

4. Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel, which will unite humanity as one. As it says: "God will be King over all the world — on that day, God will be One and His Name will be One" (Zechariah 14:9).

- **What do you think those verses are pointing towards?**

Check out some of the stuff they didn't recognise (There are over 300 prophecies about Jesus , these are just a few)...

Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2.).....(Luke 2:4-5, 7)
 The mum would be a virgin (Isaiah 7:14) ...(Luke 1:26-27, 30-31)
 Rode on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9)(Mark 11:7, 9, 11)
 Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9) ...(Matthew 27:57-60)

- **Do you know any others?**
- **Do you think the disciples were correct in saying that these prophecies were fulfilled in Christ?**

Difference #4: The Chicken or the Egg.... Faith or Actions?!?!?!?

Although the Christian bible includes the main Hebrew Scriptures that Jews have (Torah), there are major differences in belief.

Jews think *actions and behaviour* are most important (beliefs come out of actions).

Christians believe that *faith* is most important (actions are a result of that belief).

- **Which should come first? Faith or actions**
- **Which is more important? Do these verses contradict each other?**
 - John 6:47
 - Galatians 2:16
 - James 2:17-18



JUDAISM



Tonight we're looking at Judaism and we're going to look at 4 main areas that they would disagree with Christianity on. But before we go there, here's a bit of background info.

The three main forms of Judaism:

Orthodox Jews: Follows the Law of Moses (Torah) which is the first 5 books of the Bible. They also use a book called the Mishnah which tells them how to live daily life, and the Talmud which is based on the Mishnah. They live strictly by the laws in these three books. For instance they cannot mix meat and dairy products (no cheeseburgers!), they are forbidden from eating pork or shellfish, and to keep the Sabbath they will not use the phone, write, touch money, or pose for pictures and certainly wouldn't use facebook that day.

Conservative Jews: The Torah is vitally important to them but they have a more relaxed interpretation of the law and not so strict about rules. They also try and keep the Hebrew language and traditions alive.

Reform Jews: They are more interested in focusing on the principles of Judaism rather than sticking to each individual law as laid out in the Torah. So they don't usually follow the dietary and Sabbath laws.

All three types of Jews still respect and keep the Sabbath which begins on sundown on Friday night and continues till sundown on Saturday and during that time they go to the synagogue.

Difference #1: Festivals and Sacrifices

Jewish People have 2 main Holy days in the year which are linked with a period of repentance and soul searching: the Rosh Hashana (Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). In addition, they celebrate the Passover around the time Christians celebrate Easter.

- **Does repentance and soul-searching have anything to do with being Christian?**

- **What does atonement mean? (Leviticus 5:6) How did Jewish people get atonement?**
- **What is Passover all about? (Exodus 12:1-12)**
- **Should we be celebrating those festivals too?**

Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-18 that not even the smallest letter of the law would disappear.

- **Have a read of Hebrews 10:1-18 Does that mean we should be sacrificing animals as well?**
- **What did God do so we don't have to sacrifice animals anymore?**

And now for something a little bit interesting...

The Jews were told in Old Testament times to obey all the laws that God had given to Moses and make sure they sacrificed animals at certain times every year at the temple in Jerusalem to make themselves acceptable to God and get forgiveness for their sins.

There were some interesting rules for the priests and the people to observe... Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk ... Never forget to add salt to your grain offerings... Splatter the goat's blood against all sides of the altar... Never eat any fat or blood... Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast... Do not wear clothing woven from two different kinds of thread... Do not trim the hair off your temples....

Difference #2: Old and New Covenants

Jewish people are also known as people of the covenant, and the word comes up again and again in the Old Testament.

A covenant is a relationship or an agreement between two groups of people. The Jewish people had a covenant with God. If they kept their side of the deal (sacrifices, obeying the Law), God would watch over them, protect them, and they would continue to be His people.

But Jeremiah 31:31-32 talks of a time where there will be a new covenant between God and his people, and Luke 22 also talks about this new covenant.

- **Take a look at Luke 22:19-21. This passage should sound pretty familiar. What brought about this new covenant?**
- **Also take a look at 2 Corinthians 3:6. What does Paul say is the one of the big differences between the new and the old covenant?**
- **What do these differences mean for us as we live our lives as Christians?**
- **How do you think we become members of this new Covenant?**

Difference #3: The Messiah... Who did they expect?

The Old Testament prophets (way before Jesus was born) talked about a future Messiah who would rescue people from their sins. There were heaps of prophecies about what he would be like and how he would come. But the Jews did not all recognise this. They began looking for a Messiah that would save them from destruction, somebody who would bring peace to the nation. Someone strong like King David to fight against their oppressors and bring all the Jews back together.

Over the hundreds of years since Jesus was on earth, the Jews have been persecuted, exiled, killed, and left without a temple which is so central to their beliefs. So they kind of have a good reason for wanting to be rescued.

Many Jews accept Jesus as a great prophet and say he had good teachings but do not accept that he is the Messiah.

These are the 4 things they are looking for in the Messiah.

1. Rebuild the Temple (Ezekiel 37:26-28).
2. Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 43:5-6).
3. Usher in an era of world peace, and end all hatred, oppression, suffering and disease. As it says: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall man learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)