

POINTERS ON WITNESSING TO JEWS

By David Brickner

Introduction

By reading this brochure, you are indicating an interest in sharing your faith in Y'shua (Jesus) with Jewish people! Maybe you have a Jewish neighbor . . . or friend, or classmate, or even a Jewish relative. Or maybe you just want to be prepared for the next time you met a Jewish person. Here are some things you should know that will help you be a more effective witness.

Basics

Everybody needs to hear the gospel. And God's chosen people (the Jews) are certainly no exception. Y'shua came in fulfillment of the writings of Jewish prophets who were writing to Jewish people. So, if Jews don't need Jesus, no one does! Yes, Jews and Gentiles both need salvation in Jesus, but you don't have to be Jewish to have an effective witness to Jewish people.

Jewish Identity and Belief

Virtually all Jews are proud of their identity as Jews, but this does not in itself make a statement about what they believe about God. Even religious Jews may have varying beliefs about God. It is more important to find out what they believe about God and the Bible than to find out what kind of synagogue they attend.

For many Jews, their Jewish identity is more cultural than it is religious. But this doesn't mean that their Jewishness is unimportant to them. Most Jews also think that the opposite of Jewish is Christian, and so for them to consider Jesus is problematic because it means considering losing their Jewish identity. Therefore, when witnessing to Jewish people about Jesus it is important to stress that they do not need to give up their identity as Jews in order to embrace Jesus as Messiah.

Myths

There are several popular myths which keep people from sharing with their Jewish friends. Some of them include:

Myth: All Jews are well versed in the Old Testament.

Fact: Most Jews have a strong cultural identity, with a very limited knowledge of the Scriptures.

Myth: I can just invite my Jewish friend to my church.

Fact: Many Jewish people might be hesitant to attend church. There is no substitute for you personally sharing your faith

Myth: I may not be able to answer their questions.

Fact: That's true. But it does not change the truth of the gospel. Tell your friend you are happy to research the information. This gives you an opportunity to have further witnessing opportunities too.

Myth: I need to wait for the Holy Spirit's leading. I don't want to lose my friends.

Fact: God has already told us we are to be his witnesses. (Mt. 28:19-20) If you are friendly and forthright you will gain your friends' respect for genuinely caring, even if they don't agree to discuss the matter at length.

Myth: I will let my life be a testimony and wait until they ask me about Jesus.

Fact: That will likely be a long wait. Most Jewish people feel that religion is a private matter and might be uncomfortable asking. Besides, the Great Commission commands us to go tell!

Practical Tips

When witnessing to a Jewish person, remember:

1. Make friends. Demonstrate that you really care about the person. Affirm the fact that you know they are Jewish and that you appreciate their Jewishness. Let your friendship serve as the foundation for your witness to them.
2. Be up-front. Declare yourself a follower of Jesus right away. You do not want to appear deceptive or coercive. Be yourself.
3. Ask questions. Everyone likes to be asked their opinion. This can be a good way to steer the conversation towards spiritual matters. Questions about Israel, an upcoming Jewish holiday or even a Bible question from the Old Testament are a good place to start.
4. Give a personal testimony. The reality of God in your life is a powerful witness. Many Jewish people think that you were born a Christian, in the same way that they were born Jewish. Hearing how you became a follower of Jesus, how God answers your prayers, can provoke your Jewish friend to jealousy. (Rom.11:11)
5. Use Scripture. Don't be afraid to answer questions with a verse from the Bible. Encourage your Jewish friend to read the New Testament. Most Jewish people have never read the New Testament, and most Jews who have come to faith in Christ came as a result of reading the New Testament. After all, it is a very Jewish book!
6. Be prayerfully persistent. Don't be put off if you receive a negative reaction at first. In fact, you should expect it. Keep looking for opportunities. Keep praying. Seek to introduce your friend to a Jewish believer, or even to one of us in Jews for Jesus. Lend books or other evangelistic literature.
7. Ask for a decision and follow up. Don't think that your Jewish friend will automatically understand that they need to pray to receive Christ. If they are a willing listener, then you should ask if they are willing to receive what you have said for themselves. Be diligent to follow up any decision. Contact Jews for Jesus for help discipling the new Jewish believer.

Important Messianic Passages

Messianic Prophecy	Old Testament reference	New Testament reference
Messiah to be the seed of the Woman	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4
Messiah to be the seed of Abraham	Genesis 12:3; 18:18	Luke 3:23,34 Matthew 1:1-2 Acts 3:25 Galatians 3:16

Messiah to be of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Matthew 1:1-2
Messiah to be of the seed of Jacob	Numbers 24:17, 19	Matthew 1:1-2 Luke 3:34
Messiah to be of the seed of David	Psalms 132:11 Isaiah 11:10 Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15	Matthew 1:6 Luke 1:32-33 Acts 2:29-30 Romans 1:3
Messiah to be a prophet like Moses	Deut. 18:15, 19	Matthew 21:11 John 6:14 John 1:45 Acts 3:22-23
Messiah to be the Son of God	Psalms 2:7 Proverbs 30:4	Luke 1:32 Matthew 3:17
Messiah to be raised from the dead	Psalms 16:10	Acts 13:35-37
Messiah to experience crucifixion	Psalms 22 Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34-50 John 19:28-30
Messiah to be betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18, 21
Messiah to ascend to heaven	Psalms 68:18	Luke 24:51 Acts 1:9
Homage and tribute paid to Messiah by great kings	Psalms 72:10-11	Matthew 2:1-11
Messiah to be a priest like Melchizedek	Psalms 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
Messiah to be at the right hand of God	Psalms 110:1	Matthew 26:64 Hebrews 1:3
Messiah, the stone which the builders rejected, to become the head cornerstone	Psalms 118:22-23 Isaiah 8:14-15 Isaiah 28:16	Matthew 21:42-43 Acts 4:11 Romans 9:32-33 Ephesians 2:20 1 Peter 2:6-8
Messiah to be born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25 Luke 1:26-35
Galilee to be the first area of Messiah's ministry	Isaiah 9:1-8	Matthew 4:12-16
Messiah will be meek and mild	Isaiah 42:2-3 Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 12:18-20 Matthew 26:62-63
Messiah will minister to the Gentiles	Isaiah 42:1 Isaiah 49:1-8	Matthew 12:21
Messiah will be smitten	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67 Matthew 27:26, 30
Messiah to suffer, die and rise again.	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	The four gospels
The new and everlasting Covenant	Isaiah 55:3-4 Jeremiah 31:31-33	Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24 Luke 22:20, Hebrews 8:6-13
Messiah as the right arm of God	Isaiah 59:16 Isaiah 53:1	John 12:38

Messiah as intercessor	Isaiah 59:16	Hebrews 9:15
Messiah will perform miracles	Isaiah 35:5-6	John 11:47 Matthew 11:3-6
Messiah is called 'The Lord'	Jeremiah 23:5-6	Acts 2:36
The time of Messiah's coming prophesied	Daniel 9:24-26	Galatians 4:4 Ephesians 1:10
Bethlehem to be the place of Messiah's birth	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1 Luke 2:4-6
Messiah will enter the Temple with authority	Malachi 3:1	Matthew 21:12
Messiah will enter Jerusalem on a donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-10
Messiah will be pierced	Zechariah 12:10 Psalm 22:16	John 19:34, 37
Messiah to be forsaken by his disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31, 56
The coming of the Holy Spirit in the days of the Messiah	Joel 2:28-29	Acts 2:16-18
Opposition of the nations; Messiah's final victory over death	Psalm 2:2 Isaiah 25:8 1	Revelation 19:19 1 Corinthians 15:54 Revelation 7:17; 21:4
The glorious Messiah; Messiah as King	Isaiah 63:1 Psalm 2:6-9	Revelation 19:11-16 Revelation 19:15-16
Submission of all nations to Messiah's rule	Isaiah 2:4 Micah 4:1-4	Revelation 12:5
The Gentiles shall seek the Messiah of Israel	Isaiah 11:10	Romans 11:25

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