

Helaman 9**1 9:1-3**

Some weeks before the meeting of last April, I left the office one Friday afternoon thinking of the weekend conference assignment. I waited for the elevator to come down from the fifth floor.

As the elevator doors quietly opened, there stood President Joseph Fielding Smith. There was a moment of surprise in seeing him, since his office is on a lower floor.

As I saw him framed in the doorway, there fell upon me a powerful witness of God. That sweet voice of Spirit that is akin to light, that has something to do with pure intelligence, affirmed to me that this was the prophet of God.

I need not try to define that experience to Latter-day saints. That kind of witness is characteristic of this church. It is not something reserved to those in high office. It is a witness, not only available but vital, to every member.

Boyd K. Packer, *All May Be Edified*, p. 311

2 9:10***Mourning***

While we are mourning the loss of our friend, others are rejoicing to meet him behind the veil.

John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom*, sel., arr., and ed. by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987], 22

9:36-41**3 *Omniscience of God***

4 The Lord in a revelation for John Whitmer spoke of that which was in the latter's heart, which only the Lord and John Whitmer knew, witnessing that God was omniscient concerning the needs of that individual. (D&C 15:3.)

Paul said to the saints at Corinth, "And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." (1 Corinthians 3:20.) In the period just before the flood God saw not only the wickedness of man in the earth, but he saw also "every imagination of the thoughts" of men's hearts. (Genesis 6:5.) He knows "the things that come into your mind." (Ezekiel 11:5.) Jesus himself said before we pray, "Your father knoweth what things ye have need of." (Matthew 6:8.) Indeed, as Nephi said, "God... knoweth all things and there is not anything save he knows." (2 Nephi 9:20.)

Hence omniscience is one of the characteristics of the living God. As we read in 9:41, "Except he was God he could not know of all things." "And now, behold, you have received a witness; for if I have told you things which no man knoweth have you not received a witness?" D&C 6:24.)

Neal A Maxwell, *Things As They Really Are* [1978], 22

9:38-41

The two groups who have the greatest difficulty in following the prophet are the proud who are learned and the proud who are rich. The learned may feel the prophet is only inspired when he agrees with them; otherwise, the prophet is just giving his opinion—speaking as a man. The rich may feel they have no need to take counsel of a lowly prophet.

President Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 138.

9:41

5 Excessive religious zeal is as dangerous to the salvation of men as stubborn unbelief. Any virtue overdone becomes a vice. To honor and reverence the Lord's anointed is a requisite of salvation; to deify them is to falsify their nature and to pervert the message with which they are entrusted. It is to make of them the object of worship in place of God who gave us life. This more damning and dangerous practice also finds expression in the deifying of the words of the prophets. The Pharisees of Jesus' day had done this with the law of Moses. Their reverence was for the law rather than for the Lawgiver. They bowed the knee to the law while crucifying him of whom it testified. In our day there are those who do much the same thing, wherein they make all manner of claims for the Bible which it does not make for itself, including the idea that it is complete, final, inerrant and infallible. The effect of such verbal shrines and theological pilgrimages is to divert worship from the only true and living God to salvation in a book, rather than in the injunction of the Master who said, "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19).

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City; Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 3:304.

9 Conclusion

6 *Signs, Ensigns, Token, Mark, Wonder*

Signs are the language of God, angels, and prophets. Their purpose may be to communicate the approbation of heaven, as in the promise that signs will follow them that believe (D&C 84:65-73; Mark 16:17-18), or to dramatize divine displeasure, as with the plagues of Egypt (Exodus 4:8). In the scriptural sense, a "sign" is something by which another thing is shown or represented, and this often in a miraculous manner...

All gospel dispensations are associated with signs or confirmatory evidence of their genuineness.

As the Book of Mormon was given as a sign or wonder attesting to all honest truth-seekers the authenticity of the Restoration, so Joseph Smith, in harmony with the scriptural pattern, was given a sign to confirm the verity of all that Moroni told him. The sign was that when it became known that the Lord had entrusted him with this ancient record, the workers of iniquity would seek his overthrow. "They will circulate falsehoods to destroy your reputation," Moroni said, "and also will seek to take your life; but remember this, if you are faithful, and shall hereafter continue to keep the commandments of the Lord, you shall be preserved to bring these things forth; for in due time he will again give you a commandment to come and take them. When they are interpreted the Lord will give the holy priesthood to some, and they shall begin to proclaim this gospel and baptize by water, and after that they shall have power to give the Holy Ghost by

the laying on of their hands. *Then will persecution rage more and more; for the iniquities of men shall be revealed, and those who are not built upon the Rock will seek to overthrow this church; but it will increase the more opposed, and spread farther and farther, increasing in knowledge till they shall be sanctified and receive an inheritance where the glory of God will rest upon them.*" (Messenger and Advocate 2:199, italics added.)...

Signs are and ever have been tokens of divine authority and power.

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 3L:381-83.