

baptismal and temple covenants as well as covenants made at other times.<sup>118</sup> Because God is everlasting, the Covenant is also “everlasting”: it was first given to Adam, and later to all subsequent prophets.<sup>119</sup> Because it is given anew each time the Gospel is restored, the Lord also describes it as “new.”<sup>120</sup> Riddle summarizes the two basic parts of the Covenant:

Part one is the covenant of baptism, being born of water and of the Spirit. The covenant of baptism is our pledge to seek after good and to eliminate all choosing and doing of evil in our lives, and it is also our receiving the power to keep that promise.<sup>121</sup> Part two of the New and Everlasting Covenant is to receive the power and authority of God and to become perfect in using that power and authority to minister to other beings to bring about their happiness.<sup>122</sup>

Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s name for the first part of the New and Everlasting Covenant is the “Covenant of Salvation.” It is “accepted by men in the waters of baptism”<sup>123</sup> and is confirmed by the laying on of hands. Adam and Eve were the first mortals to receive this covenant, as Enoch recounts.<sup>124</sup> As an element of the process of repentance, sacrifice is both a necessary precursor to baptism and a requirement for renewal of that covenant.<sup>125</sup> The ordinance of sacrifice given to Adam and Eve<sup>126</sup> corresponds in our day to the sacrament.<sup>127</sup> Thus, as Elder McConkie explained, three ordinances (baptism, sacrifice, sacrament) are associated with one and the same covenant.<sup>128</sup> Throwing light on the symbols of the sacrament, Alma equates the eating and drinking of the “bread and the waters of life” with “partaking of the fruit of the tree of life.”<sup>129</sup> By this means, we literally become “partakers of the divine nature.”<sup>130</sup> Thus also, Coptic Christian writings saw in a grain of wheat, mercifully granted to Adam and Eve after their exile from Eden, the flesh of God Himself.<sup>131</sup>

Jesus taught Nicodemus that “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”<sup>132</sup> Although in a narrow sense this commandment is fulfilled through baptism and confirmation, in reality these first ordinances are only the “gate” through which we begin our journey down the “strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life.”<sup>133</sup> Additional ordinances—along with the development of perfect faith, hope, and charity—are a necessary part of the process of spiritual rebirth that ultimately results in sanctification:<sup>134</sup> “And now... after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay... Wherefore, ye must press forward... and if ye press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.”<sup>135</sup> Speaking plainly on this topic, the Prophet

118 *Gospel Principles*, p. 98.

119 E.g., JST Genesis 9:21-23, 13:13; JST Deuteronomy 10:2; cf. D&C 49:9, 66:2, 88:133.

120 *Gospel Principles*, p. 98. See Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 37:26; H. C. Kimball, *6 January 1861*, p. 330.

121 D. A. Bednar, *Strength*, p. 77.

122 C. C. Riddle, *New*, p. 228.

123 B. R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 293.

124 Moses 6:64-65. See *Endnote 5-43*, p. 441.

125 D&C 20:37, 59:9-12.

126 Moses 5:5-9.

127 D&C 59:8-14.

128 B. R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 293.

129 Alma 5:34.

130 2 Peter 1:4.

131 E. A. W. Budge, *Cave*, pp. 18-19 n. 1; cf. S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:68, p. 81; B. Mikael, *Apocalypse*, pp. 102, 131; John 6:25-58. See *Endnote 5-44*, p. 441.

132 John 3:5.

133 2 Nephi 31:17-18.

134 E. T. Benson, *Teachings 1988*, 28 September 1982, p. 337; B. C. Hafen, *Disciple’s Journey*, pp. 292-301.

135 2 Nephi 31:19-20; cf. Jacob 6:11. See *Endnote 5-45*, p. 442.