

## Book Review

**The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius.** By David Flusser with R. Steven Notley. Grand Rapids (MI) and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2007. Pp.xix,191. Paperback. US\$ 20.00/ ISBN 978-0-8028-2587-2.

The book is in reference to the publication of Jesus written in 1968. Thinking this task would be more an edit process it soon became a task of rewriting the book. With a 30-year gap between Flusser's original text there needed to be updates due to new discoveries. There were revised books written under the same name. Due to the rewrite of this book and the new discoveries Eerdmans went on to publish the text under the new title.

This text has twelve chapters which pertain to Jesus's life, teachings and death. During the first chapter takes us into the sources and the last chapter being the epilogue. The introductory to the text is by Charlesworth.

Chapter one goes on to explain the purpose of the text: It is possible to rewrite a book about Jesus's life because there is more documentation on what has been throughout the history of the Bible. It is stated to find history about Jesus outside of Christianity due to the comparison of Him to Buddha, and Mohammed. The first accounts of Jesus are not as unreliable as we may think. The first three Gospel's show how consistent Jesus was with the Jew's and how He spoke of the savior.

Chapter two speaks on Ancestry: Jesus's name during the first century was known as "Yeshua." Jesus's brothers' names were James, Joses, Judah and Simon. These names were considered to be popular during the first century. Jesus's earthly father was Joses short for Joseph. Jesus's mother was Mary, which is known as Miriam which was another common name during the first century. Jesus's sisters' names were not known, just women referenced as Miriam. Jesus Christ means "Jesus the Messiah." This is in accordance to the Jewish beliefs; Jesus was an ancestor of David.

Chapter three goes on into Baptism: During the time when Jesus walked the earth, John the Baptist went out to preach forgiveness of our sins. John's passion and dedication to Jesus and God's will led to his execution by Herod Antipas. There was a traditional Jewish baptism where they emerged themselves into baths and washed the uncleanness. John the Baptist expressed the soul would be purified through righteousness and through this the water could cleanse the body. It starts within before outwardly.

Chapter four is about the Law: It was God's will for the gospel to spread west to Europe. Paul's movement during early Christianity was to create of ideological framework based on freedom from the law. Jesus was portrayed as a law following Jew. There were Pharisees who were in disagreement with Jesus's disciples because they were not following Galilean tradition.

Chapter five speaks on Love: In reference to Luke 6:36: "You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." God is so mighty, and in His ways of love He reaches out to all humanity. Jesus was very adamant on loving your neighbor as you love yourself. Turning the other cheek if someone strikes you and doing good to those who hate you. It's important to be careful of sin because one can lead to many more.

Chapter 6 explains Ethics: The branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles. Jesus explained materials can become an obstacle. He believed that social outcasts and those who are oppressed would become the ideal children of God. Due to the Dead Sea Scrolls it is stated we

can have a better understanding of the poor in spirit. They are the poor in spirit whom the holy spirit would be given.

Chapter seven brings us to the Kingdom of Heaven: There were men who were sent as spies to seek out Jesus and attempt to catch him. Jesus was able to avoid the capture while making his purpose clear. Jesus makes it clear we cannot serve two masters. Meaning God or money. He states give to caesar what is caesar and give to God what is Gods. When Israel does the will of God, then the kingdom of heaven will be revealed to them according to the Lords timing. The kingdom of God will become out of his might and all men will bow down at the coming of Christ.

Chapter eight The Son: Jesus is known as doing miracles. There was a man known as Rabbi Hanan ben Dosa who lived the next generation following Jesus Christ. He performed miracles of healing. One of Jesus's most important teachings was about the little children of heaven. Hanan was one of the men who was fully aware of the children and how they would ascend to heaven before rabbis.

Chapter nine The Son of Man: Jesus asked his disciples 'Who do the people say that I am:' they answered, "The Christ of God." Jesus stated he was blessed because God is the one who showed them this truth. The people during the first century referred to Jesus as a prophet. Jesus is the divine son of God the Father. The "son of man" is the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord.

Chapter ten takes us to Jerusalem: This city is in the Middle East, which is located on a plateau in the Judaeen Mountains between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea. This city is one of the oldest. Herod Antipas was mistaken between Jesus and John the Baptist whom he beheaded. Jesus was aware they were after him. His purpose was never to pass in Galilee where he had been preaching. Jesus would soon die in Jerusalem. Jesus was with his own people during his last moments on earth.

Chapter eleven goes into Death: The action of dying or being killed which is the end of a person's life. Jesus spent his last night in custody of the high priest. The next morning, He was brought to the Temple committee. These were the same men who conspired to arrest Jesus. They were seeking to use something against him to bring him to the Roman authorities. They used Jesus's words against Him, when He stated the Temple would be wiped out. These men were unable to understand the parables of Jesus Christ. They saw Him as a threat instead of the son of God. This led to the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Chapter twelve Epilogue: In the early biblical history there were two changes in the church. These were the structures of faith. The first was the tragedy of the crucifixion. The new faith was for the people to overcome this occurrence. Christs death led to His resurrection and return to heaven with God the Father. Moving forward Paul was preaching and teaching about this new faith in Jesus Christ the Messiah. The Gentile church was born.

This text was a very insightful reading. Its refreshing knowledge on Jesus Christ the son of God stresses the teachings and biblical truths known to man during the first century. This text is in the context of the Jewish faith and how it was in Jesus's time.

Text reference: *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as a Historian* By. Shaye J.D. Cohen

Josephus, a Palestinian Jew chronicled the Jewish rebellion against Rome which was in 66 C.E. in Jerusalem. Both texts share an emphasis on Jesus.