

7. Isn't the celebration of Levitical and other Jewish festivals legalism?

We do not believe that the events conducted by Adventist Jewish congregations and ministries on the days of the festivals represent any attempt to literally fulfill any commandment from Levitical law. We organize the events in such a manner that they become an educational and spiritual experience for Jews and Adventists alike. Their purpose is to discover and deepen the understanding of the Messianic fulfillments of these ancient typological and prophetic symbols.

8. Hasn't God rejected Israel and replaced the people of Israel with Christian church?

Ellen G. White stated in *Signs of the Times*, January 24, 1895, "Many have the idea that the Jewish age was one of darkness, superstition, and ignorance. They have received the erroneous idea that repentance, and faith, and divine enlighten-ment were reserved for the Gospel dispensation, and that these have no part in the Hebrew religion.

Many think that the Jewish religion consisted only in forms and ceremonies, but there never could have been a greater deception. The Jewish nation was taken into close relationship with God, and was esteemed by Him as a peculiar people, an holy priesthood, a royal nation."

If God wanted to reject Israel there were many chances during the Middle Ages for Jews to be eliminated and assimilated. This has not happened. We believe that there was a divine purpose for that. Throughout the decimation of the Dark Ages, Jews preserved a knowledge of Hebrew, kept the Law and the Sabbath, which allowed for Christians to see the light and truth.

In their judgment, Christians often confuse the people of Israel with the theocratic state of Israel. The Temple-centered state of Israel fulfilled its prophetic and typological role and was no longer needed for the plan of salvation. But the idea that the New Covenant church was to replace the Old Covenant Israel originated in Catholic teaching. Therefore, we reject it. In Romans 11:1, Paul strongly rejects such a notion.

9. What is your position regarding the State of Israel?

We do not support the teaching that is prevalent in Messianic groups and Evangelical churches, who believe that there is a connection between the creation of State of Israel and last day events. Nevertheless, we support the state of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people and believe that after the devastation during the holocaust God in His great compassion allowed the state of Israel to exist.

We believe that the restoral of that homeland has allowed Jews to see that God had not forsaken them in Hitler's gas chambers. As demonstrated by statistics, with the creation of the state of Israel the number of Jews who accept Jesus as the Messiah has significantly increased. The current state of Israel does not have anything to do with the Israel of the Old Covenant.

10. Are Jews still God's chosen people?

As mentioned above, the Temple State of Israel does not exist today and therefore does not represent a vehicle through which the knowledge of God is being spread. Nevertheless, in Romans 3:1, Paul candidly speaks of the Jews as the keepers and writers of the God's word. It is a fact that most of the scriptures were written in the Hebrew language and that the Jews today remain the repository of that language. It is also a fact that ALL of the apostles with the exception of Luke were Jewish. The Bible cannot be properly understood without considering its Hebraic cultural and historical background. In this situation, the people of Israel remain the living witnesses of the biblical culture and lifestyle.

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Most Commonly Asked

Questions

About Jews and Jewish Ministry

1. Why is it so hard to reach Jewish people with the Gospel?
2. If a Jew accepts Jesus will he still remain Jewish or should he be called Christian?
3. Why should there be a separate ministry to Jewish people?
4. Which elements from the synagogal worship are used in Adventist Jewish groups? Will not these elements lead the people away from the Adventist message and Christianity as a whole?
5. Who are the Messianic Jews and how do they differ from the Seventh-day Adventists?
6. What is the difference between Adventist Jewish Ministry and Jews for Jesus?
7. Isn't the celebration of Levitical and other Jewish festivals a legalism?
8. What is your position regarding the State of Israel?
9. Hasn't God rejected Israel and replaced the people of Israel with Christian church?
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Most Commonly Asked Questions About the Jews and Jewish Ministry

1. Why is it so hard to reach Jewish people with the Gospel?

This is a misconception. There are many Jews today accepting Jesus as their Messiah. However because of a number of reasons, they are choosing to join other Christian denominations as well as Messianic Jewish congregations.

Unfortunately, many Adventists are ignorant about Jewish culture and religion and only pay attention to Orthodox Jews who are not easy to be reached. This is unfortunate. The majority of the Jewish population, is mainly secular or attend Reform and other liberal synagogues.

2. If a Jew accepts Jesus will he still remain Jewish or should he be called Christian?

Defining Jewishness by the affiliation with Judaism is a common misconception. Based on history and the Bible definition, Jewish implies, first and foremost, an ethnicity. In the strictly biological sense, Jews are the descendants of Abraham who were scattered around the world after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

Rabbinic Judaism as a religion also emerged after 70 AD. The first followers of Jesus described in the book of Acts including Apostles themselves were ethnically Jewish. All New Testament writers were ethnically Jewish and their acceptance of Jesus has not change their ethnicity.

3. Why should there be a separate ministry to Jewish people?

a. Many Sunday keeping Christian denominations support special Jewish ministries, even meeting on Sabbath as part of their outreach. Dallas Theological seminary (Southern Baptist) has a special department that prepares ministers for Jewish outreach. Because of this approach, Jewish ministry in these denominations are experiencing significant success in their outreach.

b. *In the closing proclamation of the gospel, when special work is to be done for classes of people hitherto neglected, God expects His messengers to take particular interest in the Jewish people whom they find in all parts of the earth.* E. G. White (Gospel Workers p. 398.2)

4. Who are the Messianic Jews and how do they differ from the Seventh-day Adventists?

Strictly by definition Messianic Jews are those Jews who believe in Jesus as their Messiah. However Messianic groups do not necessarily consist of only Jews. Many Christians, fascinated with Hebraic roots of Christianity, are joining different Messianic congregations across the States. Unlike Seventh-day Adventists, Messianic Jews are not united in one worldwide organization. Each group, led by a Messianic Rabbi, adheres to different teachings. Some of them are close to SDA doctrines; some of them are not. Messianic Jewish groups are distinguished by a Hebraic worship style.

5. Which elements from synagogal worship are used in Adventist Jewish groups? Won't these elements lead people away from the Adventist message and Christianity as a whole?

Bible is the sole focus of our approach to worship. We believe that biblically based worship leads people to deeper relations with God. The traditions we use during our worship are not carbon copies of those practiced in the synagogues. However, Seventh-day Adventists as Sabbath keepers have no meaningful example of worship (such as welcoming the Sabbath) from practices within main stream Christian traditions.

Therefore we believe that a thoughtful usage of ancient Hebraic liturgy (which is largely based upon scripture) can only enrich an Adventist's spiritual experience and strengthen a sense of identity. The liturgy we use embraces the uniqueness of our Adventist Message. Our ministry is culturally Jewish but doctrinally Seventh-day Adventist.

6. What is the difference between Adventist Jewish Ministry and Jews for Jesus?

Jews for Jesus is not a congregation but a missionary organization. It was founded by Moishe Rosen who was an orthodox Jew but became a Baptist.

The goal of the organization is to tell Jews about Jesus as their Messiah and then help them find an affiliation in any main stream Christian church. Jews for Jesus do not consider the Seventh-day Adventist Church as mainstream. Therefore they discourage their workers from cooperating with Adventists. The Jewish community is extremely hostile to Jews for Jesus, because very often their materials and tactics are offensive to Jewish people.