The Challenge to Become

Dallin H. Oaks

From such teachings we conclude that the Final Judgment is not just an evaluation of a sum total of good and evil acts--what we have done. It is an acknowledgment of the final effect of our acts and thoughts--what we have become. It is not enough for anyone just to go through the motions. The commandments, ordinances, and covenants of the gospel are not a list of deposits required to be made in some heavenly account. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a plan that shows us how to become what our Heavenly Father desires us to become. . . .

Now is the time for each of us to work toward our personal conversion, toward becoming what our Heavenly Father desires us to become. As we do so, we should remember that our family relationships--even more than our Church callings--are the setting in which the most important part of that development can occur. The conversion we must achieve requires us to be a good husband and father or a good wife and mother. Being a successful Church leader is not enough. Exaltation is an eternal family experience, and it is our mortal family experiences that are best suited to prepare us for it. (Ensign, Nov. 2000, pp. 32-34)

The Holy Order

Ezra Taft Benson

When our Heavenly Father place Adam and Eve on this earth, He did so with the purpose in mind of teaching them how to regain His presence. Our Father promised a Savior
to redeem them from their fallen condition. He gave to them the plan of salvation and told them to teach their children faith in Jesus Christ, and repentance. Further, Adam and his posterity were commanded by God to be baptized, to receive the Holy Ghost, and to enter into the order of the Son of God. To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord. (“What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children About the Temple,” Temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, pp. 42-43; also, Ensign, Aug. 1985, p. 8; emphasis added.).

**Washings and Anointings**

*Boyd K. Packer*

The ordinances of washing and anointing are referred to often in the temple as initiatory ordinances. It will be sufficient for our purposes to say only the following: Associated with the endowment are washings and anointings-mostly symbolic in nature, but promising definite, immediate blessings as well as future blessings. Concerning these ordinances the Lord has said: "I say unto you, how shall your washings be acceptable unto me, except ye perform them in a house which you have built to my name?." (D&C 124:37.) And again: "I say unto you, that your anointings, and your washings . . . are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house." (D&C 124:39.) In connection with these ordinances, in the temple you will be officially clothed in the garment and promised marvelous blessings in connection with it. It is important that you
listen carefully as these ordinances are administered and that you try to remember the blessings promised and the conditions upon which they will be realized. (*The Holy Temple*, pp. 154-155).

**Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.4, WASHINGS AND ANOINTINGS**

Ritual anointings were a prominent part of religious rites in the biblical world. Recipients of the anointing included temple officiants (Ex. 28:41), prophets (1 Kgs. 19:16), and kings (1 Sam. 16:3; 1 Kgs. 1:39). In addition, sacral objects associated with the Israelite sanctuary were anointed (Ex. 30:22-29). Of equal importance in the religion of the Israelites were ablutions or ceremonial washings (Ex. 29:4-7). To ensure religious purity, Mosaic law required that designated individuals receive a ritual washing, sometimes in preparation for entering the temple (Ex. 30:17-21; Lev. 14:7-8; 15:5-27).

The washings and anointings of the biblical period have a parallel today in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In response to a commandment to gather the saints and to build a house "to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings, and anointings" (TPJS, p. 308), these ordinances were introduced in the Kirtland Temple on January 21, 1836 (HC 2:379-83). In many respects similar in purpose to ancient Israelite practice and to the washing of feet by Jesus among his disciples, these modern LDS rites are performed only in temples set apart and dedicated for sacred purposes (D&C 124:37-38; HC 6:318-19).

Many symbolic meanings of washings and anointings
are traceable in the scriptures. Ritual washings (Heb. 9:10: D&C 124:37) symbolize the cleansing of the soul from sins and iniquities. They signify the washing-away of the pollutions of the Lord's people (Isa. 4:4). Psalm 51:2 expresses the human longing and divine promise: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (cf. Ps. 73:13; Isa. 1:16).

The anointing of a person or object with sacred ointment represents sanctification (Lev. 8:10-12) and consecration (Ex. 28:41), so that both become "most holy" (Ex. 30:29) unto the Lord. In this manner, profane persons and things are sanctified in similitude of the messiah (Hebrew "anointed one"), who is Christ (Greek "anointed one").