

like legs on a three-legged stool. All three relate to our Redeemer.

"Faith [is rooted in] Jesus Christ.

Hope centers in his atonement. Charity is manifest in the 'pure love of Christ' (see Moroni 7:47). These three attributes are intertwined like strands in a cable and may not always be precisely distinguished. Together, they become our tether to the celestial kingdom" (Russell M. Nelson, "A More Excellent Hope" [Brigham Young University devotional, Jan. 8, 1995], 3, speeches.byu.edu).

4. Gospel Topics, "Hope," Gospel Library.

5. "Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, . . . even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, [making] them sure and steadfast" (Ether 12:4).

6. Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf said: "Allow me to acknowledge that depression and other difficult mental and emotional challenges are real, and the answer is not simply, 'Try to be happier.' My purpose today is not to diminish or trivialize mental health issues. If you face such challenges, I mourn with you, and I stand beside you. For some people, finding joy may include seeking help from trained mental health professionals who devote their lives to practicing their very important art. We should be thankful for such help" ("A Higher Joy," *Liahona*, May 2024, 66).

7. Our Heavenly Father has declared that His work and glory is to bring to pass our eternal life (see Moses 1:39).

8. See Moses 5.

9. Moses 5:10.

10. Moses 5:11.

11. See Moses 5:9.

12. John 14:27.

13. John 16:33.

14. See Luke 22:42.

15. Romans 15:13.

16. Romans 12:12.

17. Romans 15:13.

18. Mormon 8:5.

19. Moroni 1:1.

20. Moroni 7:42.

21. Moroni 7:41.

22. Hebrews 11:1. In the Joseph Smith Translation it reads, "Faith is the *assurance* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (in the Bible appendix). We see the assurance of our faith in the blessings that come to those who keep the covenants they have made with the Lord.

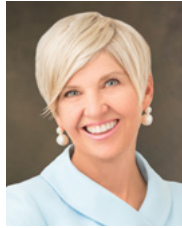
23. Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.

24. Talk given by Robbie Andersen at the funeral of her son Trey Andersen, August 12, 2024. Trey had his surgery on July 31, 2024. He passed from this life on August 3, 2024.

25. Talk given by Ben Andersen at the funeral of his son Trey Andersen, August 12, 2024.

26. Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," 82.

27. See 2 Nephi 31:20. The hope Nephi speaks of is perfect and bright because it is centered in Christ. He is perfect, and His Atonement, which offers this bright hope, is also perfect.



By President Emily Belle Freeman

Young Women General President

Live Up to Your Privileges

Learn how priesthood ordinances and covenant promises will allow God's power to flow into your life.

Recently my husband, Greg, received a diagnosis that would require an intensive surgery and months of chemotherapy. Like many of you who have faced a similar situation, we immediately began praying for heaven's help and God's power. The Sunday following Greg's surgery, the sacrament was delivered to our hospital room.

On this occasion, I was the only one taking the sacrament. One piece of bread. One cup of water. At church, my mind often focuses on the delivery system of the sacrament—the preparing, the blessing, and the passing. But on that afternoon, I pondered the gift of God's power available to me through the sacred ordinance itself and the covenant promise I was making as I took that piece of bread and that

cup of water.¹ This was a time when I needed power from heaven. In the midst of great heartache, exhaustion, and uncertainty, I wondered about this gift that would allow me to draw upon the power from Him that I so desperately needed. Partaking of the sacrament would increase my companionship with the Spirit of the Lord,² allowing me to draw upon the gift of God's power, including the ministering of angels³ and the Savior's enabling strength to overcome.

I don't think I had ever realized with this much clarity before that it's not only who officiates in the ordinance that matters—what the ordinance and our covenant promise unlock also deserves the focus of our attention.⁴ Priesthood ordinances and covenant



promises allow God to sanctify us and then work wonders in our lives. But how does this happen?⁵

First, in order for an ordinance to manifest the power of God in our lives, it must be done with authority from the Son of God. The delivery system is important. The Father entrusted Jesus Christ with the keys and authority to oversee the delivery of His priesthood ordinances. Under His direction, within the order of His priesthood, the sons of God have been ordained to stand *in place of* the Son of God.⁶

Second, we don't just make covenant promises—we must keep them. In many gospel ordinances, we make sacred covenants with God; He promises to bless us as we *keep* those covenants.⁷ Do we realize it is the combination of priesthood ordinances along with the keeping of covenant promises that allows us to draw upon God's power?

That afternoon I wondered if I, a covenant daughter of God, fully understood how to access the gift of God's power through priesthood ordinances and if I truly recognized how God's power works within me.⁸

In 2019 a prophetic invitation was extended to the women of the Church, teaching us how to draw the Savior's power into our lives. President Russell M. Nelson invited us to study Doctrine and Covenants 25, a revelation given to Emma Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania.⁹ Accepting that invitation changed my life.

Last month I had an unexpected opportunity to visit Harmony. There, under the maple trees, the priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Close to those trees is the front door of Joseph and Emma's home.¹⁰ Across from the fireplace in that home there is a window. I stood at that window and wondered what Emma might have thought as she looked out across the trees.

In July of 1830, Emma was 26 years old; *she was so young*. She was three and a half years into her marriage. She had lost a baby boy—her first. His little grave is just down the lane from her home. As I stood at that window, it was



Madagascar

not hard for me to imagine what might have filled her thoughts. Surely she worried about their finances, about the increasing persecution that threatened their safety, about their future. And yet the work of God was everywhere around her. Did she also wonder about her place in the plan, her purpose in His kingdom, and her potential in the eyes of God?

I think she may have.

Just across the way, the gift of God's priesthood authority and keys¹¹ had been restored to the earth.¹² This was a time when Emma actually needed power from heaven. In the midst of great heartache, exhaustion, and uncertainty, I imagine Emma wondered about this gift of God's priesthood that could unlock the power from Him that she so desperately needed.

But Emma didn't just stand at that window and wonder.

While the Prophet Joseph was being tutored in keys, offices, ordinances, and how to assist in the service of the priesthood, the Lord Himself, through His prophet, gave a revelation to Emma.¹³ Not Nauvoo-Relief-Society-president Emma—this revelation was given to 26-year-old Emma in Harmony. Through revelation, Emma would learn about the inward sanctification and covenant connection that would increase the ability of those

priesthood ordinances to work in her life.

First, the Lord reminded Emma of her place in His plan, including who she was and whose she was—a daughter in His kingdom.¹⁴ She was invited to “walk in the paths of virtue,”¹⁵ a path that included ordinances that would unlock God's power if Emma held on to her covenants.¹⁶

Second, in her season of deep mourning, the Lord gave her purpose. Emma didn't just have a front-row seat to the Restoration; she was an essential participant in the work taking place. She would be set apart “to expound scriptures, and to exhort the church.”¹⁷ Her time would “be given to writing, and to learning much.”¹⁸ Emma was given a sacred role to help prepare the Saints to worship; their songs unto the Lord would be received as prayers and “answered with a blessing upon their heads.”¹⁹

Last, the Lord outlined a process of inward sanctification²⁰ that would prepare Emma for exaltation. “Except thou do this,” the Lord explained to her, “where I am you cannot come.”²¹

If we read section 25 carefully, we discover an important progression taking place. Emma would go from being a daughter in the kingdom²² to “elect lady”²³ to queen.²⁴ Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood ordinances, combined with the keeping of her

covenant promises, would increase her companionship with the Spirit and with angels, empowering her to navigate her life with divine guidance.²⁵ Through His divine power, God would heal her heart, enlarge her capacity, and transform her into the version of herself He knew she could become. And through the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood, “the power of godliness [would be] manifest”²⁶ in her life, and the Lord would part the veil so she could receive understanding from Him.²⁷ This is what it looks like for God’s power to work within us.

President Russell M. Nelson taught: “Everything that happened in [Harmony] has profound implications for your lives. The restoration of the priesthood, along with the Lord’s counsel to Emma, can guide and bless each of you. . . .

“ . . . Accessing the power of God in your life requires the same things that the Lord instructed Emma and each of [us] to do.”²⁸

There were important things happening on both sides of that window in Harmony, including the revelation given to the elect lady whom the Lord had called—a revelation that would strengthen, encourage, and instruct Emma Smith, God’s daughter.²⁹

When our granddaughter Isabelle was given a name and a blessing, her father blessed her with an understanding of the priesthood; that she would continue to grow in and learn about the blessing it would provide in her life; and that her faith in the priesthood would grow as she continued to grow in understanding.

It is not often a little girl is blessed to understand the priesthood and to learn how those priesthood ordinances and covenant promises will help her to access God’s power. But I remembered Emma and thought to myself, Why not? This tiny daughter has the potential to become an elect lady in His kingdom and eventually a queen. Through His priesthood ordinances and the keeping of her covenant promises, God’s power will work in and through her to help her overcome whatever life brings and become the woman God

knows she can become. This is something I want each girl in the kingdom to understand.

“Live up to your privileges.”³⁰

Learn how priesthood ordinances and covenant promises will allow God’s power to flow into your life with greater efficacy, working in and through you, empowering and equipping you to reach your full purpose and potential.

Carefully study and ponder the Aaronic and the Melchizedek Priesthood ordinances, the covenant promises we make with each, and the power of God we access through those ordinances.³¹

Remember, it’s not only who officiates in the ordinance that matters; what the ordinance and your covenant promise unlock also deserves the focus of your attention.

Partaking of the bread and water is a weekly reminder of His power working in you to help you overcome. Wearing the garment of the holy priesthood is a daily reminder of the gift of His power working in you to help you become.

We all have access to the gift of God’s power.

Every time we partake of the sacrament.

Every time we cross the threshold of a temple.³²

This is the highlight of my Sabbath. This is why I cherish my temple recommend.

“In the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.”³³

Of this gift I bear witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 107:20.
2. Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught: “In all the ordinances, especially those of the temple, we are endowed with power from on high. This ‘power of godliness’ comes in the person and by the influence of the Holy Ghost. . . . I testify that God will keep His promises to you as you honor your covenants with Him. . . . He will, by His Holy Spirit, fill you with godly power” (“The Power of Covenants,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 22, 23).
3. See Dallin H. Oaks, “The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 39; *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 45.
4. “Every man and every woman who participates in priesthood ordinances and who makes and keeps covenants with God has direct access to the power of God” (Russell M. Nelson, “The Everlasting Covenant,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2022, 10).
5. See Joshua 3:5, footnote *a*. Elder Dale G. Renlund explained: “Through these covenants, we have greater access to [the Lord’s] power. To be clear, baptismal and temple covenants are not, in and of themselves, the source of power. The source of power is the Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Making and keeping covenants create a conduit for Their power in our lives” (“The Powerful, Virtuous Cycle of the Doctrine of Christ,” *Liahona*, May 2024, 82).
6. See Doctrine and Covenants 107:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:3 (in the Bible appendix); Alma 13:2, 16. President Dallin H. Oaks taught: “From the scriptures we also know that those who officiate in the priesthood act in behalf of the Lord (see Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; 36:2). I will now suggest how teachers and priests



Malaysia

- and deacons should carry out their sacred responsibilities to act in behalf of the Lord in preparing, administering, and passing the sacrament” (“The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 39; *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 45).
7. See *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3.5.1–2, Gospel Library.
 8. See Doctrine and Covenants 107:18–20; Philippians 1:6.
 9. See Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 77.
 10. See “Joseph and Emma Smith’s Home” (history.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) for more detail about the reproduction of the Smith home at the Church historic site in Harmony, Pennsylvania.
 11. The authority and keys of the priesthood allow God’s power to flow into the lives of those who receive priesthood ordinances and make and keep the associated covenants (see *General Handbook*, 3.5, Gospel Library).
 12. See Joseph Smith—History 1:71, note.
 13. See Doctrine and Covenants 25.
 14. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:1.
 15. Doctrine and Covenants 25:2.
 16. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:13. “The word *covenant* is of Latin origin, *con venire*, and literally means a ‘coming together.’ In the context of the priesthood, a ‘covenant’ is a coming together or an agreement between God and man. It presupposes that God and man come together to make a contract, to agree on promises, stipulations, privileges, and responsibilities. . . .
“A covenant made in this manner is immutable and unchangeable. It anchors the soul; it creates a steadfast and sure foundation for future expectations”
 - (Dale G. Renlund and Ruth Lybbert Renlund, *The Melchizedek Priesthood: Understanding the Doctrine, Living the Principles* [2018], 60).
 17. Doctrine and Covenants 25:7.
 18. Doctrine and Covenants 25:8.
 19. Doctrine and Covenants 25:12.
 20. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:15.
 21. Doctrine and Covenants 25:15. President Dallin H. Oaks taught: “The ordinance of baptism and its associated covenants are requirements for entrance into the celestial kingdom. The ordinances and associated covenants of the temple are requirements for exaltation in the celestial kingdom, which is eternal life, ‘the greatest of all the gifts of God’ [Doctrine and Covenants 14:7]” (“Covenants and Responsibilities,” *Liahona*, May 2024, 96).
 22. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:1.
 23. Doctrine and Covenants 25:3.
 24. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:15.
 25. See Dallin H. Oaks, “The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 38–39; *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 44–45. President Oaks taught:
“In a closely related way, these ordinances of the Aaronic Priesthood are also vital to the ministering of angels. . . .
“ . . . Angelic messages can be delivered by a voice or merely by thoughts or feelings communicated to the mind” (“The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 38, 39; *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 44, 45).
In addition, the Prophet Joseph Smith gave this promise when speaking to Relief Society sisters: “If you live up to your privileges, the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2011], 454).
 26. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–20.
 27. See Doctrine and Covenants 107:18–19.
 28. Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” 77. “Willard Richards reported: ‘President Joseph Smith read the revelation [given] to Emma Smith . . . and stated that . . . not she alone, but others, may attain to the same blessings’” (*Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 453–54). See also Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, March 17, 1842, in *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women’s History* (2016), 1.2.1, churchhistorianspress.org.
 29. See Doctrine and Covenants 24, section heading. This states that “the following three revelations were given at this time to strengthen, encourage, and instruct.”
 30. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 454.
 31. See Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” 77. “I entreat you to study prayerfully *all* the truths you can find about priesthood power. You might begin with Doctrine and Covenants sections 84 and 107. Those sections will lead you to other passages. The scriptures and teachings by modern prophets, seers, and revelators are filled with these truths. As your understanding increases and as you exercise faith in the Lord and His priesthood power, your ability to draw upon this spiritual treasure that the Lord has made available will increase” (Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” 79).
 32. See Doctrine and Covenants 109:22.
 33. Doctrine and Covenants 84:20.

