

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY | WEEK 4—JAN. 28/29, 2012 (JASON STRAND)

## INTRODUCTION

We live in a culture that predominately thinks all religions are essentially the same. In our current series "What's the Difference?" we have looked at how the Christian faith aligns and differs with Mormons, Muslims and Catholics. This week, we concluded the series with a message on Judaism. We've learned that all of these religions teach people to love one another. All of these religions believe in a God of some sort. However, we've discovered that there are fundamental differences of belief, especially in the areas of salvation and the nature of who God is. All religions are not the same. All are people of faith who are incredibly sincere. But the question is not about sincerity, it's a question of truth.

## REVIEW: THE 4 CORE BELIEFS OF JUDAISM

1. **"Shema:"** Read **Deuteronomy 6: 4-7**. Verse 4—"Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is One." Shema is a Hebrew word for "hear." The main tenet of the Shema is a belief in only one God.
2. **The Law:** The Law is contained in the Torah – the first five books of the Bible. The Jews believe that by keeping the Law that they maintain a proper relationship with God.
3. **The Sacrificial System:** Throughout the year the Jewish people would sacrifice goats to atone for or cover their sin. One day in particular was important. It was called the Day of Atonement. Today it is called Yom Kippur. Read more in **Leviticus 16**. In other words their sin was covered – not removed.
4. **Belief in a coming Messiah: Genesis 22:17** "Though your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed." The Messiah—the "chosen one"—would ultimately come to save the people from their sin once and for all.

**Read Matthew:** It is the beginning of the New Testament and contains the genealogy of Jesus. Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience. He is saying to them that the one you have been waiting for, for 2,000 years, the whole Old Testament, is here! Jesus is the descendant of Abraham that was promised; He is the Messiah! What has been your experience of hearing the message that Jesus is the Messiah.

**Ask yourself:** Do I have a personal relationship with Christ? Have I truly trusted Christ for my salvation or have I simply presumed I'm right with God?

## THINK ABOUT IT

Two things we can learn from the differences between Judaism and Christianity:

1. Don't presume that you're right with God.
2. Anyone can get right with God.

## COMMIT TO MEMORY

"Through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed." **Genesis 22: 17**

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