D&C 59:9-13

8 Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

9 And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspodded from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

10 For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

11 Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

12 But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

13 And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full.

Relating to D&C 59

Latin Meanings

Sacer (root word for sacrifice and sacrament): Latin adj. sacred, holy, dedicated to a divinity, pertaining to religious or divine issues.

Sacrifice: Latin noun sacrificium, the noun sacrifice, from the verb sacrificare, from sacer, sacred, + -ficium, deed, from the verb facere, do or make.

Sacrament: From Latin noun sacramentum, from the verb sacramare ("hallow, consecrate"), from adjective sacer ("sacred"), + suffix -mentum.

1828 NOAH WEBSTER DICTIONARY

Sacrifice: 1. To offer to God in homage or worship, by killing and consuming, as victims on an altar; to immolate, either as an atonement for sin, or to procure favor, or to express thankfulness; as, to sacrifice an ox or a lamb. 2. To destroy, surrender or suffer to be lost for the sake of obtaining something; as, to sacrifice the peace of the church to a little vain curiosity. 3. To devote with loss. 4. To destroy; to kill.

Righteousness: Purity of heart and rectitude of life; conformity of heart and life to the divine law. Righteousness, as used in Scripture and theology, in which it is chiefly used, is nearly equivalent to holiness, comprehending holy principles and affections of heart, and conformity of life to the divine law. It includes all we call justice, honesty and virtue, with holy affections; in short, it is true religion.

Broken Heart: Having the spirits depressed or crushed by grief or despair.

Contrite: to break or bruise; to rub or wear. Literally, worn or bruised. Hence, broken-hearted for sin; deeply affected with grief and sorrow for having offended God; humble; penitent; as a contrite sinner.

Spirit: 4. Temper; disposition of mind, habitual or temporary; as a man of a generous spirit, or of a revengeful spirit; the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

Let us go to the house of God in the spirit of prayer. 5. The soul of man; the intelligent, immaterial and immortal part of human beings. ... 8. Turn of mind; temper; occasions; state of the mind. 9. Powers of mind distinct from the body.

Sacraments: In present usage, an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace; or more particularly, a solemn religious ceremony enjoined by Christ, the head of the Christian church, to be observed by his followers, by which their special relation to him is created, or their obligations to him renewed and ratified. Thus baptism is called a sacrament, for by it persons are separated from the world, brought into Christ's visible church, and laid under particular obligations to obey his precepts. The eucharist or communion of the Lord's supper, is also a sacrament, for by it persons are separated from the world, brought into Christ's visible church, and laid under particular obligations to obey his precepts. The eucharist or communion of the Lord's supper, is also a sacrament, for by it persons are separated from the world, brought into Christ's visible church, and laid under particular obligations to obey his precepts. The eucharist or communion of the Lord's supper, is also a sacrament, for by it persons are separated from the world, brought into Christ's visible church, and laid under particular obligations to obey his precepts.

Vows: A solemn promise made to God.

Offer up: 1. Literally, to bring to or before; hence, to present for acceptance or rejection; to exhibit something that may be taken or received or not. ... 3. To present, as an act of worship; to immolate; to sacrifice; often with up.

Oblations: Any thing offered or presented in worship or sacred service; an offering; a sacrifice.

Fast[ing]: 1. To abstain from food, beyond the usual time; to omit to take the usual meals, for a time; as, to fast a day or a week. 2. To abstain from food voluntarily, for the mortification of the body or appetites, or as a token of grief, sorrow and affliction.

Perfect: Finished; complete; consummate; not defective; having all that is requisite to its nature and kind; as a perfect statue; a perfect likeness; a perfect work; a perfect system.

1 Cor 11:23-30

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my
blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew [GR: to announce, declare, promulgate, make known; to proclaim publicly, publish] the Lord’s death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning [GR: to separate, make a distinction, discriminate] the Lord’s body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

3 Ne 18:1-9, 28-33

1 And it came to pass that Jesus commanded his disciples that they should bring forth some bread and wine unto him.

2 And while they were gone for bread and wine, he commanded the multitude that they should sit themselves down upon the earth.

3 And when the disciples had come with bread and wine, he took of the bread and brake and blessed it; and he gave unto the disciples and commanded that they should eat.

4 And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude.

5 And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, he said unto the disciples: Behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread and bless it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.

6 And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread and blessed it and given it unto you.

7 And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shown unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

8 And it came to pass that when he said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take of the wine of the cup and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it.

9 And it came to pass that they did so, and did drink of it and were filled; and they gave unto the multitude, and they did drink, and they were filled.

10 And when the disciples had done this, Jesus said unto them: Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you.

11 And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

12 And I give unto you a commandment that ye shall do these things. And if ye shall always do these things blessed are ye, for ye are built upon my rock.

28 And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it;

29 For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him.

30 Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you, but ye shall minister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name; and if it so be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood.

31 But if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I know my sheep, and they are numbered.

32 Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them.

33 Therefore, keep these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not under condemnation; for wo unto him whom the Father condemneth.

Mormon 9:29

29 See that ye are not baptized unworthily; see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily; but see that ye do all things in worthiness, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God; and if ye do this, and endure to the end, ye will in nowise be cast out.

How Important is Sacrament Meeting?

Dallin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

This is a commandment with a promise. By participating weekly and appropriately in the ordinance of the sacrament we qualify for the promise that we will "always have his Spirit to be with [us]" (D&C 20:77). That Spirit is the foundation of our testimony. It testifies of the Father and the Son, brings all things to our remembrance, and leads us into truth. It is the compass to guide us on our path. This gift of the Holy Ghost, President Wilford Woodruff taught, "is the greatest gift that can be bestowed upon man" (Deseret Weekly, Apr. 6, 1889, 451).

The ordinance of the sacrament makes the sacrament meeting the most sacred and important meeting in the Church. It is the only Sabbath meeting the entire family can attend together. Its content in addition to the sacrament should always be planned and presented to focus our attention on the Atonement and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. (“Sacrament Meeting and the Sacrament,” Ensign, Nov. 2008, p. 17; underling added)

What Do the Emblems of the Sacrament Mean?

Jeffrey R. Holland (Quorum of the Twelve)

With a crust of bread, always broken, blessed, and offered first, we remember his bruised body and broken heart, his physical suffering on the cross where he cried, "I thirst," and finally, "My God, my God, why hast thou
What Does Partaking of the Sacrament Obligate Us To Do?

David O. McKay (Quorum of the Twelve)

My brethren and sisters, do we always stop to think, on that sacred Sabbath day when we meet together to partake of the sacrament, that we witness, promise, obligate ourselves, in the presence of one another and in the presence of God, that we will do certain things? Note them. I have time merely to mention them.

The first: That we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of the Son. In so doing we choose him as our leader and our ideal; and he is the one perfect character in all the world. It is a glorious thing to be a member of the Church of Christ and to be called a Christian in the true sense of the term; and we promise that we should like to be that, that we are willing to do it.

Secondly, that we will always remember him. Not just on Sunday, but on Monday, in our daily acts, in our self-control. When our brother hurts us we are going to try to master our feelings and not retaliate in the same spirit of anger. When a brother treats us with contempt we are going to try to return kindness. That's the spirit of the Christ and that's what we have promised, that we will do our best to achieve these high standards of Christianity, true Christian principles.

The third: We promise to "keep the commandments which he has given." Tithing, fast offerings, the Word of Wisdom, kindness, forgiveness, love. The obligation of a member of the Church of Christ is great, but it is as glorious as it is great, because obedience to these principles gives life, eternal life. On the other hand, the man who seeks to live by violating the principles is deceived by the adversary and goes the way to death. (Conference Report, October 1829, p.14; bolding added)

What Should We Remember During the Partaking of the Emblems?

Jeffrey R. Holland (Quorum of the Twelve)

What is stressed in both prayers [of the sacrament] is that all of this is done in remembrance of Christ. In so participating we witness that we will always remember him, that we may always have his Spirit to be with us (see D&C 20:77, 79).

If remembering is the principal task before us, what might come to our memory when those plain and precious emblems are offered to us?

We could remember the Savior's premortal life and all that we know him to have done as the great Jehovah, creator of heaven and earth and all things that in them are. We could remember that even in the Grand Council of Heaven he loved us and was wonderfully strong, that we triumphed even there by the power of Christ and our faith in the blood of the Lamb (see Rev. 12:10-11).

We could remember the simple grandeur of his mortal birth to just a young woman, one probably in the age range of those in our Young Women organization, who spoke for every faithful woman in every dispensation of time when she said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38).

We could remember his magnificent but virtually unknown foster father, a humble carpenter by trade who taught us, among other things, that quiet, plain, unpretentious people have moved this majestic work forward from the very beginning, and still do so today. If you are serving almost anonymously, please know that so, too, did one of the best men who has ever lived on this earth.

We could remember Christ's miracles and his teachings, his healings and his help. We could remember that he gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf and motion to the lame and the maimed and the withered. Then, on those days when we feel our progress has halted or our joys and views have grown dim, we can press forward steadfastly in Christ, with unshaken faith in him and a perfect brightness of hope (see 2 Ne. 31:19-20).

We could remember that even with such a solemn mission given to him, the Savior found delight in living; he enjoyed people and told his disciples to be of good cheer. He said we should be as thrilled with the gospel as one who had found a great treasure, a veritable pearl of great price, right on our own doorstep. We could remember that Jesus found special joy and happiness in children and said all of us should be more like them—guileless and pure, quick to laugh and to love and to forgive, slow to remember any offense.

We could remember that Christ called his disciples friends, and that friends are those who stand by us in times of loneliness or potential despair. We could remember a friend we need to contact or, better yet, a friend we need to make. In doing so we could remember that God often provides his blessings through the compassionate and timely response of another. For someone nearby we may be the means of heaven's answer to a very urgent prayer.
We could-and should-remember the wonderful things that have come to us in our lives and that "all things which are good cometh of Christ" (Moro. 7:24). Those of us who are so blessed could remember the courage of those around us who face more difficulty than we, but who remain cheerful, who do the best they can, and trust that the Bright and Morning Star will rise again for them-as surely he will do (see Rev. 22:16).

On some days we will have cause to remember the unkind treatment he received, the rejection he experienced, and the injustice-oh, the injustice-he endured. When we, too, then face some of that in life, we can remember that Christ was also troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed (see 2 Cor. 4:8-9).

When those difficult times come to us, we can remember that Jesus had to descend below all things before he could ascend above them, and that he suffered pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind that he might be filled with mercy and know how to succor his people in their infirmities (see D&C 88:6; Alma 7:11-12).

To those who stagger or stumble, he is there to steady and strengthen us. In the end he is there to save us, and for all this he gave his life. However dim our days may seem they have been darker for the Savior of the world.

In fact, in a resurrected, otherwise perfected body, our Lord of this sacrament table has chosen to retain for the benefit of his disciples the wounds in his hands and his feet and his side-signs, if you will, that painful things happen even to the pure and perfect. Signs, if you will, that pain in this world is not evidence that God doesn't love you. It is the wounded Christ who is the captain of our soul-he who yet bears the scars of sacrifice, the lesions of love and humility and forgiveness.

Those wounds are what he invites young and old, then and now, to step forward and see and feel (see 3 Ne. 11:15; 3 Ne. 18:25). Then we remember with Isaiah that it was for each of us that our Master was " despised and rejected ...; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). All this we could remember when we are invited by a kneeling young priest to remember Christ always. ("This Do in Remembrance of Me", Ensign, November 1995, p.67)

What does it mean to partake of the sacrament worthily?

John H. Groberg (Seventy)  
What does it mean to partake of the sacrament worthily? Or how do we know if we are unworthy? If we desire to improve (which is to repent) and are not under priesthood restriction, then, in my opinion, we are worthy. If, however, we have no desire to improve, if we have no intention of following the guidance of the Spirit, we must ask: Are we worthy to partake, or are we making a mockery of the very purpose of the sacrament, which is to act as a catalyst for personal repentance and improvement? If we remember the Savior and all he has done and will do for us, we will improve our actions and thus come closer to him, which keeps us on the road to eternal life.

If, however, we refuse to repent and improve, if we do not remember him and keep his commandments, then we have stopped our growth, and that is damnation to our souls. ("The Beauty and Importance of the Sacrament," Ensign, May 1989, p.38)

David O. Mckay (Quorum of the Twelve)  
To partake of the sacrament unworthily is to take a step toward spiritual death. No man can be dishonest within himself without deadening the susceptibility of his spirit. Sin can stun the conscience as a blow on the head can stun the physical senses. He who promises one thing and deliberately fails to keep his word, adds sin to Sin. On natural principles such a man "eats and drinks condemnation to his soul". (Conference Report, October 1929, p.15; emphasis added)
How Should We Appropriately Prepare and Participate in Sacrament Meeting?

Russell M. Nelson (Quorum of the Twelve)

Those participating should be seated at least five minutes before the meeting begins so they can be spiritually prepared for a worshipful experience. During that quiet interval, prelude music is subdued. This is not a time for conversation or transmission of messages but a period of prayerful meditation as leaders and members prepare spiritually for the sacrament. ...

The song of the righteous is a prayer unto the Lord (see D&C 25:12). Some members seem reluctant to sing, perhaps because of fear. We each need to forget our fears and sing as an opportunity to praise our Creator prayerfully. Music in sacrament meeting is for worship, not performance. We must not let our sacred music slip away from us nor allow secular music to replace it. ...

Each member of the Church bears responsibility for the spiritual enrichment that can come from a sacrament meeting. Each should sing with a grateful heart and respond with an audible “amen” at the conclusion of a prayer or a testimony. We personally ponder the Atonement of Jesus Christ. We reflect upon the significance of His suffering at Gethsemane and His Crucifixion on Calvary. At this time, each of us is to “examine himself” (1 Cor. 11:28) and reflect upon personal covenants made with the Lord. At this time, we meditate upon the sacred things of God. (Given at the Worldwide Leadership Training June 2003; printed as “Worshiping at Sacrament Meeting,” Ensign, Aug 2004, pp.24-29)

Dallin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

I begin with how members of the Church should prepare themselves to participate in the ordinance of the sacrament. In a worldwide leadership training meeting five years ago, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught the priesthood leaders of the Church how to plan and conduct sacrament meetings. “We commemorate His Atonement in a very personal way,” Elder Nelson said. “We bring a broken heart and a contrite spirit to our sacrament meeting. It is the highlight of our Sabbath-day observance” ("Worshiping at Sacrament Meeting," Liahona, Aug. 2004, 12; Ensign, Aug. 2004, 26).

We are seated well before the meeting begins. “During that quiet interval, prelude music is subdued. This is not a time for conversation or transmission of messages but a period of prayerful meditation as leaders and members prepare spiritually for the sacrament” (Liahona, Aug. 2004, 13; Ensign, Aug. 2004, 27).

When the Savior appeared to the Nephites following His Resurrection, He taught them that they should stop the practice of sacrifice by the shedding of blood. Instead, “ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:20). That commandment, repeated in the modern revelation directing us to partake of the sacrament each week, tells us how we should prepare. As Elder Nelson taught, “Each member of the Church bears responsibility for the spiritual enrichment that can come from a sacrament meeting” (Liahona, Aug. 2004, 14; Ensign, Aug. 2004, 28).

In his writings on the doctrines of salvation, President Joseph Fielding Smith teaches that we partake of the sacrament as our part of commemorating the Savior’s death and sufferings for the redemption of the world. This ordinance was introduced so that we can renew our covenants to serve Him, to obey Him, and to always remember Him. President Smith adds: “We cannot retain the Spirit of the Lord if we do not consistently comply with this commandment” (Doctrines of Salvation, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954-56], 2:341).

How we dress is an important indicator of our attitude and preparation for any activity in which we will engage. If we are going swimming or hiking or playing on the beach, our clothing, including our footwear, will indicate this. The same should be true of how we dress when we are to participate in the ordinance of the sacrament. It is like going to the temple. Our manner of dress indicates the degree to which we understand and honor the ordinance in which we will participate.

During sacrament meeting-and especially during the sacrament service-we should concentrate on worship and refrain from all other activities, especially from behavior that could interfere with the worship of others. Even a person who slips into quiet slumber does not interfere with others. Sacrament meeting is not a time for reading books or magazines. Young people, it is not a time for whispered conversations on cell phones or for texting persons at other locations. When we partake of the sacrament, we make a sacred covenant that we will always remember the Savior. How sad to see persons obviously violating that covenant in the very meeting where they are making it. (From “Sacrament Meeting and the Sacrament,” Ensign, Nov 2008, pp.17–20)

What is the Relationship between the Sacrament and the Gift of the Holy Ghost?

David A. Bednar (Quorum of the Twelve)

We also invite the ongoing companionship of the Holy Ghost as we worthily partake of the sacrament each Sabbath day: “And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day”(D&C 59:9). [From “That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us,” Ensign, May 2006, pp. 28-31]

Dallin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

When He introduced the sacrament, the Savior also gave teachings and promises about the Holy Ghost. On that sacred occasion known as the Last Supper, Jesus explained the mission of the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost. The Comforter would testify of Him and reveal other truths. Jesus also explained that He had to leave His disciples in order for the Comforter to come to them. When I depart, He told them, “I will send him unto you” (John 16:7). After His Resurrection, He told His Apostles to tarry in Jerusalem until they were given “power from on high” (Luke 24:49). That power came when “the promise of the Holy Ghost” was "shed forth" upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:33).

Similarly, when the Savior introduced the sacrament in the New World, He promised, "He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul; and he that drinketh of this
wine drinketh of my blood to his soul; and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled" (3 Ne. 20:8). The meaning of that promise is evident: "Now, when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit" (3 Ne. 20:9).

The close relationship between partaking of the sacrament and the companionship of the Holy Ghost is explained in the revealed prayer on the sacrament. In partaking of the bread, we witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and always remember Him and keep His commandments. When we do so, we have the promise that we will always have His Spirit to be with us (see D&C 20:77). [From “The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” Ensign, November 1998, p.37]

Sacrament Renews the Cleansing Effect of our Baptism

David A. Bednar (Quorum of the Twelve)

Through the ordinance of the sacrament we renew our baptismal covenant and can receive and retain a remission of our sins (see Mosiah 4:12, 26). [From “That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us,” Ensign, May 2006, pp. 28-31]

Dalbin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

To have the continuous companionship of the Holy Ghost is the most precious possession we can have in mortality. The gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred upon us by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood after our baptism. But to realize the blessings of that gift, we must keep ourselves free from sin. When we commit sin, we become unclean and the Spirit of the Lord withdraws from us. The Spirit of the Lord does not dwell in “unholy temples” (see Mosiah 2:36-37; Alma 34:35-36; Hel. 4:24), and no unclean thing can dwell in His presence (see Eph. 5:5; 1 Ne. 10:21; Alma 7:21; Moses 6:57).

A few weeks ago I used a chain saw to cut down a tree in my backyard. It was a dirty job, and when I was done I was splattered with a filthy mixture of sawdust and oil. In that condition I did not want anyone to see me. I just wanted to be cleansed in water so I would again feel comfortable in the presence of other people.

Not one of you young men and not one of your leaders has lived without sin since his baptism. Without some provision for further cleansing after our baptism, each of us is lost to things spiritual. We cannot have the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and at the final judgment we would be bound to be “cast off forever” (1 Ne. 10:21). How grateful we are that the Lord has provided a process for each baptized member of His Church to be periodically cleansed from the soil of sin. The sacrament is an essential part of that process.

We are commanded to repent of our sins and to come to the Lord with a brokenheart and a contrite spirit and partake of the sacrament in compliance with its covenants. When we renew our baptismal covenants in this way, the Lord renews the cleansing effect of our baptism. In this way we are made clean and can always have His Spirit to be with us. The importance of this is evident in the Lord’s commandment that we partake of the sacrament each week (see D&C 59:8-9).

We cannot overstate the importance of the Aaronic Priesthood in this. All of these vital steps pertaining to the remission of sins are performed through the saving ordinance of baptism and the renewing ordinance of the sacrament. Both of these ordinances are officiated by holders of the Aaronic Priesthood under the direction of the bishopric, who exercise the keys of the gospel of repentance and of baptism and the remission of sins. (“The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” Ensign, November 1998, p.37)

Taking the Sacrament Can Help Us Root Out Evil

D. Todd Christofferson (Quorum of the Twelve)

At the same time, let us not justify ourselves in a casual effort. Let us not be content to retain some disposition to do evil. Let us worthy partake of the sacrament each week and continue to draw upon the Holy Spirit to root out the last vestiges of impurity within us. I testify that as you continue in the path of spiritual rebirth, the atoning grace of Jesus Christ will take away your sins and the stain of those sins in you, temptations will lose their appeal, and through Christ you will become holy, as He and our Father are holy. (“Born Again,” Ensign, May 2008, pp. 76–79)

What Does It Mean to Take Upon Us the Name of Christ?

Dalbin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

[Having discussed three ways in which we take upon us the name of Christ, Elder Oaks said:]In these three relatively obvious meanings, we see that we take upon us the name of Christ when we are baptized in his name, when we belong to his Church and profess our belief in him, and when we do the work of his kingdom.

There are other meanings as well, deeper meanings that the more mature members of the Church should understand and ponder as he or she partakes of the sacrament.

It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. We witness that we are willing to do so. (See D&C 20:77.) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense.

What future event or events could this covenant contemplate? The scriptures suggest two sacred possibilities, one concerning the authority of God, especially as exercised in the temples, and the other-closely related-concerning exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

The name of God is sacred. The Lord's Prayer begins with the words, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name." (Matt. 6:9.) From Sinai came the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." (Ex. 20:7, Deut. 5:11.) Latter-day revelation equates this with using the name of God without authority. "Let all men beware how they take my name in their lips," the Lord declares in a modern revelation, for "many there be who … use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority." (D&C 63:61-62.)
Consistent with these references, many scriptures that refer to "the name of Jesus Christ" are obviously references to the authority of the Savior. This was surely the meaning conveyed when the seventy reported to Jesus that "even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 10:17.) The Doctrine and Covenants employs this same meaning when it describes the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation as "they who shall desire to take upon them my name with full purpose of heart." (D&C 18:27.) The Twelve are later designated as "special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world," and as those who "officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church." (D&C 107:23, 33.)

By way of further illustration, the Old Testament contains scores of references to the name of the Lord in a context where it clearly means the authority of the Lord. Most of these references have to do with the temple.

When the children of Israel were still on the other side of the Jordan, the Lord told them that when they entered the promised land there should be a place where the Lord their God would "cause his name to dwell." (Deut. 12:11; see also Deut. 14:23-24; Deut. 16:6.) Time after time in succeeding revelations, the Lord and his servants referred to the future temple as a house for "the name" of the Lord God of Israel. (See 1 Kgs. 3:2; 1 Kgs. 5:5; 1 Kgs. 8:16-20, 29, 44, 48; 1 Chr. 22:8-10, 19; 1 Chr. 29:16; 2 Chr. 2:4; 2 Chr. 6:5-10, 20, 34, 38.) After the temple was dedicated, the Lord appeared to Solomon and told him that He had hallowed the temple "to put my name there for ever." (1 Kgs. 9:3; 2 Chr. 7:16.)

Similarly, in modern revelations the Lord refers to temples as houses built "unto my holy name." (D&C 124:39; D&C 105:33; D&C 109:2-5.) In the inspired dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord for a blessing upon "thy people upon whom thy name shall be put in this house." (D&C 109:26.)

All of these references to ancient and modern temples as houses for "the name" of the Lord obviously involve something far more significant than a mere inscription of his sacred name on the structure. The scriptures speak of the Lord's putting his name in a temple because he gives authority for his name to be used in the sacred ordinances of that house. That is the meaning of the Prophet's reference to the Lord's putting his name upon his people in that holy house. (See D&C 109:26.)

Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Another future event we may anticipate when we witness our willingness to take that sacred name upon us concerns our relationship to our Savior and the incomprehensible blessings available to those who will be called by his name at the last day.

King Benjamin told his people, "There shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent." (Mosiah 3:17; see also 2 Ne. 31:21.) Peter proclaimed "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" to the leaders of the Jews, declaring that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:10, 12; see also D&C 18:21.)

The scriptures proclaim that the Savior's atoning sacrifice was for those who "believe on his name." Alma taught that Jesus Christ, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, would come "to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name." (Alma 5:48; Alma 9:27; Alma 11:40; Hel. 14:2.) In the words of King Benjamin, "Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ." (Mosiah 5:9.)

Thus, those who exercise faith in the sacred name of Jesus Christ and repent of their sins and enter into his covenant and keep his commandments (see Mosiah 5:8) can lay claim on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who do so will be called by his name at the last day.

When the Savior taught the Nephites following his resurrection, he referred to the scriptural statement that "ye must take upon you the name of Christ." He explained, "For by this name shall ye be called at the last day; And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day." (3 Ne. 27:5-6.) That same teaching is repeated in a modern revelation, which adds the caution that "if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father." (D&C 18:25; see also Alma 5:38.)

The Book of Mormon explains the significance of being called by the name of Jesus Christ. When the Savior showed his spirit body to the brother of Jared, he introduced himself as the Father and the Son, declaring that through his redeeming sacrifice all mankind who believed on his name should have life eternal through him, "and they shall become my sons and my daughters." (Ether 3:14.) Abinadi said of those who believed in the Lord and looked to him for a remission of their sins "that these are his seed, or they are heirs of the kingdom of God." (Mosiah 15:11.) He continued this explanation as follows:

"For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed?" (Mosiah 15:12.)

Speaking through the prophet Alma, the Lord explained the significance of this relationship: "For behold, in my name are they called; and if they know me they shall come forth, and shall have a place eternally at my right hand." (Mosiah 26:24.)

In these great scriptures from the Book of Mormon, we learn that those who are qualified by faith and repentance and compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel will have their sins borne by the Lord Jesus Christ. In spiritual and figurative terms they will become the sons and daughters of Christ, heirs to his kingdom. These are they who will be called by his name in the last day.

According to this meaning, when we witness our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we
are signing our commitment to do all that we can to achieve eternal life in the kingdom of our Father. We are expressing our candidacy-our determination to strive for exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

Those who are found worthy to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ at the last day are described in the great revelations recorded in the ninety-third and seventy-sixth sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. Here the Savior revealed to Joseph Smith that in due time, if we keep the commandments of God, we can receive the "fulness" of the Father. (D&C 93:19-20.) Here the Savior bears record that "all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the [Father], and are the church of the Firstborn." (D&C 93:22.) "They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things.... Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods" who "shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever." (D&C 76:55, 58, 62.) "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3; see also D&C 88:4-5.) This is the ultimate significance of taking upon us the name of Jesus Christ.

[A Summary]

When the priest offers the scriptural prayer on the bread at the sacrament table, he prays that all who partake may "witness" unto God, the Eternal Father, "that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son." (D&C 20:77; Moro. 4:3.) This witness has several different meanings.

It causes us to renew the covenant we made in the waters of baptism to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and serve him to the end. We also take upon us his name as we publicly profess our belief in him, as we fulfill our obligations as members of his Church, and as we do the work of his kingdom.

But there is something beyond these familiar meanings, because what we witness is not that we take upon us his name but that we are willing to do so. In this sense, our witness relates to some future event or status whose attainment is not self-assumed, but depends on the authority or initiative of the Savior himself.

Scriptural references to the name of Jesus Christ often signify the authority of Jesus Christ. In that sense, our willingness to take upon us his name signifies our willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ in the sacred ordinances of the temple, and to receive the highest blessings available through his authority when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Finally, our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ affirms our commitment to do all that we can to be counted among those whom he will choose to stand at his right hand and be called by his name at the last day. In this sacred sense, our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ constitutes our declaration of candidacy for exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is eternal life, "the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.)

That is what we should ponder as we partake of the sacred emblems of the sacrament. As we do so, we glory in the mission of the risen Lord, who lived and taught and suffered and died and rose again that all mankind might have immortality and eternal life. (From "Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ," Ensign, May 1985, p.80; underlining and bolding are added, italics are original)

What is the Relationship Between the Sacrament and the Ministering of Angels?

Dallin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve)

In a closely related way, these ordinances of the Aaronic Priesthood are also vital to the ministering of angels.

“The word 'angel' is used in the scriptures for any heavenly being bearing God's message" (George Q. Cannon, Gospel Truth, sel. Jerrell L. Newquist [1987], 54). The scriptures recite numerous instances where an angel appeared personally. Angelic appearances to Zacharias and Mary (see Luke 1) and to King Benjamin and Nephi, the grandson of Helaman (see Mosiah 3:2; 3 Ne. 7:17-18) are only a few examples. When I was young, I thought such personal appearances were the only meaning of the ministering of angels. As a young holder of the Aaronic Priesthood, I did not think I would see an angel, and I wondered what such appearances had to do with the Aaronic Priesthood.

But the ministering of angels can also be unseen. Angelic messages can be delivered by a voice or merely by thoughts or feelings communicated to the mind. President John Taylor described "the action of the angels, or messengers of God, upon our minds, so that the heart can conceive ... revelations from the eternal world" (Gospel Kingdom, sel. G. Homer Durham [1987], 31).

Nephi described three manifestations of the ministering of angels when he reminded his rebellious brothers that (1) they had "seen an angel," (2) they had "heard his voice from time to time," and (3) also that an angel had "spoken unto [them] in a still small voice" though they were "past feeling" and "could not feel his words" (1 Ne. 17:45). The scriptures contain many other statements that angels are sent to teach the gospel and bring men to Christ (see Heb. 1:14; Alma 39:19; Moro. 7:25, 29, 31-32; D&C 20:35). Most angelic communications are felt or heard rather than seen.

How does the Aaronic Priesthood hold the key to the ministering of angels? The answer is the same as for the Spirit of the Lord.

In general, the blessings of spiritual companionship and communication are only available to those who are clean. As explained earlier, through the Aaronic Priesthood ordinances of baptism and the sacrament, we are cleansed of our sins and promised that if we keep our covenants we will always have His Spirit to be with us. I believe that promise not only refers to the Holy Ghost but also to the ministering of angels, for "angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ" (2 Ne. 32:3). So it is that those who hold the Aaronic Priesthood open the door for all Church members who worthily partake of the sacrament to enjoy the companionship of the Spirit of the Lord and the ministering of angels. (“The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” Ensign, November 1998, p.37)

An Apostle’s Vision of the Last Supper

David H. Haight (Quorum of the Twelve)

Six months ago at the April general conference, I was
excused from speaking as I was convalescing from a serious operation. My life has been spared, and I now have the pleasant opportunity of acknowledging the blessings, comfort, and ready aid of my Brethren in the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, and other wonderful associates and friends to whom I owe so much and who surrounded my dear wife, Ruby, and my family with their time, attention, and prayers. For the inspired doctors and thoughtful nurses I express my deepest gratitude, and for the thoughtful letters and messages of faith and hope received from many places in the world, many expressing, “You have been in our prayers” or “We have been asking our Heavenly Father to spare your life.” Your prayers and mine, thankfully, have been answered. 

... The evening of my health crisis, I knew something very serious had happened to me. Events happened so swiftly—the pain striking with such intensity, my dear Ruby phoning the doctor and our family, and I on my knees leaning over the bathtub for support and some comfort and hoped relief from the pain. I was pleading to my Heavenly Father to spare my life a while longer to give me a little more time to do His work, if it was His will.

While still praying, I began to lose consciousness. The siren of the paramedic truck was the last that I remembered before unconsciousness overtook me, which would last for the next several days.

The terrible pain and commotion of people ceased. I was now in a calm, peaceful setting; all was serene and quiet. I was conscious of two persons in the distance on a hillside, one standing on a higher level than the other. Detailed features were not discernible. The person on the higher level was pointing to something I could not see.

I heard no voices but was conscious of being in a holy presence and atmosphere. During the hours and days that followed, there was impressed again and again upon my mind the eternal mission and exalted position of the Son of Man. I witness to you that He is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, Savior to all, Redeemer of all mankind, Bestower of infinite love, mercy, and forgiveness, the Light and Life of the world. I knew this truth before—I had never doubted nor wondered. But now I knew, because [page 60] of the impressions of the Spirit upon my heart and soul, these divine truths in a most unusual way.

I was shown a panoramic view of His earthly ministry: His baptism, His teaching, His healing the sick and lame, the mock trial, His crucifixion, His resurrection and ascension. There followed scenes of His earthly ministry to my mind in impressive detail, confirming scriptural eyewitness accounts. I was being taught, and the eyes of my understanding were opened by the Holy Spirit of God so as to behold many things.

The first scene was of the Savior and His Apostles in the upper chamber on the eve of His betrayal. Following the Passover supper, He instructed and prepared the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper for His dearest friends as a remembrance of His coming sacrifice. It was so impressively portrayed to me—the overwhelming love of the Savior for each, I witnessed His thoughtful concern for significant details—the washing of the dusty feet of each Apostle, His breaking and blessing of the loaf of dark bread and blessing of the wine, then His dreadful disclosure that one would betray Him.

He explained Judas’s departure and told the others of the events soon to take place.

Then followed the Savior’s solemn discourse when He said to the Eleven: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcame the world.” (John 16:33.)

Our Savior prayed to His Father and acknowledged the Father as the source of His authority and power—even to the extending of eternal life to all who are worthy.

He prayed, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

Jesus then reverently added:

“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” (John 17:3–5.)

He pled not only for the disciples called out from the world who had been true to their testimony of Him, “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” (John 17:20.)

When they had sung a hymn, Jesus and the Eleven went out to the Mount of Olives. There, in the garden, in some manner beyond our comprehension, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world. His agony in the garden, Luke tells us, was so intense “his sweat was as ... great drops of blood falling ... to the ground.” (Luke 22:44.) He suffered an agony and a burden the like of which no human person would be able to bear. In that hour of anguish our Savior overcame all the power of Satan.

The glorified Lord revealed to Joseph Smith this admonition to all mankind:

“Therefore I command you to repent ...

“For ... I, God, ... suffered ... for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; ... “Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, ...

“Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments.”

(D&C 19:15–16, 18, 20.)

During those days of unconsciousness I was given, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, a more perfect knowledge of His mission. I was also given a more complete understanding of what it means to exercise, in His name, the authority to unlock the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven for the salvation of all who are faithful. My soul was taught over and over again the events of the betrayal, the mock trial, the scouring of the flesh of even one of the Godhead. I witnessed His struggling up the hill in His weakened condition carrying the cross and His being stretched upon it as it lay on the ground, that the crude spikes could be driven with a mallet into His hands and wrists and feet to secure His body as it hung on the cross for public display.
Crucifixion—the horrible and painful death which He suffered—was chosen from the beginning. By that excruciating death, He descended below all things, as is recorded, that through His resurrection He would ascend above all things. (See D&C 88:6.)

Jesus Christ died in the literal sense in which we will all die. His body lay in the tomb. The immortal spirit of Jesus, chosen as the Savior of mankind, went to those myriads of spirits who had departed mortal life with varying degrees of righteousness to God's laws. He taught them the "glorious tidings of redemption from the bondage of death, and of possible salvation, ... [which was] part of [our] Savior's foreappointed and unique service to the human family." (James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977, p. 671.)

I cannot begin to convey to you the deep impact that these scenes have confirmed upon my soul. I sense their eternal meaning and realize that "nothing in the entire plan of salvation compares in any way in importance with that most transcendent of all events, the atoning sacrifice of our Lord. It is the most important single thing that has ever occurred in the entire history of created things; it is the rock foundation upon which the gospel and all other things rest," as has been declared. (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, p. 60.)