

## General Comments on Moroni 4-5

These chapters document the blessings which were made over the bread and water given to the church as the sacrament. It is instructive to note the similarities and differences between the two prayers when they are held in parallel, as follows:

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  witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.	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.
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The similarities are both prayers address the Father in the name of the Son and do so in a Father-Son-Son-Father pattern. Both end in an appeal to have the Spirit with the partaker. Remembrance is emphasized by it being repeated twice in both prayers.

The differences are the bread is intended to represent the body, or mortal ministry, of the Son with the partaker taking his name upon themselves and keeping his commandments. The wine is to represent the blood which the Son shed for the forgiveness of our sins, and therefore has a more eternal focus.

The differences also suggest an if...then pattern. If the partaker takes the name of Christ upon themselves and keeps Christ's teachings, then the Son will cover the partaker's sins with the blood He shed.

Some other things worth noting are the apparent differences between the ancient administration and our contemporary administration. The text of 4:2 suggests the church as well as the administrators knelt when the sacrament was blessed (cp. D&C

20:76 for a similarly worded statement, although I do not know if it was ever a practice in the early restored Church if the entire congregation in fact knelt). And, 5:1 suggests a single cup was used to administer the wine (again, D&C 20:78 suggests a single cup, but the "cup" may be more of a reference to the "wine of the cup" per 3 Ne. 18:8 than the literal cup itself). This suggest either the administration of the sacrament was to fairly small groups, or it took some time to circulate through a large and perhaps even had to be refilled. Finally, they also used wine, whether it be fermented or not, whereas we have changed to the practice of using water, cf. D&C 27:2.

These two prayers are repeated verbatim in D&C 20:77-79, with the exception of a couple of commas.

#### **Comments on Moroni 4**

1 THE manner of their elders and priests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the church; and they administered it according to the commandments of Christ; wherefore we know the manner to be true; and the elder or priest did minister it-- 2 And they did kneel down with the church, and pray to the Father in the name of Christ, saying:

v1 "elders and teachers", apparently teachers (cf. 3:1) were not authorized to administer the sacrament. Presumably the "elders" were the twelve disciples, cf. 3:1.

"according to the commandments of Christ", cf. 3 Ne. 18:5-11.

3 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 witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

v3 The ordinance of the sacrament is to help the believer remember the sacrifice of Christ, and the commitments the believer has made. If they do this, they will have the Holy Spirit to support and guide them.

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