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God's word is revealed in the ancient temple

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14. “God's word is revealed in the temple, usually in the holy of holies, to priests or prophets attached to the temple or to the religious system that it represents”¹⁰¹

In one of the accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision, Joseph is quoted as saying, “Information was what I most desired at this time, and with a fixed determination to obtain it, I called on the Lord for the first time in the place above stated.”¹⁰² Not unlike Joseph, information from God is what we all desire.

The Book of Mormon does not lay exclusive claim to being the source of God's will, of inspiration, or of personal revelation. In the Bible the apostle John's frequent challenge, “he who has ears let him hear,” is addressed to the same kind of audience as Moroni's “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things”; who are the same as those to whom the Prophet Joseph Smith quoted the Lord as saying,

I'll surely reveal all my syst'ries to them,
The great hidden myst'ries in my kingdom stor'd
From the council in Kolob, to time on the earth,
And for ages to come unto them I will show
My pleasure & will, what my kingdom will do:
Eternity's wonders they truly shall know.¹⁰³

If we will pray when we read the Book of Mormon, the Spirit of God will testify that the Book of Mormon as a whole is truly divine in its origin and message. As we continue to study the book prayerfully, that same Spirit will teach the reader that specific ideas in the book are true. The Spirit communicates its testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon by the same feeling with which it communicates its testimony of the truthfulness of individual doctrines. For one who reads the Book of Mormon regularly, this interaction with the Holy Ghost happens so frequently that before long the reader is able to recognize the feeling of testimony and distinguish from all other emotions with as much surety as we can recognize the taste of an orange and distinguish it from the taste of an apple. Then, when we encounter that same feeling outside the context of the Book of Mormon, while listening to General Conference or when seeking an answer to our own prayers, we recognize the feeling and can know it is of God.

When we have an idea and the words of the thoughts or the impressions of the mind are accompanied by that same feeling, we will recognize it to be that same spirit of revelation that taught him

101Lundquist, “Common Temple Ideology,” 59.

102Dean C. Jessee “The Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision,” *BYU Studies* 9, 3 (Spring 1969): 275-94.

103Joseph Smith, “A Vision,” *Times and Seasons*, February 1, 1843: this is D&C 76 in poetry by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

that the Book of Mormon is true. The spirit of revelation carries the same feeling in every context, but it takes a little practice to recognize it with surety. The easiest way to get that practice is to read the Book of Mormon and ask God to teach us about the truthfulness of what we are reading. Consequently, one of the greatest blessings of the Book of Mormon is that as we read it faithfully and prayerfully, and listens to the feelings that are associated with the Holy Ghost, the ease with which we come to recognize the testimony of that Spirit, or perhaps our sensitivity to its prompting, will increase until that feeling—the testimony we originally received that the Book of Mormon is the word of God—will become the standard by which we may measure the truthfulness of all things.

In this criteria of the ancient temple typology, the Book of Mormon is sacred space in sacred time, a place of peace—a Holy of Holies. It is not only a source of revelation to whomever is wise enough to claim the blessings connected with its prayerful reading, it is also the means of instruction by which we can learn to listen to the Spirit of God and recognize the validity of ones own personal revelation, through the testimony of the Holy Ghost.