

## Transcript 78

Shea Houdmann

Welcome to the Got Questions podcast. Our continuing series of taking some of the most common questions we were receiving from you and then discussing them in a little more in depth today.

With that in mind, our purpose today is to discuss some Messianic Judaism a little bit.

We get a lot of questions about what does it mean to be a Messianic Jew. What does the Jewish faith in Christ look like and how does that maybe a little bit different than how a non-Jewish person would believe in Christ so with that in mind, our guest today is Rabbi Jason Sobel. He's the President of Fusion Global and we'll give him a chance to tell you all about that here so Jason, Rabbi, Jason, and welcome to the show.

Jason Sobel

Hey Shalom, it's great being with you. Thank you so much for having me and it's great being here with you.

**Shea Houdmann**

So Rabbi Jason. So tell our audience a little bit about you and then also about Fusion Global and the other ministry callings that God has laid in your lap.

**Jason Sobel**

Yeah, I grew up in the Holy Land, New Jersey, where there are more Jews than in Jerusalem. But I came to know the Lord about 28 years ago. So I am a Jewish follower of Jesus, his Hebrew name being Yeshua or is commonly called a Messianic Jew or a Messianic rabbi is what I do as far as serving the Lord.

We have a ministry called Fusion Global and part of our Passion is to help people see the Bible in high definition how the old and the new Connect and also to bring unity between Jews and gentiles in the in the body. We do a number of different things with our ministry. We write books, wrote a book with Kathie Lee Gifford called the Rock, the Road and the Rabbi another book called Mysteries of The Messiah, where the spiritual consultants on the TV show The Chosen which we've been blessed to be a part of. And you know, we just do a lot of Internet ministry and teaching and different things along those lines. TV shows at TBN. But we're just excited to make an impact for the Lord and for the Kingdom.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, so praise God and we'll include links to where you can learn more about Rabbi Jason and Fusion Global and his books, etc. in the show notes and the description on YouTube and also at [podcast.gotquestions.org](http://podcast.gotquestions.org). So Jason let me lead off with this question for our listeners who may not be very familiar. What is Messianic Judaism?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, Messianic Judaism you know really is what we read about in the New Testament. Jesus was Jewish all his first followers were Jewish, and so what it's really about is being part of the remnant of Israel, a Jewish person who places their faith in Yeshua Jesus as the Messiah, but also wants to honor the heritage and the covenant that God made with Israel and the Jewish people, both, because you know so we believe that that's part of God calling to Israel, but also to be a witness and a testimony to the Jewish people. So it's an integration of a biblical faith and belief with the biblical practices and traditions that Jesus and the disciples themselves would have celebrated.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, so with that in mind, how would you describe Messianic Judaism as being different from say, evangelical Protestant Christianity? I mean, if someone were to attend a Messianic Jewish service who's used to a more evangelical Christian service, what would be different?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, let me just begin by saying where there's three Jews or six opinions. And so obviously we're going to be speaking very broadly, because, just like in the Christian world, there's different expressions between a traditional and more creative and contemporary. The same is true of Judaism and of Messianic Judaism, but probably the thing that summarizes it the best is that there is a desire to honor the history and heritage. So, for example, most messianic congregations will meet on either Friday night or Saturday morning because that is the Sabbath mentioned in the 10 Commandments that God gives to the Jewish people.

So one is the day of worship. You're going to experience some of the traditional Hebrew and Jewish prayers in the service. Like the saying of the Shema here, O Israel, the Lord our God, The Lord is One, so some of the traditional Jewish prayers that Jews have been saying for thousands of years, some praying in Hebrew. Also, you're going to probably see your reading from the Torah portion of the week, because just like it was in the days of Jesus when he went into the synagogue, Jews had been reading from the five books of Moses.

But what sets it apart from a synagogue is we're going to read the New Testament and the prophets and show how it all ties and fits together, yeah.

Shea Houdmann

So you mentioned this in your intro about how part of your ministry is bringing Jews and Gentiles together, and that's one of the questions we get most is that if Jews attend a Messianic Jewish service and do not in any sense like mix with Gentile Christians, isn't that kind of the opposite of what the New Testament teaches in that we all one in the body of Christ that God tore down through Christ the wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles and so forth so how do you respond to that? And I guess what is the appropriate degree if any, of separation between Jewish believers in the Messiah and Gentile believers in the Messiah?

Jason Sobel

No, I think that's I think that's a great question. I mean, I think the first thing that we have to understand is that the foundation, I believe of New Testament faith and the thing that was so radical about it, was that you know in Acts Chapter 2 on the on Jewish holiday of Shavuot and Pentecost they receive the

indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in their life. And that is what puts us into the body of Christ, the body of Messiah.

OK to be baptized in the spirit, but then was, which was radical, because only profit priests and kings experienced that. But where there was more radical Acts chapter 10 is Centurion gentiles received the same Holy Spirit as Gentiles right? And so what was that? What that communicated is that Jew and Gentile are equal in the Messiah. There's no second class citizens in the Kingdom of God, which was a radical message from a Jewish perspective because from 1st century Judaism and even today in much of Judaism, Gentiles cannot be full members of the covenant that God and that God makes and have the full blessing of God, unless they convert and become part of the Jewish people.

So that's the Radical message and part of the new Covenant. So with that God creates this one new humanity, one new man in Messiah. And so I think there has to be a unity and we see this even in the genealogy of Jesus, which was also unusual because there's these four women mentioned in the genealogy and women weren't mentioned in Jewish genealogies. And what do these women have in common? They're all Gentile women, the point is It takes Jew and Gentile to birth the line of David, the line of the Messiah, and it takes Jew and Gentile to birth the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in heaven.

So there has to be relationship. There has to be connection. But I think at the same time, God, the rather the thing about the New Testament is God doesn't say Jews have to become Gentiles and Gentiles don't have to become Jews either. They maintain their distinct identities, but yet there's this unity in Messiah, so I think it's fine for Jews to worship on Saturdays if they want, it's fine for them to go to church. It's fine for Christians to attend a messianic congregation if they want. I think we have that freedom in Messiah as long as we understand the theological grounds.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, so it's interesting in that one of the things the questions I've always both been asked about a lot and also I've thought about is how come as Christians we celebrate all these different holidays that really have very little if anything to do with the Bible? Obviously it's like Christmas and Easter. Well obviously Jesus was born that's worth celebrating. Jesus was resurrected. That's absolutely worth celebrating, but the way we celebrate them is so separated from the origin and scriptures.

But Christians, generally speaking, do not celebrate any of the Jewish holidays in how Christ is the fulfillment of those may give me a quick example of how could Christians be celebrating one of the Jewish holidays in a way that would be very meaningful even for us as Gentile Christians?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, I think this is a great question because like one of the one of the foundations of what we do and why we do it with fusion is that God really spoke to me from the passage in Matthew, where Jesus says what can a scribe who understands the Kingdom of God be compared to a householder that brings forth treasures new and old.

And I realized most Jews settled for the old treasures many Christians settled for the new treasures, they're settling for half an inheritance because the full inheritance is the old and the new coming together and the reality is that Jesus and the disciples celebrated these holidays and also we know that

in the Kingdom certain holidays like feasts of Tabernacles, Zechariah 14 all the nations of the world are going to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate it, according to the prophets.

And so there's something significant about that for us even today, and I just want to say even before we get into some specifics. Maybe is that I think the point is that there is a divine invitation for believers in Jesus to embrace that inheritance. But it's an invitation, not an obligation.

I think that's an important point to make, right? They don't have to like you're not doing something wrong if you don't, but it's part of your inheritance, so an example of that would be the Passover. I mean, we're not far from from from Easter from the death and resurrection of the Messiah. The reality is that every major event in Jesus happened on a biblical holiday. And the Last Supper was a Passover seder. You can't fully understand what he was doing when he broke the bread and lifted the wine if you don't understand the Passover.

Shea Houdmann

Exactly so I thankfully I've had been a part of a few Jewish Passover services led by a Messianic Jew just explaining the the meaning of each of the aspects of it and how Christ ultimate fulfillment and it truly does make celebrating the Lord Supper more meaningful, seeing all the background that went into it and understanding the significance of the bread and the wine, both from a theological perspective but also a historical one. So that's very fascinating. I think Christians would be very blessed and spiritually encouraged and edified by, if nothing else, understanding more about the Jewish holidays and festivals and how Christ is the perfect fulfillment of those.

So one thing that's really interesting about your testimony is how you came to faith in Christ. So I'd like you to share that maybe a little bit later, but maybe my main question here, why do the vast majority of Jews still not accept Christ as Savior? What are some of the I know evangelizing, sharing the truth of your belief in Jesus Messiah is a significant part of your ministry. What's some of the reasons you're still hearing today about why Jews continue to reject Jesus as the Messiah?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, I think there's three primary things to understand, and I think it this ties into the question that you asked before about the biblical holidays because like for example, what is the most famous picture of Jesus? Right, it's probably Davinci's Last Supper. But if you look at it there's a few things that are not quite kosher about it. They're eating fluffy loaves of white bread at the feast of unleavened bread, right? For the main course. What are they eating in Davinci's picture? They're eating fish. Because Catholic boys and girls eat fish at Lent or during Lent, right? And so, but they should have been eating the Passover lamb. The point is the church, finalized with Constantine, stripped the Jewish roots and the Jewishness of Jesus for a number of different reasons.

And so Jesus become unrecognisably Jewish, and so for most Jewish people they think. How can I believe in Jesus? He started another religion. And if I believe in him, I have to stop being Jewish and everything about it seems like contrary to what I read in the five books of Moses in the Hebrew scriptures. So I actually think restoring the Jewishness of Jesus and the historical context and Christians understanding these things is absolutely key to what Paul talks about provoking Jewish people to jealousy. And I just think that is so significant on so many levels, so the first objection is I can't be Jewish and believe in Jesus.

The next is: How can I believe in a Messiah and whose name I've been persecuted in for you know the last 1600 years and unfortunately there have been terrible things done in the name of Jesus to the Jewish people. And even you know, and a lot of it was by false Christians, right? Like Hitler, who took over, you know, the Lutheran Church or lose used quotes of Martin Luther anti-Semitic things that he said at the end of his life. But it goes back much further than that, so unfortunately there like there's a visceral reaction to Jesus because of that.

And then I think there's a third reason which is there's a partial blindness on the Jewish people that Paul talks about in Romans Chapter 11 and a partial hardening of heart, which goes back to the messianic prophecies like Isaiah 53 that he would be rejected by the Jewish people. And that's one of the proofs that he is the Messiah, but there would be a remnant that would believe.

So I think that's the importance of Gentiles embracing their Jewish roots and also of Jew and Gentile coming together in Messiah and for Christians loving and blessing Israel. I think it begins to open hearts and lives.

Shea Houdmann

In the, I would say somewhat limited interactions I've had with Jews who do not believe in Christ over the year, those are definitely some of the reasons they've given for why they do not believe that Jesus is Messiah aside from fulfill prophecy. Obviously we could go into that so, but what would you say for me as a Gentile Christian, if I was attempting to share the faith with a Jew, what would be some of the pointers? What are some of the things I definitely should do and maybe some of the things I should avoid?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, I mean again I think the first thing is you have to begin to learn about Jesus and his Jewish context is one of the reasons why we wrote our book Mysteries of the Messiah because like growing up, I thought Jesus was a nice Jewish boy who converted to Roman Catholicism, 'cause I didn't know any Jewish kids by the name of Jesus, who had mothers by the name of Mary. And just like I'm Jason Sobel, I thought they were the Christ family.

Mr and Mrs Christ meet Mr and Mrs Sobo. I had no idea that Christ I thought it was his last name. I had no idea that Christ was the Greek for the Hebrew Messiah. Yeah, right. So you know we have to use the terms like Messiah which Jewish people understand. You know we have to understand some of the key messianic prophecies and we you know like the job description of the Messiah, what do the Hebrew scriptures have to say about him?

And then I think it's also just Again, I think practically I think as believers embrace the biblical holidays, they can invite their Jewish friends to experience it with them or ask their Jewish friends if they could go to what they're doing. And you know, dialogue and interact.

Greet Jewish people on the holidays and say hey, what does this mean to you? This is what it means to me, that sort of thing.

Shea Houdmann

That is, it's fascinating to see some of the same things you hear in the New Testament about why, like even with Paul and his missionary journeys, and I'm always going to the Jews 1st and then hearing their rejection of the gospel, so even a faithful Jewish evangelist who definitely understood Jewish customs was even having that difficulty so when in sharing the gospel with Jews, it's a tough road to plow, but again until God removes that blind.

Shea Houdmann

Those blinders it's going to be difficult and thankfully, according to end times prophecy those blinders will be lifted and in the end times a massive number of Jews will come to faith in Messiah and look forward to that. But that does not excuse us from being faithful witnesses in this day in age.

Jason Sobel

Yeah, and the amazing thing that I think we're seeing right now is that where there was a complete like rejection and complete rejection like the Jewish community has been almost completely closed to the idea, there's been a shift right there have been Jews that a lot of Jews are open to dialoguing about it and open to discussing it, and so it's not that there's tons of Jewish people accepting Yeshua as the Messiah. But there's a dialogue that's going on that hasn't gone on before. And I think part of that is because the church is talking more about in scholarship as well as in many other ways the Jewishness of Jesus and explaining him in Jewish terms.

But I also think it's because there's been a lot the church has done to pray for Israel. And bless Israel, and we're seeing God do something with all of that.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, so I've been on three different trips to Israel, and each time I've typically our main tour guide will be a Jewish not non-Messianic Leader who's going through and just having some conversations with them. And I think I think it was the first trip I was on, he talked about how not that long ago he read the New Testament for the first time and he even said something. I was very surprised at how Jewish it was.

And I was like. Wow, I mean to us it's like especially the Gospels. I mean it's very very Jewish.

Like how could you not know that? But yeah, from what you're saying is that their whole life they've been have given this or have a misperception of what Christianity truly is that to finally be exposed to the New Testament see what this Jewish guy in leading Jewish people teaching them truths that are very compatible with my faith, and so that I thought that was fascinating in that he would even be willing to read the New Testament, but then I've even heard that that's it's now becoming more like required reading in rabbinic schools because it had such a hugely influential role in the history of Judaism.

Jason Sobel

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I mean in Israel is part of the history and there's this Jewish reclamation of Jesus in some very interesting in ways that one wouldn't expect. But the reality is, is that throughout history there have been famous rabbis who have quietly believed. Where God has worked in their hearts and in their lives. Now there's a lot of those who want to kind of do revisionist history and kind of not make that too known. But there's always been Jews, and believing God has always been working on the hearts

of his people, because the gospel at his core is a Jewish message because it's rooted in the Hebrew scriptures.

Shea Houdmann

Absolutely Amen. So Rabbi Jason, I may be my last question, but maybe we'll have you talk about Fusion Global a little bit more, but I would love to hear and I'm sure our listeners would what lead you to faith in Messiah. What ultimately convinced you that Jesus was the promised Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Jason Sobel

Yeah, I mean I, you know I grew up in a Jewish family, went to Hebrew school bar Mitzvah all of that and I was working in the music industry and I looked at the lives of these famous people around me and I said there has to be more to life than this. Started a spiritual journey, began to study with my rabbi, but also did martial arts and did yoga. And you know, one day I was meditating and I had this supernatural encounter with Yeshua with Jesus and I knew nothing about him. But I knew that in this counter it was Jesus, and he told me I was called to serve Him, but I had no context for it. I was like OK, there's something about him, but I thought is he's an avatar. He's a prophet. What does that mean?

And then my best friend said Jason, do you think you went to Hebrew school? You could tell the difference between the Old and the New Testament and I said sure, and he read me this passage. He was bruised for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities by his stripes we are healed.

I said John that has to be the New Testament. He said no, that's Isaiah 53. The Jewish prophet speaking 700 years earlier, and I began to be provoked to jealousy. And so he invited me to this Messianic congregation, and at the end of the service they prayed this prayer. I figured I needed all the help I can get. I prayed they said you've just been born again.

I had no idea what it meant to be born again, except I gave my mother enough trouble and I was born once and they gave me the first New Testament I'd ever seen. I took it home. I read it and I was blown away. How Jewish it was the messianic prophecies that were in it. And as I began to make all of the connections, I was like oh my goodness. Like when I like to me, the cross was such a non Jewish symbol. And then I realized Oh my goodness, like Jesus had a diner cross because Adam and Eve stole from a tree. So God put back on the cross which a tree, to make a redemption for the sin of the first man and woman. His hands were pierced because our hands were our stole from the tree. His side was pierced because the woman who led him into Temptation Eve was taken from the side. His feet were pierced because that was the first messianic prophecy. The seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. And then the Crown of thorns on it said, because the curse of creation was the ground, it would produce thorns and thistles, and he took the curse on his on himself so that we could find life and blessing and then he does the first miracle of water into wine because the first miracle Moses did was turning the water into blood. He turns it into wine. He's the great of the Moses. He doesn't come to bring death, but he comes to bring life and I was like, Oh my goodness, this all makes sense and God just you know, like put the light on right?

It's like oh I could see clearly. I was like he's the one Moses and the Prophets spoke of.

Shea Houdmann

Amen. That's powerful and again so if people wanted to learn more about you and the ministry God has called you too, what's the best way for them to find out more?

Jason Sobel

Yeah, Fusionglobal.org has our teachings and we do live teachings every week and if we have free weekly guide to Scripture and our books and our resources. Social media Rabbi Jason Sobel. They can find us there and yeah, we just love connecting and and being a blessing.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, so this has been the Got Questions podcast with Rabbi Jason Sobel. So Jason thank you again for being on the show and actually now let me ask you one final question from a friend of mine who this morning at the gym asked me. Could you ask the Messianic Jewish Rabbi just one question.

It's like is there any chance that in heaven we'll be allowed to eat bacon.

Jason Sobel

Haha! OK, that's a great question. I'll give you a short answer. Actually we have a new book coming out in August with Kathy Lee. We actually talked about this question in it because it's actually very entering.

The short answer is yes, you will be able to. Even Jews will be able to eat bacon in heaven because the interesting thing is that the prodigal son has an awakening in the pig pen and the question is why does he have this awakening if and there's a detail there. It's there for reason, of course. Like you know, it's because it's the lowest point, but why? It's the lowest point because the short answer is pigs are the most unclean animal, most unkosher. Why? To be a kosher animal, you have to have two traits. You have to have an internal trait which is chew your cud and an external trait of cloven hoofs. While pigs have the external trait, the cloven hooves without the internal. It's the sign of the hypocrite, someone who looks clean on the outside but is unclean on the inside, but the interesting thing is that the word for pig in Hebrew is hazeer and it literally comes from the Hebrew word root, which means to return. So it's also one of the words used in Israel of repentance, so the idea and from the rabbi say that in the Kingdom, pigs are going to be koshered. They're going to return to being kosher. So the point of the prodigal, if there's hope for a pig, if a pig that's a symbol of a hypocrite is ultimately going to be accepted in the Kingdom, than any one of us can return to the Lord and be accepted as well.

So yes.

Shea Houdmann

But you you made a whole bunch of Gentile Christians very happy that there won't be something they have to give up. So again, Rabbi Jason, I loved our conversation today. We'll include links where people can learn more about you and Fusion Global 'cause your doing a lot of great things and thank you for the clarity you even gave me this morning and helping me to understand some things better and reinforcing some other things that I have found through experience and attempting to share the faith with Jews and trying to explain the differences between Messianic Judaism and evangelical Protestant Christianity.

So Jason again thank you for being on the show today.

Jason Sobel



Oh, thank you for having me Shalom Shalom. It's great being with you.

Shea Houdmann

Shabbat Shalom to you as well, so it's been the got questions podcast

Got questions? The Bible has answers. We hope you find them.