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11/17/19

While reading the book “Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles.” The author of the book is Brad H. Young, he has studied at Hebrew University, receiving his PhD. He is the president and founder of the Gospel Research Foundation, a professor of biblical literature in Judeo- Christian Studies, and is a faculty member of the Graduate School of Theology. The Book “Paul the Jewish Theologian” cost about ten dollars for the online version on Google Play, and carries one hundred and eighty-four pages consisting of ten chapters. Throughout this excerpt, Brad Young has set up the idea against that of Hellenism that was the setting that mostly pushed aside Paul’s letter to the Gospel. This book will elaborate on the many turns of ideas that happened to lead people into having many misinterpretations of Paul’s stories. Throughout this review, it will be addressing the Jewish factor that plays its role throughout the stories among Jesus, Paul, and Christianity as we know it, or so we thought.

First, as we dive into the first chapter we discover the apostle Paul, this chapter allows readers to understand where Paul was when it came to being a Pharisee. Young goes to announce to readers on how Paul was misunderstood by the church and how he was rejected by the synagogues. Paul wasn’t accepted by the synagogue because it “could not accept the profile of Paul’s style of Pharisaism” and for the “The early church, on the other hand, largely rejected the Jewish heritage of Paul by denying his Pharisaism.” As readers, we get to understand why Paul had been rejected. Young also elaborates on how Paul’s teachings help many understand Paul’s view “When Paul is viewed as a Pharisee, many aspects of his teachings concerning grace and law are better understood.” Throughout this first chapter, we realize that Young wants us to know what the life of Paul consisted of and even though he had been rejected he never threw himself out and stop considering himself to be a Pharisee. Because of his teachings as a Pharisee, it helped others to come to a better understanding.

Secondly, during chapter two author Young finds himself discussing how it is possible to describe Paul as a theologian. Paul was very daring at taking other cultures and having it play a part in his life as well. Paul is shown here by Young as someone who took all the writings that he did in order to help build bridges between all the diversity that he had encountered.” His writings, moreover, have both captured the hearts of many disciples and enraged numerous antagonists. [3] As a religious genius who built bridges between diverse communities” here readers see that Paul is trying to help mend together what is misunderstood and broken. Brad Young breaks this chapter down into many parts showing readers the impact and meaning of the Torah with Paul. Young establishes some of the confusion people faced when it came to Paul. For instance, since he used the Torah as a way of validation many people formed tremendous amounts of questions pertaining to certain situations that are discussed in the Torah “Paul did not want the non-Jew believing in Jesus to be circumcised and take on the ceremonial observance of all the laws of Torah.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 21) we learn that even though there were points in using the Torah, the Torah also caused much confusion and disagreements. Furthermore, “ Paul, the Pharisee among the Christians, was trying to build a bridge between the diverse groups flowing into the popular Jesus movement.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 22) While reading this chapter I come to the conclusion that Paul was trying to just bring every one of the cultures he grew up together in the best way he knew how to.

Thirdly, throughout chapter three Young provides us with information about the story of Pentecost and how it was brought about. Pentecost is known to have a spiritually impact on Judaism and Christianity, and also is known for “ to signify the giving of divine revelation on Mount Sinai the zenith of God’s self-disclosure in Torah for Israel as well as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for the church.”(Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 54). Pentecost was one way in which it helped bring the nation together, people of Christian backgrounds and Jewish background came together to share this time and what we now understand is that it was left up to Paul to bring the rest of the world up to understanding. “ Pentecost is the backdrop of Paul’s ministry to the nations of the world. The words of Jesus are not intended for his people alone. A Pharisee educated in Jerusalem must bring the message of Israel’s one God and his Messiah to the Gentiles.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 55). Paul was the one who would announce to the rest of the world what he knows about the word of Jesus.

Throughout chapter four, Brad Young provides us with the knowledge and understanding that just like many others there has been someone who goes by the name of Maricon who wants to go against everything that Jesus and Paul have to say. What I find contradicting throughout this chapter is that Maricon actually claimed himself to be an apostle of Paul. Maricon went against everything that Jesus and Paul had to say for instance “According to their Bible, Jesus taught, “Think not that I have come to fulfill the law, I have not come to fulfill but to abolish” that goes against what “Jesus taught, “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill”. Young provided his readers with an inside view on how some people’s view was much different from what Jesus and Paul viewed. Marcion didn’t believe in the Torah and with that many teachings have been contaminated by him taking away the message of Jesus from Jewish heritage. Just like how his teachings have affected the jews Young shows how this same thing happens to “Christians, though grafted into the majestic olive tree, too often disconnect ourselves from its trunk and its life-giving roots.” Young paints the picture that Christians are often finding themselves far from their destined journey.

While reading chapter five, Young goes to show readers how throughout the Old and New Testament that Jesus hasn’t changed and that his preachings are the same as they were before “ We must recognize that the God of the Old Testament is the God of the New. He is described as being full of grace and mercy in both testaments.”(Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 65) the words that are coming from the new testament are filled with the same meanings in the old testament. Young also goes to state throughout the chapter we have always and will always serve an all-merciful God. “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 65). Brad Young also goes to state that if we want to be in favor of the Lord then we have to be willing to repent of our sins. “Most Jewish teachers belonging to Pharisaic and later rabbinic Judaism emphasized God’s goodness and willingness to accept all sinners who repent.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 66). In this chapter, readers are faced with the pure facts that if they want to be accepted by Christ we must repent and serve him.

Furthermore through chapter six readers now get to fully understand the whole meaning for the Torah, and why Paul refers to it so much. Paul has found faith in Jesus in this chapter and states that if it wasn’t for the Torah, he wouldn’t really know where his faith in Jesus would be. Young states that “As Christians, we should take the study of Torah and Jewish approaches to

the Bible very seriously.” because that’s what would allow us to be drawn closer to the Lord. We learned that the Torah was Paul’s entire world view and that’s where he obtained the majority of his information. “ Paul’s entire worldview, Torah-centered, absorbed a fresh awakening concerning God’s redemptive purpose.” The Torah helped point out many of God’s purposes for Paul to understand. Young proceeds to show how Paul emancipated on the fact that the Torah isn’t evil but that it “is spiritual and good, revealing the divine plan for all people. Through Paul’s eyes, Jesus is revealed in the Torah.” The Torah is the start for everything in Paul’s eyes if Paul didn’t have the Torah his faith in Jesus wouldn’t be as restored as it was. We learn that throughout this chapter Paul learned more about the Lord through the Torah and that is why he doesn’t believe it to hold any kind of evil but more so of a spiritual effect.

During, chapter seven we begin to see a continuation of chapter five, we again come across Marcion in this chapter and how he goes against everything of what Jesus and Paul are saying. The thing that sticks out to me the most throughout this chapter is how young identifies that “Though heaven and earth still stand, sometimes we as Christians have inclined toward Marcion’s interpretation of the gospel.” as Christians we tend to lose ourselves and fall back into certain patterns that don’t resemble the teachings of Jesus and Paul. Also, as seen before we see the change of words in order to make oneself comfortable with the saying. Marcion once again shows how his disciples have taken the words of Jesus and Paul and flipped them in order for them to be comfortable with their way of living. “When it comes to Torah, both Jesus and Paul sought to fulfill the law and to obey God’s will as it is revealed in the sacred text of the Hebrew Bible. The disciples of Marcion were so troubled by this saying of Jesus that they changed the words to read, “Think not that I have come to fulfill the law but to destroy it. . .” [7] They simply inverted the words fulfill and destroy to suit their theology.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 89). We continually throughout this book get shown how the acts of someone can change and damage a meaning because one is uncomfortable.

Furthermore, as we proceed through chapter eight we come to read and learn about the lens in which prophets see-through and understanding of Paul’s theology in 1 Corinthians 13. Throughout this chapter, readers get to understand that Moses is the greatest prophet who communicated with God on a different level. “Prophecy is not always crystal clear. In contrast to others, however, Moses was a prophet who spoke with God “mouth to mouth” and even viewed the form of the Lord.” Readers see Moses as a Prophet who could communicate with the Lord on a different spectrum. The reason why Moses is on a different level compared to other prophets is that he resembles the Lord and what he asked for. “ But Moses beheld [prophetic visions] through a polished mirror [lens] as it is said, “He beholds the form of the LORD” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 100). Unlike the other prophets, Moses’ glass was polished while the other prophets’ lens glass was blurred.

As for chapter nine, talks about the times where Jesus had been tested with temptations from satan. “In the temptation story, Satan promises to surrender the rulers and kingdoms of the present world over to the authority of Jesus on one condition: “If you, then, will worship me, it shall all be yours” (Luke 4:7).” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 107) We see here that the Devil has tried to tempt Jesus into doing what he wants but he fails to do so because Jesus comes back and say to satan “It is written,” and quotes Deut 6:13, “You shall worship the LORD God, and him only shall you serve.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 107).Throughout this

chapter, we are faced with many stories that Jesus went through as his time here on earth. Also as we continue throughout this chapter we learn about the views of how the Jewish thought about God. Young provides us with the knowledge that states how our bodies are viewed as in the Jewish light “ While they did believe in the survival of the human soul after death, the notion that the body would be reunited with the soul in a physical resuscitation was foreign to their conceptual world.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 110). This chapter has everything placed into one it gives the readers an eye open view on what the beliefs of the Jews consisted of. The Jews thought of Gods way out, the term heaven mean God himself “Jesus taught, “Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness . . .” (Matt 6:33 and parallels).” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 109) God is what the Jews seek after for change and renewal of oneself and the world. Young also goes on to talk about the body and soul and how they are to be judged together because rabbis believed there to be a special sort of connection between the two. Apostle Paul affirms the doctrine of the resurrection and teaches that the physical and metaphysical of every human being will be transformed.

Finally, throughout chapter ten we come to the end of the book where Brad Young brings into conclusion about how Paul wasn't just changing from religion to another religion. Even when he was rejected by the synagogues he still remained a Pharisees. Young shows us that throughout every trial and tribulation Paul stayed constant with his beliefs on the Torah. With always having something good to say about it. We see that Paul and Jesus have many similarities but they did hold some differences. When it came down to who preached to who “and Paul's missionary efforts among pagan Gentiles made each distinctive in the development of early Christianity. Paul labored to reach the pagans with the message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus the Messiah. Jesus, on the other hand, did not minister widely to non-Jews.” (Paul the Jewish Theologian, A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles page 122). Jesus and Paul differed on who they preached the word to Paul helped to call the Pagans to God. This last chapter takes something from every other chapter and ties it into the ending for a brief relapse of what readers have read and gone over throughout the book.

When it comes to comparing this book to another book that I have read relating to the same topic, I can't give a book that I know of. Mostly because I haven't really read a book like this. The closet this book comes to the resemblance to me is the Bible. For me, I didn't really like the book I felt as though there were very minimal parts that didn't bring interest to my eye of some sort. Also, throughout the book, I felt like I was reading something else that didn't have to do with what the story was truly supposed to be about. I realized this and thought that maybe I am the only one who thought this but apparently I'm not because there are times in the book where I get lost in what I was even reading about. I think Brad Young makes great points throughout his book but I wouldn't highly recommend this book to someone, but I would recommend this book because like I have said there are numerous amounts of times where he does make his points.