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Sharon Black

Brad Wilcox

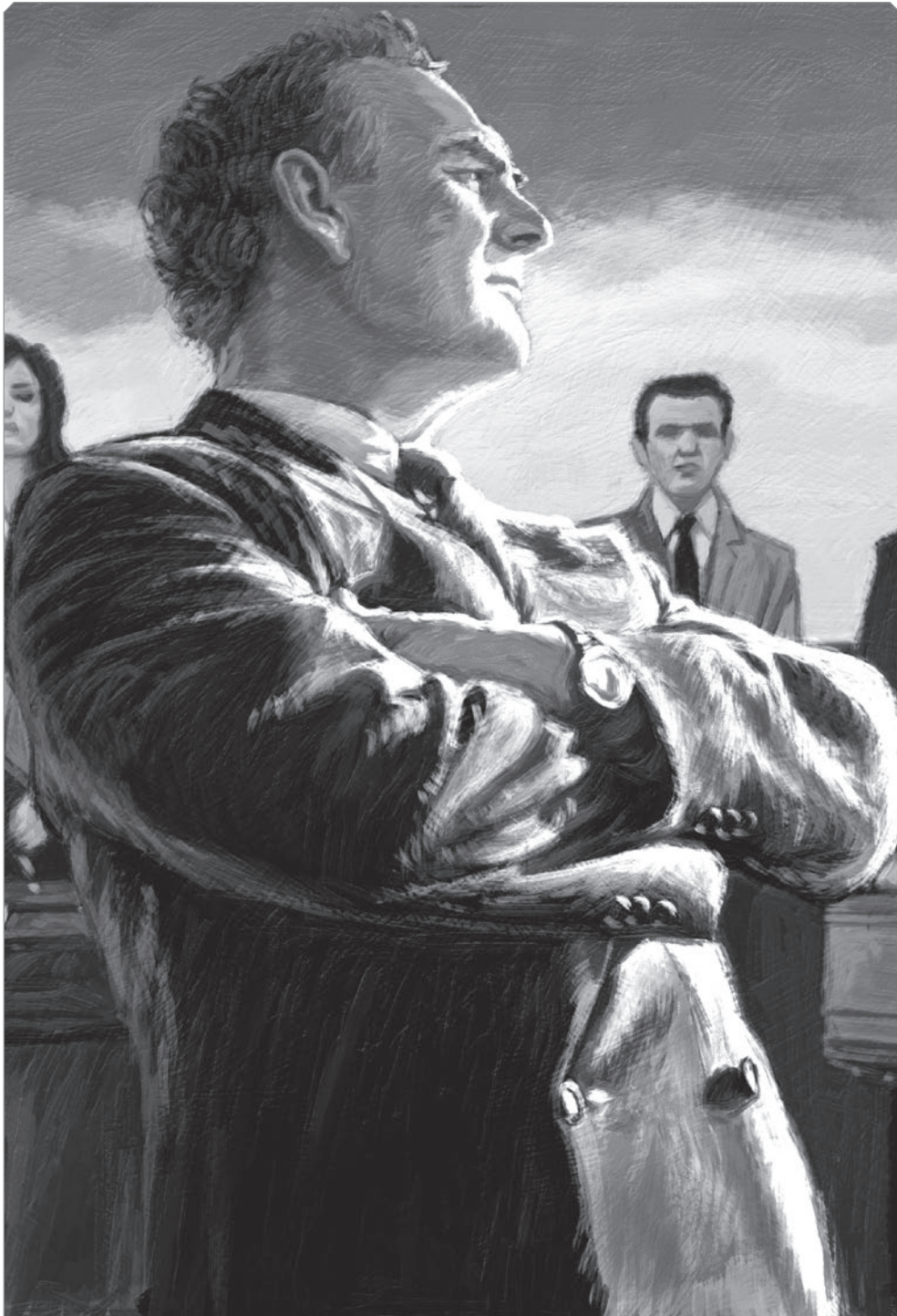
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Dan Burr, *A Battle of Pride*, © 2008, used by permission

John Ruskin said, "I have been more and more convinced the more I think of it that in general pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes."

## *"Beware of Pride": Prophetic Preparation for a Classic Address*

SHARON BLACK, BRAD WILCOX, AND SPENCER OLSEN

Sharon Black (sharon\_black@byu.edu) is an associate teaching professor in the David O. McKay School of Education at BYU.

Brad Wilcox (brad\_wilcox@byu.edu) is an associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education at BYU.

Spencer Olsen (spencer.p.olsen@gmail.com) is a student administrator in the Teacher Education Department at BYU.

Where were you when John F. Kennedy was assassinated? Where were you on September 11, 2001? These were unforgettable, defining moments in many of our lives, so significant that we even mark time by them: "Pre-9/11 America," "post-9/11 world," and even "9/11 generation." President Dieter F. Uchtdorf said, "Often we mark the span of our lives by events that leave imprints on our minds and hearts. There are many such events in my life, one of which happened in 1989 when I heard a timeless sermon by President Ezra Taft Benson, 'Beware of Pride.'"<sup>1</sup>

Because eighty-five-year-old President Benson was in poor health, the talk was read in general conference by President Gordon B. Hinckley, his first counselor (but President Benson attended the session). Although the talk included themes and referred to topics he had previously addressed, the aptness and intensity of this sermon broke new ground.

In subsequent years President Benson's words have been quoted often at both general and local levels. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin referred to the talk in his conference address in October of 2004<sup>2</sup>, and Elder Marlin K. Jensen mentioned it when he spoke in general conference in April of 2001.<sup>3</sup> In

addition, President Benson's words have surfaced in Latter-day Saint lesson manuals<sup>4</sup> and Brigham Young University devotionals,<sup>5</sup> as well as in many sacrament meeting talks given by leaders and members throughout the world. In 1993 this talk became a central focus for two videos in the seminary Book of Mormon series,<sup>6</sup> viewed by hundreds of thousands of youth.

As the prophet for the Church, President Benson was sharing a message that was inspired by the Lord. He wrote, "This message has been weighing heavily on my soul for some time. I know the Lord wants this message delivered now."<sup>7</sup> This article will examine President Benson's general preparation for this message, then focus on four particular themes he studied in developing the address.

### Preparation for This Landmark Address

Typical of his approach to all his gospel responsibilities, President Benson carefully prepared himself for the inspiration he would need to deliver this message on pride. He studied topics extensively, inviting members of his family to join with him.

#### *Habits of study*

Throughout his life Ezra Taft Benson had applied to his own ministry the Lord's instruction to Oliver Cowdery: "But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right" (D&C 9:7–8). In her 1987 biography of President Benson, Sheri Dew described the prophet as a twenty-one-year-old missionary: "Ezra studied voraciously, usually in preparation for speaking assignments. His range of topics was as diverse as it was demanding. . . . He faithfully recorded his 'Index to Antidotes [Anecdotes] Happenings,' a compilation of stories, quotations, and object lessons pertinent to gospel topics."<sup>8</sup>

#### *Resources provided by the Benson family*

We learned more about these habits of study and preparation when members of President Benson's family shared with us boxes of materials containing his eighty-four-year-old "Index to Antidotes Happenings"—a large box of files containing scriptures, quotations, prior speeches, drafts of speeches shared with family members, and, yes, a few happenings that he collected as he prepared himself to teach the subject of pride. Obviously he had applied his mind to a variety of materials.

As members of President Benson's family were studying and reflecting on the topic with him, some of their scripture compilations are included in the folders we received. The box contains a folder with scriptures and aspect ideas from his oldest son, Reed, and several folders with scriptures and suggestions from other members of Reed's family. Another folder contains what are apparently copies of earlier drafts with highlighting and notes. Two are marked with Reed Benson's name, and another is marked as an "original copy sent to Mark" (President Benson's other son). Family members were willing to share these resources but modestly asked that specific details about their personal experiences not be described.

#### *Content of folders*

The materials furnished by the Benson family included eight folders filled with materials on pride—carefully grouped, categorized, and labeled. Marking and brief handwritten annotations show President Benson's consideration and study. Table 1 represents the materials by number and type. President Benson's labels and some of his themes are given to simplify examination of an extensive variety of sources.

**Table 1: President Benson's Folders**

Content	Number and type	Labels and themes
Scriptures	17 lists by topic	Relevant examples: "Pride from the Top Looking Down" (35 references) "Cures for Pride" (133 references) "Unbelief" (4 references) "Self-Will" (48 references) "From the Bottom Looking Up" (35 references) "Enmity/Competition" (12 references) "Humility" (64 references)
Additional scriptures	3 additional file folders	"Pride Standard Works" (Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants) "Pride Miscellaneous" (similar list adding Old and New Testaments) "Index Scriptures of Pride" (index to triple combination with headings and scriptures related to pride underlined in red)

Total scriptures	Over 900 references (some on multiple lists)	107 used in sermon (quoted, alluded to, or referenced)
Examples from Church history	2 typed stories (Thomas B. Marsh and Simonds Ryder); 7 pages of typed references to additional examples	In folder “Pride Miscellaneous” Not used directly in sermon; words and phrases relating to scripture choices underlined and highlighted
Clippings from published sources	15 clippings	All but 2 sources from outside the Church In folders labeled “Pride Miscellaneous” (6), “Humility” (8), and “Pride” (1) Copy of dictionary pages with words and definitions highlighted Quotations from <i>Paradise Lost</i> (John Milton), <i>Mere Christianity</i> (C. S. Lewis), and account of writing “God of Our Fathers Known of Old” (Rudyard Kipling)
Past talks by President Benson	2 folders	Folders labeled “Pride—President Benson” and “Pride—Benson Conference Addresses” “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” (April 5, 1986) “To the Humble Followers of Christ” (April 4, 1969) “Humility” (unpublished manuscript) Drafts of talks marked with suggestions by family members Draft of a talk prepared for a priesthood session in 1989 that was not delivered
Quotations from talks of earlier and then-current General Authorities and Hugh Nibley	250 pages of typed excerpts	Folder labeled “Pride—General Authorities and Hugh Nibley” Most frequently quoted were Neal A. Maxwell, Bruce R. McConkie, Dallin H. Oaks, Spencer W. Kimball, Hugh W. Nibley, David O. McKay, James E. Talmage, and John Taylor. (Many were underlined, and influences can be found in the talk.)

### Use of resources

As table 1 indicates, over 900 scriptures were included on President Benson’s various lists (some with multiple occurrences), and 107 of them were actually used in the talk. President Benson was concise, efficient, and purposeful

in the ways he used scriptures. The following are ways in which President Benson used the scriptures in his pride sermon:

- *Direct quotations.* President Benson placed strong, relevant direct quotations—those from primary witnesses and high authorities—to give particular emphasis to important points.
- *Allusions.* Occasionally President Benson made a casual reference to a person, place, incident, or phrase that would immediately provide a mental picture, feeling, or other association.
- *References.* President Benson provided parenthetical references to additional scriptures that he did not quote or allude to, strengthening and giving additional credence to other scriptures or to points and admonitions not being presented as scriptural but having doctrinal bases in the scriptures.

Although the scriptures were obviously the basis of President Benson’s thinking and expression, the prophet used a wide range of sources for additional perspectives and ideas. As shown in table 1, quotations and photocopied pages were included in three of his folders: “Pride Miscellaneous” (6 pieces), “Humility” (8 pieces), and “Pride” (1 piece). These items show that President Benson read widely from materials not produced by the Church, truly seeking wisdom out of all of the best books.<sup>9</sup> As he sought for and made connections between doctrine and practice, the prophet selected literature portraying active faith, which extended his thoughts on the nature of pride and humility.

One of President Benson’s folders contained several pages copied from a dictionary with words relevant to pride, including *enmity*, *heart*, *humility*, *competition*, *meekness*, *rival*, and *pride*—all marked along with their definitions. Many of these words were used in “Beware of Pride,” but President Benson offered a specific definition for only one: *enmity*, a major theme in his address.

Church history sources were included in President Benson’s folder labeled “Pride Miscellaneous.” We found seven pages of typed references to forty-five incidents involving pride. Two instances were detailed in typescript: the apostasies of Thomas B. Marsh and Simonds Ryder. Neither Marsh nor Ryder was discussed in “Beware of Pride,” although Marsh was included in a group of proud apostates in an earlier manuscript.

As indicated in table 1, a folder labeled “Pride—General Authorities” contained almost 250 pages of typed excerpts from works of early and

then-current General Authorities of the LDS Church. Those quoted most often in this collection were Neal A. Maxwell (152), Bruce R. McConkie (86), Dallin H. Oaks (83), Spencer W. Kimball (77), and David O. McKay (45). Hugh Nibley's name was also written on the tab of the folder—he was the only writer represented who was not a General Authority, and 50 quotations from his collected works were included. Although none of these authorities were directly quoted in “Beware of Pride,” President Benson had underlined many excerpts for closer attention, indicating particular emphasis for some of them. In examining the underlining and other symbols and brief notes he added, we found a rich source of thinking and influence in these quotations.

In a folder he designated as “Pride—President Benson,” the prophet included two earlier addresses and an unpublished typescript in which he had previously explored scriptures and ideas related to pride. “To the Humble Followers of Christ,”<sup>10</sup> delivered April 4, 1969, was an address warning humble Saints about some forms of worldliness that threatened them, rather than commenting specifically on humility or pride. This talk would have been a form of preparation for “Beware of Pride” in the sense that the dangers represented in the talk showed aspects of a pride-filled society, although President Benson did not state this explicitly.

“Cleansing the Inner Vessel,”<sup>11</sup> President Benson's first general conference address as President of the Church, was delivered in April 1986. The prophet later commented in a note (found in one of the files) to his son Reed, “I spoke on the need of cleansing the inner vessel by conquering pride. I said at that time that the sin of pride deserved more consideration.” He mentioned the address “Beware of Pride” as being further consideration and described additional work he had planned on the topic, which he did not live long enough to complete.<sup>12</sup> The last two columns of the published version of “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” foreshadowed very specifically many points continued in “Beware of Pride.” These will be discussed further in the treatment of themes.

An apparently unpublished typescript labeled “Humility,” found in the same folder, included many ideas and scriptures developed in both of the pride talks, ideas which will also be treated with the themes. In a folder labeled “Pride—Benson Conference Addresses,” we found a draft of a talk that was intended for the priesthood session of general conference the evening after “Beware of Pride” was given. Although the talk was not delivered because of President Benson's health, we include it in this article because themes that

resurfaced provide further evidence of the strength of the prophet's convictions in those areas.

We cannot know the nature and form of the inspiration and guidance President Benson received as he applied his mind to the topic of pride. However, reviewing these materials has enabled a rare glimpse into the scriptures and other resources that influenced his teachings, the themes of his study and reflection, and his personal study methods and procedures. It has allowed us to better appreciate all that contributed to this classic sermon.

Since the speech is well known and has been included in the priesthood and Relief Society study manual for 2015, we will examine major themes in the talk in relation to the preparatory study materials that may have influenced President Benson's thinking and the way his materials seem to have come together. We discuss materials found on the following themes: (a) the nature of pride as enmity, (b) types of pride, (c) consequences of pride, and (d) “the antidote to pride.”

### Nature of Pride as Enmity

Many of the materials President Benson read and underscored as he prepared for “Beware of Pride” associated pride with enmity. He quoted a small fragment of the dictionary definition of *enmity* that he had marked in the copied dictionary pages: “hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition.”<sup>13</sup> The dictionary definition also included “ill will,” “state of being an enemy,” and “the opposite of friendship.” But President Benson focused only on one aspect of the definition. He added to it this powerful statement: “It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us.”<sup>14</sup> He had underlined in a copy of a section of *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis the statement “pride always means enmity—it is enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God.”<sup>15</sup> President Benson went beyond C. S. Lewis's definition to identify enmity as “the central feature of pride.” Popular concepts of pride include “self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, or haughtiness,” but “the heart, or core” of pride is enmity.<sup>16</sup>

### *Enmity against God*

Quoting Philippians 2:21 and citing Alma 38:12 and 3 Nephi 12:30, President Benson warned, “We pit our will against God's.” He used a memorable reversal (which he began working with in “Cleansing the Inner Vessel”): “In the spirit of ‘my will and not thine be done.’”<sup>17</sup> In “Cleansing the Inner Vessel”

President Benson had reinforced this statement with “Christ removed self as the force in His perfect life.”<sup>18</sup> However, he did not repeat this extension in “Beware of Pride.”

Looking at his preparatory folders, we found that many of the things President Benson was reading agreed with this position concerning pride as enmity (though not necessarily using the word). Passages he had marked by Neal A. Maxwell were forceful, referring to pride as “the antithesis of submission to God’s will”<sup>19</sup> and stating that “submission to God . . . requires us to strip ourselves of our pride in order to be obedient to Him.”<sup>20</sup> An underscored passage in *Mere Christianity* further intensified the concept, referring to pride as “the complete anti-God state of mind.”<sup>21</sup>

In designating pride as “anti-God,” Lewis asserted, “Pride leads to every other vice.” Other clippings in the Benson files included the same concept. In the “Pride Miscellaneous” file, a scrap of paper furnished a quotation by John Ruskin: “I have been more and more convinced the more I think of it that in general pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes.”<sup>22</sup> President Benson included this quotation both in his humility typescript and in “Beware of Pride.” He underscored a quotation by Neal A. Maxwell from the “Pride—General Authorities” file: “Just as meekness is in all our virtues, so pride is in all our sins.”<sup>23</sup> He drew a box around his underlining of the Maxwell quotation, reiterating that “pride . . . is surely present in all our sins.”<sup>24</sup> In “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” this concept was reflected in designating “pride as the universal sin”<sup>25</sup>; in “Beware of Pride” it is repeated for emphasis: “Pride is the universal sin, the great vice. Yes, pride *is* the universal sin, the great vice” (italics in original).<sup>26</sup>

Of course, the ultimate enmity toward God was and is the conduct of Satan. In a folder where he had placed photocopies of works by non-Latter-day Saint authors, President Benson had marked an assertion by C. S. Lewis: “It was through pride that the devil became the devil.”<sup>27</sup> He included in the same folder a quotation from Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, which expressed Satan’s thinking:

Here we reign secure, and in my choyce [*sic*]  
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:  
Better reign in Hell, than serve in Heav’n.<sup>28</sup>

Beside this quotation President Benson had noted, “Satan would rather reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.”

President Benson used scriptures 2 Nephi 24:12–15 and D&C 76:25–27 with this line of thinking, and he seems to have considered LDS implications using comments by Neal A. Maxwell, who referred to “the adversary with his immense ego and selfish pride”<sup>29</sup> and asserted that “Lucifer deeply desired to be ‘worshipped’ in ‘act one’ of our premortal life, as well as later.”<sup>30</sup> In “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” President Benson seems to have brought these ideas together in the statement “Christ wanted to serve. The devil wanted to rule. Christ wanted to bring men to where He was. The devil wanted to be above men.”<sup>31</sup>

In “Beware of Pride” President Benson declared, along with the scriptural references mentioned above, “In the premortal council, it was pride that felled Lucifer, ‘a son of the morning.’” Later in the sermon he returned to and expanded this point, lacing it with referenced scriptures: “Lucifer placed his proposal in competition with the Father’s plan as advocated by Jesus Christ. (See Moses 4:1–3.) He wished to be honored above all others. (See 2 Nephi 24:13.) In short, his prideful desire was to dethrone God. (See D&C 29:36; D&C 76:28.)”<sup>32</sup> In his address prepared for priesthood holders, President Benson repeated this, adding that Satan “wanted the Father’s power, priesthood, position, and glory.” He concluded, “In that losing struggle he captured one third of the hosts of heaven, and being cast down to the earth he has rallied his forces and waged war against the Father, His Son, and their servants ever since.”

### *Enmity against fellow men*

A marked passage in President Benson’s photocopied sections from *Mere Christianity* effectively linked proud individuals’ enmity with God and their enmity with their fellow men: “As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.”<sup>33</sup> We cannot know whether President Benson generated thoughts from this passage or simply read it with satisfaction after deciding how he would develop this theme. Either way, he clearly agreed with it. Among the ways pride creates enmity among people, one emphasized in “Beware of Pride” is that it makes them competitive, with the desire to “elevate [themselves] above others and diminish them.” Subthemes the prophet developed concerning this enmity include the relationships of pride to competition and contention.

In the priesthood address he prepared, President Benson gave clear primacy to the competitive nature of pride, stating that when we understand this dimension, “we are on the path to overcoming it.” In “Beware of Pride,” he included a quotation from *Mere Christianity*: “Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. . . . It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest.”<sup>34</sup> President Benson built on this concept: “The proud depend upon the world to tell them whether they have value or not. Their self-esteem is determined by where they are judged to be on the ladders of worldly success. They feel worthwhile as individuals if the numbers beneath them in achievement, talent, beauty, or intellect are large enough. Pride is ugly. It says, ‘If you succeed, I am a failure.’”<sup>35</sup> Obviously this had been a matter of deep concern to President Benson: he had in his folders 31 scriptures which he labeled “Fear of Men’s Judgments” (7 of which were included in “Beware of Pride”).

Another aspect of pride as competition that was of particular concern to President Benson was what he referred to as “From the Bottom Looking Up.” He had collected 34 scriptural references on this, though he cited only four in “Beware of Pride.” He stated this position in a single paragraph:

Pride is a sin that can readily be seen in others but is rarely admitted in ourselves. Most of us consider pride to be a sin of those on the top, such as the rich and the learned, looking down at the rest of us. (See 2 Nephi 9:42.) There is, however, a far more common ailment among us—and that is pride from the bottom looking up. It is manifest in so many ways, such as faultfinding, gossiping, backbiting, murmuring, living beyond our means, envying, coveting, withholding gratitude and praise that might lift another, and being unforgiving and jealous.<sup>36</sup>

Apparently, President Benson needed no authorities or publications beyond 34 scriptures to verify his thinking on that point. We need only to remember that he—as the hardworking son of struggling farmers, an underfunded graduate student, a young man representing and serving farming communities during war and peace, a man who served within war-ravaged countries no one else was able to enter following World War II, and a US presidential cabinet member required to live a government representative’s lifestyle—had observed human beings in varied situations. As he visited worldwide, he went into the fields to talk with and work beside the farmers.<sup>37</sup> He had personally seen the bottom and the top—and his warning extended to both.

With pride, competition easily merges into contention. President Benson collected 24 scriptures on this subtopic (although he only used 2 in “Beware of Pride”). In “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” he asserted that “pride is manifest in the spirit of contention.”<sup>38</sup> In “Beware of Pride,” he expanded to make practical applications to the lives of his listeners, which seemed to be a tendency in his thinking and expression. He told his audience, “Contention ranges from a hostile spoken word to worldwide conflicts.” He then became more specific: “Arguments, fights, unrighteous dominion, generation gaps, divorces, spouse abuse, riots, and disturbances all fall into this category of pride.”<sup>39</sup> A quotation he had marked by Dallin H. Oaks expressed the point with a cause and a summary: “Pride does not look up to God and care about what is right. It looks sideways to man and *argues who is right*.”<sup>40</sup> In his talk for the priesthood session, President Benson made a frightening statement: “A proud person hates the fact that someone is above him. It lowers his position. Most often he feels that he has to disobey, to prove that he is just as valuable as someone else.”<sup>41</sup>

#### *Tragedy of the Nephites: enmity toward God and toward man*

One of the most vivid illustrations of the tragedies of enmity is the chronology and destruction of the Nephite nation, which extends throughout most of the Book of Mormon. In both “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” and “Beware of Pride,” President Benson quoted Mormon’s summation: “Behold, the pride of this nation, or the people of the Nephites, hath proven their destruction” (Moroni 8:27). He also quoted D&C 38:39: “Beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old.” The materials in his files reflected strong criticism of Nephite pride. James E. Talmage,<sup>42</sup> Bruce R. McConkie,<sup>43</sup> Spencer W. Kimball,<sup>44</sup> and Hugh W. Nibley<sup>45</sup> were among those whose comments were marked by President Benson to consider with the role of pride in the fall of this civilization. Nibley gave examples of pride and punishment in several Book of Mormon time periods and contexts, concluding, “The Book of Mormon labors [the issue of pride] for our special benefit”;<sup>46</sup> he referred to pride as “the Nephite disease” and warned that “we have it.”<sup>47</sup> Again carrying frequently made points to more specific levels, President Benson mentioned a particular “fruit of the sin of pride . . . [which] has been and will yet be the cause of the fall of many nations”—secret combinations “built up to get power, gain, and glory of the world.”<sup>48</sup> He referenced a group of scriptures (Helaman 7:5; Ether 8:9, 16, 22–23; Moses 5:31)<sup>49</sup> to give his audience additional information and examples.

## Types of Pride

President Benson referred to pride as “a damning sin”; in his files he used this label for a list of 35 scriptures. In the priesthood address he prepared, he mentioned some ways that pride blocks our progression: “Pride is devastating to the spirit of the heart harboring it. It is also devastating to our peace of mind, peaceful neighborhoods, and peaceful communities and countries.” In his photocopies of materials from *Mere Christianity*, the prophet had underscored a metaphor that agreed with his thinking: “For pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love or contentment or even common sense.”<sup>50</sup> Under the label “So You May Count the Cost/Consequences of Pride,” President Benson included 65 scriptures as relevant. Manifestations of pride are, of course, as varied as the individuals who practice them.

Individuals have grouped and classified the types of pride differently (e.g., Oaks,<sup>51</sup> Benson<sup>52</sup>). In a devotional address at Brigham Young University, President Benson expressed this position: “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.”<sup>53</sup> Five years later, in “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,”<sup>54</sup> he applied this to the scriptures, referring to “the two groups in the Book of Mormon that seemed to have the greatest difficulty with pride” not as the Nephites and Zoramites, but as the “learned and the rich.”

In “Beware of Pride,” the prophet carried this into causality: “Pride fades our feelings of sonship to God and brotherhood to man. It separates and divides us by ‘ranks,’ according to our ‘riches’ and our ‘chances for learning.’”<sup>55</sup> His use of quotation marks around *ranks*, *riches*, and *chances for learning* seems to indicate that he was saying “so called”; he did not put the same meaning or value on these terms as proud individuals might. Since these categories were also discussed in many of the quotations President Benson marked for further attention and were well developed in “Beware of Pride,” it seems useful to consider these two categories in discussing the Benson materials.

### *Pride in learning and position*

President Benson was concerned about the pride of those who are “learned”; in “Beware of Pride” he told how the proud “[pit] their intellects, opinions, works, wealth, and talents, or any worldly measuring device against

others”—including only one item that is not linked to education. In examining the source materials lent to us, we found that this point was stimulated, enhanced, or reinforced at different phases of President Benson’s thinking by authorities whose ideas he had marked in his quotation folder. Dallin H. Oaks chastised those who were proud of their “differences in knowledge, prominence or position.”<sup>56</sup> Hugh Nibley disparaged the classes that developed among many people’s favorite pride model, the Nephites, during one of their proudest periods: “Careerism became the order of the day in a business-society of ‘many merchants . . . and also many lawyers, and many officers’” (3 Nephi 6:11). The ranks and resulting inequities troubled Nibley.<sup>57</sup> Neal A. Maxwell gave this pride of education or position a scriptural application: “Those who fear losing face cannot have His image in their countenances.”<sup>58</sup>

President Benson emphasized spiritual aspects of pride in learning. In his typescript on humility he praised the humble as being *teachable*. In this same document he took the point further: “The so-called ‘learned’ may say that they’ll follow the prophets when they feel that the prophets know as much on the subject as they do.” He seems to have responded to Elder Maxwell’s metaphor with a simile of his own: “We know that if we are educated without spiritual principle we may simply become like clever devils. And if our learning leads us to rebellion, a stiff neck, a proud look and resistance to the counsel of the Lord, then we will lose the prize.”

### *Pride in wealth*

Pride in wealth and its trappings, a major theme in “Beware of Pride,” was a major theme in President Benson’s collection of writings from Church leaders. For example, Harold B. Lee counseled, “The prophets have issued a clear signal of warning to those who are lifted up in the pride of their hearts because of their ease and their exceeding great prosperity.”<sup>59</sup> President Benson’s support of this point (whether he wrote it before or after reading it) can be seen in scriptural examples: he joined Church leaders McConkie,<sup>60</sup> Maxwell,<sup>61</sup> and others in choosing Sodom as a classic example.

In the quotations President Benson had marked, Hugh Nibley had been particularly outspoken about pride in riches. In quoting Alma’s description of the characteristics of the proud Nephite society, he remarked, “Along with this, of course, everyone dresses in the height of fashion, the main point being always that the proper clothes are expensive—the expression ‘costly apparel’ occurs fourteen times in the Book of Mormon.”<sup>62</sup> Dr. Nibley created the term



*Samuel's law*, alluding to the warnings of Samuel the Lamanite: "When 'the Economy' becomes the main and engrossing concern of a society . . . the economy will self-destruct"<sup>63</sup> (which, of course, the Nephite economy did, and by Nibley's implication ours might). Nibley concluded, "Note well the sequence of folly: first we are well pleased with ourselves because of our wealth, then comes the game of status and prestige, leading to competitive maneuvers, hatred, and dirty tricks, and finally the ultimate solution. Where wealth guarantees respectability, principles melt away as the criminal element rises to the top."<sup>64</sup> Many passages by Dallin H. Oaks commenting similarly on pride of riches in this period of Nephite history were also marked by President Benson.<sup>65</sup>

Thus pride in education, position, and riches were heartily condemned in the scriptures and quotations marked for special attention by President Benson. He found abundant precedent and support for the positions to which he gave striking applications and explanations in "Beware of Pride." His statements were bold, but he had plenty of gospel support behind them. Similarly, he spoke boldly of principles he had studied carefully as he discussed consequences of these forms of pride.

### Consequences of Pride

In the talk he prepared for the priesthood brethren, President Benson referred to pride as a "degenerative disease of the spirit" that brings us "spiritually decaying temptations." To solidify the relationship of pride to destruction, he made scriptural allusions that would bring images, incidents, and emotions to his listeners, mentioning the Pharisees who orchestrated the Crucifixion of Christ (see John 11:53), Saul (see 1 Samuel 18:6–8), Herod (see Matthew 14:9), and King Noah (see Mosiah 17:11–12). The proud became part of a scriptural hall of shame. President Benson found references to a variety of dangers and consequences within the scriptures and other sources he consulted.

### Exposure to worldly temptations

Throughout his 1969 talk "To the Humble Followers of Christ," Elder Benson mentioned a series of worldly temptations to which those who are not humble followers are subject: they live in disharmony with the Church and its members and publish their criticisms of the Church; they are deceived by "precepts of men, desiring to bring worldliness into the Gospel"; and they are distracted and deceived by "subversion of the educational system" and

by "demoralizing" forms of art, literature, music, and drama.<sup>66</sup> As President Benson collected information on the subject of pride that would eventually have some potential impact on his addresses, he found much support for this area of thinking. He listed 15 scriptures under the heading "Pride Makes Righteous Living Very Difficult" and 47 under what he considered the related topic of "Self-Will." Quotations underlined from Neal A. Maxwell included resulting behavior: "Those who are puffed up need constantly to be reinflated, hence the tendency of some to 'play to the galleries.'"<sup>67</sup> President Benson's close friend and colleague Spencer W. Kimball considered behavior as well, suggesting that the proud have a tendency to become defensive and rationalize their failures.<sup>68</sup> Perhaps the ideas generated by "play to the galleries" and the defensiveness-rationalization pairing impacted President Benson's statement that "the world shouts louder than the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. The reasoning of men overrides the revelations of God, and the proud let go of the iron rod"—their lifeline to spiritual growth.<sup>69</sup>

### Loss of the Spirit

In 1964 Elder Benson had written in *Title of Liberty*, "Too many of us have been so drunk with self-sufficiency as no longer to feel the need of prayer."<sup>70</sup> Over the years many General Authorities expressed similar sentiments, which President Benson underlined in his collection of quotations. Bruce R. McConkie expressed bluntly, "When a man engages in self-exultation because of his riches, his political power, his worldly learning . . . or even his works of righteousness, he is not in tune with the Spirit of the Lord."<sup>71</sup> Harold B. Lee was saddened that an individual's wealth or worldly success would cause one to "think himself independent of his spiritual need."<sup>72</sup> Spencer W. Kimball explained a result of this loss: "Wealth and pride, wit and physical charm, popularity and flattery are the shadows of the nothingness that can bring us only disappointment and frustration."<sup>73</sup> In "Beware of Pride," President Benson encompassed and extended such points: "The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren't interested in changing their opinions to agree with God's."<sup>74</sup> In the address he planned for the priesthood session that evening, he expressed the final penalty: "The scriptures testify that the proud are cut off from the presence of God and that Satan has power over them, and that the Spirit of the Lord will cease striving with them. The proud suffer a spiritual death, they die pertaining unto righteousness."

### *Damage to relationships*

President Benson was particularly concerned over the effects of pride on relationships. In “Beware of Pride” he warned, “Pride adversely affects all our relationships—our relationship with God and His servants, between husband and wife, parent and child, employer and employee, teacher and student and all mankind.”<sup>75</sup> Some antecedent or confirming statements can be found in quotations he marked from other General Authorities. Neal A. Maxwell had written that “our pride and insensitivity inevitably have an adverse impact on others.”<sup>76</sup> Elder Oaks specified “a withdrawal from concern for others,” which may lead to persecution and other forms of oppression.<sup>77</sup>

President Benson showed particular concern for effects of pride on the family. He exclaimed, “Think of the repentance that could take place with lives changed, marriages preserved, and homes strengthened, if pride did not keep us from confessing our sins and forsaking them.” Perhaps he thought of Spencer W. Kimball’s comment, which he had marked in his notes, “When problems affect a couple the easy thing is to stand on one’s pride and quarrel . . . and to permit those differences to continue to get bigger. . . . Finally [there is] a dissolution of the marriage.”<sup>78</sup> In both his priesthood address and “Beware of Pride,” he stressed pride problems that occur largely in families: “arguments, fights, unrighteous dominion, generation gaps, divorces, [and] spouse abuse.” He also specified, “Contention in our families drives the Spirit of the Lord away. It also drives many of our family members away.”<sup>79</sup>

President Benson went into some depth as he studied relationship problems rooted in pride. He was particularly concerned with the pandemic practice of taking offense. He marked passages taken from three different books by Neal A. Maxwell. In *We Talk of Christ*, Maxwell had written, “Another dimension of pride—which can compound the cares of the world—is to be found in the way in which trivial matters are allowed to escalate far out of proportion to their importance.”<sup>80</sup> President Benson also marked Elder Maxwell’s elaboration in *Meek and Lowly* (“There are many persons just waiting to be offended: certain they will not be treated fairly, they almost invite the verification of their expectation”)<sup>81</sup> and conclusion expressed in *Men and Women of Christ* (“For pride, nothing is too petty to be seized upon”)<sup>82</sup>. President Benson also marked a statement by Phillips Brooks, quoted in a talk by Spencer W. Kimball: “You who are keeping wretched quarrels alive because you cannot quite make up your mind . . . now is the day to sacrifice your pride and kill them.”<sup>83</sup> However, a passage from the positive view

in *Faith Precedes the Miracle* was also marked: “It is gratifying to find numbers of good people who, in their bigness of soul, have straightened out their thinking, swallowed their pride, forgiven what they felt were personal slights and who have returned to good feeling for the sakes of themselves and their posterity.”<sup>84</sup>

Those who easily take offense are particularly resistant to attempts made by others to teach or counsel them. Statements marked from Maxwell again hit hard: Although love may guide the counsel, one who is “chained by pride” responds by criticizing the counselor.<sup>85</sup> Elder Maxwell bluntly asserted, “A mind hardened in pride is impervious to counsel. . . . [It stands] resolutely and stupidly at its post.”<sup>86</sup> Elder Oaks used the phrase “too wise to be taught” to describe this mindset.<sup>87</sup> In “Beware of Pride,” President Benson seems to have applied these concepts (earlier or later) in two ways. His reference to “many who are less active members of the Church because they were offended and their pride will not allow them to forgive or fully sup at the Lord’s table” was later rephrased in positive terms: “We can choose to humble ourselves by forgiving those who have offended us. (See 3 Nephi 13:11; D&C 64:10.)” Both scripture references included here are from the list President Benson titled “Cures for Pride.” He followed this by saying, “We can choose to humble ourselves by receiving counsel and chastisement.” This statement was followed by references to eight scriptures from his “Humility” list.<sup>88</sup>

### *Risk of apostasy*

An additional risk President Benson considered in his notes and marked passages and ultimately treated in “Beware of Pride” was a frequent outcome of taking offense: apostasy. In his folder labeled “Pride Miscellaneous” he included seven typed pages of references to forty-five examples of apostasy from Church history. Two of these, the apostasies of Thomas B. Marsh and Simonds Ryder, were typed as stories—both of which illustrated the “nothing is too petty” statement of Elder Maxwell quoted earlier. President Benson did not use Ryder in his talks or typescripts, but he included Marsh along with Emma Smith and Oliver Cowdery in his typescript on humility, with quotations from the Doctrine and Covenants rebuking each of them. Emma Smith and Oliver Cowdery were also mentioned in “Cleansing The Inner Vessel.”<sup>89</sup> President Benson did seem to allude in “Beware of Pride” to an example from Zion’s Camp that was on the list of forty-five incidents. A plague of illness had come upon the camp due to indulgence in pride. When the men humbled

themselves, the plague abated, and their obedience was affirmed. Although President Benson did not give specific details from the incident, the impact of the happening was clear: “My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. . . . Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion.”<sup>90</sup>

In a devotional address at Brigham Young University in 1971, President Benson had warned, “Sometimes in our attempts to mimic the world and contrary to the prophet’s counsel, we run after the world’s false educational, political, musical, and dress ideas. New worldly standards take over, a gradual breakdown occurs, and finally, after much suffering, a humble people are ready to be taught once again a higher law.”<sup>91</sup> The prophet was anxious to provide an antidote to pride’s serious conditions.

### Antidote to Pride

President Benson stated specifically that “the antidote for pride is humility . . . the broken heart and contrite spirit,” suggesting that hearers or readers of his address would benefit from eight scriptures: Alma 7:23; 3 Nephi 9:20; 3 Nephi 12:19; D&C 20:37; D&C 59:8; Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 57:15; and Isaiah 66:2.<sup>92</sup> In the lists in his folders he had included 59 scriptures under the title “Humility,” 69 under “Consequence of Humility,” 42 under “What Is Humility,” and 34 under “Humility Is.” In addition, he had included 133 under “Cures for Pride.” His teachings on humility were obviously based on extensive scriptural support.

### *Humility in greatness*

Perhaps impacting and definitely supporting his statements on the importance of this antidote, President Benson consulted articles from non-LDS sources, which he included with LDS sources in a file labeled “Humility.” Marked passages in the article “The Best Advice I Ever Had” by Carlos P. Romulo, chair of the Philippine Delegation to the United Nations, read, “In my contacts with men of all walks of life I observed that it is always the small man, the mediocre, who is arrogant and conceited, who does not know how to bend. The truly great man is tolerant, humble and modest.” He concluded that “only where there is humility can there be peace.”<sup>93</sup> President Benson included in his research another non-LDS author who praised the importance of humility to greatness: Rudyard Kipling, who wrote the poem “Recessional” to remind his



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countrymen of the need for humility during their times of excessive national pride. The poem became the text for a hymn included in the LDS hymnbook under the title “God of Our Fathers Known of Old.” In “Beware of Pride,” President Benson included the second stanza of the poem in its entirety:

The Tumult and the shouting dies;  
The Captains and the kings depart.  
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget, lest we forget.<sup>94</sup>

### *Nature of humility*

In his typescript labeled “Humility,” President Benson referred to humility as the “mother of all virtues.” He had marked on his list of quotations a statement by Bruce R McConkie giving it similar reverence as “an attribute of godliness possessed by true saints lead[ing] to salvation.”<sup>95</sup> His thinking was also similar to a quotation he had marked by Spencer W. Kimball: “You must begin as a little child, clean, teachable.”<sup>96</sup> President Benson began his typescript on humility emphasizing humble persons as “teachable,” and in “Beware of Pride” he stated that one must be “as a child, submissive, meek, and humble.”<sup>97</sup> As he thought through characteristics of humility while writing his typescript on

the topic, he put meekness and submissiveness in perspective: “The Lord has said that no one can assist with this work who is not humble and full of love. But humility does not mean weakness. It does not mean timidity; it does not mean fear. A man can be humble and fearless. A man can be humble and courageous. Humility is the recognition of our dependence upon a higher power, a constant need for the Lord’s support in His work.” Similarly, in “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” he asserted that while pride responds to self-will, “humility responds to God’s will—to the fear of His judgments and the needs of those around us.”<sup>98</sup> But humility of this caliber does not always evolve naturally for the “natural man.”

### *Humility as choice*

In “Beware of Pride,” President Benson urged, “Let us choose to be humble.” He followed this by saying, “Let us choose to be humble” eight times, each time indicating a specific desired change.<sup>99</sup> Examining his earlier writings and his files of notes, we found that the focus on humility as deliberate change had long been an aspect of his thinking. In his study materials President Benson had marked a statement from Spencer W. Kimball: “To gain eternal life there must be a rebirth, a transformation, and an unburdening self of pride, weaknesses, and prejudice.”<sup>100</sup> Another author he had marked extensively, Hugh Nibley, had explained a process that often occurs and the ultimate effect of this transformation: “As soon as [an individual] grasps the seriousness of his situation in one clear-sighted instant and repents of his rashness and folly, then he is ready to receive the proffered hand—his pride gives way to humility, and he joyfully accepts salvation. . . . God does not play cat and mouse with us.”<sup>101</sup> Neal A. Maxwell summed the process up with a scriptural phrase, also marked by President Benson: “The best way to swallow our pride is to be ‘swallowed up’ in the Father’s will, as was Jesus.”<sup>102</sup>

Along with such concepts, President Benson brought in extensive scriptural references with his ability to find practical applications for gospel principles and teachings. In “Beware of Pride,” he quoted Alma’s words to the Zoramites, “Blessed are they who humble themselves without being compelled to be humble” (Alma 32:16). All but one item on his “let us choose to be humble” list were supported with referenced scriptures selected from his well-stocked files: “conquering enmity toward our brothers and sisters” (3 scriptures), “receiving counsel and chastisement” (9 scriptures), “forgiving those who have offended us” (4), “rendering selfless service” (1), “going on

missions” (3), “going to the temple more frequently,” “confessing and forsaking our sins and being born of God” (3), and “loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives” (3).<sup>103</sup> Thus the humility advocated by President Benson takes volition and effort; but its blessings are many and precious.

### *Blessings of humility*

President Benson underscored on his quotation list a statement by Bruce R. McConkie referring to the “blessed virtue of humility.”<sup>104</sup> The prophet included in his works a variety of blessings that come from humility.

President Benson’s focus on blessings is based on and reinforced by scriptures. Near the end of “Cleansing the Inner Vessel” he made the same statement: “With pride, there are many curses. With humility, there come many blessings. For example, ‘Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers.’ (D&C 112:10.) The humble will ‘be made strong and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge.’ (D&C 1:28.) The Lord is ‘merciful unto those who confess their sins with humble hearts. (D&C 61:2.) Humility can turn away God’s anger. (See Hel. 11:11.)”<sup>105</sup>

President Benson agreed with these words of Spencer W. Kimball on the relationship of learning to humility: “God will make [the truth] known to you once you have capitulated and become humble and receptive. Having dropped all pride of your mental stature . . . and having surrendered yourself to the teachings of the Holy Spirit, you are ready to begin to learn.”<sup>106</sup> A marked comment by Neal A. Maxwell suggested why this might be true: “The humble individual can see and feel things and can admit things . . . in ways that the proud person cannot do.”<sup>107</sup> In his typescript “Humility,” President Benson gave particular meaning to such ideas on humility and learning: “If our learning leads us to greater humility, then we are on the road to exaltation.” Another underscored comment of Elder McConkie, “All progress in spiritual things is conditioned upon the prior attainment of humility,”<sup>108</sup> may have impacted a statement in the typescript: President Benson affirmed that certain blessings for the humble—enlightenment, mercy, strength, and joy—come in addition to “direction and answered prayers,” “a great endowment and blessing,” and the “opportunity to see God.”

## Conclusion

Extensive use of scriptures, inclusion of varied perspectives, and inspired applications and insights brought a lasting impact to “Beware of Pride” unusual even for a general conference address. Church members worldwide have thought more urgently about pride, perceived it differently in their own lives, and made changes in their behavior. As he realized the intensive impact of the address and the extensive need for more instruction on the topic, President Benson felt that he needed to do more. In a file of materials collected by his son Reed, we found a handwritten draft of a letter addressed to “My beloved brothers and sisters and friends.”

Recently at the opening session of General Conference my address was completely devoted to pride. It was captioned “Beware of Pride,” a phrase the Lord uses three times in the Doctrine and Covenants.

The response to that message has lifted my heart. It was a response by the saints from those eager to put their life in order [by] overcoming a sin they rarely considered and hardly understood. To the end of trying to further help them on this most vital matter, I considered giving a series of talks in General Conference along with First Presidency Messages in the *Ensign*. . . . I do not know that I will live long enough for that to happen.

President Benson mentioned that due to this concern he was also thinking of writing a book so that the further instruction he planned on pride would be available. He shared with Reed a list of possible chapters he had in mind:

1. The friendship of the world is enmity to God
2. From the top looking down
3. Pride from the bottom looking up
4. Fear of men’s judgments
5. Pride makes living gospel principles difficult
6. Unrighteous judgments—expressions of pride
7. Pride—the source of the world’s unhappiness
8. Pride, a damning sin
9. Cure for pride

All of these areas were included in “Beware of Pride,” though perhaps worded differently. As is evident in the indications of folder content and the ways in which President Benson selected and appears to have worked with various materials, he had a good start on those chapters. Unfortunately, his health difficulties did not allow him to carry out these plans. However, knowing what those plans were like enables us to further understand the areas and perspectives he stressed in his thinking and research.

Examining this prophet’s preparatory materials and apparent thought process and, as a result, thinking intently about his treatment of the critical subject of pride have provided a deeply moving and inspirational experience for us. We are grateful for this unique opportunity and for the enduring impact of President Benson’s teachings. **RE**

## Notes

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Pride and the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, November 2010, 55.
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Press On,” *Ensign*, November 2004, 101–4.
3. Marlin K. Jensen, “To Walk Humbly with Thy God,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 9–11.
4. See Church Educational System, *Eternal Marriage Student Manual* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003), 269–73; *Book of Mormon Student Manual* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009), 265.
5. See Kim B. Clark, “Are Ye Stripped of Pride?” Brigham Young University devotional, September 29, 2009; David Day, “Lessons of Pride and Glory for the Doctrine and Covenants,” Brigham Young University devotional, June 9, 2009.
6. Videos connected to Jacob 2 and Helaman 7–10.
7. Ezra Taft Benson, “Beware of Pride,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 4.
8. Sheri L. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 54.
9. See D&C 88:118.
10. Ezra T. Benson, “To the Humble Followers of Christ,” in Conference Report, April 1969, 10–15.
11. Ezra Taft Benson, “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 4–6.
12. These intentions will be further described at the end of this article.
13. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” 4.
14. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” 4.
15. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperCollins, 1952), 124.
16. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” 4.
17. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” 4.
18. Benson, “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” 6.
19. Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will But Thine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 75.
20. Maxwell, *Not My Will But Thine*, 88.
21. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 122.
22. John Ruskin, *Selections from the Writings of John Ruskin* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1871), 348. (Benson did not give the reference he used for the quotation.)
23. Neal A. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987), 50.
24. Neal A. Maxwell, *We Talk of Christ, We Rejoice in Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 47.
25. Benson, “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” 6.
26. Benson, “Beware of Pride,” 6.
27. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 122.
28. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, book 1, lines 263–65.
29. Maxwell, *We Talk of Christ*, 83.
30. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 39.
31. Benson, “Cleansing the Inner Vessel,” 6.

32. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 5.
33. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 124.
34. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 122.
35. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
36. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 5.
37. See Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography*, 1987.
38. Benson, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," 6.
39. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 5.
40. Ezra Taft Benson, as quoted in Dallin H. Oaks, *Pure in Heart* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 97; emphasis added.
41. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
42. James E. Talmage, *The Great Apostasy* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1968), 49.
43. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 368.
44. Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 301.
45. Hugh W. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, vol. 7 of The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1988), 360–61.
46. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 331–32.
47. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 354.
48. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
49. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
50. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 125.
51. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, 101–13.
52. Ezra Taft Benson, "Humility," unpublished typescript.
53. Ezra Taft Benson, "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet," 1981 *Devotional Speeches of the Year* (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 1981), 29.
54. Benson, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," 7.
55. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
56. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, 143.
57. Hugh W. Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, vol. 8 of The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 350.
58. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 57.
59. Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 82.
60. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 593.
61. Neal A. Maxwell, *Plain and Precious Things* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 93; Neal A. Maxwell, *Looking Back at Sodom* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 8.
62. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 356.
63. Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 349.
64. Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 349.
65. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, 104–7.
66. Benson, "To the Humble Followers," 10–15.
67. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 85.
68. Edward L. Kimball, ed., *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 195.
69. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 5.
70. Ezra T. Benson, *Title of Liberty* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1964), 156.
71. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 93.

72. Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 343–44.
73. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 153.
74. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
75. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 4.
76. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 87.
77. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, 92, 110.
78. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 307.
79. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
80. Maxwell, *We Talk of Christ*, 120.
81. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 56.
82. Maxwell, *Men and Women of Christ*, 101.
83. Phillips Brooks, as quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, April 1966, 74.
84. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, 311.
85. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, 57.
86. Maxwell, *Men and Women of Christ*, 10.
87. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, 91.
88. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
89. Benson, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," 6.
90. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 7.
91. Benson, "We Seek That Which Is Praiseworthy," Brigham Young University devotional, December 10, 1974. Reprinted as "Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," *New Era*, May, 1975.
92. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6.
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94. Rudyard Kipling, "God of Our Fathers Known of Old," *Hymns* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 80.
95. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 593.
96. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 110.
97. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 7.
98. Benson, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," 7.
99. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 6–7.
100. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 110.
101. Hugh W. Nibley, *The World and the Prophets*, vol. 3 of The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 262.
102. Maxwell, *Men and Women of Christ*, 103.
103. Benson, "Beware of Pride," 7.
104. Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 1:543.
105. Benson, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," 7.
106. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 63.
107. Neal A. Maxwell, *Deposition of a Disciple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2014) 38.
108. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 370.