

Aug 21-27, 2023

# 1 Corinthians 1-7

"BE PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER"

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**Summary:** *1 Corinthians 1. True Saints are perfectly united in the same mind and in the same judgment—Preach the gospel and save souls—The gospel is preached by the weak and the simple.*

*1 Corinthians 2. The gospel is preached by the power of the Spirit—The Spirit reveals all things to the Saints—The unrepentant natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God.*

*1 Corinthians 3. Milk comes before meat in the Church—Men's works will be tried by fire—The Saints are the temple of God, and if they are faithful, they will inherit all things.*

*1 Corinthians 4. Christ's ministers must be faithful—The Apostles suffer, minister, and keep the faith—The kingdom of God is not in word but in power.*

*1 Corinthians 5. The Church cannot fellowship sinners—Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us.*

*1 Corinthians 6. Church members should not fight one another in the courts—The unrighteous will not be saved—True Saints are the temple of the Holy Ghost.*

*1 Corinthians 7. Paul answers special questions about marriage among those called on missions—Paul praises self-discipline.*

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## Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

### How may I increase respect for others?

The essence of  
information in this

lesson is that of respect. We are taught that we must respect God, other people, and ourselves. Paul's ancient teachings still remind us that there is no place for contention which leads to disrespect. Since there will always be reasons for differing points of view that prompt disagreement, disagreeable and contentious tendencies must be removed. This doctrine has been repeated by subsequent apostles and prophets and is recorded throughout the scriptures. This part of Jewish philosophy bases itself on the *Torah* (The Biblical Law). "And he commanded them that there should be no contention one with another, but that they

should look forward with one eye, having one faith and one baptism, having their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another." (**Mosiah 18:21**) "In Resh Lakish's addresses, both to academy pupils and to the general public, he would emphasize the importance of the mitzvah of studying Torah and of the great reward for supporting the poor members of the community. However, he also stressed that enormous effort must be expended in order to master the wisdom of the Torah, and that "the words of the *Torah* abide only with one who kills himself for them." He enjoined scholars to be amiable to each other and to respect one another in their halakhic discussions for "if a sage becomes angry, his wisdom departs from him." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) Paul teaches; "That your faith should

not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:5)

### What is wisdom?

“Judaism is a way of life based, according to its own evidence, on a text --- the *Torah* --which was revealed by God. This text was further enhanced by explanations believed to be divinely inspired. If this is accepted, then what further search for wisdom can possibly be required?

Furthermore, what should a man's attitude be if his logical reasoning leads him to conclusions which conflict with the revealed wisdom of the *Torah*? These questions are, in fact, the basic issues that Jewish philosophy is concerned with and different philosophers throughout the ages have suggested different solutions. Some Jewish thinkers negated the logical reasoning and insisted that the revealed knowledge always takes precedence. In effect, then, they negated philosophy.”

(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) “The term “wisdom” (Hebrew *hokhmah*) has a wide range of meanings in different contexts, ranging from intelligence to an ethical and religious quality of life. As an historical phenomenon biblical wisdom designates a distinctive cultural tradition and scholarly activity in the history of ancient Israel, continuing in Judaism and early Christianity. It was a way of thinking and an attitude to life that emphasized experience, reasoning, morality, and the concerns of man as man rather than as Israelite. Wisdom, however, was not considered to be just intellectual ability or capacity; true wisdom had to be based on the fear of God and on a moral way of life.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

### What forms moral strength?

An example of moral strength is found in ancient Joseph, the son of Jacob. He was a trusted servant of Potiphar yet refused the amorous overtures of Potiphar's wife. In a compromising situation he simply “got

himself out.” “And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.” (*Genesis 39:11-12*) The body has Godlike attributes. One serves God by respecting, caring, and nurturing the body. In LDS doctrine, the body with its spirit constitutes the soul. It is our responsibility to bring and maintain our bodies into a wholeness of physical, emotional, and spiritual health. “And the spirit and the body are the soul of man.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 88:15*) Judaism generally refers to the soul as only the spirit of a person, yet the lessons from Jewish thought are just as relevant. “Judaism believes that man must serve God with his soul and his body. A person's soul is that part of him that loves God and His goodness and wants to be like Him, and a person's body is the physical container of his soul on earth. Nearly all the mitzvot which God gave are to be performed with the body. Thus, the physical actions of man are sanctified. This applies to all the physical aspects of life: even sex when it is practiced in the proper framework, marriage, is in accordance with the will of God and is a *mitzvah*.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

### How do I identify family purity?

“The regulations concerning sexual relations between husband and wife (*termed tohorat ha-mishpahah*, literally, “family purity”), constitute another integral component of the laws of purity which still apply today. According to biblical law, a couple must abstain from sexual intercourse while the wife is a *niddah*, i.e., during her period of menstruation. The *Halakhah* (Jewish law) as it developed over the generations extended the biblical prohibition somewhat, and as it is

presently codified, stipulates that sexual intercourse (as well as intimacies which may lead to it) is forbidden from the time the woman expects her menses until seven "clean" days (that is, days on which no blood whatsoever is seen) have elapsed. A minimum of five days is fixed for the menses themselves, so that the minimum period of separation is 12 days. In the evening of the seventh clean day, the woman immerses herself in a *mikveh* (immersion font) and normal marital relations are resumed until the next menses are expected." "Like other basic human desires, sex is regarded in a positive light in Jewish teaching, especially as it is the means of fulfilling the first biblical commandment: "Be fruitful and multiply." Judaism does not encourage the unbridled fulfillment of desire, however, but rather imposes restrictions which raise the act to the level of holiness." "Detailed legislation concerning sexual behavior can be found in the Bible as well as in the *Talmud* and subsequent rabbinic literature. Celibacy (complete abstinence from all sexual activity) is discouraged as an unnatural state and detrimental to the human personality. The primary restriction of sexual activity in Jewish law is that it should take place within marriage, as an expression of love between husband and wife as well as out of a desire to fulfill God's commandments. An element of holiness is added by the laws of *niddah* (separation during the period of menstruation which ensure that the couple does not indulge in sex on impulse but rather directs the act to holiness." "In general, moderation and self-control in sexual activity are encouraged. Chastity, the goal to be aimed for, does not mean the avoidance of all sex but of illegal sex. This includes adultery, incest, sodomy, rape and seduction. Adultery is defined as sexual relations between a married woman and any man other than her husband." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

### **How important is modesty?**

"Judaism encourages modesty as one of the means to chastity. Thus, the Jewish woman is enjoined to dress and act modestly at all times. Furthermore, a man is forbidden to be alone with a woman with whom he is not permitted to have sexual relations from considerations of both chastity and modesty." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) Latter-day Saint doctrine is more definitive in that any sexual contact or activity with any body, including your own body, that leads to improper sexual emotions is simply unwarranted. Obviously, the world's mass media culture generally disagrees with such a standard. What will happen? ". . . the fashion of this world passeth away." (**1 Corinthians 7:31**)

### **What has the Lord given me to overcome disagreements and disputes?**

The scriptures give us a guideline regarding disagreements and disputes. Too often, disagreements turn into disputes, and they generally result in anger. The Lord gave us simple instructions in resolving disputes. "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and thou rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly . . ." (**Matthew 5:23-25**) Personal reconciliation sometimes requires arbitration and the judgement of disengaged persons; therefore, a judicial system was established in Biblical times. It is an ancient Jewish custom to have a system of three courts. "The Hebrew word for court is *bet din* (plural: *battei din*), which literally means "house of judgment"; in rabbinic literature it is the term for a Jewish court of law. We find *battei din* which handle the legal problems of the Israelites from the times of Moses. The rule of the law is an important principle of Judaism. The Torah stresses that justice

must not be meted out by the parties themselves but must be administered by impartial judges. Indeed, it was Moses who first organized courts on the advice of his father-in-law, Jethro. Upon Israel's entry into their land, they were obligated to establish courts in every town.

According to the Talmud, towns with less than 120 inhabitants had to have courts consisting of three judges while larger towns had to have courts consisting of 23 judges. The court of three judges exercised jurisdiction over cases involving fines, divorce, conversion, and absolution from vows. The court of 23 judges exercised jurisdiction over cases including those involving capital punishment." "The courts would deal with criminal law as well as all cases between two parties such as for damages and inheritance, decide on the status of individuals and objects as far as purity and kashrut (health laws) were concerned, besides clarifying such laws as those regarding the Sabbath and festivals." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) (Emphasis added). This may add insight to the time of Jesus. This "three-council" system was the structure of the 70-member Sanhedrin in Jesus' days. 23-persons on each council, plus the overall High Priest appointed by the Romans, (Caiaphas). It is apparent that one of the 23-member councils decided to arrest and "try" Jesus, was the "capital punishment" council plus Caiaphas.

### **How are "Judges in Israel" selected?**

"Rabbinic courts continued to be established even when the Jews went into exile. In those countries of exile where the Jews enjoyed judicial autonomy, the rabbinical courts dealt with all matters and also imposed the special regulations made by the community. In some countries, cases involving both Christians and Jews could be heard by the *bet din* as long as an equal number of Christian and Jewish witnesses, or an equal number of judges were involved. The bet din

followed Jewish Law, except in such matters as taxes or pledges of loans, which were often disposed of according to the law of the land. In some countries the Jewish legal system was under the jurisdiction of an officially appointed chief rabbi. In the modern period when such autonomy has disappeared, the function of the bet din has been limited to purely religious matters. Nevertheless, throughout the ages Jews have been encouraged to bring their disputes before a bet din rather than a secular court, and in the Middle Ages any Jew turning to a secular court to decide a dispute with another Jew was considered a traitor to the Jewish people." "The *shofet*, or judge, had to meet strict qualifications, besides just knowing the law. Among these qualifications were piety, wisdom, humility, gentility and human understanding. When Moses set up the first courts, he looked for "able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain" (**Exodus 18:21**) and "wise men, and understanding and full of knowledge" (**Deuteronomy 1:13**). They were charged to "hear the causes between your brethren and judge righteously between a man and his brother and the stranger," not to be partial in judgment but to "hear the small and the great alike, fear no man, for judgment is God's" (**Deuteronomy 1:16--17**)."

### **How is justice better served?**

"In the *Talmud* (written biblical interpretations) *shalom* (peace) is the most exalted ideal of the rabbis next to justice. The rabbis knew that only true justice could bring a true peace and that without justice peace could not be attained or preserved between nations or people. The prophet **Zechariah (8:16)** put it: "Speak truth to each other and judge judgments of equity (*shalom*) in your gates" --- only justice can completely settle disputes." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) The Apostles Paul taught how to reconcile

differences; “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?” **(1 Corinthians 6:1)** Latter-day Saints are also advised to settle differences and disagreements before they develop into disputes. “Being the kingdom of God on earth and having a perfect organization, provision is made in the Church for the trial of transgressors against church standards and for the settlement of disputes between church members and groups. It is the practice of the Church for home teachers (or other specially assigned brethren) to investigate alleged transgression and then, if necessary, bring charges against accused persons, either before a bishop’s court or a stake presidency and high council.” **(Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Page 134)** “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” **(1 Corinthians 1:10)** Balancing this instruction, the Apostle Paul also went on to teach; “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.” **(Colossians 3:12-13)** Remember, on the lid or top of the Ark of the Covenant two angelic *cherubim* were facing each other with a place for God to sit or stand between them as he counseled with the Prophet. The two *cherubim* are called “Justice” and “Mercy!” **(Rav Chaim Paltiel, <https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-cherubim-their-role-on-the-ark-in-the-holy-of-holies>)**

### **How does morality encompass our whole life?**

“High Councilors, do you have any trials before you? “Yes.” Have the brethren complained of each other? “Yes.” Are their feelings alienated one from the other? Bishops, do you have any trials? Are the feelings of the brethren in your Wards alienated? “Yes.” What should they do in such cases? They should follow the rules laid down and be reconciled to their brethren forthwith. I think that it can be shown that the great majority of difficulties between brethren arises from misunderstandings rather than from malice and a wicked heart, and instead of talking the matter over with each other in a saint-like spirit, they will contend with each other until a real fault is created, and they have brought a sin upon themselves. When we have done good ninety-nine times and then do an evil, how common it is, my brethren and sisters, to look at that one evil all the day long and never think of the good. Before we judge each other we should look at the design of the heart, and if it is evil, then chasten that individual, and take a course to bring him back again to righteousness.” **(Discourses of Brigham Young, Page 149-150)** It may be that the principle of respect for our tabernacles of flesh, temples of God, governs the spiritual, emotional, and physical context of life. Our complete morality can be measured by the respect we have for ourselves, each other, and, thereby, our God.