

Today, as we partake of the bread and the wine, remember that we have made a covenant with God in the waters of baptism. Prayers over the bread and wine remind us monthly of this covenant and that we are always to remember Jesus and keep His commandments.

D&C 17:22d O God, the Eternal Father, we ask Thee in the Name of Thy Son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this BREAD to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the Body of Thy Son, and always remember Him and keep His commandments which He has given them, that they may always have His Spirit to be with them. Amen.

D&C 17:23b O God, the Eternal Father, we ask Thee in the Name of Thy Son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this WINE to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the Blood of Thy Son which was shed for them, that they may witness unto Thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember Him, that they may have His Spirit to be with them. Amen.

My 93-year-old father was failing both in mind and body in his last few months of life at The Groves. Hal and I would take my mother there on Sunday afternoons to attend the Restoration service with him. One Communion Sunday we were a little late and the staff did not have Daddy ready--it was quite a hassle. We arrived at the service late and Hal and I ended up sitting behind my parents. As I sat and watched my father being served communion, I thought, "Is this really worth it, does Daddy even understand what he is doing--taking Communion?"

Later, arriving back at our home, Hal told me of an interesting experience he had during the service. He, like me, was watching my father take Communion, and just like me wondered if the hassle was worth it, and if Daddy even understood what he was doing. The Spirit swept over him and God spoke to his mind, "Many of My people when they take Holy Communion give no thought to their covenant or to the meaning of my Holy Communion and when they partake in this manner it is nothing but bread and wine, but when they consider their covenant with me and repent and remember Me then it is Holy Communion. Today Kenneth has taken Holy Communion and it will be his last on the earth." My father passed away later that month.

Read Psalm 111:4-9 ...He will ever be mindful of His covenant...

I have shared this because I believe that if we would truly partake of Holy Communion, repenting, remembering our Savior and then go forth to do all He has commanded us, Zion would soon come upon the earth. What will we do with the remainder of our days?

We hope you will actually be inspired to re-read the full devotionals from last year. See www.ogrb.org Resource Page. May we continue to put the actions the Patriarchs recommended into our lives--for the cause of Zion!

Questions: Contact Pat Chadwick, Women's Leader, 2010-2016

Stepping Stones for Spiritual Growth



Preparation Guide for May Women's Devotionals:

God made a wonderful covenant with those who keep His commandments and covenants:

D&C 34:6a Keep all the commandments and covenants by which ye are bound, and I will cause the heavens to shake for your good, and Satan shall tremble, and Zion shall rejoice upon the hills and flourish; and Israel shall be saved in mine own due time.

As we watch events play out on the world stage, do we long for Zion to spring forth and become a reality--not just something we talk about? Zion is for us and the world!

Will you accept the challenge of D&C 34 and make a new (or renewed) commitment today to enter into your covenant with the Lord? Begin by remembering your baptism and set goals for the week, month and year--develop a personal written "life plan." Continue to keep track of your progress!

Eighth thing listed in the guide prepared by the Patriarchs of the church: "Am I willing to enter into a covenant with my Lord to serve Him all the remainder of my days?"

Action = "Prepare a written plan of the manner in which you will live your life from this day forward. Include statements about the temporal, physical and spiritual aspects of how your life will be lived. Sign this covenant and read it at least once per week."

Read Psalm 15:1-5

Week #1 May

What did “living in covenant” mean to the Hebrews?

Foundational reason was NOT selfishness or neediness, but rather a mutual love initiated by the party in authority.

It meant sacrifice (difficult to fulfill), surety (great assurance because they knew the other party would fulfill their pledge no matter the cost).

Several steps included:

- exchange of names, weapons, and garments
- sacrificing a lamb and sharing a meal

1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant because he loved him as his own soul.

Christ fulfilled every detail of the ancient blood covenant and became our representative with the Father. He is the reason we will be blessed when keeping our covenant with God.

1 John 4:9-10 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Realizing and appreciating the spirit of the covenant and sensing God’s great love for us is ultimately what should bring us to our knees in humility, with a desire to live the covenant life with Him!

Also read John 3:16

Week #2 May

Why should I want to live in covenant?

Alma 17:3 ...whosoever shall put their trust in God, shall be supported in their trials, and in their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day.

Many of the promises found in the scriptures focus on those who have entered into a covenant with God. When we truly love Him, we desire to live with Him and keep His commandments, because He first loved us.

Mosiah 1:58 He doth require that ye should do as He hath commanded you, for which if ye do, He doth immediately bless you....

When we choose to begin living in covenant with God **NOW**, He promises many specific blessings, for our life here on Earth.

Mosiah 1:88-91 ...I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end, they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it.

We may also look forward to the **FUTURE** blessings of eternal life. Oh, the joy of living in the presence of our Savior and His love forever!

Also read D&C 76

Week #3 May

How to “enter into covenant.” What do I promise to do?

D&C 16:4e Take upon you the name of Christ, and speak the truth in soberness; and as many as repent, and are baptized in My name, which is Jesus Christ, and endure to the end, the same shall be saved.

Repentance and baptism go hand in hand in beginning a covenant, but let us not forget that “coming unto Christ” and repenting is also a continual process. In fact it may be the most important part of fulfilling our covenant promise daily.

I promise to keep all the commandments, such as:

- love God and love others (foremost!)
- pray, fast, study the Word of God
- steward of time, talents, resources
- forgive others and serve others

Trust that letting Him be in control (1) releases and frees us from daily stress, (2) honors Him. Pride and trust cannot co-exist in us. Do not murmur, but rather speak in praise and in confidence of the Lord.

When forgiveness seems like a difficult task, remember it is a mental choice, not a feeling.

Many times we are required to make the mental choice to forgive even when we do not FEEL like forgiving. God knows this and when we try, the Lord softens hearts one to another!

Also read D&C 6:4b

Week #4 May

The covenant-living challenge!

1. Write out things you do or have done that help you keep your covenant.

D&C 6:14c But if they reject not My Words, which shall be established by the testimony which shall be given blessed are they; and then shall ye have joy in the fruit of your labors.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

2. Write out the areas in which you feel your covenant needs strength, i.e. your weaknesses. Now, claim the following promise:

Ether 5:28 I give unto men weakness, that they may be humble; and My grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before Me; for if they humble themselves before Me, and have faith in Me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

3. Remember God knows best and His commands bring joy, not burden.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.

4. Share your list with an accountability partner on a regular basis.

Also read Poem by Bill J. Dollins at www.ogrb.org Resource Page May Women’s Devotionals (Wk 2)