stones* shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write” (emphasis added).⁶⁴

The Lord does not intend to keep confounded language secret forever. His purpose in having the brother of Jared include the “two stones” with the sealed record is so the content of the sealed record may be interpreted by the gift and power of God in His due time. This is another way for the Lord to “show forth my power” in the last days.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Alma 37:9 or RE Alma 17:8

⁶² 3 Nephi 21:25 or RE 3 Nephi 10:1

⁶³ 1 Nephi 13:39 or RE 1 Nephi 3:24

⁶⁴ Ether 3:24 or RE Ether 1:15

⁶⁵ Alma 37:17-19 or RE Alma 17:10-11

It means the manner in which sealed records come to light in the Book of Mormon follows the same pattern in the last days. A man is called by God and given the two stones, becoming a seer who, as Ammon says:

“. . . , a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; yet a man may have great power given him from God.

But a seer can know of *things which are past*, and also of *things which are to come*, and *by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them*, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known” (emphasis added).⁶⁶

In the Lord’s due time a seer appears that sealed records may come forth and secret acts are spoken from the housetops:

“For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; *for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.*

And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days” (emphasis added).⁶⁷

The pattern God has appointed these records to be manifest has been through a seer with a Urim and Thummim or interpreter’s in their possession.⁶⁸ Is it likely He will vary from this pattern in the “due time of the Lord?”

⁶⁶ Mosiah 8:16-17 or RE Mosiah 5:13

⁶⁷ D&C 1:2-4 or RE T&C 54:1

⁶⁸ Alma 37:20-32 or RE Alma 17:11-14

Priesthood Effects the Scope of the Urim and Thummim's Use

At the beginning of this paper it was explained how the Urim and Thummim was placed in the “breastplate of judgment” and given to Aaron and each of his firstborn descendants thereafter. The manner in which it was used was Joshua would go to Eleazar, firstborn son of Aaron and heir to the office of Aaronic high priest and ask him to inquire of the Lord regarding specific questions. This demonstrated the vicarious nature of the Law of Moses or lesser covenant.

When the covenant between the Lord and the king transcended the Aaronic covenant the Urim and Thummim was given to the king directly so the king's relationship with God replaced the vicarious nature of the Aaronic covenant with direct, individual, personal representation associated with a portion of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The nature of the covenant between the Lord and His leaders can be determined by who and how the Urim and Thummim is used in the various scriptural accounts.

One great miracle of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is that all spiritual gifts are intended to bless mankind. The scriptures provide accounts of individuals who obtained these gifts from God. The purpose of these records is not solely to suggest these gifts are exclusively reserved for select individuals or offices. Ammon explained to Limhi the greatness of the gift of seership associated with the Urim and Thummim:

And Ammon said that a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; *and a gift which is greater can no man have, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can*; yet a man may have great power given him from God (emphasis added).⁶⁹

Why is the gift of seership of such great value? Because one who enters the Melchizedek priesthood covenant is given access to the “key of the knowledge of God.”

⁶⁹ Mosiah 8:16 or RE Mosiah 5:13

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh;

For without this no man can see the face of God, *even the Father*, and live.

Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people [like the brother of Jared] that they might behold the face of God; (emphasis added).⁷⁰

The keys of the “greater priesthood” provide to those who enter this covenant the “means” to gain access to the “mysteries of the kingdom” and the “key to the knowledge of God”. This is what the Lord promised the brother of Jared He could show him when He said He could show him “all things”.⁷¹

The “means” or Urim and Thummim is not limited to specific individuals and missions in the Lord’s plan but a gift He reserves for those diligently searching for truth directly from Him. While in mortality God has made it possible for mankind to secure their blessings in the afterlife in mortality. When a person obtains a promise from God they will dwell with Him in the celestial kingdom, they are further promised a gift from God in the form of a “white stone” and/or a new name like Abram’s name was changed to Abraham or Jacob to Israel.

The place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim.

This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby *all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it*; and this earth will be Christ’s.

⁷⁰ D&C 84:19-23 or RE T&C 82:12-13

⁷¹ Ether 3:26 or RE Ether 1:15

Then the *white stone* mentioned in Revelation 2:17, *will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one*, whereby things pertaining to a *higher order of kingdoms* will be made known;

And a white stone is given to *each of those who come into the celestial kingdom* [mortal or postmortal], *whereon is a new name written which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word* [a key opening access to the knowledge of God].⁷²

The earth's intended destiny is to become a Urim and Thummim similar to the place where God resides. Information available to those who dwell on earth in its sanctified, immortal state is limited to inferior kingdoms or kingdoms of a lower order. In contrast, heirs of the celestial kingdom are given a "new name" referred to as a "white stone" whereby they obtain knowledge of kingdoms that transcend the Celestial kingdom or the kingdom where they dwell. The "white stone" may be literal and metaphorical. Those who receive the new name know.

Abraham was given a Urim and Thummim about the time his name was changed from Abram to Abraham. In the book of Abraham, Abraham says:

And I, Abraham, had the Urim and Thummim, which the Lord my God had given unto me, in Ur of the Chaldees;⁷³

When Abraham was in Ur of the Chaldees, he had not as yet received his new name of Abraham.⁷⁴ When his name remained Abram the Lord gave him a Urim and Thummim suggesting he was spiritually in a preparatory state or abiding a lesser, preparatory law. This is also the time Abram married Sarai, an event that takes on greater significance later in this paper. After Abram is given the new name of Abraham we find in the Pearl of Great Price or T&C account he is learning the astronomy of the heavens using the Urim and Thummim. Abraham is learning how to navigate the stars to find his way to kingdoms higher than the Celestial kingdom. Denver Snuffer alludes to the fact what Abraham is describing

⁷² D&C 130:8-11 or see Glossary of Gospel Terms, "Urim and Thummim"

⁷³ Abraham 3:1 or RE Abraham 5:1

⁷⁴ Genesis 11:28-29 or RE Genesis 6:8

is part of the process of learning how to navigate the heavens to trod the paths of God.

When any of us arrive at the end of the journey through the seven rungs of Jacob's ladder, *we will discover that the [Heavenly] Mother was present throughout that journey.* She declared: " *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment*" (Proverbs 8:20). She's present all along the way through the seven pillars. *This recognition of the Heavenly Mother requires wisdom.*

Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 2:2-3: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." "All nations," in this context, means all the 12 tribes of Israel. The "nations" are the 12 tribes of Israel.

"The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the...house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." *The paths of God lie in the heavens. So if you're going to learn to walk in his paths you are going to have to learn how to walk in the heavens.*

The ensign that is prophesied to be established (Isaiah 5:6), in the context, in the meaning of that day, *had reference to a zodiacal, a constellation, a depiction of the heavens themselves.* So when an ensign is going to be reared, and *it's going to tell you about how to walk in the paths of God,* this is talking about something very, very different than what most of us today would envision.

Zion is going to be a connection between heaven and earth. And at that place you will learn of the God of Jacob's ways, and you will walk in His paths. *Because Heaven and earth will be connected.* And the stairway connecting the two will be opened. And *the heavens and the earth will be*

reunited again. And this is going to happen in the top of the mountains.
(emphasis added)⁷⁵

Our Mother in Heaven accompanies us in this journey up the seven rungs of Jacob's ladder. It was not a coincidence Abram had taken Sarai to wife before he began his ascent. Once Abraham and Sarah received their new names the two were in a position to begin their ascent, Abraham seeking knowledge through the Urim and Thummim and Sarah being in the position of tempering, organizing and applying Abraham's knowledge wisely. Abram began learning wisdom the moment he had taken Sarai as his wife. Sarai's presence in their relationship becomes Abram's first step in learning wisdom. Wisdom is learning to recognize our Heavenly Mother's hand in this process.

Having advanced in his covenant relationship with God, Abraham was granted permission to learn of God how to navigate the heavenly paths leading to heaven and God's presence. Like Lehi being led to a promised land in mortality, Abraham was led by the Urim and Thummim to a glorious inheritance and promised land in immortality. Abraham was engaged in the process Isaiah described in his prophecy of Zion. He was taught in God's ways so he could "walk in his paths". He was not permitted to do that while his name remained Abram. It was only after Abraham received the new covenant, including the new name he was authorized to explore the heavens to chart his course through the stars.

The "interpreters" or Urim and Thummim have differing purposes according to the covenant relationship between the Lord and the servant. Under the Aaronic covenant the Lord directs His servant in temporal affairs. In the Melchizedek covenant a Urim and Thummim is used to translate sealed records, expose secret works of darkness and gain knowledge of higher kingdoms and orders. As Ammon says:

But a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them *shall all things be revealed*, or, rather, shall *secret things be made manifest*, and *hidden things shall come to light*, and things which *are not known shall be made known by them*, and also things shall be

⁷⁵ *Jacob's Ladder*, Denver Snuffer Jr.

made known by them which *otherwise could not be known* (emphasis added).⁷⁶

Accounts of seers in scripture serve multiple purposes in the Lord's effort to instruct and advance mankind up Jacob's ladder. They exemplify how the Lord manifests His power to man. The scriptural accounts reflect the importance God places on the integrity of scripture. The records explain the means by which God corrects the interpolations of man to restore knowledge and understanding and expose and refute false traditions. We learn from previous passages God intends these accounts to be inspirational and aspirational for each of us. Those who dwell on earth in its sanctified and immortal state are given means for obtaining greater knowledge of inferior kingdoms.⁷⁷ Those entering the celestial kingdom in mortality or immortality are given means to access God's limitless knowledge of kingdoms transcending even the celestial kingdom.⁷⁸ Like carrots dangling from a stick, God entices us to be like Abraham, a "greater follower of righteousness" and to "possess greater knowledge".⁷⁹ Heirs of the celestial kingdom receive access to the mysteries of God through the "white stone" and "new name" because, according to pattern, they receive both.

Paul admonishes us to seek the best gifts⁸⁰ and Ammon tells Limhi ". . . , that a seer is a revelator and a prophet also. And *a gift which is greater can no man have*, except he should possess the power of God".⁸¹ Following Paul's admonition to the Corinthians, we should seek from God this greatest of gifts. Those who dwell on earth and the Celestial kingdom both receive Urim and Thummim with uniquely differing abilities as "seers".

Denver Snuffer addressed this subject in response to a question raised on his blog:

⁷⁶ Mosiah 8:17 or RE Mosiah 5:13

⁷⁷ D&C 130:9 or RE Glossary of Terms: Urim and Thummim

⁷⁸ D&C 130:10-11 or RE Glossary of Terms: Urim and Thummim

⁷⁹ Abraham 1:2 or RE T&C 145, Abraham 1:1

⁸⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:31 or RE 1 Corinthians 1:50

⁸¹ Mosiah 8: or RE Mosiah 5:13

“Seeking for and obtaining gifts – part of the expected pattern”, April 20, 2010, Denver Snuffer Blog, emphasis added.

I received this comment and question:

As I have learned more about the scriptures, I have come to find many “anomalies” in the lives of the prophets are actually not anomalous but part of the expected pattern. Examples of things I once thought exceptions which I now believe are expected steps along “the way” include Moses’ struggle with the devil, the 2nd Comforter, the sealing power, Christ’s willingness to give Nephi anything he asks, John’s vision of all, Abraham’s astral journey and John’s entering into the temple in heaven.

The appearance of the Liahona in the Book of Mormon seems anomalous, a physical object of divine origin given to aid his servant in completing his journey. But is the Liahona in fact, an anomaly or can any righteous member expect physical tokens from heaven to aid them on their own journey before they arrive in the celestial kingdom?

[Denver’s response:]

I would agree that there is a pattern, it is universal, and *the prophets are trying to give that pattern to us in the history they record*, the examples they teach, the parables they offer and the commandments they reveal. *There is one, universal system which everyone will receive as part of their journey back to God. In order to pass the angels who stand as sentinels along the path you must proceed in an orderly fashion through the veil. It will be one by one.*

Yes, I agree there are physical tokens given as an aid to getting there. Take the gift of seership, as an example. We know there was an instrument given to Joseph to aid him at the first. He used it to gain an understanding

even before the translation of the Book of Mormon plates commenced. He would tell his family stories about the ancient inhabitants, their customs, manner of dress, etc. His mother, Lucy Mack Smith records this in her history. This understanding came as a result of Joseph's possession and use of the Urim and Thummim, making him a "seer" in the sense of the term used in Mosiah.⁸²

Eventually Joseph developed the independent gift of seership, and no longer required the physical instrument to be used in order to exercise the gift. He became, like Enoch, able to "see" without use of the instrument.⁸³

We tend to think this a great rarity and grand exception. Yet we also find that everyone who enters into the same state of exaltation as God will be required to possess this same gift.⁸⁴ If possession or development of this capacity is expected for all those who reside with God, then the gift is intended to be universal among the exalted. Therefore, we should not delay seeking this as one of the best gifts to desire.⁸⁵

Since whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto will rise with us, and you will have so much more the advantage if you have gained greater light and truth by your heed and diligence than others who have failed to show such diligence, there is no reason to delay. Just as Moses wished all men were prophets, I wish all men were seers.

Your proposition is right.

Promised blessings from heaven are not postponed until the afterlife. God desires to grant them as soon as we are prepared to receive them in mortality in preparation for their use in immortality. It is a *process* God intends for each of us to pursue. Part of that process is God providing mortals literal, physical instruments prepared in heaven for our advancement in mortality. We are all encouraged to ask God for them in this mortal walk. The extent to which we pursue and obtain these blessings is a measure of faith we have in God's promises.

⁸² Mosiah 8: 13-17

⁸³ Moses 6: 35-36

⁸⁴ D&C 130: 5-11

⁸⁵ D&C 46: 8; 1 Cor. 12: 31 or RE T&C 32:3-4, 1 Corinthians 1:50

The Doctrine and Covenants admonishes us to be guided by the Spirit of God and commands we ask God in all things:

But ye are commanded in all things to ask God, who giveth liberally; and that which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils.

Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given;

For verily I say unto you, they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a sign that they may consume it upon their lusts (emphasis added).⁸⁶

These gifts are given to those who love the Lord and desire to keep all His commandments. The Lord commands those who love Him to ask God “in all things” and then do what the Spirit of God testifies to them what they should do “in holiness of heart.”

God’s purpose in giving these gifts is that mankind be not deceived by evil spirits, doctrines of devils and the precepts of men. Satan battles for the souls of men through disobedience, lies and false traditions from those whom he deceives and those who serve him.⁸⁷ In contrast, the Lord commands us to ask Him and then do as He instructs by the power of His Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost provides enabling power sent forth to assist us in discerning between good and evil. Doctrines of devils and conspiring men with ill intent are exposed in light emanating from spiritual gifts God grants man. In addition to the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, God offers through that Spirit gifts to aid us in our journey.

⁸⁶ D&C 46:7-9 or RE T&C 32:3-4

⁸⁷ D&C 93:39 or RE T&C 93:11

Ministry of Angels Seen and Unseen

In a podcast on angels ministering to man, Denver Snuffer made the following observation:

If you have read the tenth parable (*Ten Parables*, Denver C. Snuffer), the thing which caused the stirring to begin was *the notice the angels took that here on the ground, on the earth, there was something that looked like Heaven*. There was a man and a woman *whose experience and circumstances mirrored the same kind of thing that the angels who were watching recognized from where they come from*. And they went, and they got the Lord, and the Lord came, and He evaluated, and He said, “We’re going to save this one [marriage]. Here’s the to-do list. Now get busy.

Begin at verse 8 of chapter 22: “*Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.*” The parable starts with the Lord (who’s trying to get people to come to the wedding) telling the servants, “The wedding is ready, but those that I’ve asked are not worthy.” “*Go into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid [them] to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways....*” *Always the servants, always angels do this work– they do the gathering* “...and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there was a man which had not a wedding garment: ...saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king, Bind him hand and foot, take him away, cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, [wailing], gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 22:8-13) (“*Angels*” - Part 1, Podcast #19).

Angels of God observe mankind and minister unto them at the direction of Jesus Christ.⁸⁸ The scriptures testify of physical appearances by angels to mankind to deliver the words of Christ but the scope of their ministry is broader than solely acting as messengers of the Lord. In the example from “*Ten Parables*”, angels observe and call the couple to the Savior’s attention. The man and woman were in the process of creating a union on earth close to that formed in heaven. When the Lord determined the couple had a relationship worth saving, the angels were given a “to do list” and commanded to “get busy.” Included in the “to do list” would be granting “tokens” or implements and “signs” at the direction of Christ. Perhaps this is what Alma referred to when he instructed his son, Helaman about the purpose of the Liahona being a “type” or “shadow”.⁸⁹

The work angels perform is associated with covenants made by the Father with the children of men, preparing the way for His covenant people to claim God’s promises.⁹⁰ Angels fulfilling those promises may be done anonymously and invisibly as well as through personal visitation. The angelic role is preparatory and Aaronic in nature.⁹¹

Prophecy in the scriptures foretell a city of Zion, the New Jerusalem to be established and Israel gathered to it. Those familiar with the LDS tradition presume a temple recommend or announcement in General Conference provides the call for the inhabitants of Zion to gather in that city. What if the gathering in Zion occurs in the same manner it did for Lehi using physical devices like the Liahona delivered by heavenly messengers to the door of his tent. In effect, the example of Lehi and his family exemplifying a type for gathering Israel to the land of their inheritance in the last days. Physical means like the Liahona compass serve as preparatory spiritual training wheels on a bike of spiritual progression. They prepare the recipient for progressively greater means in the form of spiritual gifts from God. Tokens and signs in a manner of speaking. Initially they are preparatory or Aaronic.

God’s Covenant with Lehi- “I have obtained a land of Promise”

⁸⁸ Moroni 7:21-25, 29-33, or RE Moroni 7:4, 6

⁸⁹ Alma 37:38-45 or Re Alma 17:15-16

⁹⁰ Moroni 7:30-31 or RE Moroni 7:6

⁹¹ D&C 13 or RE JSH 14:1

And it came to pass that my father spake unto her, saying: I know that I am a visionary man; for if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem, and had perished with my brethren.

But behold, *I have obtained a land of promise*, in the which things I do rejoice; yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness (emphasis added).⁹²

The Lord promised Lehi a land of promise for himself and family. The covenant between Lehi and God was in place and angels commissioned to “get busy” in fulfilling the work of God’s covenant with Lehi. Angels do the work of the Father’s covenants.⁹³ As Denver also said, angels do the work of gathering God’s covenant people.

How do the work of angels fulfill God’s covenant with Lehi and Nephi? Think about how serendipitous events played out when Nephi obtained the plates of Laban and Ishmael and his household agreed to pack up and follow Nephi and his brothers into the wilderness. There was no account of angels in any of these events but in their own right, each example is miraculous. Could angels have been commissioned by God to do the work of orchestrating His covenant fulfillment in these matters?

Alma addressed the purpose of the Liahona or compass as being a “type” or “shadow”.⁹⁴ Is the Liahona a metaphor for only following the words of Christ or is it possible the compass is a physical device fashioned by God to lead all those chosen to migrate to Zion?

“And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the

⁹² 1 Nephi 5:5 or RE 1 Nephi 1:21

⁹³ Moroni 7:31 or RE Moroni 7:6

⁹⁴ Alma 37:38-45 or RE Alma 17:15-16

ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness” (1 Nephi 16:10 or RE 1 Nephi 5:3).

Possibly the delivery of the Liahona to Lehi was done by angels and according to Denver, the reception of the Liahona may also be more than a metaphor for the words of Christ. Is it likely those whom God promises an inheritance in the latter-day Zion are given a Liahona or compass to lead them to the promised land like Lehi? Rather than an isolated example, is Lehi’s reception of the compass part of a pattern to be repeated with all who are promised an inheritance in Zion? Denver Snuffer’s response that various instruments given to prophetic figures in the scriptures are part of a repetitive pattern in the lives of all who follow a similar course. Perhaps providing a Liahona to a group of righteous people fulfills this purpose.

In light of these observations, these instruments play a role in the lives of those directed by God in their quest to obtain Eternal Life. Consider Denver’s response to the question, “*Who can be a Seer?*”

“*Who can be a Seer?*”, February 19, 2010, Denver Snuffer Blog, emphasis added.

I [Denver] was asked recently.

“Who can become a seer?”

I answered this: You could probably substitute “seer” for “prophet” in Moses’ lament: “Would to God all men were [seers]”. *The purpose of seership is the same as any other gift of the Spirit: to acquire knowledge of truth.* And, assuming “God giveth liberally to all men,” as James promised us, it would follow this was among the things He intended all men to experience.

Read the description of the conditions of post-mortal residence in the presence of God given in Section 130. *The “seership” experience there is*

commonplace. The “sea of glass,” or earth on which they dwell is a great Urim and Thummim, as well as the “white stone” given to them. *The result is that ALL occupants of that sphere are seers. Accordingly, we should assume that we obtain our first instructions here to prepare us for living there.* Seership, being necessary for life there, is something we ought to expect to be included in the Lord’s tutelage *while we are all here.*

ALL of us are to “covet the best gifts” on the one hand; and on the other “there is no gift greater” than seership. (That’s Paul and Ammon being quoted.) It follows necessarily, therefore, that *we should be seeking to have some experience with this gift here in mortality.*”

After listing the many visions given to various prophets and seers throughout the history of this world, Joseph Smith said:

“And fellow sojourners upon the earth, *it is your privilege to purify yourselves and come up to the same glory, and see for yourselves, and know for yourselves.* Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (DHC 1:282-284, emphasis added).

Learning Wisdom

If this is a process framed by priesthood, another step in the process transcending the ministry of angels under the Aaronic covenant, then it stands to reason there are additional steps associated with the Melchizedek covenant. This is a subject I know little about and I broach it from confessed ignorance.

In a talk titled “*Our Divine Parents*”, (Denver C. Snuffer, Jr. 2018), Denver introduced an approach for discerning the presence of our Heavenly Mother in the scriptures. He said:

“Our scriptures speak carefully about the existence and importance of a Heavenly Mother: *a Divine Female whose greatest attribute is to bestow wisdom upon the whole of this creation.* It is possible to miss Her presence.

That cultural and theological blindness is not because of Her absence from the scriptures. *It is not hard to detect Her, if you know what to look for. WE just don't yet understand how to look . . .*, The Father and the Son are masculine and therefore personified by the word “knowledge.” *The Mother as well as the Son's companion are feminine, and personified by the word “wisdom.”* These personifications reflect an eternal truth about *these two parts of the One True God*. Knowledge (masculine) initiates, *Wisdom (feminine) receives, guides and tempers*. Knowledge can be dangerous *unless it is informed by wisdom. Wisdom provides guidance and counsel to channel what comes from knowledge*. These are eternal attributes, part of what it means to be a male or a female. Creation begins with the active initiative of knowledge, *but order and harmony for the creation requires wisdom. Balance between them is required for an orderly creation to exist. A great deal can be learned about Heavenly Mother by searching for the word “wisdom” in scripture. Very often the reference to “wisdom” is to Her distinctly, and not merely an abstract attribute*. If we are blind to Her existence, we cannot see the reference to Her in those passages. Although *many scriptures have the Divine Mother's words, Her presence is veiled by our ignorance and refusal to acknowledge Her*” (pp. 1-2, 5, emphasis added).

This paper has mentioned topics like scriptures, seership, translating records and obtaining revelation directly from God using instruments delivered by heaven. In the previous quote Denver explains that the greatest attribute of Heavenly Mother is: *“to bestow wisdom upon the whole of this creation.”* Wisdom is something God expects men to pursue and obtain.

What is wisdom and how does Heavenly Mother bestow wisdom upon the “whole of this creation?” Begin with Alma's definition of wisdom. Speaking to his son, Shiblon, Alma said:

And now, my son, I have told you this *that ye may learn wisdom*, that ye may learn of me that *there is no other way or means whereby man can be*

saved, only in and through Christ, Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness (Alma 38:9 or RE Alma 18:3, emphasis added).

To learn wisdom, is to learn “there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ.” That is the scriptural definition of wisdom. The Heavenly Mother’s greatest attribute is that She bestows this “wisdom” throughout the entire creation. How does she accomplish this?

And now, it has hitherto been *wisdom in God that these things* [scriptures, ancient records] *should be preserved*; for behold, they have enlarged the memory of this people, yea, and convinced many of the error of their ways, and *brought them to the knowledge of their God unto the salvation of their souls* (Alma 37:8 or RE Alma 17:8, emphasis added).

It appears the preservation of ancient records falls under the stewardship of Heavenly Mother and by this means mankind learns wisdom, defined as salvation being only obtained through Christ. To know that fact is to learn wisdom. The scriptures play a key role in bringing men and women to the knowledge of Christ. The wisdom that is “in God” in preserving these records is the role of Heavenly Mother in this creation. She is the wisdom in God that preserves His words in these records bringing us to salvation.

With this concept in mind, let’s revisit the conversation between Ammon and Limhi. This role of preserving the Father’s knowledge in scripture in this creation falls upon Heavenly Mother and illuminates our understanding of the exchange between these men.

And now, when Ammon had made an end of speaking these words the king rejoiced exceedingly, and gave thanks to God, saying: Doubtless a great mystery is contained within these plates, and *these interpreters were doubtless prepared for the purpose of unfolding all such mysteries to the children of men.*

O how marvelous are the works of the Lord, and how long doth he suffer with his people; yea, and how blind and impenetrable are the understandings of the children of men; *for they will not seek wisdom, neither do they desire that **she** should rule over them.*

Yea, they are as a wild flock which fleeth from the shepherd, and scattereth, and are driven, and are devoured by the beasts of the forest. (Mosiah 8:19-20, or RE Mosiah 5:14, emphasis added).

Could it be the wisdom of God is embodied in the presence of His Wife and the role She and her daughters fill in our mortality? Is it possible His omniscience is tempered by Her wisdom and His wisdom comes directly from His association with her? Together, not independently or separately they are the essence of godliness and without one another, they are not, nor can be godly. To have *wisdom* rule over is to be sufficiently humble to acknowledge that the man cannot be “godly” without his companion nor she without him. This may be reflected in the holy anointing and the reason a man is washed and anointed by his wife in a second anointing, acknowledging without her cleansing and anointing appointment they can share no throne in the next life. Godliness cannot be attained without unity between the man and the woman in Christ.⁹⁵ The union of the man with the woman embodies the creation of man in God’s image. Together, like Adam and Eve, they share the name of “God”.⁹⁶ It may also explain why no man can perform ordinances outside of his family without the consent of his wife, the earthly following the pattern of heaven.⁹⁷

In the “*Answer to Prayer for A Covenant*”, the Lord points to this type of relationship between the man and woman when he explains:

*Marriage is **necessary** for the exaltation of the man and woman and is ordained by me through the Holy Spirit of Promise, or in other words, by my covenant, my law, and my authority. Like the marriage in Eden, marriage is a sacrament for a sacred place, on holy ground, in my presence, or where the Holy Spirit of Promise can minister. But rebellion has kept mankind from*

⁹⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:11 or RE 1 Corinthians 1:44

⁹⁶ Genesis 5:2 or RE Genesis 3:14

⁹⁷ Preserving the Restoration, Mesa Az, 9/9/14, p.15

inheriting what I ordained in the beginning, and therefore women and men have been left to marry apart from me. *Every marriage established by me requires that I be part of the covenant for it to endure, for Endless is my name and without me the marriage cannot be without end: for so long as I endure it shall also endure, if it is made by my word and covenant.*

But know also that I can do my work at any time, for I have sacred space above, and can do my work despite earth and hell. The wickedness of men has not prevented my will, but only kept the wicked from what they might have received.

Whenever I have people who are mine, I command them to build a house, a holy habitation, a sacred place where my presence can dwell or where the Holy Spirit of Promise can minister, because *it is in such a place that it has been ordained to recover you*, establish by my word and my oath your marriages, and endow my people with knowledge from on high that will *unfold to you the mysteries of godliness, instruct you in my ways, that you may walk in my path.* [heavens] And all the outcasts of Israel will I gather to my house, and the jealousy of Ephraim and Judah will end; Ephraim will not envy Judah and Judah will not provoke Ephraim.

And again I say to you, Abraham and Sarah [both] sit upon a Throne, *for he could not be there if not for Sarah's covenant with him;* (T&C 157:39-40) Isaac and Rebecca sit upon a Throne, and *Isaac likewise could not be there if not for Rebecca's covenant with him;* and Jacob and Rachel sit upon a Throne, and *Jacob could not be there if not for Rachel's covenant with him;* and *all these have ascended **above** Dominions and Principalities and Powers, to abide in my Kingdom.*

Therefore *the marriage covenant is needed for all those who would likewise seek to obtain from me the right to continue their seed into eternity, for only through marriage can Thrones and Kingdoms be established* (T&C 157:39-43, emphasis added).

In the “Answer to a Prayer for Covenant” the Lord provides three case studies of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In each instance, the man would not ascend to a throne if there were no covenant between him and his wife. Humility and the desire to

ascend to the highest levels of eternity is a tremendous incentive for a man to desire wisdom [the synonym for Heavenly Mother and his wife] to rule over him.⁹⁸

The Link Between Seership and Wisdom

If Heavenly Mother's greatest attribute is "to bestow wisdom upon the whole of this creation", a link exists between seership and Wisdom or Heavenly Mother that may be under appreciated. To gain understanding about this connection one need only contemplate several questions:

1. If Heavenly Mother has responsibility for bestowing wisdom, what is the highest form of wisdom She bestows?
2. What are the means by which Heavenly Mother bestows Her wisdom upon Her children?

What is the highest form of wisdom Heavenly Mother bestows upon Her children? Alma equates wisdom with learning "there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ". If learning wisdom is simply knowing salvation is only in and through Christ, what are the means by which Heavenly Mother bestows wisdom upon her children? There are multiple answers to this question.

One is the gift of the Holy Ghost which directs the words of Christ into the hearts of the children of men.⁹⁹ If Heavenly Mother desires to instill wisdom into the hearts of men She will certainly involve the Holy Ghost in that effort. Angels may also be involved in that process because they "speak the words of Christ".¹⁰⁰ While these options are part of the process of bestowing wisdom upon mankind, the most readily accessible source for the words of Christ is in scripture. Nephi admonishes his readers to "feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do".¹⁰¹ The wisest things we can do

⁹⁸ Mosiah 8:20 or RE Mosiah 5:14

⁹⁹ 2 Nephi 33:1 or RE 2 Nephi 15:1

¹⁰⁰ 2 Nephi 32:3 or RE 2 Nephi 14:1

¹⁰¹ 2 Nephi 32:3 or RE 2 Nephi 14:1

are those things that bring us to salvation. The scriptures accomplish that if not neglected.

The scriptures contain many of the words of Christ we are advised to “feast upon” because they testify of Christ.¹⁰² To learn of Christ is to learn wisdom, or that only in and through Him can mankind find salvation. Herein is the link between Heavenly Mother and dispersing Her wisdom through the scriptures. The means by which these scriptures and the Mother’s wisdom are bestowed upon mankind are by seers who bring records to light, making them available and understandable to all seeking God.

Our Heavenly Mother, Mary, the Mother of the Son of God resides on God’s throne with the Father, dispersing wisdom throughout the creation as her part. She has a keen interest in making sure Her wisdom is dispensed evenly with the Father’s knowledge throughout their creation. Together they share the power of God in dispersing knowledge and wisdom. Her involvement in this process is grossly overlooked and greatly underappreciated.

The revelation, existence and role of Heavenly Mother is a great mystery of heaven God reveals to one who attains seership. Through her role of dispensing Wisdom, men understand their reliance on their eternal companion and humbly submit to her guidance and receive from Her wisdom. In a bond of everlasting love, Heavenly Parents preside over their creation in the expression of a godly existence including both men and women. Eternal Life is to know the true and living God and His Son. To know One is to know their companions as well. Without the woman’s wisdom, the Father’s knowledge is insufficient and godliness and Eternal Life is unattainable. Collaboration between the two is both necessary and essential.

Those who spiritually ascend to the office of seer not only enter the presence of God to behold Him and receive His knowledge but learn Wisdom manifested through Heavenly Mother.¹⁰³ Access to His knowledge includes an introduction to Heavenly Mother because without her, the Father would not be God and the seer would not know Wisdom or obtain Eternal Life.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² John 5:39 or RE John 5:7

¹⁰³ D&C 84:19-22 or RE T&C 82:12

¹⁰⁴ John 17:3, or RE John 9:19

Denver suggests this in his talk on “Our Divine Parents”:

I want to declare that the only reason I have the audacity to address this topic candidly is because **Those** [Divine Parents] *of whom I speak in this talk have permitted me to do so. Without **Their** approval, I would not presume to address this topic publicly.* (p.1, emphasis added).

And:

“When She [Heavenly Mother] declares *whoso **findeth me findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord,*** (Proverbs 1:38), **it should be taken literally.**

(p.24, emphasis added).

Is it possible that Eternal Life by definition is to discover and know our Heavenly Mother and Father in turn learning Wisdom and Knowledge? Could that be one of the greatest of God’s mysteries? I have not received permission as Denver has, nor do I profess to be in the position to do so. There are many more doors of understanding open to us with this information but my statements are based on contemplating public sources and not personal assertions of divine authorization or personal experience.

Heavenly Mother and Jesus, the Son of God

When our Lord was raised up on the cross He gazed upon His mother, Mary and uttered the words,

Woman, behold thy son!

Then saith he to the disciple [John the Beloved], Behold, thy mother!
And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home (John 19:25-27 or RE John 10:13 and Testimony of St. John 11:16).

Superficially it appears the Savior, as a faithful Son, makes arrangements for His Mother’s care following His death. Given our new found knowledge of

Heavenly Mother and Her work of dispensing wisdom throughout creation, it should not be considered a coincidence or practicality Mary, the Mother of Jesus takes up residence in the Beloved's home. Consider the possibility there is more than His Mother's care involved in the Savior's assignment of John the Beloved to provide for His Mother, Mary. In Denver's talk "Our Divine Parents", he sheds greater light on Mary, the Mother of Jesus and Her role in this creation.

What was Mary's role? Who was she? *Is it possible she was "the mother of God" before she came into mortality?* These are important questions that ought to be asked. *If we can learn the answers they would indeed be glorious . . .*, (p.12) Traditional Mormon teachings have been crudely fixated on the mechanics of Mary's conception. *There is almost no interest in whether she has any pre-earth role with the Father, or whether she was the Mother in Heaven, the Divine Spouse of the Father, who condescended to come to earth to bear Their Only Begotten in the flesh. If She were to be acknowledged in that role, it would require a complete re-envisioning of Her. It would raise the issues of why or how She, an immortal and exalted God, could return from that exalted state back to mortality to bring our Redeemer and Savior into this world. It would draw a contrast between the Father's involvement with this creation and the Mother's. . .*, (p.13) The Father is the source of glory and likened to the sun. The Mother reflects and shares this glory, and is likened to the moon. *She reflects God's glory, endures within it and is empowered by it. **She can participate with Him in all that is done wielding that glory.*** "Knowledge" is the initiator or force, and "wisdom" is the regulator, guide, apportioner and weaver **of that power. If not tempered and guided by wisdom, knowledge can be destructive. Wisdom makes the prudent adaptations required for order.** The Father and Mother are One. **But the Mother bridges the gulf between the Throne of the Father and fallen man. She made it possible for the Son of God to enter this fallen world for the salvation of everything in it. A great deal of reflection and study is**

needed to understand all this implies. This is an introduction of some basic information about the Mother of God, or “the Mother of the Son of God after the manner of the flesh.” *More will be given in a temple where mankind’s understanding of things kept hidden from the world will be greatly increased.* When God directs one be built to His name. . . , There was a time when Christians recognized that the stars of heaven bore witness of the significance of Mary, Christ’s earthly mother. Few Christians now look at the constellations as “signs” set in the firmament by God as His testimony (p.15). Traditionally we interpret the constellation Virgo as a woman holding a sheaf of wheat in her left hand. The sheaf represents her seed. The brightest star in the constellation, a magnitude 1 star, is “spica”-- “the seed of the woman.” That star is placed on the ecliptic. Most other stars in Virgo are located above the ecliptic. “The seed of the woman” represents Christ. His star on the ecliptic represents that everything in the firmament is divided in relation to Him. All of heaven is either above or below the ecliptic. The position of His star, like His role as judge, divides the heavens. Traditionally Virgo is drawn looking down at the earth, facing us. This view places the seed of the woman in her left hand. The left hand is usually a symbol of cursing. The right hand symbolizes blessing. If the seed of the woman is meant to be in her right hand, then she would be drawn looking up heavenward, and her back would be facing us. Reorienting Virgo to face upward –with the seed of the woman in her right hand –is more fitting. **John** [the Beloved] described Virgo and the movement of other lights on the ecliptic as follows, “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars[.]” The sun and moon move on the ecliptic through the constellation Virgo and at times “clothe” her and at other times appear “under her feet.” This “wonder” John described is overhead in the starry firmament of “heaven” as one of the “signs” put there to testify of heavenly things. **Christ’s Mother Mary is a figure of such preeminence that testimony of Her is emblazoned**

upon the ecliptic in an enduring, towering figure outlined in the stars. This is not happenstance. It is God's witness to us. We should accept it as meaningful and ponder on the meaning. Another of the constellations **John** [the Beloved] mentions is a "woman" who brought forth a son, *who is then caught up to the throne of God.* This is also depicted in another constellation. One of the constellations immediately associated **with Virgo**, located next to her in the northern sky, is a constellation anciently depicted as **a mother seated on a throne holding a son in her hands.** This image of a woman seated on a throne with her son is located just to the north, above Virgo. *It suggests both the mother and her son descended from a throne they once occupied in heaven, and is destined to return again there. If you can accept the witness written of them in the stars of the firmament, then She came to earth, with Her Son. And She will return again to a Throne in the north.* Contemplate what this witness of Mary could mean. *Taken at full value, Mary, like Her Son, condescended to come here.* The Book of Mormon gives an extended description of Mary, the Mother of God. *In the original translation text the words "mother of God" were used, but was changed by Joseph Smith in 1837 to "mother of the Son of God."* (p.17). . . , Who would you reasonably expect to be the woman chosen before this world was organized to become the mortal Mother of the Lord? *Who would you expect Heavenly Father would want to bear His child, if not His Spouse? Together God the Father and Mary can be acknowledged as the Parents of Christ.* The scriptures shift the focus of the "condescension" from Christ, to His Mother, and then back to Her Son, "the seed of the woman" (p.18) . . . , Did Mary also "attain to the resurrection?" Protestants dismiss the Catholic veneration of Mary. But it may just be that Catholics have preserved something of value about her that ought not be ignored. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: *"The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of*

her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of His Body" (p.19) . . . , There are Heavenly Parents, to be sure. *They are two separate beings: a Father and a Mother. She exists and Her role is acknowledged in scripture. We are supposed to "find" Her.* And in the last-days temple (should it be finally built by a humble and obedient people), *Her open presence will be there* (p.34).

There is far more to the "Mother of the Son of God" than modern Christianity acknowledges. Mary, the Mother of Jesus condescended with Her son from Her glorious throne beside our Father in Heaven. When the angel asks Nephi, "Knowest thou the condescension of God?" it is not because Nephi is shown the Savior but rather, Nephi sees Mary, the Mother of Jesus followed by the Savior.

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the great city of Jerusalem, and also other cities. And I beheld the city of Nazareth; and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white.

And it came to pass that I saw the heavens open; and an angel came down and stood before me; and he said unto me: Nephi, what beholdest thou?

And I said unto him: A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins (1 Nephi 11:13-16 or RE 1 Nephi 3:8-9).

Nephi confesses to an angel his ignorance of God's condescension and is shown what the condescension is:

And he said unto me: Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh.

And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the Spirit; and after she had been carried away in the Spirit for the space of a time the angel spake unto me, saying: Look!

And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms.

And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?

And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things.

And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most joyous to the soul (1 Nephi 11:18-23 or RE 1 Nephi 3:8-9).

The condescension of God was not limited to the Father sending His Son to mortality. The Father also sent His Wife, the Mother of the Son of God to condescend from a heavenly throne to an earthly existence and in so doing, introduce wisdom to a fallen world. Recall, the scriptural definition of wisdom:

And now, my son, I have told you this that you may learn wisdom, that ye may learn of me that *there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, **ONLY** in and through Christ*. Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness (Alma 38:9 or RE Alma 18:3, emphasis added).

Without Mary to bear and nurture the Son of God in mortality there would be no Son of Man to save mankind. Not only was Mary's condescension critical to our salvation, it was necessary for the Savior's development of His spiritual gifts.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, *filled with wisdom* and the grace of God was upon Him (Luke 2:40 or RE Luke 2:7, emphasis added).

And:

And *Jesus increased in wisdom* and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52 or RE Luke 3:2, emphasis added).

Under the nurturing tutelage of His Mother, Mary, Jesus grew in both stature and wisdom. To grow in wisdom is to grow in the knowledge that Jesus would rise to the resurrection and provide salvation for all mankind. This is the spiritual gift given by both the Father and Mother enabling Jesus to fulfill His mission as Savior of the world. Mary gave to Jesus the literal embodiment of Wisdom and the Father gave to Him all knowledge.¹⁰⁵

In prophesying of the coming Savior, Isaiah says:

The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

And *wisdom* [the Mother] and *knowledge* [the Father] *shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation*: the fear of the Lord is his treasure (Isaiah 33:5-6 or RE Isaiah 11:4, emphasis added).

The condescension of God necessarily included the condescension of Heavenly Mother so the Son of God would have the necessary wisdom to seek knowledge from the Father. Jesus was raised with Wisdom, we “seek wisdom” by discovering Her through marriage, the scriptures and eventually through the evolutionary process of becoming seers.¹⁰⁶

Mary and John the Beloved

¹⁰⁵ D&C 93:16-17 or RE T&C 93:6

¹⁰⁶ D&C 130:8-11

There was a reason the Savior assigned responsibility to John for the ongoing care of His mother. Jesus knew His Mother, Mary would bypass death, being translated to reclaim her throne in heaven. John too would be translated. Jesus knew John would be the only apostle available to care for Her through the balance of Her mortal existence. As John cared for Mary, John could learn wisdom from the Savior's Mother as well. These are practical reasons why it makes sense for John the Beloved to care for the Savior's Mother. But there are other reasons that transcend Her daily care and maintenance as well.

It stands to reason if Mary's role as Heavenly Mother included spreading "wisdom" throughout the creation and wisdom is knowing Jesus is the only means for salvation, the scriptures are the earthly vehicle for spreading Her wisdom. John's role as the last days Elias and restorer of all things dovetails with Mary's spreading wisdom throughout the creation. Establishing a mortal relationship between Mary and John prepares them to collaborate in restoring all things leading to the end of the world and establishing "wisdom" at the end.

John the Beloved—also known as the Revelator—desired to do a greater work than what he had done.¹⁰⁷ John's mission as a translated being is to be the last days Elias who restores all things and gathers Israel.¹⁰⁸ John is a seer because he has the ability to see the past, present, and future or all truth.¹⁰⁹ Not only is John a seer, but John has the ability to show others events which have been and will come and that they write and return to John to be held until the "due time of the Lord".¹¹⁰ Finally, John's role as the latter-day Elias bears responsibility for bringing forth sealed and hidden records so the knowledge of Jesus as our Savior will be widely known and combined with the Mother's wisdom. Knowledge of the Father and the wisdom of the Mother spread throughout the earth bringing salvation to all.¹¹¹

If wisdom is to know that Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation for mankind and knowledge of how to obtain wisdom is in the scriptures, there exists a

¹⁰⁷ D&C 7:2-3 or RE JSH 13:18

¹⁰⁸ D&C 77:9 & 14 or T&C 74:9 & 14

¹⁰⁹ 1 Nephi 14:26 or RE 1 Nephi 3:30, Mosiah 8:17 or RE Mosiah 5:13 and D&C 93:24 or RE T&C 93:8

¹¹⁰ 1 Nephi 14:25-26 or RE 1 Nephi 3:26 and 2 Nephi 27:10 & 21 or RE 2 Nephi 11:19 & 20

¹¹¹ Ether 4:16 or RE Ether 1:19

link between Heavenly Mothers mission of planting wisdom throughout the creation and John becoming the conduit through which this is to be accomplished.

¹¹² John's relationship with Heavenly Mother extends beyond mortality into immortality. Together John works with the Father and Mother to plant wisdom and knowledge throughout the creation that mankind may learn of Christ and obtain wisdom.

This opens a number of possibilities that may never enter into the mind of man, literally. As my wife and I discussed this content it was she that suggested the possibility that one of the records held by John may be the account of Mary, the Mother of Son of God writing providing a more expansive account of the life of Jesus from birth to death. It would seem this would be the ultimate gospel of Jesus Christ. That would in turn introduce the possibility of many other accounts given by other righteous women throughout history. As I reflect on these and other questions introduced by knowing Mary's condescension and role in mortality the possibilities appear endless.

God leaves nothing to chance. He knew the end from the beginning and joining Mother Mary with John the Beloved was more than a practical move providing care for His Mother. It was a stroke of genius creating a collaborative effort between Mary and John that fulfills John's desire to be given "unto me power over death, that I may live and bring souls unto thee".¹¹³ Bringing souls to Christ is bringing them to Wisdom which coincides with Heavenly Mother's work of planting wisdom throughout the creation. It was wise the Heavenly Mother was placed in the care of John after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Who else could the Father trust with the Mother of the Son of God's care than one who is "Beloved" to His Son.

Denver and the Urim and Thummim

There is no direct evidence Denver Snuffer is in possession of a Urim and Thummim. The Lord and His servants often resort to cryptic pronouncements like

¹¹² D&C 77:9 & 14 or RE T&C 74:9 & 14

¹¹³ D&C 7:1-2 or RE JSH 13:18

the Savior's parables or referring to last days prophets by their new name in ancient prophecy.

New Testament or New Covenant prophecies are fulfilled in plain sight but virtually indiscernible to those witnessing their fulfillment. With this in mind, what might the Lord's servant say if he had interpreters or the Urim and Thummim today? The following quotes I submit without comment:

St. George Conference Q&A, p.11

“As far as I can tell *the new name has one utility that I have found.* When I cannot otherwise get an answer from God to something about which I'm inquiring, *I will remind Him of the identity that He gave to me,* and state that it is I who makes this inquiry. *When I do that He always answers.* If God gives to you a new name, as far as I can tell, its greatest value comes from obtaining an answer to prayer. If you cannot otherwise get a reply, remind the Lord who you are by referring to your new name, that He gave the name to you, and tell Him it is that person inquiring. *The answer always comes, in my experience.*”

From, “*Things to Keep Us Awake at Night*”, St. George Conference Q&A, Denver Snuffer, March 19, 2017

“Can you describe the process involved with The Testimony of St. John?”

Answer: I'm going to talk for a moment about a context. And I'm only talking about context in order to answer the question. The context is this, *'while the testimony of John has been put together I have the benefit of a word processing program, at times the rate at which the material is being put into the word processing program is so fast that the language is cryptic and I know what it means and I know what it means to say and I'm getting it down but it needs to be... it needs to be dealt with. The entirety of the thing gets finished and as soon as the entirety is concluded I go back to the very first and I work it through... and I work it through from beginning to end in*

order to make sure that the language, what will be in the paper, accurately reflects what was revealed. So, I work it all the way through and when I'm satisfied that everything is there, with one exception, because I fought to not write a part of the record. I did not care that John said it, I didn't want to say it as something I recorded. I fought to keep something out also so that I could answer inquiries about whether this was the completed record of John. I could then say, 'no, it's not complete.'

I fought to eliminate one part of that story that *I did not personally want to see in there, but the project couldn't be done until it was added. It was the last thing reluctantly added and it is in there.* But I went through it another time, this time looking for punctuation and extraneous words. I wanted everything to read like we read, because this is written now. Let's talk like we talk. I mean thee's and thou's and ye's and all that, that may have had a place back in colonial America and in an age where people were still calling one another "thee" but today that is off-putting. When I went back through it in another review, I was looking for that, and I found two of those, also a couple of words that were in there twice. I don't remember the words at this point, but there were some words two times. I had to delete one.

When that was all done, then I asked my wife to read it, start to finish. *She [wisdom] was not to change it.* I asked her to read it to see if there were any errors that she could see in the way the thing was laid out, in the sentence structure, in the paragraph division, in the overall read of the thing. *She made several comments that helped me, and some things were turned into staccato sentences instead of run-on sentences. Because short sentences are easier to read than run-on sentences.* ["they will not seek wisdom, neither do they desire that she should rule over them" Denver sought wisdom and let her rule over him] When that got done, I sent it to the committee and the committee was given free license [agency] to do anything with it. I think two people gave to me what they noticed were ambiguous words that could mean this, or could instead mean something else, or could even have a third meaning. And I knew [knowledge] which word meaning it was, so I fixed it. And then, I don't know which guy on the committee did

this but the idea was to release it as a downloadable PDF on my website so I could say, 'Oh yeah, that's been out there for a while.' And no one would notice it. But someone alerted the universe, and it came to the attention of Adrian Larsen who has a platform for informing a great number of people. And so, whereas I hoped to disclose here, and to say it had been up for months, instead it has become widely read for months.

I say all that for this reason, *as background for this*: Joseph Smith dictated the Book of Mormon to scribes, the primary one of which was Oliver Cowdery. Scribes, in longhand, wrote the Book of Mormon. When he ended each night, set the pen down, they started the next day at the place where he ended dictation the day before. *No one read the material back to him.* They just resumed the work at the same spot. In that way it progressed to the end.

Then Oliver took the whole thing and copied it, and he took it to the printer. Then it was typeset and came out in print. It was at that point Joseph Smith got to read the words of the Book of Mormon in the typeset copy from E.B. Grandin's shop. So far as I can tell, from the material I have reviewed, between the time Joseph dictated the Book of Mormon and the time Joseph Smith saw it in print, *he had almost no opportunity to do anything with the text. It did not matter what he meant, or that he could have clarified something, nor if he would have even punctuated it differently, he did not get that chance.* He didn't have a word processing program. He got one chance to dictate it as he translated it, and then it got written by someone else and it's off to the printer.

So, when the Book of Mormon was reprinted in the 1837 second edition, *Joseph Smith supervised the work and made edit changes. He made further edit corrections in 1840.* It was the consensus of everyone, myself included, that we should allow Joseph the right to correct it by editing. I can't even write a short letter at my law office without rereading it and sometimes correcting punctuation, sometimes rewriting sentences to have them be more clear. Joseph Smith had the right to do that and so the version in this volume is the one that Joseph edited in 1840. The material will all be in the research notes online and available for public view. We do not hide it.

But for the published project, the version that he had a chance to work through in the 1840 edition is the one that was the starting point (pp.8-9).

Again from “*Things to Keep Us Awake at Night*”

“One of the interesting things about the gathering of Zion is that apparently, even though ***there may be more revelations and commandments for us***, apparently, *it will only be in Zion where the “rich treasures” or the records of other scattered tribes are to be added. D&C 133:30-33. These records will allow a great deal of lost information to be recovered.* If the revelations and prophecies are correct, the records of the Jews and the records of the Nephites, will be gathered first. 2 Ne. 29:13. *But eventually there will be many others that get added as well*” (pp.12-13, emphasis added).

“*Other Sheep Indeed*” with Q&A session following, Sunstone Symposium July 29, 2017, Denver Snuffer,

“2 Nephi 29:11-12 states: For I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that *they shall write the words which I speak unto them; . . .* Obviously the Gods of Mormonism view Their role as all-inclusive. The entire world and all mankind belong to Them. *Their global audience has received and recorded sacred words directly from the Gods’ [Husband and Wife?] “one” mouth. We have no way to define the extent to which that has happened. Nor do we have any concept of the number of sacred records that exist somewhere among unknown others, nor any idea what truths they were given that we lack.*

Mormonism ***cannot, or at least should not, consider itself the exclusive possessor of THE sacred canon or that there is only one canon containing the Gods’ teachings. There are words from heaven spread throughout our world by deliberate planting of the Gods*** [Husband and Wife, Her responsibility to plant wisdom throughout the creation].

Continuing, for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written. These “books” hold terrible importance for Mormons *because we are going to be judged by the Gods based on a comparison between our “works” and “that which is written.”* With such a warning we Mormons ought to be humble about our claims to know more than other faiths. We should be modest in thinking we are especially graced by the Gods’ words and should be anxious to scour the globe to discover the sacred texts of other cultures. In humility, we should invite them to share the truths they value most with us because we have shown that we will respect what they regard as sacred.

To clarify this further the record continues, For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; ... So far this describes a welcome Judeo-Christian boundary because *the ancient Israelites are the backbone of the Gods’ dealings with mankind. The Lost Ten Tribes continued to compose scripture, and their records will in time be recovered.*

This passage continues by including yet others who are disconnected from any disclosed connection to Israel: and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it. Who? When? What was said?

“All nations of the earth” is broad enough to raise the troubling possibility that the Gods have spoken to others in India, Japan and China – to the peoples of Persia, Africa, and Native peoples of the Americas, Hawaii, Polynesia, and Australia. The Jaredite prophet, identified as “the brother of Jared,” had some of the greatest revelations in all history. He lived many centuries before Abraham, and therefore before there were Israelites. We know Egypt was founded “seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the first fathers in the first generation, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam[.]”

If we take the Book of Mormon seriously, the ecumenicalism of the Gods may have no recognizable or comprehensible limits. The Gods of

Mormonism are far more pantheistic than Trinitarian. What a cruel embarrassment that proves to be for any sect that proselytizes primarily among other Christian denominations. Imagining Gods who speak to everyone is troubling enough, but for the Gods to expect Mormons to give high regard, even canonical credibility to the records of these truly “others” begins to buckle the knees and mangle the mantras of today’s Mormons.

*An unfortunate Mormon truism is the mistaken idea that we have a better and more complete religion than all others. ‘WE have the most recent revelation, because the Gods spoke last to us’ (...uh, well, so far as we know). Therefore, we can be prone to think of “the least of these” as all others who have failed to embrace Mormonism. **This paper explores the possibility that we have vastly overrated the scope of our religion, and underrated our ignorance.** Perhaps we have no reason to ever consider those outside of Mormonism as “less than” Mormons, or “the least” worthy before our Gods” (pp.2-3, emphasis added).*

“There are indeed other sheep who belong to God; they should be welcomed, not scorned. If we do our part, we can awaken and arise and seek for a covenant from God, *and then receive in turn from them “rich treasures” of knowledge*” (pp.27-28, emphasis added).

“The Restoration’s Shattered Promises and Great Hope”, Presented at Sunstone Symposium July 28, 2018 Denver Snuffer

“Last year I delivered a talk at the Sunstone Symposium titled “Other Sheep Indeed”. ***In it I invited others with sacred writings to come and bring them.*** That invitation was first offered by Joseph Smith in 1840. He anticipated a temple to be built in Nauvoo to which records would be brought from all over the world “bring every thing you can bring and build the house of God and we will have a tremendous City which shall reverberate afar..., *then comes all the ancient records dig them up...* where the Saints g[ather] is Zion.” Not all of God’s words are in the Bible. God has spoken to every nation (meaning religious body of people). Truth is

everywhere, among all people. *If we love God and truth we will want to search for it. We will not be content to leave it unexplored and undiscovered.* Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after more righteousness. Blessed are those who are followers of righteousness, desiring to possess great knowledge, and to be greater followers of righteousness and to possess greater knowledge. *And blessed are those who do not suppose the scriptures contain all God's words and They (the Gods) have not provided more"* (p.8, emphasis added).

For these records to come to light, will it not follow the Book of Mormon pattern and require a "seer" to bring them forth?

"Because of prophecies made to the patriarchal fathers, the right to found this future city of peace descends from a specific ancient line. ***There will be an heir descended from both Jesse and Joseph who will accomplish it. Occupants of the community will likewise have lineal qualification.***¹¹⁴

The last-days Zion is an accomplishment promised earlier to the patriarchal fathers, and it is through their descendants God intends to vindicate the promises. The result of this alignment will be a priestly city of Zion that will return to that power which she has lost" (*Defending Zion* Podcast, Denver Snuffer, references added).

Interesting thoughts to ponder.

¹¹⁴ D&C 113:5-8