

# Salvation at His Hands

Val Brinkerhoff 10/6/2017

The harvest is coming and many are not saved. Salvation is available to all. Some do not know where to find it. Others believe they have it when they do not (D&C 45:2, 56:16; Jer. 8:7, 20). Too many today are “*blinded by the craftiness of men*” (D&C 76:75, 99-102). God has given us “**the way of salvation.**” It contains “*the plain and precious things*” of His doctrine, gospel, and church; those simple and sacred things that have been removed from the Bible by evil and designing men that wish to get gain and control over us. The saving truths are more clearly found in the Book of Mormon. Both books are precious. God calls Joseph Smith’s inspired re-translation of the whole Bible, in combination with the Book of Mormon, and the unaltered oracles of the Doctrine and Covenants – “*the fulness of my scriptures*” (see D&C 42:12, 15, 56-69). As we feast upon God’s word in them, we will find light and truth. They will instill in us a desire to receive more of them, including God’s own words in revelation and **salvation** at His hands. The simple, saving *truths* – are “**the way of salvation.**” They are contained in what God calls, “**my doctrine,**” “**my gospel,**” and “**my church.**” They are His **rock.** Those founded upon this solid foundation will not be washed away when the rain, the winds, and the floods come. His “**way**” is summarized by His five-word invitation to “**repent and come unto me**” (see D&C 10:67-68; 1 Ne. 10:18-19; 2 Ne. 9:23-24; 28:31-32; Jacob 1:7; Alma 5:33-34; Ether 4:7-19; Mor. 7:34; D&C 93:1; 3 Ne. 9:14, 22, 51; 11:14; 12:19-20, 23-24; 27:5-21; 30:1-2). This pathway has five primary steps.

1. **Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ** Faith in Christ is the *first* principle of the gospel. We must come to the knowledge of our Redeemer and then develop strong faith and trust in Him as the living God, the mediator between heaven and earth, if we are to receive the greatest blessings available in His doctrine, gospel, and church.

2. **Repentance** Real faith in Jesus Christ leads us to repentance – to *turn* to Him. It is “**faith unto repentance**” (Alma 34:15-17), or faith leading to heartfelt **repentance**, which is characterized by “*a broken heart and contrite spirit*” (2 Ne. 2:7; 3 Ne. 9:20; Ether 4:15; Mor. 6:1-4; D&C 59:8, 97:8; Psalm 34:18 & 51:17). Real repentance involves confessing to all involved, forsaking the sin (not repeating it), and submitting our will to God.

3. **Baptism by Water** The next step on *the way* is **baptism** by immersion in pure water. The writers of the Book of Mormon call it “*baptism unto repentance,*” meaning it is to be preceded by *real repentance* (Mos. 26:22; Alma 5:62; Hel. 5:17, 19; 3 Ne. 1:23; 7:25-26). Steps A, B & C lead to our **purification** via Christ’s atonement, combined with our heartfelt repentance, and our covenant with God in the outward act of baptism in *water*.

4. **Baptism by Fire and the Holy Ghost** A fourth transformational step is where we are “*born again*” in Christ Jesus (John 3:3-6; Mos. 27:24-26), receiving a *remission* of sins, a *mighty change of heart*, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is to be **redeemed** from our sins or *saved* through Christ’s blood, to have them fully *remitted* (2 ne. 31:17-18). We are **sanctified** by God’s fiery *Spirit* in this event, and receive the precious *gift of the Holy Ghost* as the first comforter - our teaching companion. When we pass through *this gate*, we enter onto “**the way**” to *eternal life* (as characterized by the beatitudes Christ taught in 3 Nephi chapter 12). The revelatory gift or endowment of the Holy Ghost then becomes our “*iron rod*” (along with Christ’s direct word) taking us to the Tree of Life. Holding it tightly, we **press forward** in faith until we finally **receive the presence of the Lord personally** and His choicest gifts and blessings (2 Ne. 31:19-21). This is to be fully **redeemed from the fall** (of Adam and Eve, when they were expelled from God’s presence), returning to the Lord’s presence in this life as did the brother of Jared (see Ether 3:13). In 2 Nephi 32:4-6 we are encouraged to seek God and ask questions relative to our progress along “**the way**” of salvation. If we do not understand the written word or impressions from the Spirit, “...it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark. For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by **the way** [the gate of the baptism of fire] and *receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.* Behold, this is *the doctrine of Christ*, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he [the Lord] shall manifest **himself** unto you in the [your] flesh. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto **you shall ye observe to do**” (2 Ne. 32:4-6). God requires a specific sacrifice to receive this priceless blessing. It is *a broken heart and a contrite spirit* - our willingness to fully submit to His will (3 Ne. 9:20). Summary scriptures tied to this important event are supplied below.

**Christ Taught** Speaking to Nicodemus, a learned Rabbi who came to him at night, our Lord said, “except a man be born again he cannot **see** the kingdom of God...Except a man be born of *water*, and of *the Spirit* [fire], he cannot **enter into the kingdom of God**” (John 3:3-6). Nicodemus came in the dark and left that way...

**Joseph Smith Taught** “The baptism of water, without the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost attending it, is of no use . . . *They are necessarily and inseparably connected.* An individual **must** be born of *water* and the spirit in order to get into the kingdom of God...*You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half*—that is, the baptism of [fire and] the Holy Ghost” (HC, 6:316). Speaking of these two baptisms while addressing John the Baptist in JST Matthew 3:38, Joseph altered it to read, “I baptize you with water, upon your repentance, but when Jesus Christ – of whom I bear record – comes, who has the power and keys, He *will administer the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost.*” See also JS

History 1:73-74.

**Nephi Taught** "...know *the gate* by which ye should enter. For *the gate* by which ye should enter is [1] repentance and [2] baptism by water; and [3] then cometh *a remission of your sins* by fire and by the Holy Ghost. And then are ye in this strait and narrow path *which leads to eternal life*; yea, ye have *entered* in by **the gate**; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received *the Holy Ghost*, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive" (2 Ne. 31:17-18).

**Alma the Younger Taught** "... I have *repented* of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold *I am born of the Spirit*. And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, *born of God*, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being **redeemed** of God, becoming his sons and daughters; And thus they become *new creatures*; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God (Mos. 27:24-26).

**5. Holding Tight to the Iron Rod until we Arrive at the Tree of Life** The gift or endowment of *the Holy Ghost* (the first comforter), along with direct *revelation* from God and the *written word* of God, is *the iron rod* that will take us to **the Tree of Life**, including the glory and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in this life. He, as *the Heavenly Gift* (see 4<sup>th</sup> Ne. 1:3; Ether 12:8; Heb. 6:44), then becomes our personal mentor in this life as the Second Comforter. We are then connected to Him (the stem, Isa. 11; D&C 113) as a fruit-bearing branch in the Tree of Life. To receive Him here, we must part the veil of *unbelief* through our **love of God**, not through our works or the law (Eph. 2:2-3; 2 Ne. 25:23). He seeks *relationship* with us, not religion or ritual. We then have **fellowship** with God as one of His sons or daughters, rightful heirs of the promised blessings of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph sold into Egypt. This is to be fully **redeemed** from the fall (Ether 3:13). To receive this great blessing, we must fully submit to the will of God in all things. It is possible with strong faith in Him, "the mighty change of heart," and a new willingness to love God with all our heart, might, mind and strength.

The Lord tells us what the primary tenets of His church is, in a number of scriptures. The Prophet Nephi said, "... **Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth**" (1 Nephi 14:10).

"Therefore, I will unfold unto them this great mystery; behold, this is my doctrine—**whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church**. Whosoever declareth more or less than this, *the same is not of me, but is against me; therefore he is not of my church*" (D&C 10:64, 67-68).

"For **behold, this is my church**; whosoever is baptized shall be **baptized unto repentance**. And whomsoever ye receive shall *believe* in my name; and *him will I freely forgive*" (Mosiah 26:22).

"That the *blessing of Abraham* might come on *the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through *faith*. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made..." (Gal. 3:14, 16).

"For ye are all the *children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: **for ye are all one in Christ Jesus**. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3: 27-9).

"Know ye therefore that they which are of **faith**, *the same are the children of Abraham*. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through *faith*, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of *faith* are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal. 3:7-9).

If we are to receive the choicest covenants and promises given unto Abraham and all his seed, God's word reveals that they are only obtained via repenting and coming unto Christ, thus becoming Christ's seed. He is the Father of our salvation through the atonement and the resurrection. We become His sons and daughters when we finally receive a remittance of our sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, in "**the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost**" experience. It is to enter through the gate and onto the path to eternal life. It is to be "*born again*" in Christ Jesus. Such have **repented** and **come unto Christ**. We must then pursue a Godly walk thereafter, demonstrating our **faith** and **repentance** by obedience to *God's commandments*, including those given us by the Holy Ghost and God's own voice (2 Ne. 32:6). This revelation is **the iron rod** that will tell us all things that we must do thereafter to continue on the path until we finally make it to the Tree of Life, that we might be numbered among the household of *faith* and those of the church of the Firstborn, those who experience the joy of God's love in this life and the promise of eternal life.

May you be blessed on your journey to **know** the living God - and receive His best gifts.