

Preface to Helaman 11

1 In 1980 Pres. Benson gave a devotional talk at BYU titled “Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet.” It is published in parts in *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, pp. 131-143 along with other quotes about the prophet—President of the Church. It is too lengthy for inclusion here, but a summary of the fourteen fundamentals is included here.

1. The prophet is the only man who speaks for the Lord in everything.
2. The living prophet is more vital to us than the standard works.
3. The living prophet is more important to us than a dead prophet.
4. The prophet will never lead the Church astray.
5. The prophet is not required to have any particular earthly training or credentials to speak on any subject or act on any matter at any time.
6. The prophet does not have to say “Thus saith the Lord” to give us scripture.
7. The prophet tells us what we need to know, not always what we want to know.
8. The prophet is not limited by men’s reasoning.
9. The prophet can receive revelation on any matter, temporal or spiritual.
10. The prophet may be involved in civic matters.
11. The two groups who have the greatest difficulty in following the prophet are the proud who are learned and the proud who are rich.
12. The prophet will not necessarily be popular with the world or the worldly.
13. The prophet and his counselors make up the First Presidency—the highest quorum in the Church.
14. The prophet and the presidency—the living prophet and the First Presidency—follow them and be blessed; reject them and suffer.

12 Characteristics of a Prophet

2	Recognition of a prophet	Book of Mormon Hel. 7-11	Old Test.	New Test.	Joseph Smith
1.	Each prophet has a foreordained mission. Obtains his errand.	Hel. 7:8-9	Jer. 1:5	Acts 9:5-6	JS-History 1:3
2.	Each prophet declares repentance.	Hel. 7:17	Jonah 1:1-2	Mark 1:4	“I love you all: but I hate some of Your deeds.” TPJS, 361
3.	A prophet’s message is not his own.	Hel. 7:29 Alma 5:45-46	Amos 7:14-16	Acts 4:18-20 & 5:29-32	“I am a rough stone. The sound of the hammer and chisel was never heard on me until the Lord took me in hand. TPJS, 304-307.,

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| 4. | A prophet is unpopular to the wicked. Righteous defend. Protected until finished. | Hel. 8:7-8
Mosiah 13:3-9 | Jer. 20:1-2 | Acts 7:51-60
Matt. 21:23-27 | JS-Hist. 1:21 |
| 5. | His message will be consistent with the scriptures, testifying of Jesus Christ | Hel. 8:16-19
Jacob 7:11 | Isaiah 9:6
Luke 24:27 | 1 Cor 2:12 | “Christ is the Great High Priest.” TPJS, 158 |
| 6.. | External evidences will support the prophet. | Hel. 8:21 | Artifacts & Discoveries | Acts 7:51-60 | “The world will prove Joseph Smith a true Prophet by circumstantial evidence.” TPJS, 267 |
| 7. | Prophets will utter current prophecies which will be fulfilled. | Hel. 8:27 | 1 Sam. 9:15-20 | Acts 21:10-12 | (Judge Stephen A. Douglas) “You will aspire to the presidency of the U.S.; ...turn your hand against me or the Latter-day Saints, you will feel the weight of the Almighty. TPJS, 302 |
| 8. | Signs are given if and when needed. | Hel. 9:23-41 | 1 Kings 18:17-40 | Acts 28:1-6 | Any man who wanted a sign was an adulterous person. TPJS, 278 |
| 9. | Prophets are granted power | Hel. 10:5 | Josh. 1:9 | John 15:16 | Lord gave this power to Joseph Smith. TPJS, 340 |
| 10. | Miracles will attend. Protected. | Hel. 10:16-17 | 2 Kings 3-7 | Acts 9:32-41; 8:39 | Newell Knight HC 1:82-83 |

11. Prophets will be established in the eyes if the people.	Hel. 11:18	2 Kings 2:12-15 1 Sam. 3:19-20	Acts 9:42	John Taylor Parley P. Pratt HC, 2:488-89 (Note)
12. True doctrine is established	Hel. 11:22-23	Deut. Ch. 5 Gen. 12:1-3 Abr. 2:8-11	2 Peter 1:20	Corrections to Orson Hyde HC, 5:323-34

Monte S Nyman, *The Record of Helaman*, pp. 381-382.

Helaman 11:4-5

3 *Power over elements*

A prophet not only prophecies of things that will happen. A prophet by the exercise of faith, causes things to happen.

A. Theodore Tuttle, *Ensign*, November 1975, 23.

4 “the Lord uses the weather sometimes to discipline his people for the violation of his laws.”
Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, May 1977, 4.

5 [Elder Franklin D. Richards] While on one of his trips across the Atlantic, returning from the British Mission in charge of a company of saints and Elders, the weather was very stormy. The waves were rolling so high that the officers of the vessel were fearful of its being dashed to pieces. When the hearts of strong men were failing them, he remembered that he held the Holy Priesthood which authorized him to rebuke the angry elements and command them to be still, as was done by the Savior and his apostles in their day. Withdrawing to a part of the ship where he would not be conspicuous and raising his hands to high heaven, he rebuked the storm and furious winds and waves in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, commanding them to cease their violence and be calm. The tempest immediately subsides and none of the passengers were lost and no damage to the vessel.

This made a very favorable impression on the captain and the passengers on board. The captain gave him the use of his own quarters and treated him with great kindness. He states, “When I was ready to pay for these distinguished favors, his charge was an interest in my prayers and that he and his might be gathered with us into the Kingdom of God. He gave us a parting kiss with tears and the crew bestowed three cheers.”

LeGrand Richards, *Just to Illustrate* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961], 203-204.

Helaman 11:8-9

6 *Humility*

The recognition of guilt should give one a sense of humility, of a “broken heart and a contrite spirit,” and bring him to the proverbial “sackcloth and ashes” attitude. This does not mean that one must be servile and self-effacing to the destructive point, but rather one must have an honest desire to right the wrong

Whatever our predispositions when influenced by the pride of our hearts, the person convinced of his sin and suffering godly sorrow for it in humility is reduced—or rather in this case elevated—to tears.

Thus, he expresses anguish for his folly and for the grief it has brought to the innocent. Those who have not been through the experience may not comprehend this reaction, but the spiritual writers with their deep insight understood that there is a healing balm in tears for the humble soul who is reaching toward God. Jeremiah wrote: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night." (Jeremiah 9:1.) The Psalmist cried in his anguish: "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim I water my couch with my tears." (Psalm 6:6.) And again he pleaded: "Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted." (Psalm 25:16).

The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed. Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 88-89.

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The two following incidents, related by the principal of one of Utah's high schools, illustrate clearly the difference between a repentant and a self-justifying attitude. Two boys had been caught stealing—one had taken some money from another student's locker, and the other had stolen some tools from the manual training department... The boys were called into the office and each one was interviewed separately. The boy who had taken the money was resentful. He said that he was not the only boy in the school who was stealing. Why did not the principal find the others and punish them too? Anyway, he felt that he had a right to take money if a fellow didn't know better than to leave it in a locker that wasn't locked.

The boy who had taken the tools felt altogether different. He was ashamed to think that he would lower himself to the level of a thief. He explained that he knew better than to steal but he had seen the tools lying around, they were just what he needed in doing some work at home, he couldn't afford to buy them, and thinking that perhaps they would never be missed, he took them. When he reached home, he could not make proper explanation to his parents and he was sent back to school to be disciplined.

The principal was anxious to help both boys—he not only wanted them to finish their schooling—he wanted them to learn one of life's greatest lessons—that honesty is one of the grandest principles in the world. He explained to them that they would have to appear before the teachers of the school, make a statement of the whole affair, and give assurances that such actions would never be repeated.

The boy who had stolen the money flatly refused. He would rather quit school than, as he called it, "be disgraced." The law of the school was enforced and he was asked to withdraw. He left the school with defiance in his soul and with a sort of determination that he would get even with somebody—though he didn't seem to know just who it should be.

Out of the school he found that he had lost the respect of his old comrades, and the new ones who took their places were a far inferior sort. He soon went from bad to worse until when last heard of he had been sent to the State Industrial School where he might be prevented from committing further crime.

The boy, on the other hand, who had taken the tools agreed to do as the principal required. It was a hard thing to do, of course. In fact, it was the hardest he had ever encountered. He not only was ashamed for what he had done, but how could he ever look those teachers in the face again? But feeling really sorry for the offense, he found courage to take the penalty. He was so manly and frank about it that every one of the teachers, who heard his confession, came to admire him more than ever before. They became his friends and took particular pains to help him find and develop his better self. When he graduated from the school two years later he was an honor student—respected by every student who knew him. The humility of repentance had led him into a new life. Let us remind ourselves of that beautiful passage in the Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 112, the tenth verse: "Be thou humble, and the lord thy God shall lead them by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayer"

Adam S. Bennion, *Exceptional Stories from the Lives of Our Apostles*, comp. Leon R. Hartshorn [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book, 1972], 25-26.

Helaman 11:16**8** *Prophets pray for the People*
Numbers 21:7; 2 Nephi 33:3

“O God our Eternal Father... whose children we are, we look to Thee in faith in this dark and solemn time. Please, dear Father, bless us with faith. Bless us with love. Bless us with charity in our hearts. Bless us with a spirit of perseverance to root out the terrible evils that are in this world. Give protection and guidance to those who are engaged actively in carrying forth the things of battle. Bless them; preserve their lives; save them from harm and evil. Hear the prayers of their loved ones for their safety....

“O Father, look with mercy upon this, our own nation, and its friends in this time of need. Spare us and help us to walk with faith ever in Thee and ever in Thy Beloved Son, on whose mercy we count and to whom we look as our Savior and our Lord. Bless the cause of peace and bring it quickly to us again, we humbly plead with Thee, asking that Thou wilt forgive our arrogance, pass by our sins, be kind and gracious to us, and cause our hearts to turn with love toward Thee. We humbly pray in the name of Him who loves us all, even the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and our Savior, amen.”

Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, Oct. 2001, 112; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 90.

Helaman 11:18-19**9** *Greatness often unacknowledged or forgotten*

In March 1837, John Taylor went to Kirtland, Ohio, and had the opportunity to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith for the first time and learn more about the principles of the newly restored gospel. At the time of John Taylor’s visit to Kirtland, many Church members had become critical of the Prophet Joseph. Even some members of the Quorum of the Twelve were caught up in this dissenting spirit, including Parley P. Pratt, who had approached him and shared some of his doubts about the Prophet, Brother Taylor replied:

“I am surprised to hear you speak so, Brother Parley. Before you left Canada you bore a strong testimony to Joseph Smith being a Prophet of God, and to the truth of the work he has inaugurated; and you said you knew these things by revelation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. You gave to me strict charge to the effect that though you or an angel from heaven was to declare anything else I was not to believe it. Now Brother Parley, it is not man that I am following, but the Lord. The principles you taught me led me to Him, and I now have the same testimony that you then rejoiced in. If the work was true six months ago, it is true today; if Joseph Smith was then a prophet, he is now a prophet.” To Elder Pratt’s credit, he soon repented of his feelings and continued to be a valiant servant of the Lord.

Teachings of the Presidents of the Church; John Taylor, 77.

10 Not all of us are going to be like [Captain] Moroni, catching the acclaim of our colleagues all day every day. Most of us will be quiet, relatively unknown folks who come and go and do our work without fanfare. To those of you who may find that lonely or frightening or just unspectacular, I say, you are “no less serviceable” than the most spectacular of your associates. You, too, are part of God’s army.

Consider, for example, the profound service a mother or father gives in the quiet anonymity of a worthy Latter-day Saint home. Think of the Gospel Doctrine teachers and Primary choristers and

Scoutmasters and Relief Society visiting teachers who serve and bless millions but whose names will never be publicly applauded or featured in the nation's media.

Elder Howard W. Hunter, "No less Serviceable," *Ensign*, April 1992, p. 24.

- 11 President Howard W. Hunter is a meek man. He once refused a job he needed as a young man because it would have meant another individual would have lost his job. This is the some lowly man, when I awakened after a weary and dusty day together with him on assignment in Egypt, who was quietly shining my shoes, a task he had hoped to complete unseen.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, April 1995, p. 18.

Helaman 11:23

- 12 *Having many revelations*

"True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior.

"The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior... That is why we stress so forcefully the study of the doctrines of the gospel."

Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17.

- 13 President Lorenzo Snow declared that it is "the grand privilege of every Latter-day Saint... to have the manifestations of the spirit every day of our lives."

In Conference Report, Apr. 1899, 52; as quoted in Dallin H. Oaks, *With Full Purpose of Heart* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002], 150.

- 14 There is a definite relationship between knowing the "true points of doctrine" and "having many revelations daily." Knowledge alone is not a barometer of righteousness, but certain knowledge, when learned and lived, points one toward that redemption which is in Christ and the abundant life that is available to the true disciple. In addition, those who know the doctrines of salvation teach the doctrines of salvation. There is strength in their testimony and power in their words. "Those who preach by the power of the Holy Ghost," Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written, "Use the scriptures as their basic source of knowledge and doctrine. They begin with what the Lord has before revealed to other inspired men. But it is the practice of the Lord to give added knowledge to those upon whose hearts the true meanings and intents of the scriptures have been impressed. Many great doctrinal revelations come to those who preach from the scriptures. When they are in tune with the Infinite, the Lord lets them know, first, the full and complete meaning of the scriptures they are expounding, and then he oftentimes expands their views so that new truths flood in upon them, and they learn added things that those who do not follow such a course can never know." (Promised Messiah, pp. 515-16)

Millet & McConkie, BOM Commentary, Vol. 3, p. 391.

Helaman 11:24

- 15 The Book of Mormon is careful to specify that the terms Lamanite and Nephite are used in a loose and general sense to designate not racial but political (e.g. Moroni 1:9), military (Alma 43:4), religious (4 Nephi 38), and cultural (Alma 53:10), 15; 3:10-11) divisions and groupings of people. The Lamanite and Nephite division was tribal rather than racial, each of the main groups representing an amalgamation of tribes that retained their identity (Alma 43:13, 4 Nephi 36).

Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976], 246.

Helaman 11:27

- 16 When we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power.

TPJS, 181.

Helaman 11:37

17 *Pride*

Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God's. When we direct our pride toward God, it is in the spirit of 'my will and not thine be done'.....

.... The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren't interested in changing their opinions to agree with God's.

... The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness. (See Alma 7:23.) It is the broken heart and contrite spirit.

Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1989, 4.

Helaman 11

18 *Conclusion*

I guess one of the greatest mysteries of mortality is why mankind fails to learn from history.

Elder L. Tom Perry, *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 16