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Traditional Christian Sacraments and Covenants

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Latter-day Saints associate ordinances with covenants. In Latter-day Saint theology, men and women establish a covenant relationship with the Lord by accepting covenants, receiving ordinances, and living up to the promises they have made.[1] Many Latter-day Saint ordinances correspond to the sacraments of traditional Christianity.[2] In the Roman Catholic tradition, the twelfth-century theologian Peter Lombard enumerated seven sacraments that were officially defined and accepted in the Council of Trent (1545–63).[3] The Orthodox tradition also holds seven sacraments, but the Reformation and subsequent Protestant tradition accepted only two: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

While emphasis on the importance of sacraments, or ordinances, is common among Christians, the pervasive connections made by Latter-day Saints between covenants and ordinances is unique. Whereas traditional Christian sacraments are generally considered vehicles of Christ's unilaterally given grace, Latter-day Saints emphasize the bilateral nature of ordinances by focusing on the covenants that attach to them. Most ordinances entail covenants, by which the recipients make promises of obedience as required by conditional promises of blessings offered to them by the Lord. While the concept of covenant—absent in Christianity for many years—returned to prominence in the writings of some Reformation theologians, the full connection between covenants and ordinances would reappear only in the Restoration.

Early Christian Views

The scholarly commentary that exists regarding the Old Testament concept of covenant would fill a modest library.[4] God's covenants with the patriarchs and with Israel formed the basis of a special relationship, which entailed Israel's religion and laws. For Christians, however, Christ's advent not only initiated a new covenant, but Christ initiated a new form of covenant establishment and renewal that was to replace the rituals of the Mosaic law. Unfortunately, "little is known about the form of early Christian ritual except through late second-century sources."[5] Furthermore, while Old Testament rituals focused on the covenant concept, early Christian sources do not explicitly link sacraments to covenants.

To understand the development of sacramental theology, we must first review how the Christian tradition has defined sacraments as the means by which a priest mediates direct transmissions of grace from God to men. In their broadest sense, sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and invisible grace. Sacraments accomplish the "transmission of spiritual power by material means."[6] More directly, sacraments are "actions or ceremonies believed to have been [7]

instituted by Christ as channels of divine grace." One may also narrow the definition of sacrament to a phenomenological understanding and define it as "a ritual that enacts, focuses, and concentrates the distinctive beliefs, attitudes, and actions of any religious tradition."[8]

In the Catholic tradition, sacraments convey Christ's grace to the participant ex opere operato, meaning "on account of the work done" or "by virtue of the action." This doctrine emerged to negate the concern that unworthiness on the part of the priest or faithlessness on the part of the participant might nullify the effects of the sacraments. The Council of Trent concluded that in and of themselves the sacraments—blessed by the consecratory words of the priest—convey divine grace, the only exception being if the recipient places an obstacle against the sacrament's administration.

Accordingly, the efficacy of the sacraments depends on Christ's virtue, not on human merit.[9] The concept of automatic conveyance of sacramental grace is antithetical to the covenant notion in that it deemphasizes human compliance as crucial to sacramental efficacy.

The word sacrament is derived from sacramentum, the Latin translation of the Greek musterion. "The Greek musterion is of uncertain etymology but is most probably associated with muein, meaning 'to close' (the mouth), and thus 'to keep secret.'"[10] The wide variety of Greek mysteries were secret initiation rituals that were often understood to ensure blessings to the initiates, particularly after death.[11]

The Latin term sacramentum was anciently employed in at least two ways. First, a sacramentum was "a sum of money laid in a sacred place by a litigant [in a case at law] which went to the gods if he lost the case. Thus it came to mean any consecratory act."[12] Second, a sacramentum was the military oath or vow of a soldier entering the Roman army. The soldiers swore an oath of allegiance and might even receive a brand on the arm to signify whose soldiers they were.[13] Jennings explains, "The initiatory function of this vow understood in relation to the vow of secrecy associated with [initiation into] the Greek mysteries made possible the appropriation of the term sacramentum for those activities (especially baptism) in which the Christian confession of faith (which, like the vow of soldiers, placed one in mortal danger) played an important role."[14]

An early and most interesting reference to sacraments in association with oaths or vows comes from a letter written in 112 by Pliny the Younger. Emperor Trajan sent Pliny to govern the Roman province of Bithynia, where Pliny heard a case concerning a band of rugged Christians accused of public disturbance. The fact that some of the tortured and interrogated Christians chose death rather than feigning allegiance to the Roman gods may evidence a prior allegiance or sacrament made with Christianity. Pliny's letter records that others in the interrogated group of Christians renounced Christianity so as to be released. Pliny wrote that these last Christians "declared that the sum total of their guilt or error amounted to no more than this: they had met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately among themselves in honour of Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath [sacramento], not for any criminal purpose, but to abstain from theft, robbery and adultery, to commit no breach of trust and not to deny a deposit when called upon to restore it. After this ceremony it had been their custom to disperse and reassemble later to take food of an ordinary, harmless kind; but they had in fact given up this practice since my edict, issued on your instructions, which banned all political societies."[15]

Other early Christian references to sacraments, however, rarely mention oaths or vows, let alone covenants. While Christians have always understood baptism as the means of initiation into the church (and the new covenant), early writers did not detail covenant obligations associated with the rite. Justin Martyr (ca. 100–165) gave the fullest descriptions of baptism and the Eucharist in the second century, but he focused more on the form of the rituals and on their centrality to Christian worship than on their possible covenant implications. He did describe baptismal candidates as "those who are persuaded and believe that the things we teach and say are true, and promise that they can live

accordingly," but he made no direct mention of covenant in that context.[16] His mention of a promise might be a faint echo of an earlier covenant perspective. But while Justin Martyr wrote of baptism as a means of rebirth and forgiveness of sins and the Eucharist as a means of memorial and thanksgiving, he placed no explicit emphasis on a mutually formed covenant relationship.

Tertullian (ca. 160–225) is considered the first to designate the rites of the Christian church as sacraments, and in some of his writings the word sacrament describes oaths and sacred actions. But it appears that Tertullian never made any real connection between sacraments and covenants either. Tertullian's homily On Baptism (ca. 200), the earliest treatise dedicated solely to a single sacrament, speaks of baptism as a washing of sins in preparation for the Holy Ghost. Tertullian took baptism very seriously. In arguing against the baptism of children, he wrote, "All who understand what a burden baptism is will have more fear of obtaining it than of its postponement." He also instructed recently baptized Christians to "ask of your Lord, that special grants of grace and apportionments of spiritual gifts be yours," so as to be able to fend off the temptations that follow baptism.[17] Nonetheless, in On Baptism Tertullian did not make mention of any vow or covenant associated with baptism.

Cyprian of Carthage (ca. 200–258) likewise wrote extensively concerning baptism. In his epistles directed against heretics, Cyprian supported rebaptism of heretics and held a baptismal doctrine contrary to the later Catholic doctrine of ex opere operato, which had its beginnings in the fourth century with Augustine. Cyprian explained that the pronunciation of the Trinity and the ritual of baptism alone were not sufficient: "But who in the Church is perfect and wise who can either defend or believe this, that this bare invocation of names is sufficient to the remission of sins and the sanctification of baptism; since these things are only then of advantage, when both he who baptizes has the Holy Spirit, and the baptism itself also is not ordained without the Spirit?"[18] Nonetheless, Cyprian's epistles evidence no distinct covenant theology in relation to baptism.

Fluidity of Doctrine

During the first few centuries of Christianity, sacramental doctrine was apparently quite fluid, as practice determined the form of the rituals more than dogma. Early Eucharistic doctrines, for example, varied over time and among different church fathers. The Didache, which seems to have arisen in the first century as an oral tradition for training Christian converts, gives detailed instructions for both baptism and the Eucharist, including verbal formulas to be used for each. But the emphasis is on sacrifice, and covenants are not mentioned.[19] Ignatius (late first century) also used the term Eucharist. He condemned the heretics of his day for not considering the Eucharist to be the flesh of Jesus Christ.[20] Irenaeus (ca. 130–202) conceived of the Eucharist as an offering of bread and wine brought by Christians. Cyprian also considered the Eucharist an oblation; the Eucharist was seen as a sacrificial gift offered by the priest, who "imitates that which Christ did."[21] But while some patristic fathers appear to have understood the original Lord's Supper as the cup of the new covenant,[22] they did not attempt to formulate the Eucharist as a covenant meal for early Christians.

When early Christians do mention covenants, it is generally in reference to the Old Testament and its relation to the new Christian era. Of the thirty-three references to covenant in the New Testament, "almost half of these instances come in quotations from the Old Testament, and another five clearly look back to Old Testament statements."[23] Moreover, the Greek diatheke was used as the New Testament word for "covenant," even though its traditional meaning had been "last will and testament." This translation further mitigated the importance of covenant in the New Testament and created a semantic debate that continues today.[24]

In the writings of the Christian fathers, commentary on covenants came primarily in response to Marcion (85–160) and the Gnostics, who claimed that the old covenant and new covenant were antithetical. Indeed, Marcion claimed that the two testaments, or covenants, came from different gods. In answer to this heresy, Irenaeus argued that the commandment to love was the same in both covenants and hence "the Author of the Law and the Gospel is shown to be one and the same for the teachings of an absolutely perfect life, since they are the same in each covenant."[25] Tertullian conceded that the ancient covenant had run its course and that the new covenant was a "reformation, amplification, and progress." But despite the differences in the teachings and in the language of the covenants, Tertullian argued that "all this diversity is consistent with one and the same God."[26]

Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215) likewise believed the truth of the matter to be found in "the connection of the covenants."[27] In many of his writings, he emphasized the harmony of the two testaments, even referring to them as one "eternal covenant."[28] Clement reasoned that because there is only one God, there is only one church and one covenant, despite its different manifestations in different ages. Accordingly, while God was known by the Greeks, Hebrews, and Barbarians through different "covenants," the different arrangements were made with the same God. With Christ's advent, a new covenant was made with Christians, which covenant superseded all previous arrangements. But Clement made clear that the new covenant came from the same God and was consistent with the law previously given to the Hebrews.[29]

There can be little doubt that early Christians were aware of the covenant concept as expressed in the Old Testament. However, the oversimplified distinction between the old covenant as law and the new covenant as gospel may have made it difficult for early Christians to associate covenants with human obligations or promises. Hence, while Christians may have understood themselves as part of a new covenant community, little mention is made of specific vows, promises, or obligations that Christians would necessarily incur.

Given the Latter-day Saint perspective of associating sacraments and ordinances with covenants, this inconclusive evidence of covenants in early Christianity is interesting, if not puzzling. In The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, George Mendenhall gives one plausible explanation for the surprising infrequency of references to covenants in both the New Testament itself and in the New Testament era: "The covenant for Judaism meant the Mosaic law, and for the Roman Empire a covenant meant an illegal secret society. This two-sided conflict made it nearly impossible for early Christianity to use the term meaningfully."[30] Christians obviously had good reason to avoid association with either the Jews or illegal secret societies. Emphasis on Christ's gospel as a testament or as a unilateral gift was one manner in which Christians could distinguish themselves from law-bound Jews and avoid the appearance of a community based on clandestine pacts.

Daniel Elazar offers another possible reason the covenant concept would not be prominent in the early Christian era. He argues that in establishing orthodoxy and unity, the concept of covenant may have "presented a number of practical and theological problems." According to Elazar, the church subsequently "deemphasized covenant, especially after it believed that it had successfully superseded the Mosaic covenant and transferred the authority of the Davidic covenant to Jesus. After Augustine (354–430), the Church paid little attention to covenant and, even though the Eucharist remained central to the Christian liturgy, it ceased to be a truly common meal and its covenantal dimension was overshadowed by other features and meanings attributed to the Last Supper."[31]

Yet despite the apparent lack of connection for early Christians between sacraments and covenants, there is late fourth-century evidence that baptism was sometimes associated with the formation of a contract with Christ. While some church fathers had certainly seen baptism as an initiation into the new covenant, St. John Chrysostom (347–407) went even further by specifying a contract with Christ that baptismal candidates made before entering the waters of baptism.

In the rite of renunciation and profession, a deacon or priest anointed the candidates with oil, after which the candidates faced west and renounced Satan. The candidates then faced east and professed belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as well as in baptism. This rite dissolved one's covenant with hell and formulated a new contract, or covenant, with Christ. Hugh Riley explains that for Chrysostom, "the notion of a contract is the central vehicle whereby he interprets the act of renunciation and profession. . . . The term 'the contract [suntheke],' which occurs more than twenty times in the Baptismal Instructions of Chrysostom, is used to interpret several aspects of the rite of renunciation and profession. The verbal act by which the candidate expresses his turning away from Satan and turning toward Christ is called by Chrysostom his 'contract.'"[32]

Reformation Views

Apart from Chysostom's reference to a Christian's "contract," it appears that the first theological work tying covenants to sacraments came in the Reformation. Sacramental doctrines during the Reformation were extremely divisive, just as they are today. One concept that divided the reformers was sacramentalism, which deals with how one connects the physical and spiritual realms of religion. Although it was Luther who raised the initial doubts concerning the medieval church's sacramental system, he soon found himself at odds with more radical reformers who denounced sacramentalism in a more extreme fashion. While Luther, and later Calvin, retained the belief that a degree of spiritual efficacy could result directly from physical symbols, Zwingli and Bullinger more strongly accented the humanist affirmation of "a metaphysical contrast between spirit and flesh."[33] The Platonistic belief that matter and spirit are fundamentally antithetical became antisacramental in its denial of the spiritual efficacy of the physical sacraments.

In redefining the sacraments, the reformers first reduced the number of sacraments to two: baptism and the Lord's Supper. The reformers considered these sacraments "signs" or "seals of the covenant." In their opposition to the baptismal doctrine of the Anabaptists, reformers such as Zwingli included Christians in the Abrahamic covenant and equated baptism with circumcision as a modern sign of the covenant. These reformers reasoned that if children in Old Testament times were circumcised into the covenant, Christian children should likewise be baptized into the covenant.

But differences arose among the reformers in defining exactly what was meant by covenant sign or covenant seal. "When Luther called the sacrament a covenantal seal, he meant that baptism visibly ratified and guaranteed God's promises, as a royal seal authenticated a government document on which it was inscribed. Only secondarily was baptism a pledge of obedience by men. For Zwingli, however, the sacrament was primarily 'a covenant sign which indicates that all those who receive it are willing to amend their lives and to follow Christ.'"[34]

Zwingli also referred back to the original use of sacramentum as a military oath or pledge to demonstrate how a Christian sacrament was also a pledge to hear and obey God.

Calvin picked up on at least part of Luther's sacramental theology. Calvin's covenant seals "graphically portray[ed] God's 'covenants' or promises" and were analogous to governmental seals of authentication. "For Calvin God's promise of salvation rather than man's pledge of obedience was the substance of baptism, and he criticized Zwingli for suggesting that the sacrament was 'nothing but a token and mark by which we confess our religion before men.'"[35]

Zwingli's successor in Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger, exchanged letters with Calvin on sacramental issues. Though the two reached some consensus, as in the case of the Zurich Consensus Formula of 1549, their doctrines ultimately differed. Bullinger, like Zwingli, held a subjective doctrine of the sacraments, which he saw as badges of human commitment. Bullinger also associated baptism with sacramentum and its ancient function as a military oath, and he saw the Lord's Supper primarily in terms of remembrance of Christ. Calvin opposed these ideals with his more objective doctrine of sacraments, which he saw as increasing and nourishing faith. Holifield explains that for Calvin the Lord's Supper contained an "objective sacramental reality, a spiritual presence of Christ that could not be overthrown by human

faithlessness."[36]

Heinrich Bullinger's reformed covenant theology is also unique for its emphasis on the bilateral or mutual nature of covenants—the idea that covenants are conditional upon human behavior. For Bullinger, "baptism is nothing other than an initial sign of the people of God, which binds us to Christ and to an irreproachable life. Secondly, its effect is to keep us for Christ in the covenant or in a life pleasing to God."[37] Baker explains that Bullinger's baptism "reminded the Christian of his covenant obligation to live a holy life. . . . The individual was obligated to love and trust God through faith in Christ and to love and serve his neighbor."[38] Bullinger's discussion of the conditional nature of God's covenant brought into focus a debate over whether God's covenants are conditional or unconditional that the Puritans would continue in the centuries that followed. While the precise origins of reformed covenant theology are uncertain, Zwingli and Bullinger's treatment of covenant ideas was crucial to the reintroduction of covenant ideas to the forefront of religious thought.[39]

Bullinger also picked up on and extended a covenant idea used by some of the early church fathers in their debate with those challenging the applicability of the Old Testament to Christianity.[40] Bullinger featured the unity of the testament, or unity of the covenant, as his central theological concept. According to Bullinger, God had made only one covenant with humanity throughout history. The covenant began with Adam, "For first He [Christ] was promised to Adam, then the promise was renewed with Noah, and now with Abraham. And all this is but one promise, one Savior and one faith. . . . The covenant conditions were the same for Abraham as they had been for Noah and Adam. They were simply, faith and love."[41]

Bullinger saw the patriarchal tradition as pristine. God revealed the covenant and its conditions directly to Adam and later to Abraham. With Abraham came circumcision, which was a sacrament of the covenant. The covenant continued through the patriarchs until the time of Moses and the law, which law was simply an interregnum between the patriarchs and Christ. When Christ came He restored the covenant and reexpressed its conditions in their less explicit form, as they were known before the law. Christ brought an end to the ceremonial law (the nonessential practices of law) and instituted new sacraments, but the covenant and its original conditions remained unchanged.

Bullinger discussed various reforms of the covenant, such as those initiated by Hezekiah and Josiah. Bullinger even saw a similarity between these ancient reforms and the reform and purification of the one covenant being carried out by his Zurich church. Less than three centuries after Bullinger, Joseph Smith would initiate a complete reformation of the covenant not only by restoring precious covenant doctrines but also by restoring the authority by which individuals can participate in the ordinances that act as essential witnesses to covenants.

Though Bullinger's theology was not the most influential, it may indeed have come the closest to the understandings that would be restored through the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's other revelations. The Protestant Reformation generally had pushed the idea of covenant back onto center stage after many centuries of absence from that light. Zwingli and Bullinger recognized that the covenant was an important step for each Christian and, like Nephi and Alma, saw baptism as an external sign or witness of an internal covenant that one makes with God when one repents by promising to obey His commandments henceforth. The Book of Mormon clarifies the proper relationship between ordinances such as baptism and covenants. "Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments . . . ?" (Mosiah 18:10; see also 1 Nephi 13:26; 2 Nephi 30:2; 31:12–14; Mosiah 18:10–13; Alma 7:15). The Reformation also reemphasized the continuity of the gospel. Bullinger recognized that the new covenant was the same as the ancient covenant given to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses.[42] Of all the Reformation thinkers, Bullinger's views were the most advanced in this respect. His treatment of the covenant foreshadowed the thoroughly covenantal approach to the ordinances of salvation that would be established

in the Restoration through Joseph Smith.

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[1] See Jorge A. Rojas, "Covenants and Ordinances," *Ensign,* November1991, 44.

[2] For example, of the seven Catholic sacraments, only penance (confession) is not directly represented in Latter-day Saint ordinances: Baptism=*baptism*, Confirmation =*confirmation (gift of the Holy Ghost)*, Holy Eucharist=*the sacrament*, Extreme Unction=*priesthood blessings*, Orders=*priesthood ordination*, Matrimony=*temple marriage*.

[3] "The Council of Trent solemnly defined that there are seven sacraments of the New Law, truly and properly so called, viz., Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony" (D. J. Kennedy, *The Catholic Encyclopedia,* ed. Charles G. Herbermann [New York: Robert Appleton, 1912], 13:299; see also New Advent, *The Catholic Encyclopedia,* sacraments, www.newadvent.org [accessed February 27, 2004]).

[4] A few of the more influential works on the Old Testament include Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh: n.p., 1885); Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament,* trans. J. A. Baker, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), vol. 1; George E. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburgh: Biblical Colloquium, 1955); Dennis J. McCarthy, *Old Testament Covenant: A Survey of Current Opinions* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox, 1972); Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969); Ernest W. Nicholson, *God and His People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[5] Monika K. Hellwig, "Christian Sacraments," *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 12:505–8.

[6] J. W. C. Wand, *The Development of Sacramentalism* (London: Methuen & Co., 1928), 2–3.

[7] Thomas M. Finn, "Sacraments," *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity,* ed. Everett Ferguson, 2d ed. (New York: Garland, 1997), 1011.

[8] Theodore W. Jennings Jr., "Sacrament: An Overview," *Encyclopedia of Religion,* 12:504.

[9] See Kennedy, *Catholic Encyclopedia,* 302–4; see also New Advent, *Catholic Encyclopedia,* sacraments, www.newadvent.org (accessed February 27, 2004).

[10] Jennings, "Sacrament," 501.

[11] See Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 276–77. In light of the Greek origins of *sacramentum,* some scholars have searched for connections between early Christian sacramental ideas and Greek mystery religions by finding parallels between ancient mystery rites and Christian sacraments (Wand, *Development of Sacramentalism;* Oliver Chase Quick, *The Christian Sacraments* [Milwaukee: Morehouse, 1927]).

[12] Jerald C. Brauer, ed., *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 734.

[13] See Ann Loades, "Sacrament," *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought,* ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 634–35.

[14] Jennings, "Sacrament," 501.

[15] Pliny, *Letters and Panegyricus,* ed. E. H. Warmington and Betty Radice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 288–89.

[16] L. W. Barnard, *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 136. The passage cited was originally translated by C. C. Richardson.

[17] Tertullian, *Homily on Baptism,* trans. Ernest Evans (London: SPCK, 1964), 39–43.

[18] Cyprian, *Epistle LXXIV,* found in "The Fathers of the Church" database at New Advent, link Church Fathers—Epistles of Cyprian, www.newadvent.org/ fathers/0506.htm (accessed February 27, 2004).

[19] See Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2003), 19–25, 35.

[20] See Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyraeans,* found in "The Fathers of the Church" database at New Advent, link Church Fathers—Epistle to the Smyraeans, www.newadvent.org/fathers/0109.htm (accessed February 27, 2004).

[21] Bernhard Lohse, A *Short History of Christian Doctrine,* trans. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), 133–35.

[22] See *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, vol. 7:1–2 Corinthians,* ed. Gerald Bray (Downers Grove, 111.: InterVarsity, 1999), 112–13.

[23] J. Guhrt, "Covenant," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology,* ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1975), 369. In contrast to the meager thirty-three instances of covenant in the New Testament, "covenant is found almost 300 times in the OT" (369).

[24] The first Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (ca. 250 B.C.), translated the Hebrew word for covenant *(berit)* with the Greek *diatheke* instead of *suntheke.* While *suntheke* generally signified a covenant or agreement between two people in Greek society, *diatheke* generally signified a will as in "last will and testament" (William Barclay, *New Testament Words* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974], 64–66; *The New Testament: God's Word to the Nations (GWN)* [Cleveland: Biblion Publishing, 1988], 531–40).

[25] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies,* in *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995), 1:429; cited in David W. Bercot, *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 179.

[26] Tertullian, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 3:345–46, 361; cited in Bercot, *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs,* 179.

[27] Clement of Alexandria, *in Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 2:552–53; cited in Bercot, *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs,* 179.

[28] Douglas Andrew Stoute, "The Origins and Early Development of the Reformed Idea of the Covenant" (Ph.D. diss., King's College, Cambridge, 1979), 22.

[29] See Stoute, "Origins and Early Development," 19–22.

[30] George E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," in *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 722.

[31] Daniel J. Elazar, *Covenant and Commonwealth: From Christian Separation through the Protestant Reformation,* The Covenant Tradition in Politics (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1996), chapter 1, "Covenant Traditions in the West," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs—Daniel Elazar Papers Index, www.jcpa.org/dje/books/ct-v012-chl.htm (accessed February 27,2004). Elsewhere in the same chapter Elazar writes: "In the days of the early church, *sacramentum* was a secular term referring primarily to the soldiers' oath of loyalty to the emperor—whose formula

goes back to the time of the Hittites—the early church used it to refer to the Last Supper as the central covenant enactment of Christianity. Those who were parties to the reenactment of this *sacramentum* became the *ekklesia,* the assembly, or the Greek equivalent of the *edah.* It was the post-Apostolic church which transformed those two terms and gave them their present meaning of sacrament and church.”

[32] Hugh M. Riley, *Christian Initiation,* The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 17, ed. Johannes Quasten (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1974), 92.

[33] E. Brooks Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed: The Development of Puritan Sacramental Theology in Old and New England, 1570–1720* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1974), 2.

[34] Holifield, *Covenant Sealed,* 6.

[35] Holifield, *Covenant Sealed,* 14–15.

[36] Holifield, *Covenant Sealed,* 24.

[37] J. Wayne Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1980), 7.

[38] Baker, *Henrich Bullinger,* 52.

[39] See Stoute, “Origins and Early Development.”

[40] See Stoute, “Origins and Early Development,” 12–32.

[41] Baker, *Henrich Bullinger,* 58–59. Bullinger’s quotation comes from *Deralt gloub* (see Baker for index of Bullinger’s works).

[42] Through modern revelations we learn that not only was the covenant the same in Old Testament times but the same ordinances of the covenant were present as well. “Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized” (Moses 6:64–65; see also 7:11; 8:23–24).