By the Testimony of Two or Three Witnesses
by Tony Robinson

The release of the movie *The Passion of the Christ* has caused no small amount of controversy. Every form of media is buzzing with opinions pro and con. The Christian and Messianic communities are not (nor should be) immune to the controversy. In fact, these two communities should be good sources of information to which people can turn for help in determining whether or not they should see this movie. Unfortunately, I believe there may be a lot of bad advice being promulgated in both groups. This is the first in a series of short articles I plan on writing regarding the movie *The Passion of the Christ* and why you might consider not viewing it.

On the one hand, many people have eagerly viewed the movie and actively encouraged others to see it. On the other hand, others have decided—for various reasons—not to view the movie. Many within this second group of people, such as myself, are actively encouraging others not to view the movie. However, as we try to do so, those who promote the movie charge that we are in no position to make judgments about it since we haven’t seen it. The message to those who are weighting whether or not to see the movie is clear—don’t give heed to those who haven’t seen the movie. Thus, many are beginning to feel that the testimony of those who haven’t seen the movie could be hearsay, gossip, dubious and/or unreliable at best. Wanting to know the truth, they decide to view the movie. Although each person must ultimately make up his/her own mind, many are acting upon the advice of the proponents of this movie. I simply want to offer advice from a different point of view for your consideration. This first paper is written to show you why you can trust the opinions of someone who haven’t seen the movie.

Now at face value, the argument of the proponents of viewing the movie seems like a valid criticism. However, is it? Do we have to view a movie first-hand before we can make a judgment pertaining to its suitability? Secondly, must we reject the testimony of someone who hasn’t seen a movie first-hand? I don’t think so. The Torah states in Deuteronomy 19:15b that “by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.” Yeshua also validated this principle in Matthew 18:16 pertaining to matters of discipline within the assembly. These verses do not insist that one be an eyewitness, simply that truth be established by witnesses. In fact, the testimony of two witnesses is a general principle found throughout the Scriptures, being used in many circumstances.

Thus, the first point I’d like to make is that according to Scripture, you can absolutely accept the testimony of eyewitnesses. Many people have seen the movie and have written commentaries about it. Many secular commentators, Christians and Messianics who have viewed the movie have written critiques of it. There is no shortage of information or opinions from those on both sides of the issue. They are first-hand witnesses of the movie and their testimony is valid. The only issue you need to resolve concerns the character and reliability of the eyewitness source. Obviously, there are many reputable sources of commentary out there. Therefore, it is perfectly legitimate and Scriptural for you to base your decisions on the testimony of those who have viewed the film. You need not see it.
yourself before making a judgment! If there is something within your heart telling you to be
careful, then heed it and don’t let anyone tell you that you **have to see the movie**.

So powerful is the testimony of two or three witnesses that **Adonai has chosen to grant
salvation based on the testimony of His witnesses!** According to I Corinthians 1:21,
Adonai has determined to grant salvation to anyone who believes the testimony of the
Gospel. All of us were saved precisely because we believed the gospel preached to us by
someone. And guess what? No one who preaches the Gospel nowadays is an eyewitness to
the resurrection! Interesting, eh? The only eyewitnesses to the resurrection have long
since died. Today, those who witness about the fact of the resurrection are witnesses
because of what Yeshua has done in their lives, not because they actually saw the
resurrected Savior.

Now let’s apply the reasoning of the proponents of viewing the movie to the process of
salvation. If we can only make a judgment about a matter after being an actual eyewitness
to an event—as the proponents of viewing the movie suggest—then no one would ever get
saved! Why? Because you aren’t able to verify the resurrection yourself. Furthermore, you
would be discouraged from making a judgment about the resurrection since you didn’t see
it. The testimony of the Gospel would just be hearsay or gossip, etc. Well, of course you
see the folly in this line of reasoning. However, by following the reasoning and logic of
Scripture (Deuteronomy 19:15), you would be able to believe the testimony of witnesses.
If it is okay to accept the testimony of witnesses concerning the resurrection of the Messiah,
then I think it is acceptable to believe the testimony of eyewitnesses to the movie, *The
Passion of the Christ*, without having to see it yourself. That’s right. If it’s good enough to
get you saved then it’s good enough to help you walk in that salvation! The testimony of
two or three eyewitnesses is powerful. In fact, it has the Holy One's stamp of approval.

Secondly, what about accepting testimony from someone who hasn’t seen the movie (such
as myself). This is where you will need some extra verification. There is absolutely no
reason on earth for most people not to be able to obtain eyewitness information regarding
this movie. Then, with that as your foundation, you will be able to judge the opinions of
those who haven’t actually seen the movie. Despite what the proponents of seeing the
movie imply, those of us who haven’t seen the movie still have valuable input that may be
important to your decision-making process. As for me, I have the written testimony from
many who have seen the movie as well as the spoken testimony from my own personal
contacts who have seen it—By the Testimony of Two or More Witnesses.

Did you **need** to see *The Last Temptation of Christ* before you knew whether or not it was
suitable viewing for yourself, a disciple of Yeshua? Did you **need** to see any of the *Harry
Potter* movies before you knew whether or not they were suitable viewing for yourself, a
disciple of Yeshua? You see beloved, one need not bring potentially spiritually harmful
things into his/her bosom for close examination through the spiritual senses of touch and
taste when it can be examined at a safe distance through the spiritual senses of hearing, sight
and smell. Some of us **smell** a foul odor emanating from this movie. Some of us **see** the red
flags of danger in its mixture of truth and error. Finally, some of us **hear** the warnings of
Scripture, which implore us to try the spirits. Using the spiritual senses that allow us to
spiritually examine a matter at a safe distance (which most certainly would include hearing the testimony of eyewitnesses), we need not reach out and eat (viewing the movie) that which is potentially harmful. It is a wise animal that quickly flees when it picks up the scent of the hunter (usually detected at great distances of separation), instead of waiting until the hunter is within his eyesight.

In the next article, I will disclose the reasons why I believe this movie is harmful by using the testimony of Mr. Gibson himself, as well as other information. Until then, test the spirits, be vigilant and follow the Scriptural pattern Yeshua laid out for us. Seek the opinion of two or three witnesses!