
Sacramental Connections: Deliverance, Redemption, and Safety (D&C 27)

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The Restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints included the authoritative reinstatement of the ordinance of the sacrament. The Lord instructed the Saints that it is “expedient that the church meet together often” to participate in this ordinance (see D&C 20:75). Most references dealing with the sacrament in the Doctrine and Covenants address the administrative aspects of this ordinance. For example, the scriptures address the authority required to perform the ordinance (see D&C 20:46, 58, 76), sacramental emblems (see D&C 20:75–79; 27:1–5), prayers (see D&C 20:77, 79), the frequency of partaking of the sacrament (see D&C 20:75), and personal preparation for participation therein (see D&C 20:68; 46:4). Such instruction is vital in maintaining the veracity of this sacred ordinance, but if we are not careful, we may focus too much on scriptural texts dealing with administering the ordinance alone and thus overshadow the possibilities of recognizing additional insights, understanding broader purposes, and receiving additional blessings of the sacrament.

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When considering how the sacrament is represented in the scriptural text of the Restoration, we can see that section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenants makes a unique contribution. It connects other textual concepts and administrative aspects of the sacrament by constructing a framework for understanding and applying the sacrament. The power of this revelatory text, however, is accessed only when its various parts are viewed as being connected and integrated one with the other. This chapter examines how the text of section 27 uniquely connects three purposes of the sacrament, namely, directing our attention to remembering the genesis of our deliverance (see vv. 1–4), inviting us to look forward to our future redemption (see vv. 5–14), and showing us how the sacrament provides safety and protection in how we live our lives presently (see vv. 15–18).

Textual Connections

The presentation and eventual publication of the revelatory text now known as section 27 are an instructive example of how scriptural principles and practices are revealed and how they are connected “line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little” (2 Nephi 28:30). Keeping this in mind helps us understand the powerful connections of the three different “lines” or “precepts” found in this revelation.

According to Joseph Smith’s account, this revelation was received when Newel Knight and his wife, Sally, visited Joseph and Emma Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania, in August 1830. During the course of their visit, it was proposed that Sally and Emma, who were previously baptized, be confirmed members of the Church and then afterwards, the group would partake of the sacrament together. Joseph left his home to find wine for the sacrament service and was met by a heavenly messenger. Joseph recounted that he recorded the “first paragraph” of the revelation with the remainder of the revelation being recorded the following September.¹

The “first paragraph” described by Joseph first appeared in the *Evening and Morning Star* in March 1833.² That very same paragraph was also included in the 1833 Book of Commandments as section 28.³ While the majority of that text deals with safely procuring and using acceptable sacramental emblems, this text outlines, albeit briefly, the three sacramental concepts necessary for us to better understand and apply the sacrament: remembering the past, looking to the future, and protecting the present.

The remainder of Joseph’s revelation, not recorded in the earlier publications, was finally published as part of the original text by 1835 as section 50 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.⁴ It is possible that this publication may have included additions to the original revelation received in 1830, for as Elder B. H. Roberts explained, some changes to the earlier revelations were made by “the Prophet himself” to correct errors and “throw increased light upon the subjects treated in the revelations.”⁵

That first paragraph published in 1833 was expanded by 457 words in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and is nearly identical to the current text found in section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenants today.⁶ Rather than adding new concepts or purposes to the original publication, the text added considerable detail to the purposes of looking forward to our future redemption and providing safety and protection in how we live our lives presently. This detail will be considered in later sections of this chapter.

Remembering the Past: The Genesis of Our Deliverance

The Doctrine and Covenants emphasizes that the sacrament is a ritual for remembering the genesis of our deliverance—the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In April 1830, for example, it was revealed to Joseph that partaking of the bread was to be “in remembrance of the body of [the] Son” (D&C 20:77) and drinking of the wine was to be “in remembrance of the blood of [the] Son” (D&C 20:79). With this sacred ritual, we are to direct our thoughts partly to an upper room in ancient Jerusalem, to the nearby grove of olive trees known as the Garden of Gethsemane, and to a garden tomb near Golgotha as we remember associated events.

Remembering is a powerful and necessary experience. President Spencer W. Kimball once said that the most important word in the dictionary could be the word *remember*.⁷ He explained the power of this word as he said, “I suppose there would never be an apostate, there would never be a crime, if people remembered, really remembered, the things they had covenanted at the water’s edge or at the sacrament table and in the temple. I suppose that is the reason the Lord asked Adam to offer sacrifices, for no other reason than that he and his posterity would remember—remember the basic things that they had been taught.”⁸

While the sacrament prayers revealed in Doctrine and Covenants section 20 instruct us to remember the Atonement and Resurrection, section 27

provides an additional witness that the sacrament is a time for “remembering unto the Father [Christ’s] body which was laid down for you, and [Christ’s] blood which was shed for the remission of your sins” (D&C 27:2). As important as the additional witness of this point is, the text in section 27 provides vital instruction about the importance and value of tokens or emblems in sharpening the focus of our remembrance.

It was revealed to Joseph Smith that “it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament” (D&C 27:2). While this may appear to be a simple administrative detail, it actually underscores the vital purpose of the sacrament itself—to completely focus our thoughts on the events of our deliverance. This textual passage actually underscores that the emblems used for sacramental worship are just that—emblems. As such, their purpose is nothing more and nothing less than turning our attention to a greater event, to focus our thoughts and feelings, and to remember the past in such a way as to make it not only relevant but very real. Some delight in discovering that it “mattereth not” what emblems are used during the sacrament. Their delight is tempered when they realize that sacramental emblems are not symbols of palatable pleasure or amusement but symbols meant to help us focus on the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. “For behold,” verse 2 teaches, “it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, *if*”—and this is a very important transition—“*if* it so be that ye do it with an *eye single* to my glory—*remembering* unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins” (v. 2; emphasis added). In truth, the value of the emblem—whatever it may be—is determined only by how well it helps us remember and focus on the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This means that any emblem, including the bread or the water, which distracts from the singular purpose of reminding us of the Savior’s Atonement, is ineffective or, in other words, it is used in vain. As such, those who prepare and pass the emblems of sacrament must be vigilant in their duty, for they may unwittingly distract from the sacrament ritual in the way they prepare, bless, and present the sacramental emblems.

President Kimball taught, “I guess we as humans are prone to forget. It is easy to forget. Our sorrows, our joys, our concerns, our great problems seem to wane to some extent as time goes on, and there are many lessons that we learn which have a tendency to slip from us.”⁹ Tokens or emblems sharpen our

focus and through tangible connectors help us remember events and concepts we hope to never forget. For example, many married couples exchange and wear rings as an emblem or symbol of their marriage. This particular emblem shows others that a person is married, but even more importantly, it reminds the married person of his or her spouse and of what is expected of a married person. Thus, when glancing at a wedding band, vivid memories and feelings return to the day when covenants were made. Remembering that event may actually inspire married individuals to renew their efforts and act accordingly. In this way, tokens or emblems that symbolize something from the past reconnect those events with the present in tangible and meaningful ways.

The sacrament is a consecrated event. Therefore, we must remember and focus on the past just as covenant Israel did during Passover. They intentionally looked to their past and remembered how they were miraculously delivered from captivity, oppression, angst, and despair. Likewise, Latter-day Saints also look to the past and remember the events that miraculously delivered them from captivity, oppression, angst, and despair, in any form. The Atonement is the genesis of our redemption, and if the present and the future do not connect with it, they hold very little prospect.

Looking to the Future: Our Redemption

Remembering the past is only effectual if it informs future events. Covenant Israel, for example, used the Passover to remember their great day of deliverance but perhaps failed to use the Passover's lessons of the past to inform and direct their view for future redemption. As a result, they did not recognize the Savior and crucified him instead of receiving him wholeheartedly. Likewise, Latter-day Saints may use the sacrament to remember the Atonement but then fail to use the sacrament to inform and direct their attention to a time when they might be with the Savior when he comes again. President John Taylor pointed out this crucial relationship between the past and the future as he said, "For in partaking of the sacrament we not only commemorate the death and sufferings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but we also shadow forth the time when he will come again and when we shall meet and eat bread with him in the kingdom of God."¹⁰

Directing our minds to the future has always been a key component of the sacrament.¹¹ For example, as Christ first instituted the sacramental wine during his mortal ministry, he said to his Apostles, "But I say unto you, I will

not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29). Even at that first sacrament meeting, the Savior was encouraging his disciples to look forward with anticipation to a *future* meeting—when Jesus and disciples would gather together again to partake of the sacrament.

Nearly 1,800 years later, the Savior provided almost the same type of instruction to his latter-day disciples. After teaching about the emblems of the sacrament and the importance of remembering the Savior's Atonement, the 1833 text of section 50 (now section 27) immediately turns our attention to the future. "Behold this is wisdom in me, wherefore marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you, on the earth, and with all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world."¹² Here the Lord speaks of his eventual return and a time when he will partake of the sacrament again. Just like the first sacrament in Jerusalem, Jesus is still urging disciples to remember the past *and* look to the future.

In the later published versions of this revelation, 70 percent of the words added were details pertaining to this future sacramental meeting.¹³ The principle of looking forward to partaking of the sacrament with the Savior is still the focal point, but now the revelation gave more detail concerning who would be at this event. Joseph Smith was informed that he would be present at the meeting along with other recognizable individuals. Section 27 specifically names other participants such as Moroni, Elisha, John the Baptist, Elijah, Joseph, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Michael (Adam), Peter, James, and John.¹⁴ We would assume from Matthew's account of the first sacrament meeting that those then present would also be in attendance to "drink [the sacrament] new" with the Savior. Elder Bruce R. McConkie also included at this gathering "those who have held keys and powers and authorities in all ages from Adam to the present [meaning when the future meeting is held]."¹⁵

Among all those listed in the later publication, we must not forget that group mentioned in both the 1833 and 1835 publications of this revelation. This is the group known as "all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world" (D&C 27:14). The wording here is reminiscent of Christ's great discourse and Intercessory Prayer given just prior to the Atonement in Gethsemane. At that time, Christ said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them *which thou hast given me*; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them" (John 17:9–10;

emphasis added). These individuals are the very same group that Christ specifically called “the men which thou gavest me out of the world” just three verses earlier in John 17:6.

In his discourse and prayer, Christ described these individuals as those who “bear witness” of him (John 15:27); “remember” him (John 16:4); and allow the Comforter, or Holy Ghost, to come upon them to “guide [them] into all truth” and “shew [them] things to come” (John 16:13). Christ said that these are they who received the name of God and kept God’s word (see John 17:6). The wording and phrases used here to describe those “given out of the world” neatly align with all those who worthily and properly partake of sacramental covenants.

As such, we find wonderful connections with the sacrament prayers revealed to Joseph Smith in April 1830. These prayers also contain words and phrases like “witness unto thee,” “in remembrance,” “do always remember him,” “willing to take upon them the name of thy Son,” “keep his commandments which he has given them,” and “that they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (D&C 20:77–78). When considering the future meeting where prophets of all ages and those “given out of the world” will partake of the sacrament with the Savior once again, it appears that this meeting will include those who have entered into covenants and who worthily participate in the sacramental ordinance. In fact, Elder Bruce R. McConkie asserted those described in section 27 as “given out of the world” to be “all the faithful members of the Church then living [at the time of the meeting] and all the faithful saints of all the ages past.” No wonder Elder McConkie described this future sacramental gathering with the Savior as “the greatest congregation of faithful saints ever assembled on planet earth.”¹⁶

For some, it may be difficult to pinpoint when this future sacrament meeting spoken of in section 27 will actually take place. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, when speaking on the subject, taught, “Before the Lord Jesus descends openly and publicly in the clouds of glory, attended by all the hosts of heaven; before the great and dreadful day of the Lord sends terror and destruction from one end of the earth to the other; before he stands on Mount Zion, or sets his feet on Olivet, or utters his voice from an American Zion or a Jewish Jerusalem; before all flesh shall see him together; before any of his appearances, which taken together comprise the second coming of the Son of God—before all these, there is to be a secret appearance to selected members of his Church.”

He then said of this “secret appearance” that “it will be a sacrament meeting. It will be a day of judgment for the faithful of all the ages. And it will take place in Daviess County, Missouri, at a place called Adam-ondi-Ahman.”¹⁷

The Present Day: Seeking Protection and Safety

After directing our attention to the past and then to the future, this revelation teaches that the sacrament should also cause us to consider the present day and our current conduct. This should not be surprising, as it has been said that the Doctrine and Covenants was “meant in part as a current guide to how Latter-day Saints should live their religion.”¹⁸ In the 1833 publications of this revelation, the final verse reads, “Wherefore lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins and be faithful until I come.”¹⁹ The later publications of this revelation added 136 words (nearly 30 percent of the additions) to this final theme, giving it a more robust approach to using the sacrament as a means for real-time protection and safety (see D&C 27:15–18). When considering the additions, we now read the original 1833 sentence as, “Wherefore, lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins, *and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand*” (D&C 27:15; 1835 wording italicized).²⁰ Several additional verses are then included that deal directly with the armor of God. Some may interpret this passage merely as an additional witness of Paul’s writings about the importance of the armor of God (see Ephesians 6:10–17). However, if this segment is directly connected with the sacrament and the other purposes thereof, these additional verses provide deeper insights on how the sacrament protects us now and prepares us for the future.

The connection of this final purpose of the sacrament with the two other purposes outlined in this revelation may be found in the textual wording of the revelation itself. For example, this final section begins with the word “wherefore” (D&C 27:15). In 1828, the word *wherefore* was commonly defined as “for which reason,” which means “because of this.”²¹ After the section describes a future meeting with Jesus Christ to partake of the sacrament (see vv. 5–14), the next verse could be read as, “*For which reason*” or “*Because of this* [meaning vv. 5–14], lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins, and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand.” In this way, verses 5–14 are directly connected to verses 15–18. This pattern was also used earlier in the revelation

to connect the first two purposes of the sacrament together. Consider how the text outlines the sacramental purpose of using emblems to remember the past events of our deliverance (see vv. 1–4), and then recall that the very next verse states, “Behold, this is wisdom in me; *wherefore*, [or *because of this purpose we must*] marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you on the earth” (D&C 27:5; emphasis added).

These direct connections are important because rather than considering this revelation as three independent purposes, principles, precepts, or practices, we can see that each purpose is textually connected to the other. In other words, the only way to be worthy of and qualify for the future sacramental meeting or redemption is for individuals to remember the past events of the Atonement and Resurrection *and* to lift their hearts, rejoice, gird up their loins, and put on the armor of God today. Richard Lloyd Anderson pointed out, “For through remembering Jesus’ past sacrifice, we promise to transform our own lives in preparation for an eternal future with him.”²²

With an established connection between the sacrament and the armor of God, we can see in vivid ways how the sacrament protects us. It is important to remember that Christ described those “given out of the world” with attributes directly tied to the sacramental covenants (bear witness of him, remember him, have the Holy Ghost with them, bear the name of God, and keep God’s commandments) and that he then said that such individuals were “not of the world” as he was “not of the world” (John 17:16). In his intercessory prayer, Christ prayed that the Father would not “take them out of the world” but instead “keep them from the evil” and “sanctify them through thy truth” (John 17:15, 17). Obviously, the sanctifying power spoken of here can come only through Jesus Christ’s Atonement and Resurrection. As for keeping the Saints from evil, consider President Howard W. Hunter’s reference to the Passover as “an ancient covenant of protection” and his statement that, in similar manner, the sacrament is “the new covenant of safety.”²³ According to section 27, the armor of God is intended to protect the Saints so they might withstand the evil day and ultimately stand with Christ in the end (see D&C 27:15). Making additional connections between the sacrament and the armor of God provides unique insights to the protecting power of this sacred covenant and is worthy of further examination.

Armor of God

While the Apostle Paul used the imagery of physical armor, he was clear that he wasn't speaking about physical protection as much as spiritual protection. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood," Paul wrote, "but against . . . the darkness of this world . . . against spiritual wickedness" (Ephesians 6:12). Elder Harold B. Lee offered a more detailed explanation regarding the symbolism of the armor of God which lays a foundation for making sacramental connections as well. Elder Lee explained, "We have the four parts of the body that . . . [are] the most vulnerable to the powers of darkness. The loins, typifying virtue, chastity. The heart, typifying our conduct. Our feet, our goals or objectives in life and finally our head, our thoughts."²⁴ With this important symbolism in mind, we are now in a position to see the powerful connection between the armor of God and the sacrament.

Helmet of salvation. The helmet is designed to protect the head or brain during physical combat. Without such protection, a serious wound is deadly. According to Elder Lee, in *spiritual warfare*, the helmet is to protect one's thoughts. Obviously if unprotected, our thoughts can likewise be spiritually fatal. According to section 27, the best way to protect our thoughts is with salvation (see D&C 27:18). To understand how salvation can protect our thoughts, consider how King Benjamin taught that salvation comes by no other name or means save Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 3:17).

As we partake of the sacrament, we don a helmet of salvation by covenanting to remember Christ. Jesus encouraged us to "look unto [him] in every thought; doubt not, fear not" (D&C 6:36). The sacrament helps us with this protection, as our thoughts are first turned to his Atonement and Resurrection. This makes it possible for us to consider our future redemption in Christ. This in turn provides opportunity for candid evaluation of our present condition. The sacrament firmly places the "helmet of salvation" upon those entering into this covenant as they covenant they will "always remember him [Jesus Christ]" (D&C 20:77, 79). Think how differently our actions would be if they were always preceded by thoughts of the Savior, how he lived, and what he would have us do. With our eye single to him in our remembrance of the past and by remembering him in all we do every day, our thoughts are protected in such a way as to secure a glorious future.

Breastplate of righteousness. A physical breastplate is designed to protect the heart and lungs—both life-sustaining organs. According to Elder Lee, the spiritual breastplate, or our righteousness, protects our conduct. It is critical to point out that it is not our conduct that protects our righteousness but our righteousness that protects our conduct. This may appear to be a matter of semantics to some, but it is much more than merely haggling over words. Elder David A. Bednar points out that “it is possible for us to have clean hands but not have a pure heart.”²⁵ A person without a righteous character might engage in appropriate activities, but that in and of itself may not afford the protection needed to withstand the evil day. Of course, righteous character cannot be obtained or even sustained without righteous conduct. Elder Bednar reasoned, “Both clean hands and a pure heart are required to ascend into the hill of the Lord and to stand in His holy place.”²⁶ As such, the way to obtaining the character of righteousness is, as Elder Bednar pointed out, “through the process of putting off the natural man and by overcoming sin and the evil influences in our lives through the Savior’s Atonement.” He clarified that “hearts are purified as we receive His strengthening power to do good and become better. All of our worthy desires and good works, as necessary as they are, can never produce clean hands and a pure heart. It is the Atonement of Jesus Christ that provides both a *cleansing and redeeming power* that helps us to overcome sin and a *sanctifying and strengthening power* that helps us to become better than we ever could by relying only upon our own strength. The infinite Atonement is for both the sinner and for the saint in each of us.”²⁷

Doctrine and Covenants 27:15 instructs every person to “take upon you [the Lord’s] whole armor” so that “ye may be able to *withstand* the evil day, having done all, that you may be able to *stand*” (emphasis added). It then reads, “Stand, therefore, . . . having on the breastplate of righteousness” (D&C 27:16). It is hard to think of anything more foundational in forging and securing the breastplate of righteousness than the sacrament. Paul taught that obedience yields righteousness (see Romans 6:16). As such, all who worthily partake of the sacrament covenant to “keep his commandments which he [God] has given them” (D&C 20:77). Thus we pledge to become righteous through obeying the commandments that God has given. Obviously, this requires an omission from wrongdoing. But the commandments of God are not limited to proscriptions alone. As we avoid things of the world, we must also seek for

the “things of a better” (D&C 25:10). Elder Bednar described this process as “the dual requirements of (1) avoiding and overcoming bad and (2) doing good and becoming better.”²⁸ These “dual requirements” are at the core—or at the very heart—of establishing and maintaining the character of our righteousness. But it is not enough to have only clean hands, for our hearts must also be pure—a condition made possible, as Elder Bednar pointed out, only by accepting and applying the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Once again, it is the sacrament that empowers us to embrace the altering powers of the Atonement that focus our obedience and change our disposition as well. Elder Bednar also taught that “this mighty change is not simply the result of working harder or developing greater individual discipline. Rather, it is the consequence of a fundamental change in our desires, our motives, and our natures made possible through the Atonement of Christ the Lord.”²⁹ More than mere determination, it is our righteous character that quite literally protects our conduct. Consider young Joseph while a prisoner in Egypt as an example. Undoubtedly, he was an obedient disciple and diligently kept the commandments of God. It is clear that his character aligned with his devoted obedience. When Potiphar’s wife tempted him to act in ways contrary to the commands of God, Joseph did not respond with “I am not allowed” or “This type activity is against my religion” or “I am not supposed to participate in those types of things.” Instead he outright refused and with incredulity queried, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9). Joseph’s reaction wasn’t so much a product of determined obedience as much as it was a reflection of his integrity—his very being, who he was. His refusal meant something like “I, meaning the type of person that I am, cannot do this type of thing!” It was against his nature—his character—to do such things. It was Joseph’s righteousness that protected his conduct. A sacramental covenant to keep the commandments protects the choices made by a willing disciple.

Girdle of truth. God’s armor also includes a girdle protecting the loins—another part of the body that has mortal implications. Spiritually speaking, the loins represent our virtue or chastity, which, according to section 27, is best protected by the truth (see D&C 27:16). In a world that condones promiscuity, openness, and indulgence, one may suppose that the best way to protect virtue and chastity would be with abstinence, abhorrence, or maybe even strict seclusion. Yet in his infinite wisdom, the Lord revealed that the best way to protect our virtue and chastity is with the truth.

In a world awash with an “everything goes” attitude, Elder Henry B. Eyring said that sin is “presented incessantly and attractively.” He added that sin “doesn’t even look like a sea of filth to the young people swimming in it. In fact, they may not even be swimming, because the presentation is so incessant and so attractive that they may not notice that there is a need to swim.”³⁰ In reality, Satan’s presentation is alluring to those who are unaware or unsure of the truth. This is why temptation is especially effective with those who have not yet entrenched themselves on the Lord’s side and who are teetering in their allegiance. President Kimball reminded us that “the Savior said that the very elect would be deceived by Lucifer if it were possible. He will use his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black. Young people are confused by the arch deceiver, who uses every device to deceive them.”³¹

It isn’t surprising that the “father of all lies” (2 Nephi 2:18) uses biology, psychology, and sociology to justify immoral behavior. Satan’s despicable portrayal of a “tolerant virtue” and a “new chastity” seems to be of tidal-wave proportions and on the brink of consuming everything and everyone in its path. Thus leaders, parents, and disciples wonder if anything can protect their children, congregations, and friends from the impending moral doom and deception. President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “The law of chastity is a principle of eternal significance. We must not be swayed by the many voices of the world. We must listen to the voice of the Lord and then determine that we will set our feet irrevocably upon the path he has marked.”³² Long ago, during his mortal ministry, Christ taught his disciples that “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

In a world filled with deception and lies on every side, wouldn’t a guide to point out the truth in every circumstance be most effective and gratefully received? The sacrament serves to secure such a personal guide. Those who make worthy sacramental covenants actually pledge to live their lives in such a way that “they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (D&C 20:77). Whether through the scriptures, the living prophets, or personal revelation, the voice of the Lord is manifest in our mind and heart by the Holy Ghost, which was “sent forth to teach the truth” (D&C 50:14). Nephi taught that in addition to telling and teaching truth, the Holy Ghost “will *show* unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5; emphasis added). Once again, it is

the sacrament that can add yet another piece of God's armor to protect and sanctify the Saints in all things, places, and times.

Feet shod with preparation. It may be surprising to many that a soldier whose feet are not shod may be in mortal peril. Many do not place shoes in the same category as a helmet, a breastplate, or even a girdle. Yet shoes are just as vital in warfare as any other piece of armor. This particular piece of armor is protective in a very different way, however. Rather than protecting the foot itself, it is actually protecting the function of the foot. A soldier's mobility in battle is crucial to his success. If a warrior is unable to advance, adjust to the terrain of the battle, or even retreat, his chances of survival are slim. In Roman times, soldiers were issued hobnailed sandals. These sandals had nails driven through the soles and could be the ancient equivalent to what we call cleats today. Hobnailed shoes gave a soldier an advantage of sure traction and increased mobility.

The armor of God also includes having our feet, or, as Elder Lee pointed out, our goals and our objectives, shod with the "preparation of the gospel of peace" that was sent by angels (D&C 27:16). This means that our goals, our plans for the future, and the objectives of our life and how we plan to live it are directed and given traction by the preparation of the gospel sent by an angel, or, in other words, by the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

Once again, it is difficult to find a platform that helps us develop such preparation derived from the restored gospel of Jesus Christ better than does the sacrament. Those who worthily partake of the sacrament actually covenant to be "willing to take upon them the name of [the] Son" (D&C 20:77). Taking the name of Christ upon us is more than merely accepting a label or a brand of worship. This is much more than saying "I am a Christian" or "I am a Latter-day Saint." In the very beginning, Adam was commanded, "Thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son" (Moses 5:8). Thus those who are willing to take upon them the name of Christ are willing to do more than just receive a namesake; they are willing to do whatever Christ does. Like Christ, they too begin to wrestle with ultimate discipleship, as experienced in Gethsemane when Christ perfectly aligned his will with the Father's will. "Father," Christ prayed, "if thou be willing, remove this cup from me." We then see the demonstration of ultimate discipleship as Christ said, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). All disciples of Christ pass through similar challenges in submitting their will to God's and in unifying their will with his.

Those willing to act as Christ did find that their desires, hopes, and plans take on a greater—even broader—context. Their preparation in his gospel influences every thought, motive, feeling, and perception. C. S. Lewis said, “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”³³ This type of preparation is directly connected with our sacramental covenant to take Christ’s name upon us. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that “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.”³⁴ Thus we must be vigilant that we never neglect our baptismal and sacramental covenants of taking Christ’s name upon us, or else we risk taking Christ’s name in vain.

Conclusion

Section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenant provides illuminating instruction concerning the sacrament. It helps us remember the past, look to the future, and focus on how we are presently living. The sacrament protects us and preserves us by helping us don the armor of God and evaluate our standing each week through specific covenants. Thus through the sacrament, the transforming power of the Atonement changes our very character. When we do more than just go through the motions, the sacrament can infuse the power and protection of the Atonement into our character. “At that ultimate stage,” Elder Bruce C. Hafen explained, “we will exhibit divine characteristics not just because we think we should but because that is the way we are.”³⁵

As we embrace the sacrament as a ritual that is sacred and holy, we find peace, power, and contentment as it connects us with the past, present, and the future. Elder Dallin H. Oaks writes, “Any who may have thought it a small thing to partake of the sacrament should remember the Lord’s declaration that the foundation of a great work is laid by small things.” He then concluded, “Out of the seemingly small act of consciously and reverently renewing our baptismal covenants comes a renewal of the blessings of baptism by water and by the Spirit, that we may always have His Spirit to be with us. In this way all of us will be guided, and in this way all of us can be cleansed.”³⁶

Notes

1. *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, ed. Dean C. Jesse, vol. 1, *Autobiographical and Historical Writings* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 321; see also *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 1:106. Newell Knight's journal account of this experience was slightly different in that he stated the second portion of the revelation was actually revealed to Joseph a few weeks after their August meeting in September. "Newell Knight's Journal," in *Scraps of Biography* (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor's Office, 1883), 62.

2. *Evening and Morning Star*, March 1833, 78.

3. Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*, vol. 2 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2011), 72.

4. Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*, 489–91.

5. *History of the Church*, 1:173.

6. The phrase "or the restorer of all things" in verse 6 was deleted after 1891. See Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 1:398.

7. Spencer W. Kimball, "Circles of Exaltation," in *Charge to Religious Educators*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982), 12.

8. *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 112.

9. *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 112–13.

10. John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom*, comp. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 227.

11. Elder Charles Penrose taught, "We take this sacrament this afternoon not only in remembrance of the past but to direct our mind to the future." See Charles W. Penrose, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 22:83.

12. *Evening and Morning Star*, March 1833, 78; Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*, 72.

13. In the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, 457 words were added to the published texts from 1833. Of these, 321 words deal directly with the future meeting where Jesus Christ will partake of the sacrament again on the earth.

14. This text also confirms that Joseph Smith received priesthood keys directly from Peter, James, and John and was ordained as an Apostle. We also learn that the archangel Michael and the "ancient of days" is Adam (see D&C 27:11–12).

15. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 579.

16. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, 579.

17. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, 578–79.

18. Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*, xxx.
19. *Evening and Morning Star*, March 1833, 78.
20. The final words of the original 1883 sentence, “and be faithful until I come,” appear three verses later in the last sentence of the revelation (D&C 27:18).
21. Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1829), “wherefore.”
22. Richard Lloyd Anderson, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, June 1975, 21.
23. Howard W. Hunter, “His Final Hours,” *Ensign*, May 1974, 18.
24. Harold B. Lee, “Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace” (address, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, November 9, 1954), 2.
25. David A. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” *Ensign*, November 2007, 82.
26. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” 82.
27. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” 82; emphasis in original.
28. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” 82.
29. Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” 82.
30. Henry B. Eyring, “Eyes to See, Ears to Hear” (address, CES Symposium on the New Testament, August 16, 1984), 3.
31. Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 152.
32. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Law of Chastity,” *New Era*, January 1988, 4.
33. C. S. Lewis, “Is Theology Poetry?” in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: Touchstone, 1980), 106.
34. Dallin H. Oaks, “Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 83.
35. Bruce C. Hafen, *The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement to Life’s Experiences* (Salt Lake City: Desert Book, 1989), 18.
36. Dallin H. Oaks, *With Full Purpose of Heart* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 102.