

Ether 4 — Rend That Veil of Unbelief — The Sealed Vision, and the Terms on Which It Comes Forth

Ether 4: Moroni's commentary on the sealed record of the brother of Jared's vision. Having recorded that the brother of Jared was shown all things, Moroni explains the long history of that sealed record — kept by King Mosiah, made manifest after Christ showed himself, and now to be hidden again because the people have dwindled in unbelief. Then the chapter opens into one of the great latter-day passages in scripture. Christ himself speaks, declaring the terms on which the sealed things will come forth: not until the reader exercises faith even as the brother of Jared did, not until the house of Israel and the Gentiles rend that veil of unbelief. It is the chapter that turns the brother of Jared's private theophany into a standing offer to every reader — the same sight, the same unfolding of all revelation, available to anyone whose faith becomes like his.

Ether 4 is Moroni's meditation on the sealed vision, and it is the chapter that makes the brother of Jared's experience matter for us. Chapter 3 recorded the unveiling — the finger, the face of Christ, the vision of all things — and the command to seal it up. Chapter 4 explains what became of that sealed record and, more importantly, declares the terms on which it will one day be opened. Moroni traces its history (kept by Mosiah, revealed after Christ's ministry, now hidden again because of unbelief) and then yields the floor to Christ himself, who speaks directly to the latter-day reader. The chapter's burden is a single, electrifying offer: the great things shown to the brother of Jared are not locked away forever; they are *hid up because of unbelief* (v. 13), and they will be unfolded to anyone — Gentile or Israelite — who will *exercise faith in me... even as the brother of Jared did* (v. 7) and *rend that veil of unbelief* (v. 15). The chapter takes the most private vision in scripture and makes it the most universal invitation.

Hebrew Word Studies

paroketh-emun / galah / shuv (פָּרוֹכֶת / גָּלָה / שׁוּב) — **veil (here, the "veil of unbelief") / to uncover, to reveal, to take into exile / to turn, to return, to repent** v. 15, vv. 7, 13–16, vv. 3, 18. The chapter's governing image fuses two ideas the Hebrew keeps close. The *paroketh* (veil) of the temple, which the brother of Jared passed (Ether 3:20), becomes here the *veil of unbelief* (v. 15) — the barrier relocated from heaven into the human heart. The Hebrew for unbelief is bound to hardness; the same root family yields the *uncircumcised* heart and the *stiff* neck, the heart too hard and the mind too blind (v. 15) to perceive what is plainly offered. The veil is not God's reluctance but the reader's resistance. *Galah* — to uncover, to reveal — is the verb behind *manifest, unfold, made manifest* (vv. 7, 15). It is the root of *gilui* (revelation) and, strikingly, also the root of *galut* (exile) — for to be carried into exile is to be *uncovered*, stripped and exposed. The chapter plays on both senses: the great things are presently in a kind of *galut*, sealed and withdrawn because of unbelief, and they will be *galah*-revealed when the veil is rent. Revelation is the un-exiling of truth, the bringing back of what unbelief drove into hiding. *Shuv* — to turn, to return, to repent — is the action the whole chapter requires (vv. 18, and the *broken heart* of v. 15). As throughout the record, *shuv* is the turning that changes everything: the Gentiles and Israel must *shuv* — turn from unbelief, return to Christ with a contrite spirit — and the *shuv* is what rends the veil. The chapter's three Hebrew notes trace the movement exactly: the *paroketh* of unbelief is rent by *shuv* (the turning of a broken heart), and the result is *galah* — the great and marvelous things uncovered, brought back from their exile of unbelief into the sight of a believing people.

From the Chapter's Architecture

``cross-references Gen. 1:3 (let there be light — Christ the light... of the world, v. 12); Deut. 30:11–14 (the commandment is not hidden from thee... but the word is very nigh unto thee — the great things near, not far, vv. 13–15); Isa. 25:7 (he will destroy... the vail that is spread over all nations — the veil of unbelief rent, v. 15); Isa. 29:9–14, 18 (the sealed book, the people blind, and the day when the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see — the sealed record and the rending of blindness, vv. 5–15); Isa. 45:15 (verily thou art a God that hidest thyself — the hidden things of vv. 13–15); Isa. 64:4 (neither hath the eye seen... what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him — how great things the Father hath laid up, v. 14); Dan. 12:4, 9 (seal the book till the time of the end — the sealing of vv. 5–7); Matt. 5:8 (the pure in heart... shall see God — the broken heart that rends the veil, v. 15); Matt. 11:28 (Come unto me, all ye that labour — the Come unto me of vv. 13–14); Mk. 16:16–17 (he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved... these signs shall follow — verbatim at v. 18); Jn. 7:17 (if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine — the test of v. 12); Jn. 8:12; 14:6 (I am the light of the world... the way, the truth, and the life — v. 12); 1 Cor. 2:9–10 (eye hath not seen... the things which God hath prepared... but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit — vv. 11, 14); 2 Cor. 3:14–16 (the veil upon the heart, taken away in Christ when one turns to the Lord — the master parallel to v. 15); Heb. 10:19–22 (entering the holiest by... the veil... with a true heart in full assurance of faith — vv. 7, 15); Ether 3:6–20 (the brother of Jared's faith and his passing the veil — the model of vv. 7, 15); Ether 5:1–4 (the three witnesses and the forbidding of the sealed translation — the immediate sequel); Ether 12:19–21 (faith like the brother of Jared's that could not be kept from the veil — vv. 7, 15); 2 Ne. 27:6–22 (the sealed book and the conditions of its coming forth — the prophecy this chapter fulfills); 3 Ne. 26:9–11 (the greater things withheld to try the faith of the people, given if they believe — vv. 7, 13); Moro. 7:16–17 (the light of Christ, that which persuadeth to do good... is of God — the test of v. 12); Moro. 10:4–5 (ask with a sincere heart, faith in Christ, and know the truth by the Holy Ghost — the rending of the veil, v. 15); D&C 67:10–14 (rend the veil of unbelief and fears, and ye shall see... my face — direct echo of v. 15); D&C 121:26–33 (the things hid up to be revealed in the day of the Lord — vv. 13–16). ``