

# Witnessing to Jews



Ron Elkin  
AMMI Ministry  
Philadelphia, USA



# Topics to Cover

- ◆ Branches of Judaism Today
- ◆ Major Obstacles We Face in Sharing the Gospel with Jews.
- ◆ How to Respond to Major Jewish Objections to Christianity.



# Branches of Judaism

- ◆ Orthodox Judaism
- ◆ Conservative Judaism
- ◆ Reform Judaism



# Orthodox Judaism

- ◆ Revelation
  - Bible is God's Word.
  - So is the Oral Law.
- ◆ Creed
  - Nothing quite like the Westminster Confession
  - The Shema (Deut 6:4-5)
- ◆ God
  - Derived from Bible, but reject Trinity



# Orthodox Judaism

- ◆ **Emphasis on Practice**
  - Law (as taught by Rabbis) is to be obeyed.
- ◆ **Creation**
  - Good; to be enjoyed within limits of God's law
- ◆ **Man**
  - Basically good; can become better by good deeds
  - Eternal soul; eternal paradise for righteous
  - Evil allowed to test human character



# Orthodox Judaism

- ◆ Israel
  - Elect; chosen to help establish God's rule & glorify Him
  - Will one day live in peace in the Promised Land
- ◆ Messiah
  - Still to come, will bring in world peace, establish Israel
  - Not Jesus! Not God!
- ◆ End Times
  - There will be a resurrection of the dead.
  - Humans will live eternally.

# Conservative Judaism

- ◆ Established as an alternative to Orthodox and Reform Judaism.
- ◆ More adapted to Western and secular culture than are Orthodox Jews.
- ◆ Rabbis have less authority.



# Reform Judaism

- ◆ Maintains Jewish identity.
- ◆ Very liberal in theology
  - May or may not believe in God
  - Feel no obligation to obey the Bible or Rabbinic tradition





# Major Obstacles to Gospel

- ◆ Persecution by the Church
  - Many Jews killed & oppressed in name of Jesus
- ◆ Theological Differences with Christianity
  - God
    - no Trinity
    - God cannot be divided

# Major Obstacles to Gospel

## ◆ Theological Differences

### ■ Jesus

- Not the Messiah; didn't set up Kingdom
- God cannot be man.
- The Rabbis don't accept him.

### ■ Sin

- Man is basically good, made in God's image.
- Righteousness is increased by good deeds.

# Our Responses



To the Major Objections  
of Jews to the Gospel

# Persecution of Jews

- ◆ Admit wrong done, express sorrow & regret.
- ◆ Explain prejudice as having source in our sin nature.
- ◆ Use this as a way to show that all are sinners (Ps 14:2; 51:5, 9)



# Trinity

- ◆ Word "one" in Deut 6:4 is *achad*, a plural unity (Gen 2:24; 11:6), in which two or more things are combined into one.
- ◆ Another word, *yachid*, is used to mean "only one" (Gen 22:2).

# Jesus

- ◆ Jesus didn't bring peace.
  - Jesus brought inner peace to those who trust him.
  - When he returns he will bring outward peace.
  - The Rabbis' two Messiahs (suffering & reigning) are actually one — Jesus!
- ◆ God cannot be a man.
  - Is anything impossible for God?
  - Isa 7:14 – Virgin will bear son, Immanuel.
- ◆ The Rabbis don't accept him.
  - Some have. Would you believe if I showed you?

# Sin & Salvation

- ◆ Sin nature
  - Ps 14:2-3 – no one does good, not even one
  - Ps 51:5, 9 – sinful at birth; blot out my iniquity
  - Jer 17:9 – heart is deceitful above all things
  - Isa 6:5 – woe to me... unclean lips!
- ◆ Salvation by works?
  - No sacrifice for willful sins – Num 15:30-31
  - David cried out to God for mercy – Ps 51
  - Abraham declared righteous by faith – Gen 15:6
  - Isaiah saved by God's mercy – Isa 6:7

# Forgiveness

- ◆ Sins were forgiven by a blood sacrifice – Lev 17:11.
- ◆ Where is our atonement today?
  - Does God accept a bloodless sacrifice?
- ◆ Why did God allow the temple to be destroyed?
  - 1<sup>st</sup> temple destroyed for 70 years
    - Because of Israel's disobedience
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> temple now destroyed for 1930+ years
    - Destroyed only some 40 years after Jesus' death





---

# The Gospel in the Hebrew Bible

---

- ◆ All are sinners.
  - Ps 14:2; Jer 17:9; Isa 6:5
- ◆ Sins separate us from God.
  - Isa 59:2; Ex 34:33; Dan 12:2
- ◆ Our good deeds are not enough.
  - Isa 64:6 – all our righteousness like filthy rags.



# The Gospel in the Hebrew Bible

- ◆ God gave a blood atonement.
  - Lev 17:11; Ex 12:7, 13
- ◆ God promised a Messiah to bear our sins.
  - Isa 52:13-53:12
- ◆ How do we know Jesus is the promised one?
  - Micah 5:2; Dan 9:26; Zech 12:10; Psalm 22



# The Gospel in the Hebrew Bible

- ◆ Salvation is by faith.
  - Gen 15:6; Isa 26:3-4; Ps 2:12
- ◆ There is a life after death; where will you spend it?
  - Dan 12:2

# Major Messianic Verses

- ◆ Gen 3:12 – wounded but will crush Satan
- ◆ Gen 49:10 – from tribe of Judah
- ◆ 2 Sam 7:16 – from line of David
- ◆ Ps 2:12 – trust/believe in Messiah
- ◆ Psalm 22 – will suffer; deliverance to be worldwide news
- ◆ Psalm 110 – Messiah to be a priest & king

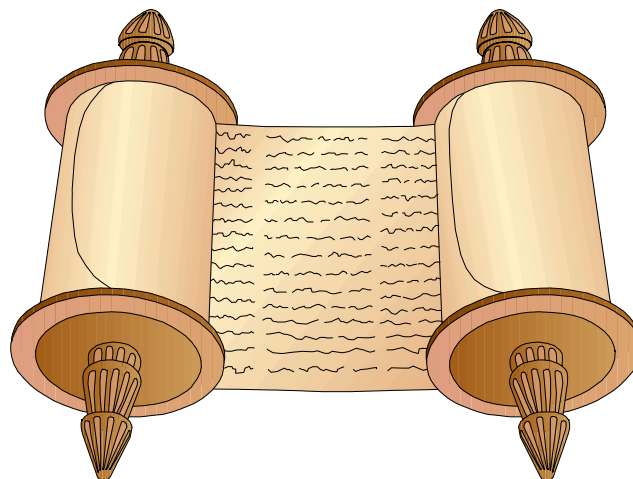
# Major Messianic Verses

- ◆ Isa 7:14 – born of a virgin
- ◆ Isa 9:6-7 – boy who is God & king forever
- ◆ Isaiah 11 – will bring peace to Jews & Gentiles
- ◆ Jer 23:5-6 – a king who is God
- ◆ Zech 9:9-10 – will enter Jerusalem on a donkey, yet rule all the earth one day

# Major Messianic Verses

- ◆ Zech 12:10-13:1 – Israel will see the one they have pierced and they will mourn.
- ◆ Mic 5:2 – to be born in Bethlehem, yet active for ages past.

# The End



May God encourage and empower you  
to reach out to your Jewish friends and  
acquaintances!