

Is Jesus the Jewish Messiah? (Debate)

by Michael L. Brown

Dr. Michael L. Brown argues for Jesus as the Jewish Messiah in a scholarly debate against Dr. J. Emanuel Shokhet's opposing views on Judaism and the New Testament.

Duration: 1:06:02

Scripture: Deuteronomy 4:2-13, Matthew 5:17-20, Matthew 16:6-12, Luke 23:1-2

Topics: "Jewish Messiah", "Christian Apologetics"

Description

In this debate, Dr. Schochet opposes the idea of polemical debates in Jewish law. He mentions the conversion of tens of thousands of Jews to Christianity as evidence of God's supernatural backing of the message. Dr. Brown, on the other hand, welcomes the opportunity to present Jesus as the Messiah and challenges the assumption that belief in Jesus is based on ignorance. He emphasizes the need for evidence and has been actively following Jesus for 23 years.

Transcript

Welcome everyone. I'm Garfield Green, student president for Arizona State University's chapter of Fellowship of Christian Athletes. On behalf of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, it's my great pleasure to welcome everyone here to Neib Hall on the campus of ASU in Tempe, Arizona this Thursday evening, March 30th, 1995 for this special event.

A debate on the question, Is Jesus the Jewish Messiah? between two international spokesmen and scholars, Dr. Michael Brown and Dr. Emanuel Shokhet. Without any further delay, I would like to introduce the announcer for this evening's event, Mr. Scott Hinkle. Good evening and Shalom.

Tonight's debate will focus on the two related questions, Is Jesus the Jewish Messiah? and Can a Jew Believe in the New Testament and Still Remain True to Historic Judaism? Arguing the affirmative position will be Dr. Michael L. Brown. Dr. Brown, a Jewish follower of Jesus from Gaithersburg, Maryland, is a Biblical and Semitic scholar as well as a published author with a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Literature from New York University. His books, articles, and sermons have been translated into more than 10 languages.

He has spoken throughout the world, taking a message of repentance and revival to Israel, the church, and the nations. Dr. Brown has debated Biblical questions with rabbis on the radio, on television, and on many college campuses. Arguing the negative position will be Dr. J. Emanuel Shokhet.

Dr. Shokhet is an authority on Jewish philosophy and mysticism who has authored more than 20 books as well as numerous articles. Many of his writings have been translated into Hebrew, French, Italian, and Portuguese. A renowned worldwide lecturer on Jewish thought, ethics, and social issues, Dr. Shokhet is the Rabbi of Kielcer Congregation and Professor of Philosophy at Humber College in Toronto, Canada.

He is widely recognized as one of the foremost spokesmen for Orthodox Judaism. And now to introduce our panel. First, the moderator of this evening's debate will be Mr. James White.

Mr. White is the Director of Alpha and Omega Ministries. He holds a bachelor's degree in Bible and a minor in Biblical Greek from Grand Canyon University, where he graduated summa cum laude and was a Ray Maven Scholar. He also holds a master's degree in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

He is an ordained Baptist minister and has served as adjunct professor teaching church history at Grand Canyon University. He is the author of seven books on such topics as theology, apologetics, and the text and translation of the Bible. Mr. White is an experienced debater, having argued a variety of biblical topics in debates throughout the United States.

The other three members of our distinguished panel are Jennifer P. Norrie, Randy Nussbaum, and Michael Simonson. Ms. Norrie graduated magna cum laude from the Arizona State University College of Law, where she was a member of Law Review. In addition to her wide experience in litigation, she has lectured on technology exchange and intellectual property issues at the Beijing Institute of Foreign Trade in Beijing, China, and also served as a faculty member for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy.

Ms. Norrie has formed her own law firm in Scottsdale, Arizona, where she currently practices. Mr. Nussbaum received his bachelor of arts degree cum laude and his law degree from Arizona State University. He is a member of the State Bar of Arizona and the Scottsdale and Maricopa County Bar Associations, for whom he is a frequent author and lecturer.

He is a graduate of the Scottsdale Leadership Training Program and an active participant in the Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce and has extensive experience in both coaching and judging high school mock trial competitions. Mr. Nussbaum's professional affiliations include responsibility for overseeing all continuing education programs sponsored by the ASU Law School Alumni Association, for which he is vice president. Mr. Simonson is a graduate of the Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, Missouri.

He currently serves as Judge Pro Tem in Maricopa County Superior Court, Phoenix City Court, and Mesa City Court. I will now turn over these proceedings to our Mr. James White. This evening we are privileged to have two very competent scholars before us who are prepared to give us the best their position has to offer.

They have agreed to engage in a truly scholarly debate, one that seeks to concentrate on the substance of the issue alone. Many debates in our modern culture are marked by what I call cheap debating tricks. One or both sides attempt to win the audience's approval by means of humor, one-upmanship, glitzy presentation, or other emotional and subjective performances.

Rather than focusing upon the issues and engaging in logical and sound argumentation, such spectacles use all sorts of improper means to sway the audience. One need only observe so-called political debates to observe how rarely the real canons and rules of proper scholarly debate are followed. This evening we

have two scholars who are making mutually exclusive claims.

They propose to offer objective evidence in defense of those claims. Such evidence would refer to proof or data that is normally accepted as carrying weight for both sides in the debate. Personal faith or belief, therefore, no matter how important to either debater, does not amount to proof and is therefore immaterial.

To be more specific, Jews and Christians agree on the truth of the Jewish Bible, known as Tanakh to Jews and Old Testament to Christians. The Jewish Bible, therefore, is clearly sufficient proof or evidence for both sides in our debate this evening. Whatever goes beyond, this biblical text cannot be accepted as a persuasive argument given in proof of a point.

Quotations from the Jewish Talmud, Midrashim, and commentators are sacred, meaningful, and convincing for a believing Jew, but do not prove anything to a non-Jew or others who do not accept these sources as authoritative or binding. Likewise, quotations from the New Testament or Christian commentators are sacred, meaningful, and convincing for a believing Christian, but do not prove anything to a Jew or others who do not accept these sources as authoritative. A Jewish person, therefore, cannot argue in a debate, I know this to be the true meaning of the Bible because the Talmud or Jewish tradition says so, nor can the Christian in turn argue, I know this to be the true meaning of the Bible because the New Testament or Christian tradition says so.

All and any claims or allegations this evening must have to follow self-evidently from the actual text that is acceptable to both parties, either because it is stated so explicitly or because it follows clearly by way of the rules of logical deduction. All this does not preclude either side quoting or citing whatever sources they wish, provided that the debaters and the audience understand what the criteria or standards for proof are. Our debate this evening will deal with the two fundamental questions dividing the two positions.

Number one, is Jesus the Messiah promised in the prophecies of the Jewish Bible? And number two, is it possible for a Jew to remain faithful to historic Judaism and also accept or believe in the New Testament? Before the actual presentations, each side will offer a statement of purpose explaining their perception and expectations of this evening's discussion. Having engaged in many scholarly debates myself, I have a few requests to make of you, the audience, and of our scholarly debaters this evening. To Dr. Brown and Dr. Shochet, I say that I, as the moderator, will be particularly strict when it comes to maintaining the agreed upon time limitations.

Staying within those limitations shows respect both for the audience as well as for one's opponent. And of you, the audience, I would like to request the utmost in respect for our debaters this evening. We have come here to listen to what they have to say.

You may well feel the overwhelming urge to make an audible comment, fight that urge. You may wish to express your wholehearted agreement with a particular speaker's point by clapping, sit on your hands. You will have the opportunity of expressing your thanks to these men at the end of the debate.

And further remember that any clapping or interruptions during the presentation only detracts from the ability of both speakers to do their very best. With that said, our format this evening, as you have in your handout, indicates debaters will begin with a four-minute opening statement. We have changed that to a five-minute opening statement, beginning with Dr. Shochet.

So, Dr. Shochet, the podium is yours for your five-minute opening statement, sir. Good evening. I oppose in principle this type of debate because, first of all, halacha, Jewish law, disapproves of polemical debates.

Okay, start again. I oppose in principle this type of debate because, first of all, halacha, Jewish law, disapproves of polemical debates about our faith, since a. it is basically a waste of time, b. another's religion is of no relevance to us, and c. debates may result in negative effects by unavoidably provoking the other side. Secondly, polemical debates have merit only where each side is completely open-minded and is prepared to accept the logical consequences, whatever they may be, even if that means to drop long-held cherished beliefs.

In reality, that is of course mostly not the case, and debaters mostly seek to refute the other side and time over it without regard to truth. For that matter, to suggest a debate to determine the truth about a most serious matter with strict time restraints of you speak twenty minutes, five minutes, six minutes, and the other side and so forth is rather an absurd, tragicomedy. It's like telling a doctor you are five minutes for this part of the operation and six minutes for that part, regardless of what you may find in the patient.

Thirdly, for Jews to debate missionary evangelistic groups is especially offensive. To appear on the same stage to debate our individual beliefs creates a perception of two equal parties, two parallel religions as it were. It appears to lend credibility or equal status to groups or individuals whose sole aim in life it is to deny and destroy authentic Judaism and to lead Jews astray.

This we cannot do and never will do. We despise those who would destroy our souls, our spiritual reality, no less than we despise those who would destroy us physically. The interest in debates is not one of pursuing truth, but hopefully to score points for the followers and prospective victims.

I may sound harsh, but I'm committed to truth. I agreed to come here exclusively for an objective pursuit of truth, thus I have no choice but to be open and frank as opposed to saying one thing and thinking or feeling another. Fourthly, most serious of all, there is an aspect of dishonesty in having a polemical debate in 1995 on Christian allegations about Judaism.

There have been numerous such debates over the past 2,000 years with Christian theologians or Jewish apostates, generally forced upon us by the dominant Christian powers, mostly with the threat that if the Jews would lose the debate, their communities would be forced to convert, killed or expelled. We had to weigh our words and arguments most carefully so as not to offend the Christian authorities and suffer dire consequences. Oftentimes we suffered these anyway because our opponents were furiously frustrated by failing to present valid arguments.

That is another reason why we Jews don't like polemical debates. In short, we Jews have already been confronted by every conceivable question and challenge and already answered every single one of them. We have never lost the debate.

Many of these debates have been recorded even by Christians and are readily available in books printed in many languages and found in numerous libraries in addition to numerous polemical and apologetic works composed and printed in medieval and modern times. Practically speaking, this means that there is something basically wrong when somebody still wants to debate us on these issues. If they really want to find out what's what, they can simply go to a bookstore or library and find there the answers to all and any of their questions plus infinitely more than they want to find.

Both the Bible and rabbinic writings have been thoroughly taken apart in these debates with every possible detail discussed. Thus I question the motivations and merits of such debates and view them as cheap fishing expeditions for purely ulterior motives. What then am I doing here? A. To make these points public once and for all.

B. To give the lie once and for all to the claim that the rabbis are afraid to debate or have something to hide. I'm not interested in attacking another religion, which is forbidden by Jewish law, or to try and convince Christians to change their minds or beliefs, etc. My sole and ultimate goal is to get missionaries off our backs to say to them, leave Jews alone.

You have nothing to teach us. You have nothing but your personal beliefs, things that you chose to believe in but cannot substantiate objectively. Thus stop harassing Jews to change what you and we know to be absolutely true, the revealed word of God, for something that is no more than your personal leap of faith in the claims and allegations of one or more individuals of the New Testament which you chose to believe just as Muslims chose to believe in Muhammad, Buddhists chose to believe in Buddha, Parsis chose to believe in Zoroaster, Mormons chose to believe in Joseph Smith, Moonies chose to believe in Reverend Moon, etc., etc., etc.

And to the Jews among you I say, return to your fault, to your roots, to that which we all know to be true. Stop speculating about concepts and beliefs alien and unacceptable to your Judaism and get to know about yourself, your heritage, the legacy of your faith, your Jewish link to God. Distance yourselves from mere allegations and unsubstantiated claims of strangers preying on your souls and come back to that which we know for sure that it came from God himself, namely the Torah and its commandments.

Thank you, Dr. Choquette. Dr. Brown, your five-minute opening statement, sir. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to be here tonight.

I welcome this very much because we have a legitimate representative tonight of what calls itself authentic Judaism, which I will demonstrate to you begs the question and assumes what it wants to prove. It's been 23 years now that I have been actively following Jesus, Yeshua, as the Messiah of Israel and the nations. And I was told over and over and over for years by rabbis, by Jewish scholars, you only believe what you believe because you're ignorant.

You only believe what you believe because there's no substance to it. I've been challenged over and over and over again, what is the evidence for this? Where is the proof? You have none. And I've offered for years, if I have none, then what do you have to fear by discussing things openly? So this is an opportunity for me to say, hear this man very carefully.

Listen to what he has to say. Listen to what I have to say very carefully. Review our words and see where the truth actually lies.

I would warn you to beware of sweeping bombastic statements by either side that prove nothing. Some of which, in fact, I have already heard, namely that I and all other Jewish believers in Jesus here actually know the truth is against us. I would propose that tonight you'll see where the truth really does, in fact, lie.

I personally heard on a videotape a challenge from Rabbi Shochet that he could not find anyone willing to debate him with a panel, guaranteeing that there would be logical discussion and deduction, and that he would even do it on live television. So I'm very happy to answer that challenge. By the way, historically, the

very first debates, according to Christian recording, we were told that we could check the record, say that the Messianic Jews decisively refuted their rabbinic opponents, according to Acts 18.28. Not only so, I've been involved in many debates.

We were just told that no time ever has the rabbinic side ever lost. I'd encourage you to check and see, check the records, look, look at recent debates and see. Now this is going to be my approach tonight.

I will first seek to demonstrate from the Hebrew scriptures that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah, explain why it was that he had to come 2,000 years ago, according to the scriptures, why he was to be rejected by his people, why he was to suffer and lay down his life as an atonement for the sins of the world, why he was to rise from the dead and be a light to the nations before his own people Israel would fully receive him, at which time he would then return and establish his kingdom on the earth. I will seek to demonstrate that from the Hebrew Bible. I was told many times as a new believer in Jesus that the New Testament authors shot an arrow and then they drew a bullseye around the arrow and said, look, Jesus hit the bullseye.

He fulfilled the prophecies when in fact he fulfilled none. Quite to the contrary, I will seek to demonstrate that he hit the bullseye perfectly and when later Judaism moved the target and said he fulfilled nothing. I'll do my best time permitting to refute all of the objections raised to Messianic prophecy by Rabbi Shochet.

What I will seek to demonstrate is that there is no actual substance in any of the arguments. So if I'm unable to get to every single one of them, what I hope to prove is that each one raised has the full value of zero. So that zero plus zero plus zero times a million still equals zero.

I will use rabbinic literature for two reasons. One, if I give you an interpretation of the Hebrew Bible and you say that's far-fetched, that's crazy, that's a later Christian view. If I can show you that this was also common in rabbinic circles, even among the rabbis, most all of whom rejected Jesus, then I can say this is not just some newfangled Christian view, but this is actually recognized as a legitimate reading of the text.

As to the question of can a Jew believe in the New Testament and be true to historic Judaism, I will seek to demonstrate that it is the religion of the Talmud that is not faithful to the Bible and thus I will seek to demonstrate the spirit and essence of rabbinic Judaism and you can judge for yourselves whether it follows. I have actually seen much fruit from debates because people get provoked to study more, to think more, to search more, to sift more. I'm not expecting in a few minutes to change someone's life course, although anything is possible.

What I'm expecting is to provoke you to think, to study, to research, to open up your heart, to ask God, to get into the scriptures. Having done that, I trust that this will produce much lasting fruit. Thank you, Dr. Brown.

We will now have a 20-minute position statement from Dr. Choquette. Let me mention that Dr. Choquette has the option of finishing a little early and transferring some of his time to his rebuttal period a little bit later. So if he does not use all the 20 minutes, that time will be transferred to his rebuttal period a little bit later on.

So Dr. Choquette, your 20-minute position statement, sir. Before I start and the clock starts ticking, just one comment. Viewers' discussion advised, meaning that since you all know this is a polemical debate, so obviously certain things will be said that may appear offensive to some, knowing nothing of that sort is

intended.

We have to just take things as they come and in context. So I just want this to be realized. Where do I start this? There are two basic issues to deal with.

Number one, could Jesus be the Jewish Messiah promised in the Bible? Two, can one be a follower of both the Jewish faith and the Christian faith, like a Hebrew Christian, Jewish Christian, Jews for Jesus, or whatever else they call themselves? The answers to both these questions are categorical no's. Why is it impossible for Jesus to be the Jewish Messiah? Mashiach, the Jewish Messiah, is a concept wholly and totally derived from and dependent on the Jewish Bible. For all and any information, one can depend only on the Tanach, the Jewish Bible.

To put it very briefly, there are ten basic aspects, read the biblical Mashiach and Messianic Era. Number one, Mashiach is a descendant of King David. He's obviously a human being.

God has vouchsafed the divinely sanctioned rulership of the Jewish people, the throne of Israel, to David and his descendants forevermore. To be the legitimate successor to King David, therefore, Mashiach must be a direct descendant in paternal line, son after son. For the Torah restricts tribal affiliation and succession to paternal descendants only.

Number two, of Mashiach it is said in Isaiah, the spirit of God will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of God. He shall be inspired with fear of God. Number three, Mashiach will come after the children of Israel will sit solitary for many days without king and without prince and without sacrifice, Hosea chapter three.

Number four, the holy temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt to stand forevermore after Mashiach comes, as explained in the book of Ezekiel. Number five, the exiles of Israel will be restored from all the corners of the world to the holy land, the land of Israel, as explained in numerous passages in the five books of Moses and practically every prophet. This restoration of Israel is unconditional and will happen even if the people should not wish to return, as explained in Ezekiel.

Number six, the whole earth, once Mashiach comes, will be filled with awareness, consciousness, knowledge, and perception of God and godliness. God's spirit will be upon his people, endowing them all with the power of prophecy and vision. All mankind will worship God in unison.

I leave out all the references, if necessary I will quote them later on simply to save time. Number seven, oh sorry, part of number six also includes that the messianic era will be an end to evil and sin. Seven, the Messiah will usher in a permanent era of universal peace and harmony, a veritable utopia throughout the world.

Hosea chapter two, Hosea chapter two, Micah chapter four, Zechariah chapter nine. Even the animal kingdom will be affected to the point that animals too will live in peace and harmony with one another. Number eight, the messianic era will witness the eradication of disease and all afflicted shall be healed, Isaiah 35.

Death itself too shall cease, Isaiah 25. Number nine, in the final stage of the messianic era there will be a resurrection of the dead. Number ten, there will be marvelous prosperity with an abundance of every kind of produce.

Now, not a single one, not one of these prophecies applies to Jesus, both according to the well-known Jewish tradition, which rejects Jesus categorically, as well as according to the admission of the New Testament. Four, number one, according to the New Testament he was not the paternal descendant of David and in Judaism, as said, it is only the father who determines tribal affiliation and succession. The mother determines the religion, the faith of the child, but not the tribal affiliation as stated explicitly in numbers.

Number two, he did not come after Israel was without sacrifices, a holy temple, exiled to all corners of the world. Number three, the earth has certainly not been filled with the knowledge and perception of God since he came, nor does all mankind worship God in unison, nor is there an end to evil and sin and warfare, nor is there universal peace and harmony among men and animals on the eradication of disease and the resurrection of the dead. In fact, the world has never seen so much warfare, bloodshed, suffering, confusion in humanity, et cetera, as since the coming of Jesus and very much, if not most, unfortunately, in his name.

The idea of a second coming is a sheer invention without any source whatsoever and contradicts even the words of Jesus himself, who promised that the messianic age of redemption would be in his generation. Matthew, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. This generation shall not pass till all these things be done. Little wonder, then, that his last words on the cross, according to John, were words of disappointment and resignation when he said, It is finished, and bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

According to Matthew 3, John the Baptist made the same prediction, and it is also found in Revelation, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly. The time is at hand.

So, obviously, it was not meant even by the New Testament in terms of a second coming. Number four, Moshiah is supposed to be a man with the spirit of God upon him, a spirit of knowledge and the fear of God. He shall be inspired with fear of God.

Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins. Unfortunately, Jesus did not live up to this, as according to the records of the New Testament and Jewish records, he was a contentious and witting transgressor and denier of God's laws and commandments and Jewish tradition. To wit, A, he condoned the capital offense of his disciples, violating the Sabbath, as recorded in Matthew 12, and in fact publicly violated the Sabbath himself on several occasions, as recorded in Matthew 12, Luke 13, and Luke 14.

B, he denied and mocked the dietary laws of the Torah, as recorded in Matthew 15 and Mark 7. C, he violated and mocked the need for ritual washing of the hands, as recorded in Matthew 15, Mark 7, and Luke 11. D, he ignored the practice and laws of ordained fasts, as recorded in Matthew 6, Mark 2, and Luke 6. E, he opposed and mocked communal prayers, as recorded in Matthew 6. He violated and mocked the Ten Commandments precept of honoring one's mother and father, as recorded in Matthew 8, 12, 23, and Luke 14. G, he denied the biblical permission to divorce, as recorded in Matthew 5 and 19.

H, he violated the biblical prohibition against carrying a grudge and revenging yourself by cursing, threatening, and planning revenge against those who would not believe and follow him, as recorded in Matthew 7, 10, Luke 19, and 1 Corinthians 16. I, on the one hand, he pretended to affirm and strengthen

the rabbinic ordinances of the Pharisees, as recorded in Matthew 5 and Luke 23, and then turned around to warn his followers to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees. In short, we are presented with the picture of a man who violated the eternal commands of God, as ordained in the Bible, sometimes using indefensible and immoral sophistry that others did or would commit the same violations, arguing, in effect, that two wrongs make it right, or irrational and others this type of arguments to justify himself.

I am not even going to touch upon the presumptuousness of arrogating to himself the power to stand above the law, I am the Lord of the Sabbath, make or break laws and commandments at will, forgive sins committed against God, or apparent blasphemies. All this is a very, very far cry from one inspired by and filled with the spirit of the fear of God. Jesus' behavior thus violated the explicit commandments of the Bible, which state, A, Deuteronomy 4, 2, do not add to the word that I command you and do not subtract from it.

And again, in Deuteronomy 13, verse 1, do not add to it and do not subtract from it, which is followed incidentally by the warning about false prophets leading Israel astray. And B, Deuteronomy 17, 8, 12, to turn to the priests or the judge at the time for all religious disputes and then, and I quote, do as they tell you, follow all they instruct you, do not stray to the right or left from the word that they declare to you, which is the biblical source for the authority of the rabbis or Pharisees whose instructions must be followed and as Jesus himself suggests and recommends and demands of his followers in some parts. Conclusion.

Jesus did not live up to a single criterion of Moshiach, the Messiah discussed in the prophecies of the Jewish prophets, addressed and promised to the Jewish people and recorded in the Jewish Bible. As for the second issue, a Jew can remain a member of the Jewish faith and also believe in Jesus and the Testament. The biblical passages from Deuteronomy just cited, forbidding any changes in the Jewish Bible, adding or subtracting, let alone accepting someone as a prophet or more, who himself violated the biblical precepts, already answers this question with a categorical no.

Moreover, Deuteronomy 4:35 states, you were shown the revelation of God at Sinai in order that you may know that the Lord is the God and there is none beside him. None or the same word can also mean nothing beside him. Again Deuteronomy 4:39, you are to know this day and take to your heart that the Lord is the God in the heaven above and on the earth below, there is none other.

This clearly forbids ascribing any divinity or authority to anyone or anything besides God, lest one be guilty of idolatry. Moreover, just as only American authorities can determine American citizenship and only French authorities can determine French citizenship, so only Jewish traditional authorities, the unbroken chain of the authorities of the Jewish faith, meaning the Pharisees or Rabbis, can determine membership in the Jewish faith. There is no need to mention that these Jewish authorities have determined that one cannot be a member of the Jewish faith while also accepting Jesus or Muhammad or Buddha or Krishna or Zohar.

Indeed, even the New Testament recognizes this fact and rejects the idea of retaining Jewish religious identity and Christianity. According to the New Testament, the Israel of old has been superseded by the new Israel, the new Jews, the new seed of Abraham, which are all the believers in Jesus. And I quote, for he is not a Jew who is one on the outside nor a circumcision that which is on the outside in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is one on the inside and circumcision is that of the heart in spirit and not by the written code.

Romans, not all out of Israel are Israel, neither because they are Abraham's seed are they all children. The children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. Again Romans, for there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek.

Those who are of faith, these are the sons of Abraham. As many as are of the works of the law, Jews observing the Torah are under a curse. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus.

If you are of Christ, you are really Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise. Now in Jesus became near for he made the both one, meaning Jew and Gentile, and broke down the wall of partition, that he might create the two into one new man in one body through the stake. There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, and so forth.

Then you have a typical diatype of Paul, anti-Semitic I call it, where he starts denying even that the Jewish people are the true children of Abraham, the true heirs of Abraham, and he writes the following, this is incidentally from Galatians chapter 4, these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, which brings forth children for bondage, and which is Hagar, the bondmaid of Abraham. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, corresponding with the Jerusalem of today, and is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem which is above is free, and is the mother of us all.

We brothers, as Isaac was, are children belonging to the promise. Just as then the one born in the man of the flesh persecuted the one according to the spirit, meaning the son of Hagar persecuted Isaac, so also now. Nevertheless, what does scripture say? Throw out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir as the son of the free woman.

So then brothers, we are not children of the bondwoman of the free, meaning in other words that Jews are no longer Jews, are not the rightful descendants of Abraham, but those who believe in Jesus are. The very idea of Hebrew Christians as Jews for Jesus, who would retain some Jewish religious identity therefore, stands in direct contradiction to both Judaism as well as the New Testament. Indeed the New Testament goes so far as to say that real Jews have nothing to gain from accepting Jesus.

If you are circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. I bear witness to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Galatians chapter 5. So if you had the misfortune that at eight days old you are circumcised, forget about Jesus.

He's not going to help you anything. Moreover, if you're circumcised like I just quoted, Christ shall fail you nothing. If righteousness is through the law, Christ really died for nothing.

This man can no longer be righteous through the law. Those who adhere to the law are heirs. The faith has been made void and the promise ineffective because the law produces wrath.

For all those that are of the works of the law are under a curse. Moreover, listen carefully, the law is not made, meaning the Torah, the laws, the commandments of the Bible, God's eternal commandment. The law is not made for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for men who lie with males, for kidnappers, for liars, for those who swear falsely, and any other thing that is contrary to sound teaching according to the glorious gospel which was committed to my trust.

First book of Timothy chapter 1. Thus even by New Testament standards it makes no sense to speak of Jewish Christians, Hebrew Christians, Jews for Jesus, or whatever they like to call themselves now, Messianic Jews. These groups pretending to be Jewish and trying to fool themselves and others by observing certain Jewish laws, customs and practices, thus violate the New Testament passages which I just quoted, which declare categorically that I said that if righteousness is through the commandments, the observance of Jewish customs and practices, Christ really died for nothing. The execution of Jesus is the end of the law.

It follows then that not only from Jewish tradition, but even according to the straightforward teaching of the New Testament, without interpreting, just reading what it says, not taking out of context, just the words as they are, the concept of Jewish Christians, Messianic Jews, Jews for Jesus, etc., makes as much sense as square circles, Jews for Zoroaster, kosher pigs, Christian Muslims, Christians for Krishna, and all other such oxymorons. Thank you. Well I'm thrilled to hear so much of the New Testament quoted.

Unfortunately, I would honestly say that was the greatest demonstration of verses taken out of context and misinterpreted in the shortest period of time that I've ever heard in my life. Now, we were just told nothing was taken out of context. Everything was quoted out of context, just pulled out.

But I want to go very briefly and deal with the key things that were said as quickly as possible, remembering that as we refute them one by one, it doesn't matter if a thousand arguments were given, zero plus zero plus zero equals zero. And then I seek to take the rest of the time to demonstrate our point. We were told that there are ten characteristics of the Messiah according to the Jewish prophets.

What we weren't told was that not one single passage quoted anywhere in the Hebrew Bible or referred to mentions Moshiach. In other words, this is interpretation telling you that these are messianic passages. How do we know that these alone are messianic passages? How do we know that these tell the whole story? Not a single one said Moshiach.

Now, what we must do is go through the scriptures and see how the messianic idea developed, and then see what the prophets did speak of, and then see who fulfilled them. In terms of some of the specific objections, we were told, for example, that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David, and the tribal affiliation is determined paternally according to the Torah, and numbers were cited. In point of fact, the opposite is true in cases where there is not a male father, so that the father, the male dies, and only women are left.

Then, tribal affiliation will come through the women, and you can find that at the end of the book of Numbers. What do you do with the case that according to rabbinic tradition and certain passages in scripture, it's understood that Messiah could well be a pre-existent one, in other words, greater than just man? Well, the New Testament gives us the answer. Through his mother, he is a physical descendant of David, but he is greater than David.

That's the whole reason that the New Testament speaks of a virgin birth. So, he is not just the son of David, but greater than David. We are told, according to Hosea, which I know meant Hosea 3, the Messiah will only come after years of exile and years without a temple and sacrifice.

Quite the contrary, Hosea 3 says, only after many, many, many years of desolation will the people of Israel then seek the Lord and David their king. In other words, this is not someone who is now going to come, but this is after years and years and years of being without him that they will then seek him. Why?

Because he had come before that time of exile.

We were told, according to the book of Ezekiel, that the Messiah will build the temple. Where did Ezekiel say those words? We were told that there will be restoration after Messiah comes. Where did the prophets explicitly say those words? We were told that when the Messiah comes, there will be no more evil or sin.

The glory of God will fill the earth. It is true. There are many prophecies about the Messiah, the king, who will bring all these things to pass, but none of these passages mentioned, none of these so-called descriptions of the Messiah mention the problem of human sin.

We don't need a king to just show up one day. We don't need someone to snap their fingers and suddenly there's no more war. It's like our dear, respected former president Jimmy Carter going to Bosnia, and now there's peace.

It doesn't just happen so easily unless there's a heart change. I'll show you that Messiah first had to come and deal with sin, that he was not just a king, but also a priest. We were told that there will be no disease when Messiah comes, according to Isaiah 35.

Isaiah 35, again, does not explicitly mention Messiah, but it does say that there will be great miracles of healing, which in fact were the hallmark of Jesus' ministry. We were told, for example, that the second coming is a myth and contradicts Jesus' own words. Jesus is the one that said that the kingdom of God would be like a king going into a distant country, and people would all think he was delaying his coming.

So it would only be after a long period that he would return. What about some of the passages referred to briefly like Matthew 16? There's some tasting here who will not see death until the Son of Man comes and the glory of his kingdom. Keep reading into the very next chapter, Matthew 17, where it says that he was glorified in their presence and there was a manifestation of the kingdom.

Matthew, Mark, Luke all have that same sequence. What of Matthew 24? All these things will be fulfilled before this generation passes. The Greek word generation can also be spoken and translated nation.

The very same word is also nation, meaning this particular race. This particular race, the Jewish people, is still here. And many of those prophecies of which he did speak were fulfilled in that first generation of Israel also.

The words of Jesus on the cross that is finished are not words of defeat, but words saying it has all been accomplished. Read John 19:28 before you read John 19:30. We're told that Jesus was a contentious transgressor.

Let me just read you a couple of quotes just so you can hear what other Jewish scholars say. This is not proof, but I just want you to know that Rabbi Shochet's position is not the only position. According to Rabbi Leo Beck, who was a great defender of Judaism in the years of the Holocaust in Germany, he said Jesus is a genuine Jewish personality.

All his struggles and works, his bearing and feeling, his speech and silence bear the stamp of a Jewish style. He was a Jew among Jews. According to Martin Buber, respected professor from Hebrew University two generations ago, he said we must overcome the superstitious fear which we harbor about the messianic movement of Jesus and we must place the movement where it belongs, namely in the spiritual history of Judaism.

According to the great Israeli scholar of last generation, Joseph Klausner, Jesus was a Jew and he remained a Jew until his last breath. His one idea was to implant within his nation the idea of the coming of the Messiah. And all this Jesus is the most Jewish of Jews, more Jewish than Hillel.

From the standpoint of general humanity, he is indeed a light to the Gentiles. According to modern Orthodox Israeli scholar Pinchas Lapid, Jesus was utterly true to the Torah, as I myself hope to be. I even suspect that Jesus was even more true to the Torah than I, an Orthodox Jew.

Strange that there is such different views here. According to a recent presentation by Rabbi Professor Shia Cohen, a respected historian at the Jewish Theological Seminary, he said the old view was that Jesus was a lawbreaker. Now we realize that he was an absolute Torah-keeping observant Jew, although he differed with some of the rabbinic traditions in his day.

And there were many different traditions and many different viewpoints. Just as today there were Reform Jews and Conservative and Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox and Hasidic, et cetera, et cetera. There were different views then.

Jesus is considered by modern Jewish scholarship to have been totally faithful to the biblical law, although rejecting some current traditions. The one true God. And when they realized that, although for years they resisted the words of the missionaries, the Boardmans, George and Sarah Boardman, suddenly tens of thousands of them were converted and were baptized.

This type of thing has happened around the world. In other words, God is supernaturally backing up this message. And through this message, the light of the one true God is going around the world, distinguishing it, in fact, from all of the religions and all of the faiths.

Dr. Shokat, your two-minute rebuttal, sir. Again, I'm amazed. I really don't understand this.

Atonement, first of all, the Muslims preach exactly the same type of atonement. Only those who will acknowledge that Allah is Allah and Muhammad is his final prophet shall be saved. And all others, it's down to the barbecue.

As for Buddha and Krishna, as a matter of fact, they are less arrogant and less presumptuous than either Muhammad or Jesus. They never made such claims, at least in most of the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. They are dividing into a whole bunch of different religions, and they have an argument of something of all rivers lead to the same ocean.

So to say that the only one who offers that, no. Any religion that claims to be universal claims that they are the ones who offer the atonement. It's likewise that the Muhammadans, the Muslims, claim that they are the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

The Christians, Jesus and the apostles, came and said God gave the Torah, first edition. Then came a revised edition called the New Testament, and that's it. Then came the Muslims, said nonsense.

God came as a second edition, they accept Jesus, but then God came as a third edition, and the third edition is the final edition. Then, of course, comes Joseph Smith and the Book of the Mormons. Then, of course, you have all the others, etc., etc.

Where is it going to end? Yes, the Christians came as the book to all the natives, and so forth. They came as the book in one hand and the cross in the other. And they said you better kiss this, or this kisses you.

And that's how they became converted. And as for conversion, the Muslims converted just as many. As a matter of fact, the Muslim religion is the largest growing religion in the world, and there are at least as many Muslims as there are Christians, especially if you don't even accept most Christians as being true Christians.

As for the fruits of the beliefs in Jesus, look at the fruits. I know plenty of people who have been saved and taken out of the gutter from drugs and promiscuity by joining the moonies, by joining Scientology, by joining Hare Krishna, by joining every cult that you can imagine. If you really believe in something, it will fix you up.

Whether you believe in idolatry, you believe in nonsense, or you believe in yourself, it makes no difference. So therefore, I'm not impressed by the fruits of Jesus or Christianity. Dr. Brown? Well, I didn't expect to amaze you, but I'm pleased that I've been amazing you tonight.

Is there the same kind of atonement in Islam? Absolutely not. I had the pleasure of studying Arabic and studying the Quran in Arabic. No, it does not offer atonement for sin through the shedding of blood.

Islam claims to be the fulfillment of Hebrew Bible, New Covenant. It's true, except the Bible of the Quran is not the same Bible. It's greatly changed.

The New Testament is greatly changed. The claim in the Quran is that the Jews and Christians corrupted the original text, and they don't have the true one, whereas what I'm talking about is getting the actual Hebrew Bible in translation or in the original Hebrew to people around the world who then worship the God of Israel. And in fact, there's one interesting thing, Hebrew scriptures plus something, called rabbinic literature.

Instead of one book, it's volume after volume after volume after volume. That doesn't leave the Hebrew Bible alone. It says you need our tradition too.

Conversion through book and cross, no, no, no. There were aberrations, so-called Christians who persecuted. That is the exception to the universal rule around the world.

Thank you, Dr. Brown. That's a very, how many seconds do we have? That was his one minute rebuttal. The closing statements or the questions are finished.

We will now have two, six minutes, no new topics, so on and so forth, but to use their closing statements to wrap up the subject of the debate itself. Dr. Brown. Rabbi Shochet has said that every single debate that has ever been held between Jew and Christian has been won by Jews.

Tonight, that couldn't be possible because we're both Jews, but we put that aside. When we agreed to do this debate, I was invited, Rabbi Shochet was invited. I considered him to be one of the top representatives of what is known as the anti-missionary position.

We've been very careful to go through guidelines and even who would go first, last, timing, certain things decided by the flip of the coin, et cetera. One key thing to me was that everything had to be audio and videotaped. Why? Because at the outset I said to beware of sweeping bombastic statements, whether by

me or by Rabbi Shochet.

What I'd encourage you to do is when these things are accessible to go through very carefully, look up texts, go through references. The key text Rabbi Shochet quoted I want you to be able to check was Matthew 23. He said Luke 23, but he meant Matthew 23.

That's what he had in his notes. So if you want to look that up, I'm telling you where it is. And if I missed any rabbinic citations, you can check with him and he can set that right also.

Now, the whole idea that he gave all of these qualifications, signs of the Messiah, and I said nowhere did it say the Messiah would do it. And then at the end I said, when Jesus returns, he'll fulfill these. What was my point? My point was who says those are the only messianic passages in the Bible.

So what I did was I demonstrated through quoting various passages that are either totally self-evidently messianic by the terms and figures used being the same as elsewhere. For example, Semach branch is universally recognized as a messianic title. So I showed her that that was a priestly King, or for example, Isaiah 53, which has an excellent background of rabbinic tradition, interpreting it messianically.

It was interpreted of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in his sickness as messianic. The point there is very simple. I showed text after text after text that is messianic in content that is messianic as recognized by tradition and said, this had to happen also to say that I showed nothing demonstrated nothing is basically like hitting a thousand and then saying you just struck out every time.

Check, look, observe. Why did I quote Talmud? Well, I was told that authentic Judaism rejects this position outright. I was told that you could not believe in the New Testament and be faithful to historic Judaism.

Therefore it behooved me to demonstrate that rabbinic Judaism is not in fact the authentic or historic Judaism, but just another tradition of man as to the idea that there is an unbroken chain of tradition going back to Moses. And without it, you can't understand anything. Let's be honest, take a fundamental law of Torah that if people commit certain sins, they will be car rates cut off.

The rabbinic tradition isn't sure between two options, what it actually means. It's forgotten the meaning of certain animals, unclean animals, which they exactly are, how to identify them. Get a book like, are your Kaplan's living Torah, go through the notes and you'll see so many interpretations, so many ideas.

Why? Because there is no unbroken tradition going back to Moses and point of fact, only ultra Orthodox Jewish scholars today will speak of that. Most modern Orthodox scholars will not even speak of an unbroken chain of tradition. You say, but I had my chain of tradition by which I interpreted texts.

No, I went to the context. Read the context of the various passages quoted, read the context of Matthew 23, where Jesus says, don't follow their example. Read the end of Matthew 21, when he says, yes, you sit in leadership now, but the authority will soon be taken away from you.

No, Jesus did not say that we are forever to be under rabbinic law. There was a man named Rabbi Daniel Sion. He was the chief rabbi of Bulgaria, helped to save many Jews from the Holocaust, settled in Eretz Israel, the land of Israel, where he lived out the rest of his life there.

He was a fervent believer in Jesus, Yeshua, the Messiah. In spite of all objections raised to him, I know others, religious Jews who have put their faith in Jesus, the Messiah. I know some who have been beaten,

some who have been persecuted.

The persecution has gone both ways at times. The fact is very simple. If you will seek God with all of your heart and all of your soul, because we have many prejudices.

It's said in the Psalms, open my eyes, uncover them that I can behold wonders in your Torah, in your law and your teaching. I'd encourage you, seek God and say, look, I'm a weak human vessel. I don't know everything.

Give me wisdom. Give me insight as I study the text and read on your own. Jewish believers in Jesus, I urge you to read through the scriptures carefully, to look at them, to look into the New Testament and see if in fact your faith stands on strong ground as I determined to do over 20 years ago.

I encourage rabbinic Jews and atheistic Jews and others, read through the Hebrew Bible, seek God, study, look and see if in fact Jesus, Yeshua is the prophesied Messiah. I rejoice to say that in fact the fastest growing religion is not Islam, but New Testament believing Christianity. The turn of this century, one out of every 13,000 Africans believed in Jesus.

Now it's one out of three. God is moving, not with a sword, not with outward coercion, but by his spirit, through his word, changing lives. Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man who puts his trust in him. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Brown.

Dr. Shochet, you have six minutes, sir, for your closing statement. Shall say you missed me again. Dr. Brown still misses the point.

I'm prepared to accept every single passage in the Old Testament to be messianic, even those that he didn't mention, even those that nobody mentions. And I'll still say even if they are, so what? What has that got to do with Jesus? You want to find similarities? Well, let me tell you, I am prepared to stand here in front of you tonight and tell you that every single passage that is referred to by Christians to refer to Jesus applies to me no less. That I have as many claims to be the Messiah as Jesus has any time.

Plus more, that I have a paternal link to King David which he doesn't have. Secondly, to say that modern Orthodox do not believe in an unbroken chain of tradition, that is sheer nonsense, a ludicrous lie. To say that there are Jews who have accepted Jesus, and he quotes even rabbis, do you want me to quote how many priests and ministers and nuns and friars and who knows what else have dropped Christianity and became Jews or became Muslims or became Buddhists, etc.

So what is that proof that a person has a certain weakness or a person allowed himself to be persuaded by emotional arguments, etc. What kind of an argument is that? The onus of proof is still upon them and so far they haven't proven a thing. Read carefully, he says.

Yes, read carefully by all means. I once dealt with a young man who got involved with Campus Crusade for Christ, became the main recruit on the campus in San Diego. I spent a few hours with him and at the end of it I told him one thing.

Look, I am not asking you to listen to my interpretations of what I say. One thing only. Go home tomorrow, stay away from them, stay away from me and stay away from the rabbis.

Start reading the Old Testament starting with Genesis 1.1. Don't look at Jewish interpretations, don't look at theirs. And then keep reading straight forward. And as you come to various passages, ask yourself, what does this mean? It took him two days to drop the whole thing.

Two days. Now back to my closing statement. I think I've clearly given you the reasons why historical Judaism rejects categorically any suggestion that the Christian Saviour is or might be the Messiah, or at least the Jewish Messiah, and b. why it is impossible for it to be a faithful Jew when accepting the New Testament or the Christian Saviour.

Christianity feels an obvious kinship to Judaism, but not vice versa. The Christian faith and scriptures mean absolutely nothing to the Jew, just as Islam or Hinduism mean nothing to the Jew or the Christian. We have no quarrel with the Christians, Muslims, or Hindus.

We respect other people's religions and are opposed to seeking their conversion to bring them into our ranks. If necessary, though, we shall respond firmly to any attacks on our and especially the vicious and evil obsession to missionize Jews, to the egotistical, sanctimonious self-righteousness of exclusivists who proclaim their religion to be the one and only truth for all mankind. Yes, there is absolute truth, but it's not yours.

It's not mine. It's God's. And let no man come unto God except with their way.

As Coleridge said, he who begins by loving - he was a Christian - he who begins by loving Christianity better than truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity and end in loving himself better than all. I couldn't have said it better. Our real concern is this missionary attempt to proselytize Jews, mostly easy prey, totally ignorant of their own identity, young children, bedridden in hospitals, and at least one person here in this audience knows who and what I am talking about, defenseless elderly in nursing homes.

Schmatt, the conversion of a Jew to another faith is to his worst and physical death. It is the brutal murder of a Jew's soul, cutting off his connection with God and salvation. Christians and devout believers of any religion should understand that, for they feel the same way about their own identity, their own children, brothers and sisters.

They, no less than we, regard the leading astray of their children into alien curds or religions as the worst tragedy. So do not do unto others what you would not want others to do unto you. Leave Jews alone.

The last 2,000 years of history of go out into the hedges and compel them to enter and to the Jew first is the very root and branch of antisemitism which has brought us 2,000 years of relentless persecutions, suffering, and bloodshed from Rome through the Crusades, the Inquisition, the continuous pogroms. This mission to the Jews under all its guises, whether going by the name of the various churches, Hebrew Christians, Jews for Jesus, Messianic Jews, or what have you, is the very heart and soul of Nazism, which in our days resulted in the Holocaust of 6 million Jews. It is the fruit of a very, very bad tree, for a good tree brings forth good fruits, and only a bad tree brings forth bad fruits.

In the words of Micah, for all the peoples, each man walks in the ways of his God, and as for us, we shall walk in the name of God, our God, forever and ever. I doubt very much whether anyone has been swayed by tonight's presentations or by any other debate of this kind. Most believing Christians are committed to their dogmas of faith, and no arguments, regardless of sound or logical, will persuade them otherwise.

Torah Judaism, the historical Jewish tradition, is based on the absolute evidence of God's public appearance at Sinai, revealing himself to over 2 million Jews, and verifying to them the unquestionable authenticity of Moses, historical proof passed on in documentary and oral tradition for over 3,500 years. Thus, it is logically impossible that a knowledgeable Jew can ever forgo that unbroken chain of tradition and historical record for the personal allegation and belief for anything or anyone who would want to change one jot or one tittle of that tradition by adding or subtracting anything. Thus, enough with all this nonsense.

Let Jews be faithful Jews, even as Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, or Hindus should be allowed to believe what they wish. I have some more, but time is up. That concludes the formal debate section.

We did, however, promise to you that at some point you would have an opportunity of expressing your thanks to the gentlemen for their preparation and their work, and I think this would be an appropriate time to do so. Mr. Hinkle now has some closing announcements for us. Thank you for your attendance at this evening's debate.

It is our hope that it has been enlightening and thought-provoking for everyone present. We would like to briefly acknowledge the various persons and organizations that have worked together so hard to make this evening's debate a success. First, Mr. Garfield Green and the Arizona State University Chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, who are the sponsors of this event.

To our debater in the affirmative, Dr. Michael Brown. To our distinguished debater in the negative, Dr. Immanuel Schuchat. To our moderator, Mr. James White.

And to our panel members, Ms. Jennifer Norrie, Mr. Randy Nussbaum, and Mr. Michael Simonson. And thank you, audience, for your attendance and participation. Shalom and good night.

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