

Question Series

Session 1

What about Jews and their relationship to Jesus?

To answer this question, we must look at Judaism in relation to Christianity. There are similarities and there are differences. The biggest difference is how they view Jesus.

Let's look at the similarities first:

- 1) Both are Messianic faiths. In other words, they both believe in the promise of the Messiah who will be sent by God to save mankind.
- 2) Both see Jesus as an important Biblical figure.

Let's look at the differences:

- 1) Christians regard Jesus as their messiah. Jesus is the foundation of their faith. But to Jews, Jesus was viewed as a great historical figure. A great rabbi-teacher or prophet.
- 2) Christians believe that Jesus came to the world to die on a cross to pay the penalty for our sin and rose on the third day to redeem all mankind. Judaism is still waiting o the coming Messiah. So by saying this, they do not believe Jesus is the Messiah sent to redeem mankind.

There is good news: Jews are being led to Christ today. These Jews are what we call Messianic Jews. These are Jews that have accepted Jesus as their promised messiah. Some refer to the Messianic Jews as "completed Jews". Most Messianic Jews are Jews by heritage. But there is a price to be paid, many who become Christians or Messianic Jews are many time rejected by their families who have not yet been converted.

So, saying that, who are Messianic Jews and what traditions do they hold to?

- 1) Messianic Jews use a Hebrew bible known as the "Tanakh".
- 2) Messianic Jews still believe in the practice of circumcision because it still says within the keeping of the covenant.
- 3) They do not observe the Lord's Supper but do believe in baptism by immersion.
- 4) Messianic Jews still observe their Jewish holidays such as Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah. Yom Kippur is regarded as the "Sabbath of Sabbaths" that is observed on the tenth day of the seventh month. Rosh Hashanah is observed on the first day of the month and is a day of forgiveness of sins.
- 5) Messianic Jews believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was raised on the third day.
- 6) Messianic Jews also are charismatic in many ways and do practice speaking in tongues.

Today there is a Jewish organization known as “Jews for Jesus”. This organization began in California in 1973. The organization seeks to lead other Jews and does ask for donations from other Christian churches and individual believers to help with their ministry.

Why did David choose five stones when it only took one to kill Goliath?

There are actually two views I found on this question:

- 1) Some think David was in doubt that one stone could do the job.
- 2) Others think that David chose stones because, Goliath had one giant brother and three giant sons. So David chose one stone for each of them.

Let's look at the first view. David was not in doubt. David had a strong faith in God. God had protected and delivered him from dangers in the past and he knew God would protect him again. David knew his strength came from God. (Read: I Samuel 17:32-27) David here was just being prepared for battle. Also, we never saw that God promised David that one stone would kill Goliath either.

Let's look at the second view. Goliath did have other family. (II Samuel 21:15-22) In this passage, the other four Philistine Giants (one brother and three sons) are mentioned. According to the time frame of David's encounter with Goliath in I Samuel, David only encountered Goliath. At this time, he was only aware of Goliath not his other brother and three sons.

(Key) Whether it would take one stone or five stones to kill Goliath, David had confidence that God would help him defeat the giant Goliath. David praised God in Psalm 21:13 for His strength and power.

****Another thought:** Why did David choose five “smooth” stones? Smooth stones traveled through the air at higher speeds due to less resistance when traveling through the air; thus making his throw more accurate.