

September 25 – October 1, 2023

Galatians

“WALK IN THE SPIRIT”

Summary: *Galatians 1. Preachers of false gospels are accursed—Paul received the gospel by revelation—He believed, was taught, and preached to the Gentiles.*

Galatians 2. Paul goes to Jerusalem—He contends for the true gospel—Salvation comes through Christ.

Galatians 3. God gave the gospel to Abraham—The Mosaic law was added because of transgressions—The law was a schoolmaster until Christ—The Saints are children of God by faith—All who are of the faith and baptized into Christ become Abraham’s seed.

Galatians 4. The Saints are children of God by adoption—Paul calls the Galatians back to Christ—He compares the two covenants.

Galatians 5. Stand fast in gospel liberty—Seek faith, love, Christ, and the Spirit—The works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit are named.

Galatians 6. Bear one another’s burdens—As you sow, so shall you reap—Be not weary in well-doing.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

Whose gospel, is it?

The labors and accomplishments of Paul are exciting

and dramatic. Many non-Christians (and some Christians, too) feel that Paul “took over” and that the original Jewish nature of the early believers was adjusted to accommodate the Gentiles. A modern-day (1978) adjustment might be considered as the living prophet at that time, President Spencer W. Kimball announced the inclusion of all worthy people in priesthood blessings. The factor that is most important in these adjustments is the Holy Spirit. The spirit reveals things as they were, as they are, and as they will be. “And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;” (**Doctrine & Covenants 93:24**)

Where did the Holy Spirit go?

At a recent conference of scholars dealing with “The Bible Code,” one orthodox Jew

stated simply, “Judaism does not have the Holy Spirit.” Jewish comments about the spirit are included for comparison. “The rabbis regarded Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi as the last of the prophets, the “divine spirit” having ceased in Israel with their deaths.” “*Ruah ha-Kodesh* (holy spirit) is often used as a synonym for prophecy. However, according to some rabbis, unlike prophecy, there are some types of *ruah ha-kodesh* which also can be attained by doing good deeds.” To the religious Jews, the concept of “spirit” has been overtaken by “measurable” things. “The term *revelation* is used in two senses in Jewish theology; it either denotes (1) what in rabbinical language is called *Gilluy Shekinah*, a manifestation of God by some wondrous act of his which overawes man and impresses him with what he sees, hears, or otherwise perceives of his glorious presence; or it denotes (2) a manifestation of his will through oracular words, signs, statutes, or

laws." ("**Revelation**", **Jewish Encyclopedia**, **Jewishencyclopedia.com**)

What role did the Urim and Thummim play?

"The first mention of the *Urim* and *Thummim* appears in the passage in Numbers which describes Moses' transfer of his authority to Joshua prior to his death. Joshua is told by God, through Moses, that in his capacity as leader of the Israelites, "He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the *Urim* before the Lord." Much later, in the Book of Samuel, King Saul unsuccessfully sought information from the *Urim* and *Thummim* about the outcome of an impending battle with the Philistines, and his failure to receive any response led him to seek advice from the witch of En-Dor who conjured up for him the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel." "It is not known exactly when the *Urim* and *Thummim* ceased to function, but the latest period for which there is evidence of their use is that of King David. Subsequently, oracles and predictions about future events were conveyed exclusively by the prophets. The exact meaning of the words "*Urim*" and "*Thummim*" have puzzled scholars over the generations. Both in the Greek and Latin translations of the Bible they were rendered as "revelation and truth" or "teaching and truth" and this understanding gave rise to the incorporation of the Hebrew words *Urim ve-Thummim* on the official seal of Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) The Book of Mormon account of **Mosiah 28:13** speaks of two rims of a bow with two stones, the *Urim* and *Thummin*, used to know the mind of the Lord. The late Church Patriarch, Eldredge G. Smith once spoke of Joseph Smith describing the *Urim* and *Thummin* as two triangular stones connected by silver bows. Detractors of

Joseph Smith spoke of them being "magic glasses." The use of these special revelatory stones has been repeated throughout time. It is a characteristic of the House of Israel. In ancient Hebrew as well as Egyptian, the meaning of these two words include, simply, "Yes" or "No."

How do Jews describe Christianity?

One of the necessary requirements to have the true spirit is to have true faith in the Lord. It is a true test with true results. Misinformation usually results from closing the mind and the heart. It requires an open heart and an open mind to exercise true faith. Jewish scholars have described the Christian faith as follows. "Christianity is the religion which derives from the original followers of Jesus of Nazareth, and which became a major religion in the Western world during the common era. While the history of Christianity has much detailed information, this article . . . is seen from the Jewish point of view." "Strictly speaking, the ministry of Jesus himself does not come under the heading of "Christianity," but rather is part of the history of different Jewish-Christian sects which developed at the beginning of the common era. The first Jewish sects which followed Jesus' teachings still observed much of the Torah but added the belief that Jesus was the messiah. The Greek translation of the word messiah is Christos, and thus Jesus' followers deemed him Jesus Christ. After his death, these followers came to be known as Christians. At this point, the nature of Christianity began to change from being a Jewish-Christian sect with partial observance of mitzvot to a sect embracing gentile followers. This development took place largely under the influence of Paul of Tarsus who attracted a gentile following by teaching that the observance of the commandments was no longer necessary. Faith in Jesus could take the place of the

commandments and the "Church" could take the place of the Jewish people." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How did Christianity develop?

"A Christian community began to emerge whose traditions and beliefs concerning Jesus were shaped by the New Testament. The writings included in the New Testament were written between 66 C.E. and 200 C.E., a period in which relations between Jews and Christians had already begun to deteriorate. Thus, the New Testament portrays Jesus as engaged in violent debates with Jewish scribes, and tends to describe "the Jews" as being responsible for Jesus' death. As the scriptural authority of Christianity, the New Testament has served as a basis for Christian anti-Semitism throughout the ages." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

Surrounding Middle Eastern cultures and religions also added their contrasts and created disputations. A popular worship culture included gods of the earth, wind, rain, and sun. Anciently, the religion of *Baal* featured different gods. Female gods became popular, such as goddesses of victory, a fish goddess (mermaid), and one connected with fertility, *Astarte*. This goddess was later known as *Ashteroth* (the word Easter seems to have been derived from *Astarte*). Another name for this very popular goddess was Diana. "Archaeological finds have included hieroglyphic writings, columns of ancient synagogues, and a statue of the Greek goddess of victory standing on a globe of the world supported by Atlas." "Talmudic sources also mention Ashkelon's orchards and a fair held there. In the Byzantine period the city was a center of paganism, whose population worshiped a fish-goddess, *Derceto*, whose image was a mermaid." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

What contradiction to true religion emerged at the headquarters city of the Church?

In Old Testament times; "The foreign queens Maacah, Jezebel and Athaliah brought in the influence of idolatry, particularly the Canaanite idol Baal, its many names and forms of worship. During this period, it was the mission of the prophets to rebuke the people for their idol worship. The prophets attacked idol worship not only on the grounds that it violates God's covenant with Israel, but also because it was useless. While the pagans believed that the natural phenomena rain, fertility, health etc. were controlled by idols, the prophets taught that God is in control of nature."

(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) It is interesting to note that by New Testament times, Ephesus had a large business surrounding the goddess, Diana. The tradition of the burial of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the subsequent veneration of Mary beginning in Ephesus became a counterfeit substitute for the newly restored religion. The "business" of religion then eclipsed the essence of religion.

What is the first aspect of true religion?

Jesus taught that the first trait of true religion is to love God and the second is to love your neighbor. That likens the holiness of all people with the holiness of God. Judaism has at least held on to that concept through the ages. ". . . holiness . . . applies to the ordinary Jew as much as to the priests. Indeed, one memorable verse reads: "The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 'Speak to the whole Israelite community and say unto them: You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy," and among the laws immediately

following this statement comes the commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Clearly, the holiness is not just that of the Tabernacle and the sacrifice, but that of everyday life." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

How can I describe the characteristics of true religion?

The worship of the true God and the correct religion is the connection and communication with God. Worthy prophets were and are chosen to lead the families of this earth. God chooses these leaders; they speak to the people and the people speak to God. He answers them, confirming the teachings of the prophets. The two-way communication through prayer, and spirit, and sealed by covenants is the essence of true religion. That started with Adam, continued through time to Abraham. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)) God and Abram (name was later changed to Abraham) became friends. "Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend forever? ([2 Chronicles 20:7](#)) The prophets are God's friends, they teach all mankind. "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." ([Galatians 3:8-9](#))

How is a friend different than being friendly?

"Friendship is a relationship between people arising from mutual respect and affection. The ideal of friendship in the western world is derived from classical Greece, which exalted friendship as one of the great human achievements and prime goals of life. The significance of friendship is recognized in the Bible but is never raised to such an important place. A friend is defined as "one who is like your very self" ([Deuteronomy 13:7](#)) and as one "who sticks closer than a brother" ([Proverbs 18:24](#)). Of the few depictions of close friendship in the Bible, perhaps the most famous is that of David and Jonathan. The Bible appears to be more concerned with social and family relations than with individual ones, and thus puts more emphasis on being a good neighbor than it does on friendship. The Bible also warns against false friendship, saying that people might be attracted to a person solely because of his wealth, and not out of motives of respect." "Hillel was a great teacher who emphasized the qualities of humility, patience, tolerance, and devotion, and who was responsible for a renewed spiritualism in Jewish life. He is perhaps best remembered for his authorship of what has become the Jewish version of the golden rule: when a heathen came to him and said he would convert to Judaism if Hillel could teach him the whole of *Torah* while he stood on one leg, Hillel replied, "What is hateful to you, do not do unto your neighbor; this is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary. Go and study." This basic law, far different from the Christian conception that a person should do to others what he would have them do to him, has become a fundamental tenet of the Jewish faith." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What responsibility do I have to preserve truth?

The chastisement that Paul gave to the Saints living in various communities was to help them abandon the creeping counterfeits in religion and return to the basics. "The *Torah* very clearly requires the Jew to rebuke his fellow when he sees him acting wrongly. "You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor and not bear sin because of him" (**Leviticus 19:17**). The most obvious reason is, of course, to restrain him from evildoing and to correct his past misbehavior. Thus, a Jew is not only commanded to watch over his own deeds and behavior; he is also responsible for ensuring that his fellow men act righteously." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What is the harm with assimilation?

The early Saints were constantly challenged by the "glitz" of the religions around them. Assimilation was a great challenge. The New Testament Apostles taught people to be in the world yet not of it. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" (**Philippians 2:15**) "Assimilation is the process in which one cultural or national group loses its identity and becomes part of another group. Referring to Jews, assimilation means losing Jewish identity and becoming absorbed in gentile society. Throughout Jewish history assimilation of Jews has taken place and has been motivated by many factors. In some cases, Jews viewed gentile culture as superior and wished to join it. As early as 175 B.C.E., during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, there were Jews who wished to accept the mode of life and culture of Hellenism.

Later, in the years of early Christianity, there were Jews who gradually assimilated into the Christian way of life. In other cases, the lure of a better social or economic position led Jews to assimilate. During the Middle Ages this was sometimes the cause of apostasy (conversion out of Judaism). At other times, persecution and anti-Semitism compelled Jews to convert, but often only on the surface while secretly they remained Jews." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) The revelation of New Testament Apostles and Prophets was to emphasize the powerful and wonderful purpose of the Holy Ghost. The lesson title, "Walk in the Spirit" means that we should live in the spirit – in the world. That will guide our life in the societies of the world community.

Who adopts me back into Heavenly Father's family?

The Spirit reveals and confirms God's teaching, keeping those teachings, and making a covenant we are adopted by His Son. Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, adopts us into His Father's presence. The adoption is a fatherly act by the Son, making Jesus a father to us. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (**Galatians 4:4-7**) Consider this Jewish thought: Conversion to Judaism is also a literal adoption into the family of Israel. It involves a religious as well as a cultural change and subsequent family involvement. "A convert to Judaism is considered a newborn child, and, from the

halakhic (religious legality) point of view, he has no father or mother. Thus, if a whole family converts, the children and the parents start their lives as Jews with no legal relationship. Because of this state of affairs, converts are always named as

though they were the sons of Abraham . . .
. A husband and wife who convert must also have another wedding ceremony in order to be married under Jewish law.”
(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)