

December 16-22, 2024

Moroni 10

“COME UNTO CHRIST, AND BE PERFECTED IN HIM”

Summary:

Moroni 10. 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

How are Jewish interpretations of faith expressed without knowledge

of the Savior?

“The three attributes of God-fearing people are faith (*emunah*), hope (*Tikvah*) and charity (*Zedakah*) or (*Hesed*). A Jewish look at these three words is illuminating. The word faith as discussed in the last lesson has the element of practice or work. Judaism has, however, evolved to the point that *immun* (practice or works) has become more important than belief. “In the Bible there are no articles of faith or dogmas in which the Jew is commanded to believe. Belief in God’s existence and infinite ability is taken for granted and is the basis of the Bible. This is the importance of the story of the Exodus from Egypt; the Children of Israel witnessed God’s wonders and passed on the record of their own personal experience to their descendants. The biblical word *Emunah* (and its other forms) which is often translated as ‘belief’ really means ‘trust’ or ‘confidence,’ which is something quite different.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) “There is no catechism (i.e., a creed of belief) even in the *Talmud*. Although the rabbis did enumerate those ideas which a person must believe in order to merit ‘a portion in the World to Come’ they did not compile a list of the fundamental dogmas of Judaism. In

discussions throughout the *Talmud* and *Midrashic* literature there is material on the subject and this material was the basis for later developments.” “As the Jews came into contact more and more with Muslim and Christian religious philosophy during the Middle Ages, the need was felt for a definitive statement of those beliefs that make a Jew a Jew. This need had not been felt before because a person’s Jewishness was natural and not exposed to external challenge. The medieval Jewish philosophers gave a great deal of thought to formulating articles of faith and disagreed among themselves as to how many there should be. Some even opposed any such formulation on the grounds that every *Mitzvah* (commandment and blessing) is an article of faith.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What might be considered the Jewish “Articles of Faith?”

“Perhaps the most famous of the various formulations of dogmas is the Thirteen Principles of Faith of (Rabbi Moses) Maimonides (1138-1204). Originally written in Arabic, this creed is the basis of the *Yigdal* hymn which is part of the daily service and is usually recited at the conclusion of the Friday evening synagogue service. The 13 fundamentals are:

1. The existence of God, which is perfect;
2. God is 'one' in every sense of the word;
3. God has no body or physical attributes;
4. God is eternal;
5. God alone must be worshiped;
6. the prophecy of the Bible is true;
7. Moses was greater than any other prophet;
8. the entire *Torah* was given to Moses;
9. the *Torah* will never be superseded or abrogated;
10. God knows the actions of men;
11. God rewards and punishes;
12. the Messiah will ultimately come; and
13. the dead will be resurrected."

"These principles have also been put in the form of a creed in which each begins with the words 'I believe with perfect faith that . . .' the creed is printed in most prayer books." "In addition to belief in God, one of the important articles of faith of the Jew is that God is good. Often human beings cannot appreciate God's goodness, because no human being can see the whole course of events as God does. A unique aspect of the Jewish faith is that although God rules the world with absolute justice, He is also merciful and forgives sins against Him. The doctrine of repentance is based on this belief."

(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How does a "Do It" Jewish culture still hold on to "Belief?"

A believing member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may express that true faith is more than belief. Having faith in the Lord and believing things that are true is connected with heavenly confirmation and the Holy Ghost's verification and validation. That way you will know that your belief is true.

True faith transcends a wish. The word "hope" is also more than a wish. It is a powerful expectation somehow connected with Heaven and redemption. On the other hand, Jews express religious hope and desire as follows; "The ideal of freedom has always been cherished by the Jews, for their history has been one of slavery, exile and persecution --- slavery in Egypt until the Exodus around the 13th century B.C.E., and exile and oppression since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. Throughout the exile, the hope of the return to *Erez* (land of) Israel was kept alive, developing into the Zionist movement in the 19th century, which found its fruition in the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. A fitting symbol of the Jews' desire for their own land, government and defense is the national anthem *Ha-Tikvah* ('The Hope')." "The poem was first written by Naphtali Herz Imber, probably in 1878, as 'Our Hope,' to express the yearning of the Jews to live as a free people on their own land. In 1882, after Imber had read the poem to a group of settlers in Rishon le-Zion, Samuel Cohen, a recent immigrant from Moldavia, set it to a melody based on an old Moldavian-Rumanian folk song. The song achieved the status of a folk song almost overnight, and was sung in settlements throughout *Erez* Israel, as well as at Zionist congresses. The Seventh Zionist Congress (Basle, 1905) ended with an 'enormously moving singing of *Ha-Tikvah* by all present,' a moment which probably confirmed the song's status. The 18th Zionist Congress in Prague, 1933, declared *Ha-Tikvah* the official Zionist anthem. In 1948, the Italian conductor Bernardino Molinari orchestrated the song for the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, giving it its final version. At the Declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, *Ha-Tikvah* was

sung at the opening ceremony and played by the Palestine symphony orchestra at the conclusion; however, *Ha-Tikvah* (the Hope) has never been given official status as a national anthem by a proclamation of the Knesset (parliament).”

(Ha Tikva)

“As long as deep in the heart
The soul of a Jew yearns,
And towards the East
An eye keeps watch upon
Zion,
Our hope is not yet lost
The hope of two millenia
To be a free people in our land
The land of Zion and
Jerusalem.” (Encyclopedia
Judaica Jr.)

An inspiring rendition of Ha-Tikva was played and recorded by the LDS/Jewish concert pianist, Marvin Goldstein.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xktYRDuCjT0>)

What Jew connected hope to God?

In a second century disputation between *Tryphon* a Jew, and *Justin Martyr* a Christian, an illumination of the Jewish concept of hope can be seen -- hope is connected with God. *Tryphon*, who does not have an understanding of the Godhead, is assuming that the *Justin's* belief in Jesus is belief in a man. “*Tryphon* . . . argued, ‘. . . when you forsook God, and placed your hope in a man, what kind of salvation yet remains for you?’”

“Although Judaism sees sin as a most serious matter, even the sinner is not without hope. One of the most important theological doctrines of both the Bible and the *Talmud* is that if a sinner repents his bad deeds, God will forgive him. “Children are considered a great blessing; they are the hope and the promise of continuing life.” “. . . it was the hope of redemption that sustained Jews through centuries of suffering and persecution.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How does Passover link the family of Israel, Jews and members of the Church?

The great redemption festival for the Jews is Passover (*Pesach*). At the *Seder* meal, parsley and lettuce or other green vegetables are dipped into salted water. The greens are associated with the hope of spring. Passover is in the spring as a memory of the past redemption and in hope of a future greater deliverance that comes from heaven. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe that the fulfilment of hope, the heaven-sent Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, was born in the spring – at Passover. His death, resurrection and subsequent atonement were also at Passover. The restoration of His true religion was Passover eve, April 6, 1830. The ancient form of Sacrament was wine (or water) and bread – in anticipation of the Messiah. Now restored, it is bread and wine (or water) – in remembrance of the Messiah.

How is righteousness connected to “doing?”

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.” “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* (commandment and blessing) 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.” “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’.” “(Rabbi) Maimonides lists seven ways of giving *Zedakah* which are progressively more virtuous:

1. to give . . . 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;
7. and in such a way that neither the donor nor the recipient knows the identity of the other.”

“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.**)

How does the Book of Mormon connect the Zion-family, Old and New?

In Israel, the centers for charity, hope and faith are usually focused in Jerusalem. Jews pray three times a day for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple. One day, it will be a City of The Lord where all faith, hope and charity will emanate from the Lord Himself. “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**).