

The Golden Heart of the Eternal God

Now that we know somewhat more concerning the residence of spirit, and the unnecessary visibility of, and/or access to the plates, we may return to the matter of the Urim and Thummim. Orson Pratt taught,

The Urim and Thummim is a stone, or other substance sanctified and illuminated by the Spirit of the living God, and presented to those who are blessed with the gift of seeing.¹

The interpreters are a stone, or *other substance*. An other substance is like an other testament: the same testimony, another perspective. An other substance is an other understanding—another understanding sanctified and illuminated by the Spirit of the living God.

Reports differ, but somewhere around 1829–1830 Joseph Smith stopped using a seer stone to translate and receive revelation because he had become more readily in tune with the spirit of prophecy and revelation. Some try to play this off as if he was beginning to distance himself from folk practices and clean up his image as he built up a new church, and that it was just another sign that the stone was never needed to begin with, it was all part of the ruse and he was tired of using his old tricks—the stone was weighing him down and it was time to move on. Well, the stone was weighing him down in all the ways one can imagine, not only secular and social, but spiritual, and it just may be the case that the Urim and Thummim, the device which allows a worthy wielder to hear the voice of God and see his roaring creations, is any substance sanctified and illuminated by the Spirit of the living God.

What substance is more sanctified and illuminated by the Spirit of the living God than your very being, your very body—your temple? For all intents and purposes, your body is the current grounds illuminated for understanding via the Spirit of Truth.

Some would offer up the pineal gland as the inner replacement—a small, local pebble for receiving revelation in lieu of a handy, tangible seer stone found in a well. This, a notion that leaves revelatory processes stuck drifting and mingling with Cartesian philosophies. I offer up your own neural net awash in the roaring winds of cerebrospinal fluid. Your own brain is the ultimate crystal ball, on your shoulders, always—so clear you never see it; so clear that some see through that glass darkly—others, as an iridule of divine radiance.²

Muddy water, when stilled, slowly becomes clear;

¹ *Masterful Discourses of Orson Pratt*, 552

² THB, 1 Corinthians 13.12

Something settled, when agitated, slowly comes to life.³

It would make sense that the seat of your very experience is a Urim and Thummim, for a sea of glass and fire—the electrical storm of a brain awash in cerebrospinal fluid—is near the throne of God, operating as the ultimate divine-light refracting device—that elusive third eye. This is true, for it says in D&C 130.5–6,

“...angels do not reside on a planet like this earth...they reside in the presence of God, on a globe like a sea of glass and fire, *where all things for their glory are manifest, past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord.*”

That sounds like swimming in timeless glory with unspeakable comprehension—and it is. Ye are gods and children of the most High, and your body, which is made of the material elements of the most High, is the nearest to that throne of God you can get while being topologically restricted to this dimensional layer of reality.

This scripture, coupled with this explanation, also holds the key to a heretofore unmentioned doctrine that is never formally discussed in Latter-day Saint thought, but is a topic that has many members, and former members alike, secretly knocking at the back door of wonder, too afraid to discuss it in the open. This is, still, for another time.

But now that we know somewhat more concerning the process of using the urim and thummim, we can adjust our stereoscopic vision a bit in order to see layers upon layers of embedded information in the text.

If there are two things that are certain it is that Joseph Smith inherited the visionary topography of his family line, and that the Book of Mormon is a theological autostereogram. This is evidenced by, and easily discussed through utilizing the story of Lehi’s Dream and Nephi’s Vision as found in 1 Nephi 8 and 11. We will just skip over the comparison of Joseph Smith Sr’s version of the dream and accept it as evidence of real experiences. Not only this, Lucy Mack Smith and her sister Lovisa were also notably visionary, and the topology of their reports are found mirrored in Joseph’s ever-expanding theology—as they should be; as is the case with the aforementioned cultural markings. Moreover, it would be remiss to simply accept Joseph Smith Sr’s dream as evidence of real experiences but then not investigate them any further. In my experience, this is something of a shared vision accessible across the human landscape, and the Book of Mormon itself alludes to that possibility, as Lehi first has the vision, and then Nephi asks for, and receives the same vision—with some personal variations of the overall experience. I have witnessed a vision of the tree of life on three prominent occasions, and have since discovered that there is remarkable overlap in the contents of the visual landscape there, and since distinctions among things are dependent

³ DDJ, ch.15

on particular perspectives and the limits of an individual's language, the descriptive lines drawn there are inherently negotiable.

There is an ancient Chinese book of life known as *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, wherein there is relayed the methods and procedures to attaining ultimate clarity of body and mind, and turning one's light around to be experienced for the radiant principle that it is. When one achieves this state then one may in turn see the Golden Flower. In Carl Jung's commentary of Richard Wilhelm's translation of this text he says,

The Golden Flower is a mandala symbol which I have often met with in the material brought to me by my patients. It is drawn either seen from above as a regular geometric ornament, or as a blossom growing from a plant. The plant is frequently a structure in brilliant fiery colors growing out of a bed of darkness, and carrying a blossom of light at the top, a symbol similar to that of a Christmas tree. A drawing of this kind also expresses the origin of the Golden Flower, for according to the *Hui Ming Ching* the 'germinal vesicle' is nothing other than the 'yellow castle', the 'heavenly-heart', the 'terrace of life', the 'square inch field of the square foot house', the 'purple hall of the city of jade', the 'dark pass', the 'space of former heaven', the 'dragon castle at the bottom of the sea.' It is also called the 'border region of the snow mountains', the 'primal pass,' the 'realm of the greatest joy', the 'land without boundaries', and the 'altar upon which consciousness and life are made'. 'If a dying man does not know this germinal vesicle,' says the *Hui Ming Ching*, 'he will not find the unity of consciousness and life in a thousand births, nor in ten thousand aeons.'⁴

For those who are already aware, and as we shall otherwise see as we investigate here, it is rather intriguing that this experience of the "Golden Flower" is at times described as "the heavenly heart" and "the space of former heaven" and "the realm of greatest joy". This is indeed a profound vision to be witnessed and shared by many. For, as it is also said in the text: "Once you know [this], you can seek experiential proofs."⁵

As has been established here, the ultimate Urim and Thummim is your very head, or as Douglas Harding would say, your very No-Head. That space atop your shoulders you can't actually see for yourself is the light of the world erupting out of you, as if appearing on the surface of the most resplendent crystal ball. As Harding described the situation,

⁴ Jung, C. G., and Richard Wilhelm. *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*. p.101. Translated by Cary F. Baynes, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

⁵ Cleary, Thomas, translator. *The Secret of the Golden Flower: The Classic Chinese Book of Life*. p.32. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

From this white Light the gorgeous kaleidoscope of the universe [*that Golden Flower*] endlessly radiates, out of this infra-microscopic Top-hat are drawn all the props and all the actors that come and go on the world's stage. How beautiful that this marvelous Cornucopia should be alive to itself, and how right that its own Self-awareness in me should never pall! For deserved interest, for genuine worthwhileness, what in the world can compare with Where it all comes from?⁶

For various reasons I don't need to digress about here, I believe that in many instances of altered states—whether endogenously or exogenously induced—the experiencer is shown either representations of, or actual scoped in views of their own anatomy, neurochemistry, biology, etc. I call this a psychoscopic experience. I believe that the dream in question here is an archetypal representation of the neurology and cardiology involved in the experience. However, more specifically in this case, it may just be that it is not so much a personal view of their own individual internal mechanisms, nor a mere archetypal representation, but Joseph Smith Sr's Vision, Lehi's Dream, Nephi's Encounter, and others experiences of the various Golden Flower descriptions—they are out-of-body experiences where the dreamer or meditator is sent to the very heart of the universe, which is the heart of the Eternal God of all gods.

First, let's consider the initial descriptions of Lehi's experience, as it differs from Nephi's. Lehi reports,

“I have dreamed a dream, or in other words, I have seen a vision.”

This is a description of an asleep out-of-body experience. When I would have my recurring dreams, one of which became my future reality—another which I realize as I type this may soon be a marker for another turning point to come—I would wake up, but I would see myself laying there in bed sleeping before I would head out of the room and off on my journey. In other words, I dreamed a dream—indeed they were visions. In verse 7 Lehi confirms this, as it is common for an out-of-body experience to contain within itself an out-of-body experience of the initial out-of-body instance; he says, “I beheld myself that I was in a dark and dreary waste” — perhaps a “dark pass” or a “land without boundaries”.

Notice this is not in the sense that he had “found” himself to be somewhere, or that he saw a representation of himself out in the visionary landscape, rather that he arrived in a dark and dreary waste, seeing himself there—no doubt still feeling as if he could look back where he was asleep, dwelling in his tent, knowing it's *him* he's seeing, and not a mere representational image, nor hallucination. I have experienced this on many occasions. Over time especially you tend to know when you are actually seeing yourself vs when you are dreaming yourself.

Additionally, I find that due to Lehi's descriptions of a “dark and dreary wilderness” and a “dark and dreary waste,” having travelled through for “the space of many hours,” that this is not simply an out-

⁶ Harding, SFP, ch.19 p.45, bracket emphasis added

of-body experience but is also likely a sleep paralysis episode. A common feature among certain altered states, including sleep paralysis episodes, is experiencing long spaces of darkness, as well as the experience of exotic states of time: loops, which occurs between verses 4 and 7, and moments of eternity, which occurs in verse 8.

Comparatively, this mirrors Nephi's report in chapter 11. As he sat pondering in his heart he was "caught away" in the Spirit of the Lord, he was taken, captured—sleep paralysis. This is in contrast to the description of the virgin Mary who in verse 19 is described to have been "carried away" in the spirit; she was taken along, transported—she *bore* the Spirit of the Lord.

Before synthesizing the neurological and cardiological underpinnings I find it important to mention how the encounter with the messenger guide of Lehi's dream and Nephi's encounter is consistent with D&C 129. In 129.4–7 it states,

When a messenger comes saying he has a message from God, offer him your hand and request him to shake hands with you...If he be the Spirit of a just man made perfect he will come in his glory; for that is the only way he can appear—ask him to shake hands with you, but he will not move, because it is contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive; but he will deliver his message.

The truth is, a handshake is a great, very specific mode of the test, and is something to which I can testify as true. However, I can further testify that it is only one specific description of the process entailed. First, it doesn't matter who initiates the handshake, it can be you or the other individual. Second, the handshake doesn't necessarily have to be a handshake. What is intended is that there be a transaction that occurs, some sort of request or offering that allows you to detect and feel the intent of the messenger. Remember, all spirit is matter, and you can feel the spirit through the softness of the heart muscle—Nephi sat pondering *in his heart* after all—and so therefore your entire tabernacle is able to feel, detect, and know the topological state of the messenger by being in their presence.

We don't get as much detail as Nephi's encounter, but we can infer through Nephi's retelling that there must have been a similar starting to the conversation before anything visionary began with Lehi. The messenger appeared to Lehi and stood before him, in other words, he did not move. After he had arrived in his glory and stood before him this messenger offered a transaction, bidding Lehi to follow him. Lehi for one reason or another accepted the transaction, and off he went with the messenger. Remember, both the potential state of motion and tangibility of the messenger are enough to detect their intent.

Before Nephi really sets off on his vision he also exemplifies the transactional nature of these encounters and how they are utilized to ensure and assure both parties that the other is well-intended. The Spirit required to know the desire of Nephi's heart, and Nephi willingly exchanged and expressed the information. The Spirit accepted his "handshake"—which is just a protocol utilized for security purposes before initializing visionary communication—and off Nephi went through his visionary lesson.

Next, Lehi says that he beheld a tree whose fruit was desirable to make one happy—elsewhere possibly described as ‘a structure carrying a blossom of light in the realm of greatest joy’. For, recall now when I stated that the dreamer here is sent to the very heart of the universe, which is the heart of the Eternal God of all gods. Lehi beheld the golden heart of God. Lehi was beholding the dendritic system of the Eternal God’s heart, whose synapses where alight with a white fruit that was desirable to make one happy—a cardiovascular hormone. When Lehi partook of the fruit his soul was filled with such exceeding great joy that he became desirous for his family to partake of it as well.

Here, revisiting the wording in Alma 5.34 can help this understanding. It states that the Lord God hath spoken,

Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life.

1. To partake is to share
2. A fruit is any vegetable that is useful to humans and animals—a harvest, an enjoyment, a delight;
3. The tree of life, as answered in 1 Nephi 11.22, is the love of God.

Therefore, the experience of the tree of life—the heavenly heart—the Golden Flower, is to come unto him and partake of the fruit, to be desirous that your loved ones should also, and to share in the harvest of the love of God; to share in the delight of the love of God; to share thoroughly the light of the love of God—which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men.⁷

Which means that the vision itself is a map leading to the heart and love of God, even his very interstellar, intrinsic cardiac nervous system. This tree, and its fruit that is most joyful and desirous, are Gods oxytocin-drenched dendrite bloom, shedding itself abroad as the most desirable thing to be found in the hearts of the children of men in the realm of greatest joy.

Oxytocin is a neuropeptide that functions as both a hormone and a neurotransmitter. It is synthesized and secreted in the heart, and plays key roles in cardiovascular regulation. Concentrations of oxytocin rival that of concentrations found in the brain, and it is otherwise known as the “love molecule” due to its essential role in social and pair bonding, and even interspecies relationships such as with your pets. Both physiologically and symbolically, oxytocin works to soften the cardiac core for empathy and divine receptivity. Higher oxytocin levels, whether from brain synthesis or the heart's own reservoirs, promote emotional openness, trust, and compassion, literally and metaphorically countering the "hardening" effects of stress or pride. The heart produces oxytocin locally in cardiomyocytes, where it works to reduce stiffness in heart tissue. Chronic stress hardens the heart through a cortisol-induced fibrosis, but oxytocin counters this, and even indirectly helps to mitigate inflammation and fibrosis in pericardial conditions like constrictive pericarditis. Foundationless in its fragility, the pericardial sac looms

⁷ BOM 1 Nephi 11.22

high in the mediastinal air above the heart. Multitudes of coronary plaque build-up enter its halls. Finely dressed in a mesothelial sheen it scoffs at the heart with its inflammatory ire, prone to effusion, tamponade, and constriction. Yet the pericardial pride of the world crumbles in crisis, and the fall thereof is exceeding great.

The strait and narrow path which comes alongside the iron rod is the pericardiectomy for the soul, and the fruit of the tree—the pure love of God—is healing, and spiritual recovery found on the terrace of life.

These are the main components of the vision, but it stands to reason that the rest of it may be mapped out. So, in order of appearance, here is the map of Lehi's Dream, which is a map of the heart of God—which heart is your heart, the heavenly heart:

1. 8.4–8: The Dark and Dreary Waste, (dark pass), is the venous periphery, large veins that drain the body's wilderness of deoxygenated blood back to the right atrium. It carries waste like ions and carbon dioxide which creates a low-oxygen environment and a fatigued state—it feels long and dark due to the lack of oxygen.
2. 8.10–12, 24, 30; 11.8–9, 21–25: The Tree of Life represents the dendritic system in the heart's intrinsic cardiac nervous system. This is a network of neurons mostly in the atria and around the base of the heart. These neurons have tree-like branches, dendrites which receive and process signals for rhythm and emotion. The white fruit symbolizes oxytocin, produced and released by heart cells, creating joy and harmony. The tree's branches spread signals for calm and connection, with the fruit inundating the soul. It stands central, and is desirable for its role in regulating love and stress relief.
3. 8.13, 26: The River of Water is the bloodstream, which tries to find the best path forward through the heart and off to the lungs for oxygen. Getting lost in the mists of its flows leads to issues like poor recirculation and clots. It runs parallel to the heart's fibrous skeleton
4. 8.14, 17: The Head of the River would be the sinoatrial node, a small group of cells which starts each heartbeat. As the family has gathered here in the vision it symbolizes the rhythm that propels them forward. The dragon castle at the bottom of the sea—where a dragon guards the pearl of enlightenment.
5. 8.19–20, 24, 30; 11.25: The Iron Rod is the heart's fibrous skeleton. It is a rigid framework that separates the atria from the ventricles, anchors the valves, and insulates electrical signals.
6. 8.19, 26: The Bank of the River is the muscular ridges of the inner walls of the ventricles. Running alongside the iron rod of the fibrous skeleton they guide blood flow and manage pressure.
7. 8.20–22: The Strait and Narrow Path, (the primal pass), is the valves which connect atria to ventricles; narrow openings for blood passage, supported by the fibrous skeleton of the iron rod.
8. 8.20–21: The Large and Spacious Field (the land without boundaries, and the border region of the snow mountains), marks the end of the path at the base of the ventricles, where the chambers of the heart lead to the arteries, and expands into the aortic arch and ascending aorta. This is the heart's "world" portal, where oxygenated blood surges forth in a vast, pressurized expulsion. In the dream,

the field is "as if it had been a world," teeming with "numberless concourses of people... pressing forward..."

9. 8. 23–24: Exceeding Great Mists of Darkness, (the dark pass), are any irregular blood swirls which block normal signaling in the atria. Clots and hazy blood particles block the view of the path and cause one to lose their grip on the rod.
10. 8.26–28, 31: The Great and Spacious Building is the pericardial sac as described previously. The purple hall of the city of jaded individuals.

And thus we have charted the inspired waters of Lehi's Dream, knowing that to partake of the fruit of the tree of life is to share in the flowering love of God, and to open and soften your heart through expressions of love and gratitude—and expressions of oxytocin.

Yet the image is not yet complete, as this began with the notion that the ultimate urim and thummim is that of your own head, and that the throne of god is nearest that cerebral fire encased in a spinal fluid that is a sea of glass like unto crystal. This is a fractal of creation, as the tree of life can also be found mirrored as the brain, with the spinal cord as the iron rod—and so forth. However, this would more explicitly be the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, guarded by a cherubim with a flaming sword that turns every which way—in other words, glial cells watching synapses for chemical balance, surrounded by the electrical fires of neurology and knowledge at play. This trees fruit? Likely norepinephrine. Deeply connected to the heart, it is essential for fight-or-flight awareness, and the moral tension of good-and-evil discernment.

In the brain, bathed in cerebrospinal fluid, lies the true Urim and Thummim—not an ancient artifact from the earth, but a natural part of our own self. Lehi's dream maps the golden heart's inner workings as a path to God's presence: the river as blood flow, the iron rod as the heart's supportive framework, the tree as the source of joy and bonding through oxytocin—the love of God, and so on. In this view, the golden plates can stay covered, and the interpreters set aside; the seer no longer needs them because the ability to receive revelation has become internal. The process evolves from relying on outside tools to trusting the inner self as the real temple—the yellow castle. The sea of glass, described in scripture as a place of divine vision, is right here within us, showing past, present, and future. The translation of sacred texts, then, lives on not as fixed words on metal, but as ongoing flows of light and understanding in the heart, knowledge in the brain, and wisdom through the lungs of the Tree of Whispers.