

December 14–20, 2020

Moroni 10

“COME UNTO CHRIST, AND BE PERFECTED IN HIM”

A testimony of the Book of Mormon comes by the power of the Holy Ghost—The gifts of the Spirit are dispensed to the faithful—Spiritual gifts always accompany faith—Moroni’s words speak from the dust—Come unto Christ, be perfected in Him, and sanctify your souls. [About A.D. 421].

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What is true faith?

Throughout the years, Jews have weaned themselves away from spiritual experiences. One orthodox religious man stopped and listened to me while I was touring a group through the Old City, Jewish Quarter. Presumptuously, he yanked at my microphone and said, “You don’t understand the Jews, it’s the commandments that count, not the faith.” He continued, “Faith is made of feelings and feeling can be changed, but the commandments are fixed.” It is simply do’s and don’ts.” In a recent meeting of Jewish and non-Jewish scholars discussing the “Bible Code,” one prominent rabbi said, “There is no Holy Spirit in Judaism anymore!” In previous commentary, other statements that apply with “faith and works” show the posture of Jewish faith, today. As previously stated, True religion is based on true faith in the Lord. The Hebrew word for faith is *emunah* and that is probably derived from the word *imun* which means practice, procedure or work. Inherent in the word *emunah* is faith and works. Both are necessary to keep us in the right way. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (James 2:17) It takes humility as well as courage to exercise faith. Those who will make the “leap of faith” before the “signs” will land on true faith. They will experience the fulfillment of signs that they did not seek but will recognize through their faith and repentance . . . and recognize the truth. “. . . and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.” (Moroni 10:4-5)

Where did the word charity come from?

Along with faith and hope comes charity. In Hebrew it is called *zedakah* or righteousness. Sometimes charity is called *hesed*, loving kindness. Charity is the energy that reflects the faith and hope of a person following God. “Although the idea of charity and almsgiving is spread throughout the whole of the Bible, there is no special term for it. The rabbis of the Talmud, however, adopted the word (*zedakah*) for charity and it is used (but not exclusively so) throughout rabbinic literature in the sense of helping the needy by gifts. The word has since passed into popular usage and is almost exclusively used for charity. The term *hesed* (‘loving kindness’), which is used widely in the Bible, has taken on the meaning of physical aid, or lending money without interest.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How does charity help me keep a commandment?

“The word *zedakah* literally means ‘righteousness’ or ‘justice’; by their very choice of word the rabbis reveal a great deal of their attitude to the subject, for they see charity not as a favor to the poor but something to which they have a right, and the donor, an obligation. The importance the rabbis attached to the *mitzvah* of *zedakah* can be understood from Rabbi Assi who stated that ‘*zedakah* is as important as all the other commandments put together’ and from Rabbi Eleazar who expounded the verse ‘to do righteousness (*zedakah*) and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice’ (Proverbs 21:3) to mean that charity is greater than all the sacrifices.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How can I measure my sense of charity?

“To give a tenth of one’s wealth to charity is considered to be a ‘middling’ virtue, to give a 20th or less is to be ‘mean’; but the rabbis decided that one should not give more than a fifth lest he become impoverished himself and dependent on charity.” “The rabbis were especially concerned about the manner in which alms are to be dispensed. The prime consideration is that nothing be done that might shame the recipient. About one pious man it was related that if he met a man of good family who had become impoverished he would say, “I have heard that a legacy has been left to you in such a place; take this money in advance and pay me back later.” When the man accepted it he then said to him, “It is a gift’.” “Maimonides lists seven ways of giving *zedakah* which are progressively more virtuous: to give . . .

- 1) but sadly;
- 2) less than is fitting, but in good humor;
- 3) only after having been asked to;
- 4) before being asked;
- 5) in such a manner that the donor does not know who the recipient is,
- 6) in such a manner that the recipient does not know who the donor is; and
- 7) in such a way that neither the donor nor the recipient knows the identity of the other.”

(**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What is the higher way of giving?

“The highest form of charity is not to give alms but to help the poor to rehabilitate themselves by lending them money, taking them into partnership, employing them, or giving them work, for in this way the purpose is achieved without any loss of self- respect at all.” “This last way of helping the poor is known as

gemilut hasadim, ‘dispensing kindness.’ This term also includes aiding people who need help and encouragement and includes such matters as visiting the sick and looking after them and inviting needy guests to eat at your home. One of the greatest acts of charity is to provide for orphans.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) Jesus of Nazareth taught in such a way that people grew from learning to care for themselves by caring for others. He gave the supreme payment for all wounds and sorrows, the ultimate charity, because of His mercy.

Where will one of the Lord’s Temple Cities be established?

In Israel, the centers for charity, hope and faith are usually focused on Jerusalem. Jews pray three times a day including the plea for the “rebuilding of Jerusalem,” that means—the temple. One day, it will be the City of The Lord where all faith, hope and charity will emanate from the Lord Himself. A temple city! Embedded in Jewish history is the Exodus, organized in twelve tribal camps identified by stakes with colorful banners. Within those stakes were the Levites, surrounding other stakes connected by beautiful cloth enclosing the Holy of Holies, the “presence of the Lord.” You can imagine the outer, inner and Holy of Holies; Telesial, Terrestrial and Celestial degrees. “And awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.” (**Moroni 10:31**)