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 Faith Bible Church
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<http://fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

JEWISH APOLOGETICS (29)
 ANSWERING JEWISH OBJECTION #20
 (DDR #648)

Objection #20: “If Jesus is really the Messiah, why isn’t there peace on earth?”

Michael Brown’s short response:

According to the biblical timetable, things are right on schedule, and Jesus has been doing everything that the Messiah was expected to do up to this point. The problem is that you have an incomplete understanding of the biblical picture of the Messiah. According to the prophet Malachi, the Messiah would bring purification and purging before he brought peace. He would execute judgment before he established justice. Many would not be able to endure the consequences of his coming. This is written in our Hebrew Bible! For many of our people, his coming would be bad news not good news. Our Scriptures also teach that the Messiah was to be a priestly King, like David. As a royal Priest, he came to make atonement for sin and offer forgiveness and reconciliation to Israel and the nations. As King, his dominion expands every day, as he rules over those who embrace him as Messiah. Soon he will return and establish his kingdom on the earth, destroying the wicked and bringing worldwide peace. So, what you expected to be the *first act* of the play will actually be the *final act*.¹

Beginning with this objection, Michael Brown moves from general objections to historical objections. These objections will become increasingly more complex and a bit more challenging, especially when we get to theological objections. I also need to point out that Brown is, as far as I can tell, a progressive dispensationalist, which is where the statement, “As King, his dominion expands every day” comes from. Progressive dispensationalists actually believe that Christ is reigning on David’s throne right now from heaven. This view is also known as the

¹Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus: General and Historical Objections*, 1ST ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), 69-88. In this work, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response, which is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response, after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer responses (there is far too much material to include in the DDRs).

“already—but not yet” view of the kingdom. This is simply not true. More on this at another time.

In dealing with this Jewish objection, there are at least five principles that I would use. First, I would take the “weapon” out of his hand and use it “against” him. What I mean by this is that instead of letting him fire away at you with passages which clearly show that when the Messiah comes He will establish world peace (implication being that since Jesus did not establish world peace, He can’t be the Messiah), I would take him to the many passages that demonstrate that Jesus also had a priestly ministry that had to take place before the Second Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. This principle deals with methodology and framing the debate. What you will want to point out is that modern Judaism has a very *incomplete* concept of the Messiah and has totally ignored His priestly ministry, which must take place before His kingly ministry. Here is a major passage on the Messiah establishing world peace and world knowledge of God that the modern Jew will likely try to “use” to prove that Jesus was not the Messiah:

Isaiah 11:1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. ² And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³ And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; ⁴ But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And **He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth**, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵ Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist. ⁶ **And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the kid, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them.** ⁷ **Also the cow and the bear will graze; Their young will lie down together; And the lion will eat straw like the ox.** ⁸ **And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.** ⁹ **They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea [emphasis mine].**

The second thing I would touch on is that the reason Messiah Jesus did not set up God's kingdom of peace and universal knowledge, as promised to the Jews, is because the Jews rejected Him. Christ came preaching repentance and offering the kingdom to the Jews, but they rejected Him, and therefore, lost the opportunity to have God's kingdom established during His First Advent.

The third thing I would do is to establish the priestly ministry of the Messiah. I would take him to Isaiah 52:13-53:12 and point out the undeniable priestly activity of: "sprinkling," (52:15), His soul being offered as a guilt offering (53:10-11), and the intercessory nature of the Messiah as the sin bearer who provided atonement (53:11). Another great passage that illustrates that the Messiah would be both priest and king is Psalm 110, which was accepted by ancient Judaism as a future reference to the Messiah as the Son of David and as such He would be like David in being King, Priest, and Warrior. David himself served as a prototype of a priest in his wearing of the priestly garment of the Ephod (2 Sam. 6:14), bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to the Jews, in the design of the Temple, and in the offering of sacrifices. Other passages you could use include Zechariah 3:8 and 6:11, where you have a picture of the Messiah/Branch and Joshua as the High Priest wearing a crown. This is a picture of making a priest into a king. In Zechariah, we have a connection between the Branch, the High Priest, and the King. The picture is one of a royal priesthood. The bottom line here is that we have a man who stands as a symbol of the Branch who is a priest on a throne. It is interesting that in the Dead Sea Scrolls there was the expectation of two messiahs—one from the Aaronic priesthood and one from the Davidic kingship. We also have confirmation in ancient rabbinical sources—before Judaism changed its views in reaction to Jesus Christ. While this information is not divinely inspired, it does aid in dismantling the charge of "Christian interpretations/distortions." Again, many Jews were

expecting the Messiah of Aaron as well as the Messiah of David. This idea of a priestly Messiah, however, vanishes in later Judaism.

The fourth thing is to establish a timeline in which this priestly ministry *had* to take place—a timeline which had to be fulfilled before the destruction of the Second Temple in A.D. 70. This can be done by examining three key texts. The first text is Haggai 2:7-8, where we have God's promise to fill *this* house (Second Temple) with His glory and that this glory would be greater than the First Temple. This means that this Second Temple had to be filled with a glory that was greater than the First Temple (Solomon's)—before it was destroyed in A.D. 70. The problem here is that in Judaism it was never filled with a greater glory. It did not have the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat, or the Shekinah Glory. Furthermore, when the Bible speaks of God filling His sanctuary with glory, it refers to Him filling it with Himself, as per the First Temple (cf. 2 Chronicles 5:14). Modern Judaism has no answer as to how “the latter glory of this house will be greater than the former” (Haggai 2:9). Of course, we know that the Second Temple was filled with the glory of Jesus Christ, as incarnate God visited the Temple—Christ being the presence of God and the glory of the Father (John 1:14). The second text is Malachi 3:1 where we are told that the Lord Himself will visit the Second Temple. However, when did the Lord visit the Second Temple in a way that is described in Malachi—before that Temple was destroyed? The third text I would focus on is Daniel 9:24-26. In dealing with Daniel 9, there are a lot of rabbit trails to avoid. What I would do is to focus on the big picture of the 490 years. We are told in Daniel 9 that within the timeframe of 490 years that transgressions, sin, atonement, would be dealt with and eternal righteousness would be provided (9:24), and then afterwards the Messiah will be cut off (9:26). So who dealt with sin and provided perfect righteousness within

the prophetic years of Daniel—after which the sanctuary (Second Temple) would be destroyed? Of course, there is only one candidate and He is Jesus Christ..

A fifth thing I would point to is the Jewish traditions in the Midrash and Qumran writings which abundantly bear out the fact that the Messiah was indeed expected to come during the period when Christ came. The ancient Jews understood the Messiah far better than modern Judaism, and they expected Him to come as priest and king. It was later Judaism, in reaction to Christ, which turned away from the Messiah's priestly ministry and to this day have all but ignored this ministry. They have failed to realize that before the Messiah can set up a kingdom, sin must be dealt with and righteousness provided. Otherwise, it is impossible to have a kingdom of peace and knowledge

In sum, if a Jew tells you that Jesus cannot be the Messiah and then takes you to the passages that predict that the Messiah would bring worldwide peace and knowledge of God, you need to point out that in their own Bible the Messiah also has a priestly ministry, and furthermore, that priestly ministry had to be accomplished before the destruction of the Second Temple. This is what their Bible, our Bible, and ancient Jewish tradition teaches.

Positionally a saint – just like ALL believers

Pastor Don

1 Corinthians 1:2 to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,

